Applying performance to transform scripts of gender and sexuality that enable rape

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at how performance can work as an innovative form of rape prevention. As a community artist working through the medium of performance, the issue of rape has often arisen in my work with young women. However, I have been unsure of how to deal with this potentially traumatic topic through performance. This study is an investigation into some pertinent approaches.

Drawing upon Sharon Marcus' analysis, this work considers rape as a script which positions men as perpetrators and women as victims. As a script for sexual relations, rape both scripts and is scripted by normative gender roles. This thesis asks if the rape script can be disrupted through staging different types of performances. It asks how performance can transform ideas of gender and sexuality which enable rape to occur. Nicola Gavey writes of a 'cultural scaffolding of rape', in which the hegemony of gender masks rape as an inevitable aspect of gender relations. Gavey's theory is drawn upon as a way to unpick the types of ideas which are prevalent in the script of rape, and thus those which must be thwarted in order for rape to be prevented. While conventional approaches to rape prevention focus on warning people about sexual danger, this thesis looks to Moira Carmody's notion of sexual ethics. The *Sex & Ethics* program, founded by Carmody and Karen Willis from the NSW Rape Crisis Centre, works with young people and service organisations to alter the conditions which enable rape. It does this by supporting young people to question and perform their social roles differently.

With its focus on social transformation, practices used in applied theatre are widely drawn upon throughout this examination, alongside approaches from other performances which also seek social change. When looking to the potentials of performance as a vehicle for rape prevention three main questions arise: How can performance deal with the trauma of rape? In what ways can performance undermine norms of gender and sexuality that perpetuate rape? And how can performance encourage audiences to create new social scripts? This study investigates these questions by first looking to a range of performances based on painful lived experiences, and argues that when aiming to transform pain, performance must offer opportunities for connection and compassion. The Drama for Life (DFL) applied

drama festival at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in 2010 provides an opportunity to examine methods of transforming social scripts through applied theatre and performance. Some of the approaches to transformation observed at DFL are identified as pertinent to my examination into rape prevention. In considering the gender norms that underpin rape, this study goes on to examine what Rebecca Schneider calls 'explicit body performances'. Pieces from the United States by Annie Sprinkle and Karen Finley, and from the Australian artists Moira Finucane and The Kingpins are analysed. These performances reveal significant approaches for undermining normative notions of sexuality and gender which underpin the script of rape.

My own work, *Spreading the Love*, is then analysed as a final case study. I look at this performance in order to provide insight into the practicalities of planning and performing shows that attempt to prevent rape. *Spreading the Love* was performed in public spaces across Adelaide, engaging with those who passed by as participants and audiences, and encouraging them to destabilise normative notions of gender that perpetuate rape. As a community arts piece, it was produced in conjunction with the Feast Festival and local councils, and struggled to gain council support as an overt piece of rape prevention. This thesis concludes by suggesting that rape prevention is a complex and ongoing process that requires commitment and a wide variety of social responses. I suggest that performance is an ideal way to augment other forms of social education which create possibilities for different ways to perform sexuality and gender, and ultimately, end rape.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: _____

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INTRODUCTION

I come to this study from personal curiosity and professional confusion. For several years, the issue of rape kept hitting me in the face. In my professional life I was a community artist who worked with marginalised groups of people, often young women, on issues which adversely affected their lives. Although the shows we created were not specifically about rape I was astounded by how often this issue was raised during workshops and rehearsals. Whether I was creating a show about eating disorders, identity, or depression, the issue of rape was always brought up by participants. They tentatively added these experiences into the mix of themes we set out to explore. Participants seemed to expect that our theatrical work could explore their own experiences around rape, build communities of support, and help them transform their pain. Yet I was confused about how to do this and felt underprepared. Although I was optimistic about the potential of performance I worried that rape was potentially too volatile and complex to deal with in this way.

As a community artist I saw how different performances of the self could alter the way people thought about themselves and the ways others behaved towards them. I saw how performance could transform depression and challenge the stronghold of eating disorders. Therefore, I wondered what impact performance could have on notions of gender and sexuality that produce rape. What would rape preventative performances look like? I wondered if depictions of rape reinforced its pain and inevitability, or offered possibilities for transformation. If performances that represented rape suggested it as an inevitable feature of relationships between women and men, then what modes of performance showed the most potential for transforming these ideas?

This thesis is therefore an exploration of how performance can be used to prevent rape. Throughout this work I look to the notion of ‘performance’ rather than ‘theatre’ as performance allows for a broader range of actions to be examined and a greater flexibility of roles. Well-known director, performance theorist, and head of performance studies at New York University, Richard Schechner (1974, 1985, 1988, 1993, 2001, 2002, 2010), describes the distinction between theatre and performance

writing that 'the theatre is the specific set of gestures performed by the performers in any given performance; the performance is the whole event, including audience and performers (technicians, too, anyone who is there)' (2002, p. 87). As Schechner explains, performance encompasses a greater range of activities than theatre and allows those in attendance to shift between roles. Performance may be a ritual, game, ceremony, or an activity from everyday life; in performance people can move from being a spectator to a performer and back again; actions in a performance may be real rather than simulated, and/or spontaneous rather than rehearsed. Although I prefer the broader term 'performance', demarcations between theatre and performance are slippery and shifting so any attempt to fix definitions of these terms becomes meaningless.

It is also worthwhile to clarify my use of the term 'rape'. In Australia, rape is considered under the broader banner of 'sexual assault'. The Australian Bureau of Statistics writes that '[s]exual assault is a physical assault of a sexual nature directed towards another person without their consent' (ABS 2002, p. 9). Within South Australia, 'rape' is typified as a penetrative form of sexual assault. In 2008 the South Australian parliament clarified the legal definition of 'free agreement' so that consent cannot be gained through coercion, threats, deceit about one's identity, or purpose of the sexual act (ABS 2002, p. 9). This change to sexual assault laws also maintained that consent cannot be freely given if one is too intoxicated to agree, is asleep, or is unlawfully detained (Government of South Australia 2013).

Unlike some rape prevention strategies, such as self-defence classes or improved street lighting, this thesis does not look to prevent rape in the moments of a rape attack itself. Instead, I examine the way performance can transform the conditions which allow rape to continue. I consider these conditions to be the configurations of sexuality and gender which claim women are innately vulnerable to rape and men are natural aggressors. My intention is to find out how performance can work as a form of social transformation, looking to how it could alter the socio-cultural conditions which allow rape to continue.

This thesis is therefore focused on primary rape prevention. In order to combat rape those working in the field of prevention divide their techniques into three kinds of

approaches: primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary preventative practices seek to transform the landscape that allows for possibilities of rape. Secondary prevention efforts work with those groups considered at-risk of being a victim or a perpetrator, while tertiary prevention engages with victims and perpetrators of sexual violence. Feminist theorist who works in primary rape prevention, Moira Carmody (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c), writes that most approaches to rape prevention by service providers and governments have focused on tertiary prevention, and to a lesser extent, secondary prevention (Carmody 2009a, p. 5). This may be understandable due to the sometimes ongoing problems which can result from rape, and the perceived threat that those who commit rape may do so again. However, tertiary prevention efforts often focus on developing tougher penalties for perpetrators and providing therapeutic respite for those who are raped, neither of which has been shown to decrease rates of rape. As Carmody argues, these types of approaches do not 'build alternative cultural norms that make sexual assault unacceptable' (Carmody 2009a, p. 5). Secondary methods of rape prevention may be seen as having greater potential to shift cultural scripts of sexuality and gender; however, as these methods only work with those at-risk of either committing or being a victim of rape, rather than the wider community, their scope is limited and comparatively narrow. Determining those who are at-risk may adhere to and strengthen stereotypes of rape victims and perpetrators.

On the other hand, primary approaches to rape prevention work with the broader community in order to promote discourses on sexual ethics (Carmody 2009a, p. 5; Carmody et al. 2009; Flood 2011; Mulroney 2003). Primary rape prevention programs often have a more pedagogical perspective which seek to transform notions of gender and sexuality that enable rape. I look to this broad-based approach of primary prevention as it is able to change the conditions that allow sexual violence and intervene long before any assaults occur.

Performance could be an apt vehicle for stimulating and supporting transformation of the social norms which allow rape to continue. With its ability to display 'interpretations, representations, and fantasies' of gendered bodies, performance can interrogate dominant social scripts and re-perform alternative models of relationships (Marcus 1992, p. 400). As a tool in rape prevention performance may offer unique

methods to view and embody alternative ways of being and interacting. Performance may enable spectators to envision and renegotiate their own everyday performances of gender and relationships, so that they disturb the naturalisation of women's vulnerability and men's aggression. As an embodied practice of transformation, performance allows audiences and participants to bring into being alternative realities, and hoped-for visions of the future. Through performance people are able to physically embody new attitudes and behaviours, or watch their peers perform themselves in different ways. It can be a forum to explore and practice alternative performances of the self which are witnessed by one's social group.

Performance is not, however, a neat bundle of meanings given by performers to those who watch. Philosopher Jacques Ranciere (2007) argues that spectators do not simply receive what is imparted from the stage. While performance-makers may intend to evoke a particular set of meanings, affects, or moods, Ranciere argues that performance is in fact a site of intersubjectivity, and a collaboration between performance makers and spectators. Or, as performance theorist Rebecca Schneider (1997, 2000, 2006) argues, spectators do not only see meanings on the stage but actively create these meanings in collaboration with artists (2000, p. 26-7). Ranciere and Schneider each argue that the act of watching performance is an active process of examination, comparison, and interpretation. In this way, all performance is in fact participatory. Ranciere writes that spectators participate in the stories on stage by making them into their own stories, and continually reinterpreting their aesthetic meanings (Ranciere 2007, p. 277).

One of the difficulties in creating performance that aims for particular outcomes, like the prevention of rape, is that audience members may receive different meanings than performance-makers intend. In May 2012 I attended a performance by local Adelaide-based company, Zee Productions, called *I Looked Into the Darkness Around Me* (Zadra D 2012). The work was staged as part of White Ribbon Day events. White Ribbon day is an international movement, led by men, which seeks to prevent men's violence against women (White Ribbon Australia 2012).

In *I Looked Into the Darkness Around Me* a woman was found dead in suspicious circumstances. The play examined the circumstances surrounding her death and

gradually revealed the violence she endured from her husband. The husband was alternately charismatic and aggressive; he was cunning and controlling, with seemingly no redeeming qualities. On the other hand, his wife was calm, successful, beautiful, and ultimately, completely controlled by him. As a performance which seeks to end violence against women this show encouraged audiences to acknowledge gendered violence, confront stereotypes about domestic violence that claim that it only happens to people of a low socio-economic class, and examine the impact and disastrous consequences that domestic violence can have. The play was quite shocking and saddening as it centred on violence and pain. I was among many audience members who was quite upset by the piece, as we shuffled out of the theatre, heads down and sniffling, feeling the hopelessness of the female protagonists' situation.

While Dirk Zadra, the writer and director of *I Looked Into the Darkness Around Me* intended to decrease shame and isolation felt by victims of domestic violence (Zadra K 2012), I felt hopeless and overwhelmed about gendered violence after watching the performance. In fact, I felt that the performance reinforced the inevitability of gendered violence. I suggest this is because *I Looked Into the Darkness Around Me* did not show a way out of this violence, but simply repeated the classic narrative of cruel, unstoppable perpetrator and desperate, dead victim. As an audience member, this piece left me with little hope of creating new social scripts that foster different kinds of relationships and behaviours. As its title suggests, *I Looked Into the Darkness Around Me* depicted a world in which men had inordinate power to trap women in dark places from which they could not escape.

Applied Theatre theorist James Thompson (2009) examines performances which seek social change after painful events. Thompson ran performance workshops with young people in Sri Lanka who had been affected by the war between the government and the Tamil Tigers. He explains that:

> During the day we were creating very issue-based theatre dealing with the problems of life in a war zone, like awareness of mines. My professional history prioritised those daytime workshops and I think the young people found them useful. But I noticed that they

> were much more upbeat in the evenings when there were celebratory, feel-good events around singing and dancing.
>
> (in Arnot 2009, n.p)

Thompson is not only interested in informative or skills-based theatre, but in work which allows participants to create something different in their lives. His analysis points towards an important area for my work: that performances which seek change must deliver hope and suggest opportunities for something different. In simply depicting the problem at hand, audiences may feel these painful events are inevitable and cannot be altered. I am interested in performances that search for an alternative to rape; those which encourage cooperation, foster positive dialogue, and look towards creating ethical relationships.

As a guiding framework this thesis uses a paper by feminist theorist, Sharon Marcus, called 'Fighting Bodies, Fighting Words: A Theory and Politics of Rape Prevention' (1992). Marcus' theory of rape as a social script instead of an inevitable biological fact is particularly pertinent for my analysis. Marcus disputes the claim that rape is one of the 'real, clear facts of women's lives', determined by her vulnerable vaginal opening, and inferior physical strength (Marcus 1992, p. 386). According to Marcus rape is a scripted interaction which draws upon social configurations of sexuality and gender in order to manifest. This notion of a script works especially well for my project as it suggests the potential role of performance in rape prevention. Like Marcus, I conceive of rape as a script which can be thwarted through playing roles differently. I look to the way staged performances can enable people to analyse, practice, and play with different notions of sexuality and gender. I suggest that performance can create new social scripts which are based on ethical sexual relationships and move away from rape altogether.

Looking to prevent rape by disturbing the structural underpinnings of sexuality and gender that support it has even been recognised as an imperative strategy by the Australian government. *Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2009-2021* (2009) outlines several key strategies for best practice in violence prevention; prevention programs must challenge traditional patriarchal notions of masculinity and femininity, confront ideas that 'a woman's place is in the home' and challenge the notion that 'men

should "wear the pants" as heads of the household' (p. 37). The report asserts the Australian government must promote and support 'relationships [which are] respectful' (p. 57); respectful relationships are those which are 'based on mutual respect, equality, trust and support' (p. 58). Looking to another national context, the first recommendation for decreasing the numbers of rapes in the report for the Medical Research Centre in South Africa, by researchers Rachel Jewkes, Yandisa Sikweyiya, Robert Morrell, Kristin Dunkle (2009), stated: 'Rape prevention must focus centrally on changing social norms around masculinity and sexual entitlement, and addressing the structural underpinnings of rape' (n.p). These strategies identified by *Time for Action,* and by Jewkes et al, namely of disrupting traditional gender roles and developing understandings of respectful relationships, are explored throughout this thesis.

Throughout this work I argue that performance must create new social scripts of sexuality and gender. The notion of a social script refers to anticipated methods of interaction for specific events, such as asking someone on a date or attending a funeral. Like theatrical scripts, these social scripts contain information about props, costume, character, and lines. However, unlike theatrical scripts they often operate unconsciously (Littletom & Axsom 2003; Marcus 1992). In the context of this thesis, I refer to a 'script', not as a staged performance, but as a mode of interaction which is enacted off the stage. These scripts usually go unnoticed, passing as a kind of 'common sense', because they are so deeply embedded into social and cultural norms.

Methodology

It is my original contribution to this area to explore the different performative approaches which can transform scripts of sexuality and gender that produce rape. Chapters one and two offer literature reviews of contemporary approaches to rape prevention and applied theatre respectively before I examine a selection of different performances in chapters three, four, five, and six. In each of these chapters I consider a number of case studies in order to discover useful strategies for transformation. This thesis closes with an analysis of my own performance as

another case study. My show is not put forward as a culmination of best practice in the use of performance as rape prevention, but is instead a way to explore some of the challenges and potential pitfalls of creating this kind of work.

My exploration begins by grounding itself in an analysis of rape and approaches to prevention. Rape has been a rich area for feminist investigation for many years, and several different theories have been put forward to combat it. In chapter one, which is a literature review of feminist approaches to rape prevention, I begin by looking at several different ways feminists have conceived of rape. Feminists have examined rape as an act of violence, as fostered by excessive heterosexuality, as a lack of consent to sex, as enabled by cultural norms, and as a script. I ask which, if any, of these approaches emerge as an ideal way to frame my own analysis. Which ways of conceiving rape leads to theories of prevention? Which constructions of rape are most useful when looking to performance as a tool for prevention? The second half of chapter one focuses on feminist approaches to rape prevention. I look at theories put forward by Catherine Waldby (1995), Sharon Marcus (1992), Nicola Gavey (1989, 1992, 2005, 2012), Moira Carmody (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c), and Linda Alcoff and Laura Gray (1993) before analysing the potential of dismantling the rape script through public testimony given by rape survivors. I ask if each of these concepts enable ways of re-performing sexuality and gender so that they undermine rather than support the script of rape.

The analyses offered by Marcus, Gavey and Carmody are carried through the rest of my thesis as they offer useful ways of framing and explaining my own work. Marcus' notion of rape as a script frames this thesis and is heavily drawn on throughout. Gavey's perspective is useful as it understands that rape can be confused with 'just sex' because it is supported by cultural understandings of gender and heterosex, or what she calls the 'cultural scaffolding of rape'. Although her arguments may at first appear similar to those made by radical feminists, who claim that rape is supported by normative notions of heterosexuality, Gavey's analysis does not doom all heterosexual sex as unconsciously aligned with rape-supportive attitudes. Instead, Gavey looks to ways that a cultural scaffolding of rape can be dismantled through different configurations of gender, sexuality, and heterosex. Carmody's concept of sexual ethics is also carried throughout my analysis. She

argues that a focus on sexual danger does not prevent rape, but reiterates the idea that women are sexually vulnerable and men are sexually aggressive. Like Carmody, I also seek to create new scripts of sexual ethics. In order to do this, one must ask: what conditions foster the ethical negotiation of sex? What types of behaviours and attitudes enable ethical sexual negotiation and how can these be promulgated?

The thesis then moves onto examining the literature around applied theatre. Theories and practices of applied theatre are widely drawn upon throughout this thesis as these types of performances often focus on social transformation. Applied theatre performances have clear health, educational, or social objectives. They are also relevant to my exploration as they usually privilege efficacy over aesthetics, are often participatory, and often work with people who do not usually attend theatre or arts activities (Prentki & Preston 2009). I look to the history and some of the uses of applied theatre in order to assess its potential as a prevention device. The literature review on applied theatre opens by examining different ways of comprehending performance. I look at performance as mimesis, as catharsis, as ritual, and as a critique of the social order, searching for a lens which supports social transformation. This chapter continues by offering a definition of applied theatre, asking about its usages, limitations, and how this type of performance strives for transformation. Different methodologies of applied theatre are then examined. I survey theatre for development (Chinyowa 2005, 2007a; Dogbe 2002; Gaskell & Taylor 2004; Kamlongera 2005; Prentki 1998), drama therapy (Emunah 1994; Mackay 1987; Read Johnson 1982, 1991, 1992), psychodrama (Fox J 2004, Moreno 1940, 1946a, 1946b, 1073), Playback Theatre (Fox H 2007, 2010; Fox J 2004; Salas 1983, 1996; Zanjam 2011), and Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal 1985, 1992, 2006; Fisher 1986), searching for approaches that enable the script of rape to be transformed.

Following this analysis of different approaches used within applied theatre I focus my investigation on performances which seek to explore painful issues. It seems pertinent that a study of rape prevention through performance must examine the ways in which pain is represented on the stage. Do representations of pain prevent painful events from reoccurring? Do they raise awareness of the issue or encourage healing? Chapter three looks to what I call ‘performances of pain’, or performances which explore painful issues. I analyse several performances from several different

countries which have explored painful issues in a particularly articulate way. These are not necessarily applied theatre pieces, but rather, performances that engage with painful issues. I ask if replicating pain in performance has the capacity to transform pain or if instead, it simply reinforces the inevitability of pain. When rape survivors tell of their painful experiences are audiences compelled to make change or does it reinforce the notion that women are sexually vulnerable and men sexually aggressive? What issues arise when using performance to explore the pain of rape?

In chapter four my thesis looks to concrete examples of performances which are used in the field of prevention. Chapter four examines performances from the Drama for Life (DFL) festival, and the surrounding conversations from the African Research Conference (ARC), which were both held at Witwatersrand University in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2010. Although the works at DFL were not themed around the prevention of rape, but instead on the prevention of HIV, they are useful to my analysis for what they reveal about the use of applied theatre when used to prevent an issue that is intimately connected to gender and sexuality. I suggest that some of the performative approaches used in the prevention of HIV may likewise be valuable for my attempt to use performance in the prevention of rape. South Africa proves to be an ideal place for the examination of applied theatre due to its long and rich tradition in this country. In South Africa performance is widely used as a tool of development as it does not rely on television, radio, internet or even literacy, which are scare commodities in some communities. Performance has been widely used as a tool for social intervention right across South Africa as it can be created relatively cheaply, be made in local languages, and take account of local concerns (Kamlongera 2005). Witwatersrand University also shows itself to be an excellent host as it runs the preeminent training course for practitioners of applied theatre. I analyse several performances from the DFL festival and ask which of these approaches may be applicable to the prevention of rape. Works at the DFL festival used some of the forms examined in chapter two including Playback Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed, so this analysis provides a further opportunity to examine the usefulness of these forms in the prevention of rape.

While applied theatre may be an obvious choice when looking to use performance as a form of rape prevention, I suggest that another completely different form of

performance may also be useful to my project. In chapter five I examine a style of performance which I refer to as 'explicit body performances'. This term is taken from a text by performance theorist Rebecca Schneider called *The Explicit Body in Performance* (1997). Schneider writes that explicit body performances attempt to dislodge normative ways of viewing through exploring the historical and social implications of women's bodies. Theorist Cristyn Davies (2008) describes explicit body performance as 'a feminist tradition of performance art in which the body is foregrounded as the site through which cultural and socio-political values are inscribed' (p. 94). These works may be useful to an analysis of performance as rape prevention due to their capacity to re-perform the female body and its sexuality. These performances may offer a way out of the rape script through the ways they problematise normative notions of femaleness and embody a female sexuality that is fierce, desiring and even macho. Explicit body performers aim to not simply repeat conventional performances of 'woman', but instead highlight and problematise gendered assumptions that create the category of 'woman'. These feminist works are not an attempt to represent 'some true woman that exists without quotation marks' but instead endeavour to 'summon the ghosts' and make overt the cultural inscriptions of 'woman' that create her (Schneider 1997, p. 23).

Chapter five examines explicit body performances by Annie Sprinkle, Karen Finley, Moira Finucane and The Kingpins in order to ask if the approaches used by these artists have potential for disrupting the script of rape. Although their performances were not created in order to thwart the rape script, I suggest that the problematising of normative constructions of the body has potential for my project. My analysis asks how this highlighting and problematising of standard configurations of gender and sexuality can destabilise the script of rape. I also question whether approaches used by explicit body performances would be useful to artists working with marginalised communities or in an applied theatre setting as they are criticised for playing only to elite audiences.

Finally, chapter six explores my own performance, *Spreading the Love.* I look at my shows as another case study, as a way to gain insight into the complexities of attempting to create performances that seek to prevent rape. Chapter six focuses entirely on *Spreading the Love* as a case study in order to more thoroughly unpick

the practicalities of how a performance that attempts to prevent rape is planned and then performed in public spaces. While *Spreading the Love* is analysed here, it was not created as part of this thesis, and performances were not pieces of research, but works of art. *Spreading the Love* was situated in public spaces throughout the city and suburbs of Adelaide and spontaneously engaged with passersby in order to reach those who may not ordinarily engage in rape prevention activities. I intend for this examination of my own work to show a performance in context and therefore begin to build an understanding of what happens when some of the approaches used throughout this thesis are applied.

As an approach to primary rape prevention, *Spreading the Love* sought to discover a way of working with the wider community to express, critically consider, and transform shared approaches to gender and relationships. Performances sought to encourage a questioning of normative notions of femininity and masculinity, asking if the desires of women and men are differently positioned and given varying importance, and how this impacts upon the negotiation of pleasure. Members of the public were given a platform to discuss issues around power, pleasure, negotiation, communication, and intimacy, while being able to consider and respond to the ideas of others. While prevention projects often present one dominant health and educational message, my performances looked for a multiplicity of observations and diverse understandings of love and relationships. *Spreading the Love* did not seek to discover any perfect relationship, gender performance, or style of interaction that would completely contradict the rape script. Instead, performances invited people to reflect upon how they negotiate and what they expect in intimate relationships.

This thesis intends to contribute to the existing knowledge on rape prevention by bringing it together with the field of performance. In bringing these different fields together I seek an innovative method of rape prevention. My approach seeks a way for prevention activities to be framed as an engaging and fun way for people to develop their own ethical capacity in conjunction with their community. This thesis builds upon current theories of rape prevention and performance by looking for ways that engage the broader community in joyous activities that stimulate people to consider, strive for, and support ethical sexual relationships.

CHAPTER 1: RAPE PREVENTION AND CONTEMPORARY THEORY

Feminists have argued that rape is not a product of deranged male behaviour, nor the singular act of an individual man imposed upon a lone woman. Instead, rape is perpetuated by hegemonic gender norms that prescribe particular ways of being a woman and a man. Since second-wave feminism, several pertinent frameworks have sought to explain and understand rape. Feminist theorists have described rape as an act of violence, as an extension of everyday heterosexuality, and a manifestation of men's social power over women. These theorists claim that rape is not an idiosyncratic incidence but an outcome of everyday gender relationships.

My investigation into performance as rape prevention begins by asking how feminists have conceived of rape and consider how different definitions are more or less useful for a politics of prevention? This exploration will commence by looking at radical feminist theories, asking if this schema can foster a politics of prevention. Using this as a springboard, I then move to an analysis of Sharon Marcus' analysis which claims that rape is a scripted interaction which can be altered and overthrown, rather than an inevitable feature of gender relations. I then examine Catherine Waldby's critique of heterosexuality, Nicola Gavey's 'cultural scaffolding of rape', and the pedagogical work of Moira Carmody to complement Marcus' critique, forming a framework for rape prevention that seeks to reposition notions of gender and sexuality. Instead of instituting rape as an inevitable result of male and female bodies, feminine vulnerability and masculine sexual aggression, these theories search for ways to undermine the sexed and gendered conditions which enable rape. The chapter ends by looking at testimonies from those who have experienced rape, asking if this is an apt approach for encouraging social transformation.[1]

[1] Throughout this thesis I use the term 'victim' rather than 'survivor' unless referring to the work of those who specifically use this term. Some writers and activists on the issue of rape prefer to call those who are raped 'survivors' in order to emphasise their resistance and strength, and I value this attempt (Naples 2003). However, I am uneasy with using this term 'survivor' here as for me it assumes that a person's life is necessarily at risk in the act of sexual violence. This conflation between the acts of rape and death suggests that to rape someone is tantamount to killing them, or an integral part of them. As my work here often looks to prevent the types of rape that may be considered as 'just sex' I prefer the term 'victim' as it emphasises that an offense was enacted upon the individual, but their lives were not necessarily at risk (Gavey 2005).

Rape as violence

Led by Susan Brownmiller's landmark book, *Against Our Will* (1975), second-wave feminism initially conceptualized rape as an act of violence, rather than a sexual act. While other theories on rape at this time claimed that men raped women who were being (even inadvertently) seductive, or that women lied about rape in order to protect their virginal reputations, Brownmiller questioned these misconceptions (Brownmiller 1975). Instead, Brownmiller looked at rape in the context of violence and war, arguing that rape was a result of social inequalities between men and women. In the context of war, Brownmiller argued that the defence and rape of women is symptomatic of perceived male potency. Rape is 'a message passed between men – vivid proof of victory for one and loss and defeat for the other' (Brownmiller 1975, p. 38). The penis is conceived of as akin to a knife or gun, as a weapon of violence and attack. According to Brownmiller, women's biology, specifically their vaginal opening, marks their vulnerability to rape while men are endowed with a penis, which is a weapon-in-waiting.

Brownmiller's analysis successfully motivated a dialogue on rape that moved the blame from the victim to the perpetrator. However, this early work named women as natural victims of rape, and men as inevitable perpetrators. Some feminists have critiqued Brownmiller's analysis for being essentialist for assuming fixed gendered selves, which name women's bodies as always vulnerable to be raped and men's bodies as fundamentally aggressive. These analysts argue that Brownmiller's analysis denied the different ways that women and men can perform their bodies across time, history, and culture. She maintained a totalising view that neglects the multitudinal ways that both women and men challenge traditional models of gender, sexuality, and race (Cahill 2001; Carmody 2006, p. 351; Davis 1983; Hall 1983). Through focusing on rape in war, prisons, and revolutions, Brownmiller neglected to respond to rape within intimate relationships. This lack is responded to by arguments led by radical feminist theorist, Catherine MacKinnon (1982, 1989, 1996, 1997).

Rape as excessive heterosexuality

Like Brownmiller, MacKinnon writes rape as 'indigenous, not exceptional, to women's social condition' (1997, p. 42). However, unlike Brownmiller, who constructs rape as a 'sexual assault', with sex being used as a weapon of assault, MacKinnon argues that looking at rape as violence refuses to recognise the way heterosexuality constructs gender. She writes that the law struggles with distinctions between sexual intercourse and sexual assault because norms which govern sexual assault also come into play in sexual intercourse (1997, p. 42). While assault is considered outside the range of accepted human interactions, the trajectory from mutually enjoyable sexual activity to sexual assault is not always so clear. According to Mackinnon, rape and sex cannot be so neatly separated, and she defines rape as an act of excessive heterosexuality.

Like other radical feminists, MacKinnon claims that heterosexuality must be examined for the way it entrenches men's control and dominance over women (Dworkin, 1979; Jeffreys 1990; Millet, 1970; Rich, 1980). Sex is done by men to women, or as MacKinnon writes '[m]an fucks woman'; heterosexuality prescribes men's coercion and control, and women's acquiescence (MacKinnon 1982, p. 541). Heterosexuality is an eroticisation of dominance and submission, claims MacKinnon, with the passive woman perfectly suited to the aggressive man. In this view, women are able to react to men's instigation, but not to instigate sex themselves. Therefore, 'a certain level of force or coercion can be expected in "normal" heterosexual sex' (Cahill 2001:37).

Diana Russell's early research on rape, developed through interviews with victims and rapists, revealed how notions of normal heterosexual sex are drawn upon to disguise rape. Russell claimed that while victims described the rapes as traumatic and stigmatizing, rapists spoke of them as relatively predictable responses to an uncontrollable desire for sex. Rapists described themselves as loving women or merely wanting to show women their sexual potency (in Heberle 1996, p. 75). Sheila Jeffreys (1990) reasons that heterosexuality eroticises power imbalance. She argues that heterosexuality makes dominance and submission erotic, maintaining men's role as aggressive, while women are positioned as passive. Indeed, radical feminists argue

that heterosexual sex is actually premised upon a certain level of force or coercion, as women are simultaneously considered to be upholders of moral purity, and sexually seductive objects. Women are not sexual agents and can only react to men's desires rather than seeking to fulfil their own. Within this framework men must always be hard, rigid, and ready for sex and women cannot say yes, yet also cannot say no.

This radical feminist analysis of rape, however, denies women's agency and does not accept that many women enjoy sex with men without finding these sexual experiences as akin to rape. Feminist poststructuralists argue that by conflating heterosexuality with rape there is no room to consider enjoyable sexual experiences between women and men. Problematically, seeing rape as an inevitable feature of heterosexuality does not allow for a politics of prevention and posits a certain unchangability to sexual and gender relations.

Rape as lack of consent

Legal and popular discourses maintain that rape is separated from sex by whether or not consent is given. Writing on the history of consent, Carol Pateman (1980) explains that consent infers an act is freely embarked upon and can also be freely rejected. As long as an act is not forced or coerced then consent is assumed. These notions of consent assume gender equality, yet historically women have not been seen as having the ability to make decisions about their own bodies nor have the agency required to give consent. Therefore women's so-called 'consent' to men's sexual initiation, especially when this man is her husband, is only an extension of her natural subordination rather than a voluntary commitment. Pateman concludes that this insistence upon consent as the primary marker of difference between sex and rape actually produces women's vulnerability to rape.

Yet legal discourse maintains a distinct focus upon this issue of consent (Cahill 2001, p. 172-5). Legal frameworks utilise two different ideas on consent: the attitudinal and the performative (Kazan 1998). The attitudinal model surmises that the subject's attitude towards consent is the point in question: if a person is legally capable of consent, their attitude towards the sex act constitutes consent or its absence. Feminists have contested this notion, arguing that the attitudinal model places the

victim on trial, through questioning their sexual history, and assuming that any sexual history with the defendant is used as evidence when considering their future consent (Cahill 2001; Kazan 1998). Feminists also claim that the attitudinal model treats women's clothing and promiscuous behaviour as evidence of consent (Friedman & Valenti 2008).

A performative approach to consent instead focuses on behaviours or utterances instead of attitudes (Kazan 1998, p. 29). The performative model of consent draws upon notions of the performative utterance, developed by linguist J.L Austin (1975). Like the statement 'I promise' or 'I do' at one's own wedding ceremony, a performative utterance performs what it utters (Austin 1975, p. 5-6). This approach attempts to move towards an affirmative model of consent, in which 'yes', rather than 'no' is sought in sexual exchanges (Cahill 2001; Friedman & Valenti 2008; Kazan, 1998). Consent therefore requires that one behaves in a way that signals an affirmation of consent, or what some feminists on the blogosphere have called 'enthusiastic consent' (MacAulay Millar 2010). This model looks for evidence that consent is affirmed rather than denied. Affirmative models of consent have been utilised by Antioch College in the United States in a well-known campaign to combat the high number of date rape allegations by students. This campaign attempted to set guidelines for the way students negotiate sex (MacAulay Millar 2010). Some have argued, however, that the performative model assumes that utterances and gestures which signify consent are standardised. It does not recognise that performances of consent may be ambiguous, or mean different things to different people. Within this context it may be especially difficult to distinguish consent from coercion, as when coerced, people's actions can be confused as signifying consent (Kazan 1998; Wood & Rennie 1994, p. 130). For example, if a woman who is being coerced can negotiate using a condom, or has an orgasm, then it may not be considered 'an actual rape' when using a performative model of consent.

Both the attitudinal and performative theories of consent are restricted as they place women in the position of reacting to and regulating men's desires, while classifying women's own desires as subordinate. Carmody claims that notions of consent are inconsequential without also exploring notions of gender, ethics, and social relationships. She points out how focusing primarily on consent continues to deny

justice to victims and perpetuates myths that support sexual violence. Carmody's sexual ethics framework advocated as an alternative to a pedagogical focus on models of consent will be a subject of further analysis towards the end of this chapter.

Rape as enabled by patriarchal cultures

In moving from models of rape that see it as inevitable or at least co-extensive with heterosexuality, and those which see it defined in legalistic ways, to exploring the cultural conditions that allow rape, some feminists have found it worthwhile to look to societies that do not have rape. Anthropologist Christine Helliwell (2000) uses her work with the Gerai people of Indonesia who claim to have no instances of sexual violence in their culture. Helliwell insists rape is not a universal phenomenon. She claims that western feminists have looked at rape as a symbol of patriarchy, and as a result of the physical differences between men and women. Patriarchal social structures have been considered a global phenomenon, and men are believed to be universally equipped and able to rape.

In order to disrupt this reasoning, Helliwell explores how the Gerai consider women's and men's bodies and dispositions. Unlike Brownmiller, who writes rape as an inevitable result of polarized differences between women's and men's bodies, Gerai culture is instead based on reciprocity. Gendered and sexed bodies are not considered to be in binary opposition, as the Gerai imagine men and women's bodies and dispositions as alike. In Gerai culture, both women and men are understood as naturally nurturing, which is the most important attribute for a Gerai person. Crying babies are comforted at the breasts of both Gerai men and women, and some men claim to menstruate (Helliwell 2000, p. 802-3).

Helliwell writes that western cultural practices emphasise gender difference, while the Gerai focus on identification. It is this western polarisation of gender that Helliwell argues is significant in creating possibilities for rape. Her analysis shows how rape can be seen as a phenomenon made possible through cultural constructs of gender and sexual relationships. The Gerai reveal how 'beliefs in the "sexed" character of bodies is not natural' and universal, but a characteristic that is local and

particular (Helliwell 2000, p. 798). The Gerai demonstrate that rape is not a commonality between all cultures, and point out that cultural underpinnings of gender and sexuality both perpetuate and are perpetuated by rape.

Rape as a script

Like Helliwell, poststructuralist feminist critic Sharon Marcus posits that potentials for rape may be thwarted through a reconstruction of gender and relationships. Poststructuralist theory claims that 'subjectivity is produced through discourses that are multiple, possibly contradictory, and unstable' (Gavey 1989, p. 470). This theory therefore provides a way of conceiving of gender that allows for transformation rather than assuming fixed and permanent characteristics. Marcus argues that different ways of thinking about and doing femininity and masculinity can undermine the process of rape.

In contrast to essentialist accounts which configure rape as inevitably determined by biology or a universal patriarchy, Marcus names rape as a script, as a process which can be rewritten. She writes:

> Rape exists because our [women's] experience and our deployment of our bodies is the effect of interpretations, representations, and fantasies which often position us in ways amenable to the realisation of the rape script: as paralysed, as incapable of physical violence, as fearful.
>
> (Marcus 1991, p. 400)

In seeking approaches for rape prevention, Marcus looks for ways to disrupt what she calls the 'gendered grammar of violence' (Marcus 1992, p. 393). Marcus advocates a postmodern, textual approach, and begins her analysis by contesting the views of feminist theorist Mary E. Hawkesworth. Hawkesworth puts forth an empirical view of rape, which names rape as a starting point for feminist politics, and a permanent reality. Her argument suggests that, as Marcus puts it, 'women are always either already raped or already rapable' (Marcus 1992, p. 386). However, Marcus argues against this and maintains that, by claiming rape as a determining factor in women's lives, Hawkesworth's theories do not allow room for a politics of prevention. Marcus writes that Hawkesworth's approach, and feminism's focus upon

legal reform, are futile as they anticipate the inevitability of rape. Legal deterrence can only act after rape has occurred, attempting to gain some retribution for the crime. Marcus overturns the notion that men rape because they have the capacity to and looks to undermine the inevitability of rape by naming it as a script that can be rewritten.

Marcus' argument reconceives rape as a language that names as well as describes and places. Like a language, Marcus claims that rape follows certain grammatical rules. A male rapist is a grammatically correct subject of violence while women are positioned as subjects of fear and objects of violence (Marcus 1992, p. 397). According to Marcus, the rape script sees one person audition for the role of perpetrator, while another is manoeuvred into the complementary position of victim. Qualities typically assigned to the feminine like acquiescence, passivity, and receptivity make women more susceptible to be manoeuvred into the position of victim; and qualities which are usually aligned with men, like aggression and agency, write men as typical perpetrators (Marcus 1992, p. 394-5). The script of rape thus both relies upon and perpetuates normative configurations of gender.

Notions of race also play a fundamental role in the script of rape. Marcus argues that the script of rape positions white men in particular as legitimate subjects of violence against all women (and men). She argues that 'Afro-American' men are scapegoated as perpetrators of rape, particularly if the victim is a white woman, while the rape of 'Afra-American' women is condoned and overlooked by a legal system that allows racial prejudices of juries to make decisions (p. 388). Marcus writes that when men of colour rape white women, these acts are seen as justifying extremely violent acts, such as lynching (p, 390). On the other hand, when the accused is a white man, there are significantly lower rates of conviction (p. 388). Australian feminist academic Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2000, 2006, 2011) writes that the bodies of Indigenous women are more likely to signify sexual availability. Unlike white women, writes Moreton-Robinson, when Indigenous women rebuke white men it can be interpreted as a threat to their racist supremacy and this may result in retributive gang rape (Moreton-Robinson 2000, p. 168-171). Moreton-Robinson argues that Indigenous women are positioned in white society as sexual deviants, who are always available and easily accessible for sex (Moreton-Robinson 2000, p. 170). While the rape of

white women by black men is popularly considered a political act, the rape of black women by black men is considered a private and non-political matter (Irving 2004, p. 46). Marcus maintains that this is because intraracial rape does not challenge social inequalities but instead maintains recognizable social conventions (p. 392-3).

Nonwhite men are characterized as inordinately violent and 'Afra-American' women are written as either especially vulnerable to rape, or at other times in history, just as susceptible as other groups of women (Marcus 1992, p. 390).Marcus argues that white women are encouraged to fear nonwhite men, and when men of colour do rape white women, these acts are seen as justifying extremely violent acts, such as lynching. These concepts of race which underpin the rape script influence the legal outcomes of rape cases which are brought to court. Marcus writes that 'Afro-Americans' are more likely to be named as perpetrators, while 'raped Afra-Americans often do not obtain [legal] convictions even in the face of overwhelming evidence of brutalisation' (p.388). In a case brought to the Northern Territory Supreme Court in 1980 Justice John Gallop found that the rape of an Aboriginal woman was not as significant as the rape of a white woman. He told the court that:

> rape is not considered as seriously in Aboriginal communities as it is in the white communities … and indeed the chastity of women is not as importantly regarded as in white communities. Apparently the violation of an Aboriginal woman's integrity is not nearly as significant as it is in a white community
>
> (in McGlade 2006, p. 6).

In another case also overseen by Justice Gallop, the rape of a fifteen year old Aboriginal woman living on an Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory was condoned as cultural obligation, because the rape was committed by the man to whom she was promised at birth. Justice Gallop gave the perpetrator only twenty-four hours in a cell for the rape. In fact, Justice Gallop said that the case would never have been brought to court if the perpetrator did not fire a gun into the air after he raped her, as the girl 'knew what was expected of her' and the rapist was only 'exercising his conjugal rites in traditional society' (in Ammerman et al 2003, p. 4). Despite his short jail sentence for rape, the perpetrator received fourteen days in jail for firing the gun (Ammerman et al 2003). Perhaps most infamously, the gang rape of a ten year old girl in the remote Queensland community of Arukun received

international media attention and sparked an independent review when Judge Sarah Bradley told the court that 'the girl involved was not forced and she probably agreed to have sex with all of you' (in Rooks 2012, p. 51).

Many feminists have vehemently condemned this claim that the rape of Indigenous women is somehow not as serious as the rapes of other women, and that rape has traditionally been condoned in Indigenous communities across Australia (Ammerman et al 2003; Behrendt 2000; McGlade 2006; Rooks 2012; Weston-Scheuber 2007). The description of rape as a script helps to explain how concepts of race are interwoven with those of rape. A script of rape does not simply claim that some women are particularly vulnerable, and some men are inordinately violent, but insists that different bodies are differently conceived of and thus differently positioned in the script of rape.

In order to work our way out of the script of rape Marcus insists that people are only positioned in this script moment by moment. Identities of rapist and raped do not pre-exist a rape attempt, but instead, the rape script is drawn upon in order to achieve and then comprehend rape. Marcus' theory of the script of rape claims that victims and perpetrators are not permanent identities, but are momentarily enacted. She writes that the 'rapist does not simply have the power to rape; the social script and the extent to which that script succeeds in soliciting its target's participation help to create the rapist's power' (Marcus 1992, p. 391). According to Marcus, typically feminine qualities of empathy and responsiveness are exploited in order to move women into positions as victims in rape attempts. In fact, empathy is popularly advocated as an appropriately feminine model of self-defence. Marcus cites the surprising prevention strategy of encouraging women to 'respond lovingly to potential rapists' (Marcus 1992, p. 393). This strategy claims that men rape because they feel unloved and therefore if they receive an empathetic response from their victims, they may not go on to rape. In order to avoid getting hurt women are popularly encouraged to respond to rapists' demands. Women are taught not to fight back unless they are sure they can escape the situation. Marcus argues that ironically, this means that women 'can best avoid getting hurt by letting someone hurt us' (Marcus 1992, p. 395). As grammatically correct objects (rather than subjects) of

violence women are rendered immobile in the rape script, constructed as physically vulnerable, and not able to risk harm through engaging in a physical struggle.

Within the popular imagination rape is considered to be the worst thing that can happen to a woman. Those who are raped are conceived of as eternally damaged victims. 'Rapists have learnt, *as have their victims*, that to rape is to do something worse than to assault' (Gordon and Rigor in Helliwell 2000, p. 791, emphasis in original). Popular discourses on rape tend to emphasise raped women's pain and trauma rather than their strength and resilience (Wood and Renni 1994). The act of rape is constructed as damaging women, bringing on 'sexual dysfunction, guilt, shame, rage, increased substance abuse, sleep disturbances, anxiety, suicidal ideation' among other negative behaviours (Wood and Renni 1994, p. 126).

Instead of constructing rape as that which permanently harms and completely changes the self, Marcus argues for a radical reconception. In order to reconfigure rape she argues that gendered norms of sexuality must also be reconsidered. Rather than looking at feminine sexuality as something precious, as hidden in the body, Marcus suggests understanding sexuality through the lens of time and change. In this way, sexual choices can be understood as changing over time, so that consent given in past sexual situations does not automatically stand in for present and future sexual choices (Marcus 1992, p. 399-400). This is a marked change from attitudinal models of consent used in legal frameworks which draw upon women's past sexual history in order to ascertain the likelihood that they actually gave consent. In reconfiguring women's sexuality through the lens of time and change, rather than as a precious interior space, reciprocity is encouraged, as is the notion that sexual expression constantly shifts in its relationship to another. Marcus' theoretical framework contends that rape continues its stranglehold on women when it is considered to steal a precious, interior sexuality, an object of mystery and fragility which has an unchanging, essential quality. In order to disrupt the script of rape Marcus argues that feminine sexuality must not be defined as 'a delicate, perhaps inevitably damaged and pained inner space' but instead as a process which can be reimagined over time (Marcus 1992, p. 398).

Marcus suggests that shifting one's position in the rape script involves re-performing and reimagining one's body. In order to move away from their position of object of violence and subject of fear women must be able to reimagine their bodies as violent, as fighting back, rather than freezing during rape attempts. This fighting back, writes Marcus, interrupts the rape script as it creates a new character which does not fit within the standard script and thus erodes the script's legitimacy. Simply 'by fighting back, we cease to be grammatically correct feminine subjects and thus become much less legible as rape targets', writes Marcus (p. 396). Women need to enact self-defence tactics, to fight against would-be rapists, refuse the role of victim, and 'frighten rape culture to death' (Marcus 1992, p. 401; McCaughey 1997). Non-forceful resistance strategies, like pleading, crying, reasoning, and freezing have not been shown to be effective in reducing the likelihood of rape completion (Ullman, 2007). On the other hand, women have prevented rape by laughing at, bargaining with, and reproaching attackers, as well as screaming to draw attention to the incident (Marcus 1992, p. 396). In her study of physical feminism, Martha McCaughey (1997) cites research that tells how women in violent relationships reduced their partner's violence through threatening to harm them, lending support to Marcus' claims. Men reduced their violence when 'women would point out that they could kill their husbands while they were sleeping, and the husbands genuinely feared the homicidal threats' (McCaughey 1997, p. 154). McCaughey suggests that film and music videos that feature women being violent towards men offer women 'a fantasy of resistance' (McCaughey 1997, p. 185). These images destabilise the seeming naturalness of gender formations that claim women as objects of violence. Rather than naming women as vulnerable and men as dangerous, disruption to the rape script claims women as potential agents of fear and violence.

Violent and phallic women

Feminist theorist Catherine Waldby engages with discourse on both men's and women's bodies in 'Destruction: Boundary Erotics and Reconfigurations of the Heterosexual Male Body' (1995). Her argument offers an adjunct to Marcus' notion of the rape script, as it also theorises a way to reconfigure men's bodies, while Marcus' paper focuses upon women's bodies. Waldby begins with an explanation of destruction as 'the temporary, ecstatic confusions wrought upon the everyday sense

of self by sexual pleasure, and the more long-term consequences of this confusion when it works to constitute a relationship' (p. 266). She references the arguments given by the lesbian protagonist in Jeannette Winterson's book *Oranges are not the only fruit.* This character argues that in love relationships two women are able to shift between roles of destroyer and destroyed while men stay fixed in their roles as destroyers. Waldby's exploration seeks to explain how standard heterosexual choreographies of erotic practice maintain women as destroyed and men as destroyers. Her analysis also points to ways of performing gender subversively beyond the rape attempt. Waldby does not look specifically at the issue of rape but reconceives gendered bodies through an analysis of heterosexual sex. Like Marcus, Waldby argues that in order to subvert the rape script, women must be constructed as potential agents of violence, with will and strength, rather than empathy and responsiveness. Waldby argues that men's bodies must be rewritten so that they can be thought of as submitting to and being engulfed by erotic encounters, and women's bodies as penetrating and potentially aggressive (p. 270-1).

According to Waldby, men's bodies are considered to be indestructible, with a hard, armoured exterior. Their bodily boundaries are clearly marked, and their self-hood expands in heterosexual intercourse to occupy women's allegedly permeable bodies and selves. She writes that in direct contrast to men's bodies, women's bodies are seen as penetrable and receptive, able to take in another. Contributing to the notion that women are inherently able to be victims of sexual attack, penetration of a woman's body against her will is ironically not considered violence, as the vagina is constructed as permanently open to invasion. Waldby echoes Marcus' argument that rape 'engenders a sexualised female body defined as a wound' (Marcus 1992, p. 397); the vagina is already open, damaged, seemingly ready to be raped. In rape cases it is not enough for women to declare vaginal penetration against one's desire, but claimants must also produce sufficient bruises, cuts, or other signs of struggle, as well as psychological distress (McCaughey 1997; Waldby 1995).

The framework that reinforces the male body as hard and penetrating, while the female body as open to penetration, is what Waldby refers to as the 'hegemonic bodily imagos of sexual difference' (p. 268). This is in reference to Lacan's concept of the imago, and indicates both a complementary relationship and distinct difference

between the sexes. This construction suggests the constant inevitability of masculine violence and feminine victimhood, naming rape as a predictable result of male and female bodily difference. 'Rape is arguably the social practice which takes the ideological imagos of masculinity and femininity most literally', creating and being created by dominant discourses on gender and sexuality (Waldby 1995, p. 270).

In order to overthrow the hegemonic bodily imagos that enables rape Waldby argues for shared fantasies that reconsider male and female bodies. These 'imaginary anatomies', create competing discourses that undermine the legitimacy of dominant discursive constructions (p. 268). Waldby claims that if sexual acts are performances of masculinity, femininity and sexuality then these discourses can be transformed through erotic imagination and practices. New sexual fantasies and practices, for example, can renegotiate relationships between bodies. Sharing fantasies in which men are being engulfed by women, while women are surrounding and engulfing men, disrupts the hegemonic bodily imagos. The Gerai people construct male and female bodies and sexual intercourse in a similar way. According to Helliwell, during intercourse the Gerai consider the penis as 'taken into' another body (Helliwell 2000, p. 808-9). The penis is thus more vulnerable to be attacked, rather than to attack.[2] On the other hand, the vagina is comparatively safe and comes together with the penis in an equal exchange of 'fluids, pleasures, and life forces' (Helliwell 2000, p. 803).

In a subversion of western notions of men's and women's heterosexual bodies, Waldby posits viewing men's bodies as receptive and open to penetration. As a way of reconfiguring men's bodies as receptive, Waldby suggests a focus upon male anal eroticism. She writes: 'The ass is soft and sensitive, and associated with pollution and shame, like the vagina' (p. 272). The ass, like the vagina, is a 'vulnerable interior space' (p. 272). Male anal eroticism threatens strict gender categories that forbid the transgression of men's bodily boundaries. Rather than the constant destroyer in imaginings of anal eroticism men surrender and are destroyed. Likewise, women's bodies must be reconceived of as phallic, so that they can penetrate and destroy. This

[2] Helliwell writes that for the Gerai, the penis is more vulnerable as it sits outside the body, while the vagina is comparatively safe inside the body. She supposes that this relates to the Gerai notion of safety, as pertaining to inside the home, while danger is understood as located outside the home (Helliwell 2000, p. 808-9).

is a borrowing of Judith Butler's (1988, 1990, 2004) analysis of the lesbian phallus, which contradicts the notion that men own the phallus, and threatens the direct connection between the male body and penetration (Waldby 1995, p. 274).

In order for feminism to develop a language in which to talk about the politics and possibilities of sexuality, and move away from the monotonous imagos of normative heterosexuality, Waldby argues that a pornographic imagination must be nurtured (p. 275). This pornographic imagination would use fantasy and play to reimagine the potentials of intercourse so that new configurations of women's and men's bodies could be generated. It would shift from the idea that men penetrate while women are penetrated, and look to ways of representing and enacting the phallic woman and the receptive man. Waldby promotes the development of an 'adventurous erotic imagination' in order to present opportunities to reconsider gender and erotic relationships (p. 275). It is here that Waldby's work is especially pertinent to my project, as she suggests that theatrical performances and art can begin to disrupt normative notions of gender and sexuality.

Waldby looks to performance art and lesbian fiction as ways to develop a pornographic imagination, suggesting that these places of play can reinvent the erotic imagination (p. 275). She speculates that theoretical feminism can be repelled by 'the violence of desire' and harbour a distaste for perversity and deviant fantasies (1995, p. 275). However, this reluctance means that new configurations of women's and men's sexual bodies which are able to 'dephallicize the heterosexual male body' are not imagined or performed (p. 275).[3]

[3] While Waldby encourages an expansion of erotic imaginings she criticizes the tendency for men to live out adventurous sexual encounters only with sex workers. She tells that this creates a kind of 'theme park effect' in which a brief infringement has no real effect on ongoing relationships (p. 274). Waldby writes that by 'containing a passive sexual practice to the secretive and commodified world of prostitution, men can continue to stand in a phallic relation to their wives and girlfriends' (p. 274). In order to enable transformation paid encounters with sex workers must be able to spill over and influence everyday life. Waldby maintains that she is not only interested in temporary challenges to men's sexual mastery within specific and defined environments, but of bringing these into the public domain, where they can alter dominant perceptions of straight male sexuality and have ongoing effects upon relationships. Like performance and art these brief interludes from normality could allow people to feel safe in exploring different performances of the self, and subsequently encourage them to take these new scripts into their everyday lives and ongoing relationships. In order to do this Waldby suggests taking some of the erotic elements which can be found in feminist and queer erotica into normative sexual practices.

However, this perspective which looks to the actions of individuals, and claims that rape can be prevented through altering the ways people fantasize about sex and perform their bodies is disputed by Carine Mardorossian (2002). In a paper which challenges postmodern feminist analyses of rape, Mardorossian argues that these theories blame women victims for continuing to fall for restrictive narratives of sexuality and gender. She argues that postmodern formulations of rape, such as those put forward by Waldby and Marcus, inevitably presume that women who are raped have their minds 'colonized by a sexual scenario [which] they could instead learn to recognize and use to prevent the scripted experience' (Mardorossian 2002, p. 752). Although Mardorossian does not refer to Waldby's work, she directly confronts the arguments put forward by Marcus. Mardorossian challenges Marcus' incitement for individual women to perform themselves as violent subjects who thwart off rape attempts in the moment of the attack, writing that women's 'non combative' responses to rape may in fact be a well thought out strategy of self-protection, instead of an enactment of the 'tremulous female body' (Marcus 1992, p. 389, 400). Mardorossian claims that by focusing on the role of women, Marcus perpetuates the notion that raped women are responsible for stopping rape, rather than perpetrators. She argues that Marcus presumes individual women must recognise the various stages which make up a rape attempt and personally intervene in this continuum in order to prevent rape from occurring. A continued emphasis on the actions of victims insists that women's behaviour needs to change, reasons Mardorossian.

However, I suggest that looking to the actions of individual women and what they can do to prevent rape does not in fact place responsibility on them, but rather points out how they too can make change. As Marcus writes: 'While the ethical burden for rape does not lie with us but with rapists and a society which upholds them, we will be waiting a very long time if we wait for men to decide not to rape' (Marcus 1992, p. 400). Theatre scholar Lisa Fitzpatrick argues that Mardorossian has misread Marcus, who is actually much more nuanced than Mardorossian's critique allows. Fitzpatrick challenges Mardorossian's claim that Marcus blames women for not successfully resisting their own rapes. According to Fitzpatrick, Marcus' argument does not blame women for being raped, but instead explores the way notions of 'woman' are constructed through rape. Marcus is not inciting women to resist rape attempts, and then blaming them when they fail, but is looking at how concepts of

gender and rape rely upon and feed each other. Fitzpatrick explains that Marcus does not blame women for being raped but explores how constructions of femininity have been constructed through the rape script.

I agree with Fitzpatrick and argue that Marcus' notion of a script of rape can be used as a foundation to create social change, rather than blame women for being raped. I suggest that Marcus' concept of a rape script could provide an interesting intersection with Gavey's 'cultural scaffolding of rape', and weave together to inform a theory of transformation (Gavey 2005, p. 3). Coming from a different disciplinary approach to Marcus, Gavey likewise looks at cultural conceptualisations of rape, and explores sexual experiences which sit awkwardly between 'unsexy sex', 'forced sex', and rape (2005, p. 136 – 165).

The cultural scaffolding of rape

Like Marcus, Gavey is interested in how feminist theory can discuss the issue of rape and the trauma it involves, without reinforcing a language of victimisation. In order to do this Gavey explores how normative configurations of gender and sexuality produce forms of heterosex that produce a gray area between sex and rape.[4] It is these often taken-for-granted distinctions between normative forms of heterosex and rape that Gavey refers to as the 'cultural scaffolding of rape' (Gavey 2005, p. 2-3). She argues that 'women's passive, acquiescing (a)sexuality and men's forthright, urgent pursuit of sexual "release" […] script a relational dynamic that arguably authorizes sexual encounters that are not always clearly distinguishable from rape' (p. 3). Gavey goes on to explain that dominant forms of heterosex have perpetuated rape acceptance myths which position women in roles as nurturing care-givers who acquiesce to sex in order to care for their male lovers. Rape acceptance myths allow societies to accept rape as a normal, if unfortunate, aspect of gender relations.

Furthermore, many women have coercive sexual experiences that they do not classify as rape. Research by Mary Koss claims that 'only 27 per cent of the women

[4] Gavey does not, however, claim that rape only occurs within heterosexual relationships. She maintains that people are also raped by their own sex and within same sex relationships. Her argument instead points out how notions of gender and sexuality that underpin normative understandings of heterosex also perpetuate myths which condone and propagate rape (Braun et al 2009, Gavey 2005, p. 14, 226, Gavey et al 2009).

who reported having had an experience consistent with the legal definition of rape labelled themselves as rape victims' (in Gavey 2005, p. 60). In Gavey's interviews with six women she shows that men do not have to exert physical force over women to exercise their control, but can rely upon the coercive effects of disciplinary power to ensure that their needs take precedence (Gavey 1992, p. 337). And disturbing research by Diana Scully and Joseph Morolla (1984) claims that convicted rapists who broke into women's homes and used weapons during rape attacks were able to justify their actions through drawing upon normative notions of gender and heterosexuality; these perpetrators maintained that their women victims really wanted it and enjoyed what they called 'sex' (p. 533-537). Gavey draws upon radical feminist writings on rape, like those I referred to above, in order to claim that rape may easily be accommodated into normative notions of heterosex which excuse and even expect men's sexual aggression and women's reciprocal passivity. Yet Gavey shifts from a radical feminist analysis, and insists that although normative systems of gender and heterosex impose rigid realities that produce rape, these are not inevitable, but can be dismantled and reconfigured.

Gavey explores three organising discourses of heterosexuality, which are identified by Wendy Holloway's (1984) research into gender relations, and are considered to condone and disguise rape as 'just sex' (Gavey 2005, p. 103-122). Firstly, there is the male sexual drive discourse, in which heterosexual relationships are considered to have an imperative to fulfil men's substantive erotic needs. Within this discourse, men are considered to be active subjects of desire while women are passive objects of desire. Women can only respond to or anticipate men's sexual desires rather than have and enact any of their own. The male sexual drive discourse perfectly complements the second discourse named by Holloway; this is the have/hold discourse which likewise names women as without their own sexual desire. According to this way of thinking, women only have sex in order to maintain happy monogamous relationships. The have/hold discourse claims that women have sex for its secondary gains: that of maintaining relationships and keeping their men (Gavey 2005, p. 104-5). Thirdly is the permissive discourse, which is more prominent in contemporary representations of sex. This permissive discourse claims that all consensual sexual activity is appropriate. Problematically however, the permissive sexual discourse presumes 'autonomous rational actors [who are] unconstrained by

power differences when making choices about their sexual engagements' (Gavey 2005, p. 108). It does not consider the different social power that women and men yield which may make it difficult for women to refuse sex, and it prevents women from drawing upon morally based arguments to manoeuvre a way out of undesired sex (Gavey 2005, p. 108). Gavey argues that the permissive discourse requires women to be continually sexually desirous, or as Germaine Greer puts it: 'A woman's duty now is not only to have the sex she doesn't really want, but to enjoy it' (in Gavey 2005, p. 111).

These three dominant discourses of heterosex can constrain women's attempts to create the types of sexual encounters they wish to have. When combined with what Gavey refers to as 'the coital imperative' it seems inevitable that the demarcation between 'just sex' and rape seems particularly slippery and difficult to precisely ascertain (p. 9). The coital imperative claims that normative heterosexual sex is the penetration of the vagina by the penis, and preferably includes men's ejaculation. This act is 'real' sex, and all other sexual acts are simply foreplay, or not 'proper' sex (Gavey 2005, p. 124-6). As Gavey explains, because the coital imperative is considered to be the defining sexual act, Bill Clinton could perhaps straightforwardly claim that he did not 'have sexual relations' with Monica Lewinsky (p. 125). According to the logic of the coital imperative, having oral sex with Lewinsky did not count as 'real' sexual relations, as it only involved penetration of the mouth with the penis, and not the vagina. As Gavey argues, women may not actually be able to choose if they want to engage in vaginal penetration when they wish to participate in heterosexual sex, or even in what are assumed to be mature heterosexual relationships. Social norms proscribe that in order to maintain a mature heterosexual relationship regular coitus, which is considered to be the only 'real sex', must occur (Gavey 2005, p. 126).

Gavey uses these arguments to set up her thesis that it can be hard to clearly ascertain the difference between unwanted sex and rape; this is because normative forms of heterosex produce a cultural scaffolding of rape. Unwanted sex is a neglected area in feminist analyses of rape prevention. Gavey presumes that this may be because unwanted sex is often hard to distinguish from consensual sex, and in focusing on this grey area, feminist theorists may be forced to confront the idea that consent can

sometimes be ambiguous. Gavey's collected testimonies of ambiguous consent contradicts Cahill's claim that most women can clearly delineate between sex and rape (2011, p. 172-5). In contrast to this, Gavey explores the confusing areas in between definitions of rape and sex. She analyses forced sex, coercive sex - or what she calls 'unsexy sex' - as well as ambiguous consent, experiences that look like rape but are not called as such, and at women's decision to choose to have sex so that one is not raped (Gavey 2005, p. 136).

Gavey argues that understanding rape through a framework of pain and fear can lead to misunderstandings about rape. In explaining this troubled connection between fear and rape she writes that women who do not have high degrees of fear during an assault are less likely to call their experiences rape. On the other hand, women who are intensely frightened during an assault are more likely to consider their experience rape. Although both events may be similar in many ways, including the physical injuries the women receive, their classification of the assault is determined by their personal fear, rather than perpetrators' actions (Gavey 2005, p. 181-2). The degree of fear and trauma felt by victims does not accurately indicate if their experiences are rape. Instead of being understood through the framework of pain and fear Gavey looks at rape through the lens of gender and heterosex. She claims that normative notions of gender and heterosex reproduce societal notions of male entitlement and deny women's sexual agency, thereby ensuring that distinctions between rape and just sex can be difficult to determine (Braun, Gavey & McPhillips 2003; Gavey 2005, p. 136-164).

Consequently, Gavey argues that a 'just say no' message is an ineffective way to prevent rape. According to Gavey, the 'just say no' strategy is unproductive for two reasons. Firstly, as is shown through analysis of typical conversations, refusal is not usually signalled by directly saying no. Instead, it is more common for people to 'disprefer' options, in which case they may appear hesitant and indirect, perhaps even seeming to agree. Secondly, the strategy of 'just say no' contravenes notions of appropriate femininity. Qualities which are appreciated in woman and girls are tenderness, nurturance, compliance, and agreeability rather than disagreeability. Social scripts of femininity make it difficult for women to say no to men's sexual advances as women are supposed to please men instead of seeking their own sexual

pleasures. This strategy places women in the position of only being able to say yes or no to sex instead of negotiating the types of sex they want (Gavey 2005, p. 144-5). The framework of consent is not a negotiation between equals; giving consent is only a 'response to power' not actually 'sharing in power' (Brown in Philadelphoff-Puren 2005, p. 31). A discourse of consent also presumes that men will listen and respond to women's sexual refusal when, as the accounts cited by Gavey point out, saying no may be disregarded or excused as a part of expected feminine sexual refusal (Gavey 2005, p. 69).

Sexual ethics

Carmody claims that a 'just say no' message is ineffective in preventing rape. She argues that this strategy reinforces women's fear and the notion that victims are to blame for their own rapes (Carmody 2006, p. 346). In searching for effective strategies for rape prevention Carmody developed the *Sex & Ethics* (2009b, 2009c) educational program in conjunction with Karen Willis from the NSW Rape Crises Centre.[5] *Sex and Ethics* is designed to work with young people in high schools and train those who provide services to young people. The approach favoured by the *Sex & Ethics* program is akin to a constantly shifting dialogue rather than a management of risk. Steering clear of simply teaching definitions of consent or danger management, *Sex & Ethics* invites students to enter into dialogue about sex, ethics, desire, and pleasure. Carmody points out elsewhere that young women often report that sex usually 'just happens' (Carmody 2006, p. 5). In order to elucidate the ways people negotiate sex without explicitly speaking about it, the *Sex & Ethics* program invites participants to discuss non-verbal cues. The program does not merely strive for safety, but encourages participants to undergo a 'transformation of personal existence', so that they develop an ethical approach to negotiating sex (Carmody 2009c, p. 84).

Within this program sits the 'sexual ethics framework' which is a set of four stages intended to outline a dynamic negotiation of sex and not a static sequencing of consent. This framework encourages participants to first consider their own desires, and then think of the other person's. Participants then enter into a dialogue with the

[5] View the *Sex & Ethics* research project online (Sex & Ethics 2013).

other person through 'negotiating and asking' (Carmody 2009b, p. 55). The final stage of the framework asks participants to critically examine their own notions of gender and self. It asks 'How does who I am in terms of age, gender and culture impact on how I understand things?' (Carmody 2009b, p. 56). This reflexivity is a counterpoint to programs that simply ask participants to focus on the perceived danger of the other. The focus upon ethics over harm gives Carmody's prevention program a broader scope than those which focus only on danger, safety, and consent.

Instead of looking to models of consent, or assuming that rape is a permanent reality of heterosexual relations, Carmody posits the question: 'what is sexual ethics?'. Like Marcus, Waldby, and Gavey, Carmody also claims that rape relies on a process that can be re-worked. Unlike these theorists, however, Carmody focuses her analysis on sexual ethics rather than sexual violence. Carmody observes that the field of rape prevention is awash with programs that largely focus on promoting fear and alerting against danger (Carmody 2005, p. 466-468). Carmody critiques the primary rape prevention programs used in universities across Australia and the United States for this focus on danger and risk avoidance which she claims reinforces the notion that women are sexually vulnerable and men are sexually aggressive. She writes that women are usually targeted as participants in rape prevention programs, thereby perpetuating the belief that it is women who are responsible for avoiding rape (Carmody 2006, p. 344-7). Carmody cites research from the United States which claims that of twenty six universities in the study, twenty two of them had programs targeting women's behaviour, and only two worked specifically with men (Carmody 2006, p. 344). These programs reinforced rape as an issue of concern to women, rather than the community at large (Banyard, Moynihan & Plante 2007; Foubert et al 2005). Most rape prevention programs in universities teach women self-defence skills and ways to say 'no' assertively; however, they rarely consider women's own desires, question gendered assumptions, nor motivate a community-wide response. They continue to focus on the actions of individual women and presume that if they can learn to say 'no' more assertively, or cease putting themselves in dangerous positions, rape will end (Carmody 2006, p. 346).

Carmody argues that while prevention programs may attempt to transform rape-supportive attitudes the efficacy of these programs is often unclear (Carmody 2006).

Any approach that simply seeks individual behaviour or attitude change, rather than cultivating the support of the wider community, may be ineffective claims Carmody. As such, a different approach may be necessary, one that looks to shared cultural and social constructions, and attempts to transform cultural patterns of gender and sexuality (Carmody 2006, p. 342). Carmody points to the importance of working with the broader community, and not simply small target groups (Carmody 2009a, p. 6). Her focus is on shifting cultural presumptions of sexuality and gender, rather than the trend to examine individual attitude or behaviour change. Carmody's approach to sexual ethics presumes a responsibility from whole communities instead of just those directly affected.

Rescripting through speaking out

The final strategy for rape prevention that I look at in this chapter is that of giving testimony about personal experiences of rape. I ask if public testimony of those who have experienced rape is able to discredit the script of rape and begin to unravel its hold on gendered relations. The benefits to individual victims and survivors of rape of speaking about their experiences, or what is sometimes referred to as 'breaking the silence', are well documented (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 261; Driver 2005; Friedman & Valenti 2008; Gallagher and Dodds 1985; Read Johnson 2009). Linda Alcoff and Laura Gray (1993) write about what they call 'survivor speech', which are the narratives used to describe personal experiences of rape, sexual assault, and incest, created by victims themselves. Alcoff and Gray (1993) argue that the act of speaking out assists survivors to integrate, make sense of, and liberate oneself from all forms of sexual assault (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 261-2). While these writers argue the benefits to victims and survivors of speaking about their experiences it is less clear how personal narratives of rape can instigate shared transformation. The strategy of speaking out about rape, or consciousness-raising, has been critiqued for focusing on the individual at the expense of the larger social group, and for essentialising women's experiences, that is, naming all women's narratives of suffering and healing as the same (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 282-3). However, Alcoff and Gray argue that speaking out as a consciousness-raising activity is a way to shift the cultural taboo from speaking about rape to perpetrating rape (Alcoff and Gray 1993). The second-wave rallying call of 'the personal is political' suggested that publicly speaking out

about personal experiences of rape is politically effective in raising community awareness and support (Hannisch, 1970). Personal testimony has the potential to build support, agitate for community change, and rescript narratives around sexuality.

Yet Alcoff and Gray remind readers that survivor speech is regularly co-opted by popular discourse and used in the creation of normative discourses of sexuality and sexual assault (1993, p. 261). They argue that survivor speech is routinely co-opted into popular discourse in two ways: the first way is through silencing, in which survivors are denied access to language or power through disbelief or blame for their assault. Second, is the act of recuperation, in which survivor speech is subsumed into dominant discourse through portraying rape and other forms of sexual assault as individual events, and constructing survivors as mad, seductive, and/or sick (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 268-281). Recuperation takes over survivor speech 'in such a way that it is disempowered and no longer disruptive' (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 268). Alcoff and Gray attempt to find ways that survivors' narratives of their assault can escape the silencing and recuperation of dominant discourse. As a way of circumventing silencing or recuperation they cite bell hook's assertion that in discussing experiences of abuse, women must 'place that experience within a theoretical context' (hooks in Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 283). hooks maintains that survivors must not only name their assaults, but also become experts of their own experiences. In this way, women become theorists of their own lives, analysing their own stories, and placing them in wider social and cultural contexts. Alcoff and Gray agree with hooks' claim and argue that survivors do not need 'to confess, but to witness' (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 287). As opposed to one who confesses a terrible event, a witness is 'someone who knows the truth and has the courage to tell it' (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 287-8). As witnesses to rape and theorists of their own experiences survivors can work to avoid their testimony being silenced or recuperated.

Feminist theorist Nancy Naples (2003) agrees with Alcoff and Gray's problematising of survivor speech, and stresses that transformation cannot simply occur through breaking the silence on experiences of assault. Speaking about rape can even strengthen narratives of abuse that blame the victim, and explain away rape as an

inevitable feature of gendered relationships. Like Naples, Rene Heberle (1996) is also hesitant to entirely endorse the proliferation of speaking out about sexual violence. She argues that narratives of rape can reinforce it as an eternal, inevitable phenomenon caused by natural gendered differences. Rather than question this discourse survivor stories may simply strengthen its stranglehold.

Although speaking out against rape is used as a feminist tool to convince people of the *reality* of sexual violence, Marcus' project is an attempt to convince people of the *unreality* of rape. For Marcus, rape is a linguistic fact, enabled through cultural discourses on gender and relationships. In Marcus' framework, speaking out about rape cannot be reduced to personal testimony. Instead, it must retain a critical reflection that posits rape as a script that can be averted. Marcus therefore appears to agree with hooks' assertion that in order to undermine rape survivor discourse must be critically engaged and cannot simply be a narrative of personal experiences, but must meaningfully interact with theories of sexuality and gender. Like hooks, I suggest that the rape script can be problematised when those who speak out about their own rapes position their experiences within a wider theoretical context (hooks in Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 283). This theoretical context would critically examine the ways in which rape is embedded within normative socio-cultural constructions. Witnesses to this speech can be reconfigured as active makers of meaning who take part in and can change the discourse that is created. Testimonies given by those who have experienced rape can emphasise rape as a phenomenon that can be avoided and overcome, rather than one that is inevitable and remains painful forever.

There may be also be some value in collectively speaking out about personal experiences of rape. Narratives which are resistant to the rape script can encourage other women to stop blaming themselves for being raped and challenge gender relationships which minimise the significance of sexual violence. In her analysis of the intersections between gender, race, and class, black American writer Melba Wilson, states that hearing other people's stories of incest was vital in giving her strength to talk about her own experiences. She claims that it gave her a political understanding of the issue of sexual violence in black communities, which helped her gain the strength to deal with her own history. Wilson tells that she 'needed their stories in order to find the strength to tell my own' (Wilson in Naples 2003, p.1169).

The value of survivor narratives may lie in their ability to foster collective opposition and subversion of the rape script, while developing new scripts of gender, race, violence, and sexual ethics. This may be especially important when 'race and class inequalities limit the opportunities for some women to come to voice about their experiences […] and to be heard when they do speak out' (Naples 2003, p. 1156).

However, it cannot be expected that those who witness testimonies will accept or be sensitive to survivors' stories. The sexual suffering of women can become a spectacle, which reinforces women's supposed vulnerability rather than challenges it. Lori Sudderth (1998), a mental-health sociologist, argues that survivors may choose to remain silent about their rapes, not due to low self-esteem or self-blame, but because of their fear about societal reaction. She points out that while survivors may expect support, they can instead receive reactions ranging from hostility to disregard. Sudderth speculates that silence can sometimes be the best option.

Yet those who experience rape may be motivated to publicly speak about their experiences due to the lack of legal recourse for most victims. The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault and the Victorian Law Reform Commission claims that rape has the lowest reporting rate of any crime; in Australia and internationally, at least eighty-five percent of rapes do not reach the criminal justice system (Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault 2011, p. 14; Heath 2004, p. 1, 3). Victims may choose not to press charges for many reasons, including not believing the crime to be serious enough, fearing the disbelief of others, or because of their ongoing relationships with perpetrators (Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault 2011, p. 57). In cases of rapes committed during war, the unstable state of the criminal justice system can make it even more difficult for victims to have their cases heard. For these reasons, victims may want to publicly speak out about their rapes in order to gather support and stimulate public outrage.

Giving testimony through performance allows rape victims access to a public forum that they may not otherwise have. Performances may not aim for 'a faithful account of the factual or historical truth of an event' but instead offer a 'fragmented collection of emotional, physical and bodily associations, and remembrances' (Stuart Fisher 2009, p. 109). Unlike court proceedings, performance can give victims an

opportunity to share their testimonies without insisting on narratives of 'unified and explanatory historical processes' (p. 110). Through sharing one's testimony victims can gain strength and support, become advocates for change, and generate an opportunity for people to learn about rape and agitate for change.

Key ideas from chapter 1

In order to establish a pertinent approach to rape prevention this chapter has looked to different ways that feminists have conceived of rape. It began by looking at theories which claim rape as violence, and as excessive heterosexuality. Both of these theories, however, were seen to be ineffective to a politics of prevention, as they reiterate the idea that women are naturally vulnerable to rape, and men are prospective perpetrators. I then turned to the analysis of rape as a lack of consent, in which rape is separated from sex due to presence or absence of consent. However, this approach too, was seen to be an ineffective approach to rape prevention as it places women in the position of only being able to react to and regulate men's desires, and claims that women's own desires are secondary to men's.

This chapter reasons that approaches to rape prevention must not presume the inevitability of rape, nor perceive women as innately vulnerable and men as inevitably dangerous. Consequently, Marcus' concept of rape as a script has been chosen as a way of framing rape. This theory does not construct rape as an inevitable feature of biology or gendered relations, but as a scripted interaction which is created through the different ways we conceive of femininity, masculinity, and sexuality. Marcus' approach enables rape to be prevented through thwarting normative notions of femininity, masculinity, and sexuality. I draw on Marcus' concept of rape as a script throughout this thesis, as it both points towards a politics of prevention, and suggests that performance can be a useful tool in working towards prevention.

Other theories of rape prevention have been found to complement this idea of a rape script. Waldby's analysis offers a way of performing gender differently and thus subverting notions of typical victim and perpetrator. She suggests that when women perform themselves as violent and phallic and men perform themselves as receptive the notion that women's bodies are biologically vulnerable to being raped and men's bodies are naturally sexually aggressive is disturbed. Gavey's theory of a 'cultural

scaffolding of rape', explains the way in which normative ideas of gender, sexuality, and heterosex perpetuate rape. Her analysis is vital for my work as it shows how rape can be prevented through transforming cultural norms. Carmody's idea of sexual ethics is likewise valuable to my project. Instead of focusing on sexual harm, which can reinforce the script of rape, Carmody looks towards ways of creating environments in which ethical sexual choices are possible. She has created the 'sexual ethics framework', a pedagogical method created for young people, which uses an approach that is likewise relevant to the wider population (2009c). Testimonies of those who have experienced rape can also create new scripts that thwart the inevitability of rape. I argue that testimonies from rape victims and survivors have the potential to subvert the script of rape when they are critically engaged with feminist and rape prevention theories.

In this analysis the idea of a 'script' refers to social roles and interactions which are taken for granted. Yet it also suggests theatrical performances. I am interested in exploring the role that theatrical performances can play in prevention. The next chapter explores how applied theatre performances can transform constructions of gender and sexuality that produce the script of rape. I ask how the script of rape can be transformed through renewed performances of gender and sexuality by now turning to contemporary theories of theatre and looking at how these may be applied to social issues.

CHAPTER 2: APPLIED THEATRE AND CONTEMPORARY THEORY

Applied theatre provides a foundation for this thesis due to its focus on social transformation. I have chosen to work with applied theatre, as distinct to other types of performance that may also harbour potential for dismantling the rape script, due to its intention of purpose. In fact, as theorist of applied theatre Judith Ackroyd (2000, 2007) points out, although forms of applied theatre may differ wildly, it is this intention of purpose that links divergent works (2000, p. 1). Applied theatre shows promise for my analysis as performances have clear objectives, are often participatory, and work with groups of people who may not ordinarily access theatre or arts activities. While applied theatre pieces are often framed as pieces of art, and may prioritise aesthetics, the efficacy of the work often predominates (Schechner 1988, p. 129-63). Founding director of the Centre for Applied Theatre Research at Griffith University in Brisbane, Phillip Taylor stated that '[a]pplied theatre is characterised by its desire to influence human activity, to raise issues, [and] have audience members problem solve those issues (in Millett 2002, p. 2). As applied theatre often works closely with target communities in order to encourage change I suggest these approaches may have the most success in transforming the script of rape.

Before examining different forms of applied theatre, this chapter looks at some of the functions of performance. Throughout history and cultures different characteristics of performance have been highlighted and focused upon. Performance has variously been used as mimesis, catharsis, ritual, and as a critique of the social order. I look to these different features of performance in order to seek the best framework for transformation. Do any of these aspects offer a way of comprehending performance in a way that supports the transformation of normative scripts of gender and sexuality which produce rape? The remainder of this chapter moves on to analyse contemporary literature on several different forms of applied theatre. I look at theatre for development, drama therapy and psychodrama, Playback Theatre, and Theatre of the Oppressed and ask if any of these methods shows distinct promise for transforming the script of rape.

Performance as a mimesis of life

Ancient Greek philosopher Plato considered performance as primarily mimetic, that is, as aiming to reflect and represent life. In his analysis, performance looks to reality as the model for which to base itself, so that performance becomes a way to view and express reality (Diamond 1997). However, a realist performance style may struggle to work towards transformation and merely affirm the status quo as applied theatre theorist Kennedy Chinyowa's (2001, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2013) example of the play, *Sbongile,* reveals.

Sbongile positioned itself as a mimesis of life and used a realist performance style to examine the consequences of teenage pregnancy. In South Africa an average of one in three women have a baby before the age of twenty, and the province of KwaZulu-Natal, where *Sbongile* played, has the highest prevalence of teenage pregnancy in South Africa. As in classical notions of mimesis, performances acted as a mirror to life, hoping to enable young people to view and consider their choices. The play was created as a 'platform for action that could influence changes in values, attitudes, and behaviour among the youth themselves' around the issue of teenage pregnancy (Chinyowa 2008b, p. 5).

However, Chinyowa argues that *Sbongile* did not encourage a questioning of normal social relationships. Instead, it may have even fostered an acceptance of these relationships. After seeing the show, some spectators 'tended to condemn *Sbongile* for not listening to her parents and falling prey to peer pressure, while others felt she did not have much choice about circumstances' (Chinyowa 2008b, p. 6).

Some feminist scholars of performance have been critical of using performance as a form of mimesis, claiming that it does not merely reflect life, but also stifles any attempt at change. Feminist performance theorist Elin Diamond (1988, 1995, 1996 [ed.], 1997, 2010) argues that realism can stagnate and make permanent gender relations. She writes that in 'the process of exploring social (especially gender) relations, realism ends by confirming their inevitability' (Diamond 1997, p. xiii). Feminist theorists argue that although realism purports to display the 'truth' of life, it only charts maculinised ways of being and seeing (Case 1988; Diamond 1997; Dolan

1988). Thus a mimetic, realist performance may only reaffirm what is and may not have the capacity to imagine what could be.

In her book *Unmaking Mimesis* (1997) Diamond works to rescue mimesis from this type of interpretation. According to Diamond, mimesis need not 'inevitably transform female subjects into fetishized objects whose referent is ideologically bound to dominant – heterosexual – models of femininity and masculinity' (Diamond 1997, p. xii). Diamond's analysis points out that mimetic performance can also denaturalise normative notions of gender. She argues that women characters need not be an articulation of a world-view, but can be seen as a system of words, gestures, and actions which are open to interpretation. Diamond claims that bodies on stage are 'part of a theatrical sign system' rather than fixed images dictated by patriarchal norms (Diamond 1988, p. 129). Performance can reveal gender 'as a sexual costume, a sign of a role, not evidence of identity' (Diamond 1988, p. 88). The notion of a 'dialectical image' is used by Diamond to explain how gender can be presented as a series of shifting and competing meanings.

The notion of a dialectical image was first developed by Walter Benjamin in the 1930s as a way to problematise images from the inside. This type of image simultaneously reveals both the real and the represented, so that images retain their historical traces and significations, and carry markings of their movement through time. Diamond writes that the dialectical image is 'a montage construction of forgotten objects or pieces of commodity culture that are "blasted" out of history's continuum' (Diamond 1997, p. 146). In this way, performance may stage the historical struggle between different meanings that have been given to notions of 'woman' and 'man'. Representations of 'woman' and 'man' may draw attention to themselves as representations which have had different and contesting meanings through time and in different contexts. Dialectical images do not attempt to locate one appropriate reading of different images, but are instead a way for audiences to experience a multitude of different meanings (Diamond 1997). Diamond's reworking of mimesis may hold potentials for a discourse on transformation, as it suggests ways that mimetic performance can agitate, rather than contain, social attitudes. This way of considering performance allows it to be a vehicle to question social realities rather than simply reproduce them.

Performance as catharsis

In continuing to look at classical views on the function of performance I turn to theories by Aristotle. Aristotle's concept of catharsis may be useful for my project due to the ways it develops a framework for feeling. Theories of catharsis offer ways to examine how performance considers and influences the emotions of spectators. While interpretations of Aristotle's catharsis vary, performance theorist Phillip Auslander (1997) understands it as the ability of art to enable 'a safe discharge of emotional reactions' (p.13). Catharsis is a way for people to train themselves in the correct use of emotions, allowing them to rise, and then fall, within a contained and safe environment. Tragic performances, for example, trigger pity and fear in spectators, who are invited to release these as performances end. This release assists audiences to achieve emotional equilibrium and clarity (Auslander 1997). In discussing performance in post-genocide Rwanda, theatre maker Hope Azeda (2005) tells how the boundaries of performance allowed spectators to feel safe in experiencing and then letting go of pain and trauma. Azeda reports that although the play 'really scared people', by speaking of shared trauma through the theatrical form spectators were made to feel safe. When pain was performed on stage Azeda writes that 'there would be like a spirit to come and lift the emotions' (Azeda 2005, p. 4). This notion of catharsis claims it as an aesthetic vehicle to facilitate an ordering and experiencing of emotions, maintaining that 'the pitiable and terrible become beautiful when the organization of art limits and orders it' (Goldstein 1966, p. 575).

Concepts of catharsis may also point to ways that arousing pity and fear can be used to teach correct social action (Meisiek 2004). Watching characters who deviate from social norms achieve negative consequences encourages audiences to make correct moral choices. Chinyowa views this notion of catharsis in his analysis of *The Hare and Other Animals*, an oral narrative told by the indigenous Shona people of Zimbabwe (Chinyowa 2001). In this story, the hare Kalulu refuses to help the other animals dig a well. Eventually, all the other animals come and beat Kalulu, and he is banished from their kingdom. This story serves to incite fear and worry in audiences and warns about the consequences of not pursuing appropriate behaviours and responsibilities. The hare deviates from social values which claim 'that the needs of the group should transcend the interests of the individual' (Chinyowa 2001, p. 25).

While *The Hare and Other Animals* inspires uncomfortable emotions, Chinyowa claims that the play was a pleasurable catharsis, as it enhanced a feeling of community connection. He tells that 'the excitement and satisfaction experienced during the narrative performance seemed to demonstrate the existence of a collective education system in which the community spirit is greatly enhanced' (Chinyowa 2001, p. 28).

While these cathartic performances increased a feeling of community connection, and assisted groups to safely release traumatic emotions, they stabilised rather than undermined dominant social scripts. In Azeda's view of catharsis as the ordering of emotions, or in Chinyowa's analysis of catharsis in performance as a way to teach correct social actions, the notion of catharsis is a controlling force. They point to an adherence to, rather than a rebellion against, dominant social scripts. According to Jacob Moreno (1940, 1946a, 1946b, 1973), who developed the theory and practice of psychodrama, Aristotelian catharsis is observational rather than active. It is a passive form of catharsis, and cannot function to allow subjects to consider or change the patterns of their own lives (Meisiek 2004; Moreno 1940). Moreno claims that traditional catharsis 'leads to calmness and the reception of rigid patterns' rather than agitating for change and creating new models of action (Meisiek 2004, p. 807).

However Diamond reconceives catharsis as a shudder of feeling rather than an attempt to retain social order. She writes that while theatre maker Bertolt Brecht (1964) claims that cathartic performance overpowers the emotions and therefore dulls the intellect, performance may also use this stimulation of feeling as arousing critical contemplation. Diamond explains Aristotle's catharsis as a lively interplay, 'an oscillation between seeing and feeling'. She takes this further, using Lacan's use of the term 'anamorphosis' to clarify her concept of catharsis. Anamorphosis describes a 'distorted image that can only be seen without distortion from a special angle' (Diamond 1995, p. 155). Rather than an attempt to calm and quell the emotions, cathartic performance is considered as a disturbance of feeling. Diamond's explanation of anamorphic catharsis offers a way of understanding performances that explore painful issues, like rape. Rather than viewing on stage pain as a way to either modify feeling, or encourage appropriate social behaviour, a cathartic response can ignite and disturb emotions, allowing space for social pain, without an attempt to

numb, forgive, or forget. Performance of painful events can ignite pity and fear, not in order to remove or safely sort through them, but to mark, recognise, and critically consider pain.

Performance as ritual

Another concept of performance which springs from ancient times is naming performance as a kind of ritual. Looking at performance as a ritual may be a way of conceiving how it can work towards social transformation. Social groups have long turned to ritual processes as a way of guiding transformation. Anthropologist Victor Turner (1974, 1979, 1982, 1987a, 1987b) and performance theorist Richard Schechner (1974, 1985, 1988, 1993, 2001, 2002, 2010) have written widely on the connections between ritual and performance. Both theorists have traced how different societies have publicly performed symbolic action, and note that ritual and performance each retain traces of the other (Schechner 1974, 1993; Turner 1987b). Neither Turner nor Schechner make sharp distinctions between ritual and performance but instead claim, as Turner puts it, 'the basic stuff of social life is performance' (1987b, p. 13).

Instead of clear demarcations between ritual and performance Turner and Schechner classify performances as either social or cultural: social performances can include rituals, which are perceived as 'social dramas', or ways in which people 'try to show others what they are doing or have done'; cultural performances include on stage 'aesthetic dramas', which create their own symbolic time, space, and characters (Schechner in Turner 1987b, p. 6). According to Turner, there is a continual interrelationship between social and aesthetic dramas. Aesthetic dramas can offer interpretations of social dramas, while social dramas pick up on the images and perceptions of aesthetic dramas (in Schechner 2006, p. 76-7). Likewise, Schechner argues that most performance comes from this interweaving between aesthetic drama and social drama.

Turner explains that the social drama of ritual is used by groups as a process of shared meaning-making and identity formation, with individuals using them to

create, express, and transform themselves in conjunction with their society (Turner 1979). Turner divides social dramas into four phases of public action. These are called: breach, crisis, redressive action and reintegration. The phases of crisis and redress are the most potent periods for transformation as they each contain liminal characteristics and are 'be-twixt and between' the normal social states. Liminal periods are dangerous, as they are ambiguous and unclassifiable; yet due to these characteristics of being outside, or on the threshold, they are also potent periods of transformation. Turner explains that the liminal period is a reflexive time in which participants, or what he calls 'neophytes', are between realities. Initiates are not who they were, but not yet who they are going to be (Turner 1987b, p. 4-5). Sitting between time and space the liminal phase is apart from daily duties and disconnected from everyday social interactions. Liminal phases can include the inversion, subversion and contradiction of daily roles, and usually include playful performances of alternative realities as a way to examine and critique one's own social role and the positions of others. The liminal period is 'a time of enchantment when anything might, even should, happen' (Turner 1979, p. 465).

Schechner distinguishes between 'liminal rituals' and 'liminoid rituals' (Schechner 2002, p. 72-4). While liminal rituals lead to a process of transformation, liminoid rituals are processes of transportation. Transportation is when a person has an experience that affects them, but then returns to their previous state once the experience is over. On the other hand, after a process of transformation one does not return to their previous social state, but moves into a completely new role. Transformation rarely occurs, and if at all, can only happen a few times in a person's lifetime, whereas transportation can occur every day. Staged performances can transport their audiences, claims Schechner, but 'no matter how strong the experience, sooner or later, most people return to their ordinary selves' (2002, p. 72). Performance can become a space for performers and audiences to temporarily leave themselves and experiment with different ways of being. This perspective argues that ritual and performance each only allow short breaks from everyday social norms, before returning people to their original roles and identities.

The work of anthropologist Mary Thompson Drewal (1988, 1991, 1992), however, calls into question this claim that rituals only allow short breaks from normality

rather than transformation. Thompson Drewal suggests that rituals are not necessarily about stabilising the social order, but can also be a process of expressing and negotiating continuous change. Rituals themselves change as the social group who conduct them continuously transform. Thompson Drewal observes rituals of the Yoruba African tribe; these are characterised by play and improvisation, allowing participants a degree of autonomy, and the potential to change the rituals themselves (Thompson Drewal 1992). According to Thompson Drewal, rituals are not simply a 'relic from the past' replicating traditional social norms, but 'dialogic in form, always a process of competition, negotiation, and argumentation, never simply a matter of repeating correctly' (Thompson Drewal 1988, p. 25). Yoruba village elders contend that as society changes, rituals must also change in order to retain their relevance. Yoruba rituals do not strive to duplicate the rituals that have previously been performed, but work to represent them in new ways. Their rituals seek a critical distance from everyday life that allows people to revise rather than just repeat what has been. Rituals are a way of 'altering the way the past is read, and thereby redefining one's relation to it' (Thompson Drewal 1991, p. 43). Thompson-Drewal's analysis shows the way that, seen through a lens of ritual, performance can transform social reality when it becomes a way to critique and not only affirm social life.

Performance as a critique of the social order

Performance may be a pertinent tool for critiquing the social order. Brecht's (1964) performances seek to transform the social order through highlighting social norms in a way that makes them strange. While cathartic theatre evokes emotions of pity and fear Brecht encourages spectators to emotionally detach and critically reflect upon his narratives (Prentki 2006; Smith 1991). His performances are not 'hopelessly mired in emotions which enslave the spectator's mind', and instead strive to alienate spectators, in order to awaken them to their social realities (Kiralyfalvi 1990, p. 20). Brecht employed what he termed the 'alienation effect', or *verfrerndungseffekt*. This *verfrerndungseffekt* fosters a scrutiny and agitation of the social order; it is 'a technique of taking the human social incidents to be portrayed and labelling them as something striking, something that calls for explanation, [as that which] is not to be taken for granted, not just natural' (Brecht 1964, p. 125). Performance is not an

illusion, but becomes an account of social systems; it is a way to reflect upon unexamined cultural apparatuses. The social order is not merely represented, but portrayed in such a way that it is deliberately made unnatural, unfamiliar, and therefore worth detailed examination so that there is 'pressure on audiences to 'co-produce' meaning' (Smith 1991, p. 492).

Despite his attempt to challenge the dominant social order feminists point out that Brecht's plays do not challenge gender systems, but simply reproduce the sexist ideologies of his era (Dolan 1988; Lennox 1978; Mulvey 1975; Smith 1991). Feminists critique Brecht's plays for their stereotypical women characters. These characters often simply fulfilled traditional feminine roles, or simply acted as 'demonstration objects', to illustrate a particular concept (Lennox 1978, p. 84). Some feminists also claim that while Brecht examined the social role of class, he overlooked the impact of gender. While Brechtian theories discouraged mere voyeurism in favour of analytical engagement, feminists argue that he did not write his female characters with sufficient critical distance to allow for an agitation of gender norms (Lennox 1978; Smith 1991).

Despite this critique, feminist Brechtian theorist Sarah Lennox (1978) points out that Brecht's plays may in fact 'exert a subversive potential, [even] pointing in directions qualitatively different from the position Brecht consciously represented in his theoretical writings' (Lennox 1978, p. 84). Diamond takes up this challenge and turns to Brecht's work to create what she calls a gestic criticism, a method that rephrases Brechtian theories so that they may be applied to a feminist analysis (Diamond 1988). This gestus undermines the authority of the text, so that it too, is marked by its historical context. Using a gestic criticism constructions of gender are alienated and made strange in order to encourage audiences to enter into a dialogue with the performance and make their own meanings. Performance is an 'attempt to engage dialectically with, rather than master, the play-text'; it is an interchange between actor, spectator, and the text itself (Diamond 1988, p. 131).

Although Brecht flattens out the feminine in his 'Good Person of Szechwan' (1939), a reworking of his theories may have potential to make constructions of gender strange. Iris Smith (1991) examines the play, asking how gender can be made visible.

'The Good Person of Szechwan' is about a young girl, Shen Teh, who is chosen by the gods as the only good person in Szechwan. The gods give Shen Teh a large sum of money, so she leaves her job as a prostitute and buys a tobacco shop. A poor family comes to live with her and begin to take advantage of Shen Teh's goodness. Finding it difficult to meet the demands of the shop and the family she is caring for, Shen Teh pretends to be a bossy, business-minded male cousin, Shui Ta, who comes to stay. When Shen Teh becomes pregnant the differences between female and male characters becomes clearer. For Shen Teh, her growing stomach signifies the sentimental motif of a now reformed saintly mother, but for Shui Ta it denotes an increase of wealth, prosperity and power. In order to examine the play through a feminist gestus Smith suggests that gender is revealed in its constructed-ness, so that instead of a splitting in Shen Teh, there is a slippage. Rather than total separation between the powerful man who saves the passive woman, Smith suggests that Shui Teh could cross or spill over to him, so that there are '[b]its of Shui Ta seeming to 'stick' to Shen The: a single pants leg appearing under the skirt' (Smith 1991, pp. 504-5). According to Smith, representations of one must reveal traces of the other: Shen Teh retains traces of Shui Ta and vice-versa. Smith's analysis shows the ways Brecht's plays can also be a critique of the social order of gender and its fixity to notions of sex. According to Smith, Brecht's 'Good Person of Szechwan' can reveal femininity and masculinity as historically located systems of belief, which can be slippery, shifting, and spill out onto the other.

Performance can act as mimesis, catharsis, ritual, and as a critique of the social order. All of these features of performance have potentials and limitations when applied to transforming the script of rape. For this reason, I will not rely upon any one of these aspects to lead my consideration of performance. Instead, I draw upon each of these characteristics to create a flexible and dynamic approach which can shift to respond to different needs and contexts. Each of these aspects of performance is varyingly used in the context of applied theatre, with many performances drawing upon several different characteristics in their work. The field of applied theatre is emerging and still determining its terms and the types of work which may be considered under its rubric. Applied theatre does not predominantly rely upon performance as a form of mimesis, catharsis, ritual, nor critique of the social order. Rather, the primary goal of applied theatre is often stated as individual or social transformation and the method

in which this is sought varies widely (Ackroyd 2007, p. 3, 5). I have chosen to locate my work in rape prevention in the field of applied theatre due to applied theatre's capacity to reflect, critique, subvert, parody and play with social realities.

Introduction to applied theatre

The term 'applied theatre' usually refers to performances which are held outside traditional theatres and are used to create social transformation. Those who perform in applied theatre performances are sometimes not professional actors, but members of the target community in which transformation is sought. Audiences are often referred to as 'participants' in recognition of their role in co-creating meanings on stage, and because many applied theatre performances focus on interaction over representation. Applied theatre refers to a range of performance styles, which go by the name of theatre for development, Playback Theatre, drama therapy, theatre of the oppressed, community theatre, political theatre, youth theatre, theatre in prisons, theatre in health facilities, and theatre in conflict resolution (Prentki 2009). Several of these styles of applied theatre are examined through the remainder of this chapter.

In considering definitions of 'applied theatre', theorists of this discipline point out that the prefix 'applied' does not lie in binary opposition to an otherwise 'pure' theatre which is marked as the centre, or superior form (Ackroyd 2000; Millett 2002, p. 2; Shaughnessy 2012, p. 9). Instead, applied theatre uses 'the skill and techniques of theatre for functions not usually associated with theatre' (Millett 2002, p. 2). Applied theatre tends to differ from other kinds of theatre because it anticipates a utilitarian function: performances aim to have an effect on participants, to change their lives in some significant way. The specific aims of applied theatre performances are different across different contexts, yet they often have broad health or educational objectives.

There are many different uses for applied theatre. Lyn Dalrymple (2006), director of the South African group DramaAidE (Drama AIDS Education), writes that their first play, *What if it's True* (1992), worked in eight hundred schools across KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and was designed to give students correct information about the

transmission of HIV (Dalrymple 2006, p. 207). Applied theatre was chosen as a vehicle for delivering information on HIV due to its ability to engage with the current knowledge of target audiences, and relate information in an interesting way (Dalrymple 2006, p. 215). On the other hand, a group of community cultural development workers from Newcastle (Australia) Trades Hall Council created *Aftershocks* (1990), a verbatim theatre performance about the earthquake in Newcastle, based on experiences of people directly affected by the quake. *Aftershocks* played in Newcastle, before moving to Sydney a few years later. Applied theatre was used in this context for its ability to build, develop, and celebrate community (Makeham 1998, p. 173-4). Applied theatre is also used as a way of engaging audiences in a potentially difficult subject. When looking at the issues of sexual and domestic violence, visiting professor from the United States, James Newton Poling (2006), chose to use psychodrama with his Korean university students, as a way of engaging them in these issues in a culturally sensitive matter. Poling writes that psychodrama assisted him to understand the students' perspectives on sexual and domestic violence rather than another form of theatre that would simply inform them of his own point of view (Poling 2006, p. 389-90).

Traditionally, applied theatre has focused on social efficacy over aesthetic experience (Prentki 1998; Thompson 2009). While performances which strive for a particular effect may be considered as diametrically opposed to those which primarily aim for entertainment, Schechner maintains that these two qualities actually work together (Schechner 1988, p. 156). Schechner arranges entertainment and efficacy into a braid, showing that these qualities are not mutually exclusive, but interweave with the other. Historically, all types of performances have been seen as oscillating between these two extremities (Schechner 1974, 1988, p. 129-63). When efficacy dominates, performances often involve audiences as participants, focus on the whole group, and are connected to a specific view of an established social order. On the other hand, when entertainment dominates performances focus on fun, and emphasise the individual; in these performances audiences are expected to simply watch, and perhaps even criticise the work (Schechner 1974, p. 467; 1988, p. 134). Schechner maintains that all performances have aspects of both entertainment and efficacy, and it just depends on how they are analysed. For example, a Broadway show seems like pure entertainment, but when broadening out to look at the whole

event – buying tickets/subscriptions, getting dressed up, parading around the foyer, greeting other audience members, watching performances quietly and clapping at the end – then it becomes clearer that this type of performance also has an efficacious social function (Schechner 1974, p. 467-471; 2002, p. 79-82). While applied theatre may have a distinct focus upon the efficacy of its work, this does not mean that these performances do not also aim to be entertaining. Transformation in applied theatre is not simply about striving for a particular effect, but also working to be entertaining.

In his book *Applied Theatre and the End of Effect* James Thompson (2009) argues for a methodological shift that considers the affect rather than the effect of applied theatre. While applied theatre may be educational, or offer ways for communities to differently negotiate their social realities, Thompson claims that these must not be seen as the primary attributes of this work. Thompson quotes Claire Colebrook who argues 'what makes it art is not content but its affect' (Colebrook in Thompson 2009). This viewpoint suggests a move away from a focus on utility and a renewed focus on aesthetics in applied theatre. Thompson suggests that utility and aesthetics must work together in applied theatre performances, and writes that 'the aesthetic intensity is in itself the propellant of political action' (Thompson 2009, p. 128). For Thompson, applied theatre must be appraised for the interrelationship of sensation and meaning, so 'the joy – the buzz of the participatory arts is inseparable from the total impact of the event' (Thompson 2009, p. 131).

The desired effect which many applied theatre performances strive for is often articulated as a kind of personal or social transformation (Shaughnessy 2012, p. 7-14). This notion of transformation and how it can be achieved is often debated by those working in the field of applied theatre. In her recent exploration of socially engaged performance practices, Nicola Shaughnessy (2012) cites the argument made by Helen Nicolson, who claims that the notion of transformation through performance assumes the dramatic act will inspire audiences to shift from being one kind of society or state of being into another. Nicholson asks if this transformation is done to or by participants, and if it is done to serve the needs of participants themselves or those of the applied theatre makers. Rather than transformation Nicholson prefers Schechner's notion of transportation, which I described earlier in the context of ritual and performance. Instead of presuming that performances can

create permanent social change the notion of transportation claims that performance can be a site to experience another way of being for a specific time period, before returning to one's original state (Nicholson 2005, p. 5-7; Schechner 1992, p. 72-4; Nicholson in Shaughnessy 2012, p. 8).

According to several applied theatre practitioners and theorists transformation can be a contentious term as it appears to suggest that performance makers direct and determine the enduring changes that their audiences will make. Applied theatre theorist Michael Balfour (2009) explores ways that the notion of transformation is considered in applied theatre literature. He discovers that while the social efficacy of applied theatre is central to its aims, transformation is often seen in terms of meeting objectives of the agencies which commission the work. Balfour concludes by looking for a 'theatre of little changes' rather than a theatre of transformation. He cites Jackson's argument that this theatre of little changes can 'shift the focus from persuasive, coercive, objectives-driven work' to a greater emphasis on the art form itself (Jackson in Balfour 2009, p. 356; Neelands 2004).

Drama practitioner Bill McDonnell (2005) argues that theatre which strives for social transformation must be able to create change 'with and through others' rather than for others (McDonnell 2005, p. 73). He writes that it is often assumed that the communities targeted by applied theatre projects don't know how to make the changes which would release them from their oppression. However, McDonnell claims that people often do know the solution, but don't have the power to make that solution happen. As he writes: 'It is not ignorance that stops people fighting oppression, it is their intimate knowledge of the damaging consequences of defiance and of defeat' (McDonnell 2005, p. 71). According to McDonnell, applied theatre makers must not fall into the trap of assuming that performance is a one-way dialogue, in which vital information is passed from the stage to participants. In order to ensure that applied theatre is not simply a one-way dialogue from makers to participants performances often strive to blur distinctions between makers and participants. Contemporary applied theatre performances often emphasise the interrelationship between performers and audiences. As distinct from performances with strict delineation between performances and audiences many modern applied theatre makers focus on dialogue, interaction, and participation (Shaughnessy 2012,

p. 11). Transformation is negotiated through interactions between those on and off stage as a process of dialogical change.

Theatre for development

Applied theatre is used in the field of development through a group of practices often referred to as theatre for development. These performances frequently work with rural and marginalised communities employing performance, including drama, song, dance and puppetry to convey pertinent health and educational messages (Kamlongera 2005; Prentki 1998). As a tool for development work, performance may be particularly useful due to its ability to work with groups of people who are not literate, who do not share a language, or who don't have access to other types of media. Theatre for development performances often attempt to operate in local languages, and strive for styles, techniques, plots, and characters that are culturally appropriate. This group of performances work towards delivering health and educational messages to those not reached by mainstream initiatives, while cultivating community participation and mobilisation (Chinyowa 2008b; Kamlongera 2005; Prentki 1998). Rather than simply being a method for communicating health and educational messages to communities, theatre for development aims to create a forum which allows people to negotiate their own change.

The pedagogical theories of Paulo Freire (2002, 2006a, 2006b) offer a framework for working with communities and have been instrumental in developing the concepts of theatre for development. Freire initiates a 'bottom-up' approach to education, in which students institute their own solutions to problems. In his most famous text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* ([1970] 2006a), Freire separates his work from what he calls the 'banking' method of education. The banking method refers to the assumption that students are an empty vessel and the teacher's 'task is to "fill" the students' with knowledge (Freire 2006a, p. 71). The student is filled up like a bank, a receptacle to be sustained by the teacher. The teacher tells, while the student listens, records, remembers. Knowledge can be possessed or lacking, with the teacher acting as regulator, or depositor of essential information. Meanings are delivered as if they are absolute and unchanging: 'The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless,

static, compartmentalized, and predictable' (Freire 2006a, p. 71). According to Freire, this banking method reflects an oppressive society which clearly delineates ignorance from knowledge, and denies any attempt to transform existing power structures. Knowledge is given value according to who holds it, so that the wisdom held by students is not as valuable as that held by teachers. It is the 'teacher [who] chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it' (Freire 2006a, p. 73).

This banking method of education annuls possibilities for transformation and creativity. It is the same framework that delivers communities 'folk songs, dances, poems and stories that have already been planned for them' (Chinyowa 2008a, p. 18). It presumes that 'the individual is a spectator, not re-creator' of the world (Freire 2006a, p. 75). To combat this Freire suggests education as the posing of problems, a dialogue between equals in which all are responsible for intellectual and personal growth. Freire's philosophy engages learners in dialogue that invites them to be become 'co-investigators' in building awareness (Freire 2006a, p. 106). Learning expands into a process of *conscientizacao*, or a developing of awareness and taking action against one's oppressions (Freire 2006a). In the spirit of Freire's theories, when considering theatre for development Chinyowa writes that the process assumes 'people are capable of transforming themselves if they are afforded the space to participate in their own development' (Chinyowa 2008a, p. 5). Theatre for development is influenced by a Freirean framework and aims to become 'the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it' (Freire 2006a, p. 79). This concept of theatre for development is participatory, using performance to awaken people from a passive state of acceptance, into a critical consideration of their realities.

Despite the impact of Freire's participatory framework upon theories and practices of theatre for development, performance processes may continue to silence women participants in particular. While women may be visible in theatre for development shows, performance theorist Esi Dogbe (2002) argues that they do not necessarily have a voice in the process. In her analysis of theatre for development in Ghana, Dogbe writes that plays may show women's strength and decision-making abilities, yet these same performances do not allow women to become active decision makers

in the play-making process. While Ghanaian government policies on development aim for the empowerment of women, none of the projects that Dogbe studied explicitly attempted to challenge gender frameworks. Instead, performances targeted women 'with messages to work harder, keep their surroundings clean, develop eco-consciousness, and discipline their sexual behaviour' (Dogbe 2002, p. 88). As Dogbe puts it, women were 'simultaneously "vocal" and "silenced", "visible" and "invisible"' in a contradictory approach to participation (Dogbe 2002, p. 85).

While participation is a key tenant of theatre for development, without a critique of gendered practices the kinds of theatre for development surveyed by theatre scholars supports the same ideas and practices that perpetuate women's exclusion. Chinyowa maintains that while 'community theatre remains in search of social change, it seems to be confronted by ambiguities in terms of the agency, power and representation of its participants' (Chinyowa 2008b, p. 11). According to Chinyowa, those working in the field of theatre for development, who are often outsiders to the communities with which they work, can fail to fully observe and understand the cultural norms of target communities. He argues that participation must involve more than simply performing plays in local languages, and post-performance discussions (Chinyowa 2008a, p. 18). Like many other applied theatre theorists, Dogbe and Chinyowa warn of the potential of shaping theatre for development projects to suit stakeholder needs, rather than taking into account the specificities of each community.

Theatre of the oppressed

Unlike theatre for development, Theatre of the Oppressed uses performance as a way to agitate against the status quo and create a unified voice for change. Theatre of the Oppressed is a range of performance techniques developed by Brazilian theatre-maker Augusto Boal Boal (1985, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2006) and emanating from the pedagogical theories of Freire. Boal first began developing Theatre of the Oppressed in Brazil in the 1960s, before taking it to Europe, and around the world. Techniques of Theatre of the Oppressed include Invisible theatre, Rainbow of Desires, Newspaper Theatre, Legislative Theatre, and the most well-known and widely used of Boal's techniques, Forum Theatre. Invisible Theatre and Rainbow of Desire are

both predominantly used in a workshop environment. These forms work with the body and image to externalise and alienate oppression. Newspaper Theatre offers performative re-readings of newspaper stories in a way that subverts the intended meanings, revealing what is omitted, and what is privileged (Boal 1985, 1998). As a way of creating new laws, Boal created Legislative Theatre, a form that invites citizens to use performance to evaluate, comment, and discover potential solutions on civil matters (Boal 1998). Legislative Theatre draws upon the techniques of Forum Theatre, and was developed by Boal during his time as Vereador, or City Councillor, in Rio de Janeiro. My analysis, however, focuses on Forum Theatre, due to its popularity, and also because of its claim to explicitly practice social transformation. Like Freire's pedagogical approach, Forum Theatre affirms a bottom-up method of decision making in which all are implicated in on stage decisions. In Forum Theatre performances audiences are positioned as interlocutors and encouraged to analyse events on stage. Yet rather than just watching performances on stage, Forum Theatre actually invites audience members, or what Boal calls 'spect-actors', to come onto the stage themselves and act out the changes they would like to see occur (Boal 1996). Boal aims for 'liberation of the spectator, on whom theatre has imposed finished visions of the world' (Boal 1985, p. 155). Traditional theatre forces audiences to accept a finished world-view, and according to Boal, maintains a belief that individuals can't change society. For Boal, there is little value in simply watching performances that depict or encourage resistance; instead, performance must be a 'rehearsal of revolution', a tool to practice political change (Boal 1985, p. 141).

In a Forum Theatre show, a real-life oppression, one that is commonly experienced by spect-actors, is performed on stage. This is what Boal calls the 'anti-model'. The anti-model is re-played a second time, but this time, through facilitation by a Joker, spect-actors may call 'stop!' at any time, and come onto stage and attempt to transform oppression. Because this drama unfolding on stage parallels similar oppressions that spect-actors experience in their everyday lives Forum Theatre can be a way to practice solutions to these issues. If the spect-actor cannot avert the oppression on stage then another spect-actor can call out 'stop!', and go on to take their place (Boal 1992; 1996). Boal writes that 'aim of the forum is not to win, but to learn and to train' for ways to overcome oppression (Boal 1992, p. 20). Forum

Theatre works with groups of people who are positioned as the 'oppressed' to generate and practice practical ways to overcome shared problems caused by those considered to be 'oppressors'. Performances are a way of rehearsing transformation, supporting oppressed people to practice different solutions to problems, and serving as a 'dress rehearsal of the actual act' (Boal 1992, p. 231). They can use Forum theatre as a practical vehicle to address shared concerns, experiment with different solutions, and develop models for future action (Boal 1992, p. 231).

In discussing women's experiences of Theatre of the Oppressed, Berenice Fisher (1986) discusses some problems with this method. While Forum Theatre may be a vehicle for participants to rehearse ways to make changes in their lives, it can also reinforce societal divisions. Forum Theatre usually works with homogenous communities, groups of people exploring a common oppression (Boal, Cohen-Cruz & Shutzman 1990). In proscribing two distinct groups: the oppressed and the oppressors, Boal's ideology may force rigid distinctions, assume homogeneity, and undo alliances between groups. As an example, Fisher wrote that when straight women explored the oppressions they thought lesbian women faced using Forum Theatre, this exacerbated tensions between straight and lesbian women instead of cultivating cooperation (Fisher 1986, n.p). Theatre of the Oppressed also ignores disparities within groups and assumes that inequality resides between two groups of people. It presumes that all spect-actors can equally participate in changing the anti-model performed on stage simply because they are invited, without acknowledging that within groups, some people's perspectives may be silenced, while others are overly valued. Fisher goes on to caution against performance methods that investigate problems through recreating them on stage. She argues that representations of rape, for example, may be vulnerable to reinforcing a 'prevailing atmosphere of brutality and apathy' rather than challenging any oppression (Fisher 1986, n.p). Fisher points out that re-staging real problems in an attempt to change them can reinforce some issues and emphasise divisions.

However, not all Forum Theatre practitioners agree with Fisher's claim that this method reinforces differences between groups. Boal claims that the form can work together with those considered as the oppressed, and oppressors. He worked with the people of Godrano, in Sicily, Italy, and made a Forum Theatre show which explored

oppressions faced by the young women of this town. He writes of his excitement in creating and performing this show, saying 'this was the first time in my experience that Forum Theatre was being done with an audience composing of oppressed and oppressors at the same time' in this show 'adversaries were face to face' (Boal 1992, p. 33). Yet instead of reinforcing the issues which divided them, Boal explains that Forum Theatre allowed the townspeople to gain greater insight into the experiences of the young women, and increased understanding of their ideas and perspectives. The Forum Theatre anti-model depicted a twenty year old woman, Guiseppina, whose parents denied her request to go on a walk after supper because she could not be chaperoned by any of her three brothers. Guisepinna's brothers bullied and bossed her, and while they went out after supper, she was left to clean up and wash the dishes (Boal 1992, pp. 33-6). According to Boal, this show enabled the oppressed to tell of their struggles in their own words and voices, and supported oppressors to listen and take their dissatisfactions seriously. Traditional power structures that silenced or marginalised the voices of young women were overthrown as the Forum Theatre show staged what the women were unhappy about, and enlisted help from other people in Godrano to assist them solve their dilemma. Through staging this problem publicly the young women gained strength in their numbers and made all people in Godrano aware of their pleas.

Boal insists that ways of using Forum Theatre must adjust to suit each group. Classifying some people as oppressed, and others as oppressors may strengthen disagreements between groups and discourage cooperation. In some cases, members of oppressed groups may be put at risk through participating in public performances that inspire subversion. For example, when working in India Boal found that women felt safer working with fictional instead of real narratives, because then they didn't have to worry about the implications of sharing potentially subversive opinions (Boal 1996, p. 188). Forum Theatre must remain sensitive to the specific needs of each group, and work to foster the most appropriate ways to promote participation.

Drama therapy and psychodrama

While Theatre of the Oppressed will often result in public performances, drama therapy focuses on the use of performance in therapeutic environments. Drama therapy has grown from the field of psychotherapy and merges theatrical practices with therapeutic goals (Emunah 1994). Framed through play, drama therapy sessions aim to provide a non-threatening way for individuals to deepen their awareness of hidden aspects of the self (Emunah 1994; Read Johnson 1982, 1991, 1992). Drama therapist Renee Emunah (1994) writes that play is central to drama therapy as it encourages a dual level of consciousness: a situation is played 'as if this situation were real, while at the same time knowing it is in fact make believe' (Emunah 1994, p. 5). Or, as drama therapist and theorist David Read Johnson (1982, 1991, 1992, 2009) puts it, drama therapy entails 'a reliving of that moment of becoming' (Read Johnson 1982, p. 184). This double-play of becoming is pleasurable, producing alternative ways of seeing, understanding, and performing reality. While drama therapy assists clients to clarify their notions of the self, it is also used to encourage them to challenge restrictive self-perceptions. Drama therapy works with clients to challenge, re-perform, and revise normative social performances. During drama therapy sessions clients are assisted to untangle themselves from rigid ways of being through exploring and experimenting with different performances of the self (MacKay 1987; Read Johnson 1982, 1991, 1992). The self is reconfigured in drama therapy as a 'becoming, not a being', an actor who is permanently improvising their life (Read Johnson 1991, p. 286).

In an attempt to 'dislodge the client from the highly bounded self-perceptions he or she comes to the session with' Read Johnson utilises an improvisational technique called transformations, taken from the theatre games of Viola Spolin (Read Johnson 1991, p. 292). Transformations is like free associations through performance: two performers begin a scene, becoming any character and performing any action that occurs to them. When a sound or movement within this scene reminds one player of something else, they transform the scene simply by beginning to act as if they were in a new one. The other actor must accept this transformation and the scene continues until it shifts again (Read Johnson 1991, 1992). Read Johnson explains how this technique was effective when working with his client Elaine, claiming that it assisted

her confront and alter her perceptions of herself. In a game of transformations Elaine called to her mother for comfort when she was upset. When her mother did not arrive, Elaine pretended to gorge on food; she ate and ate until she grew into a huge giant. This issue of overeating had been a difficulty in Elaine's life and a primary reason she decided to engage with drama therapy. Read Johnson joined in the improvisation, also performing himself as a fat giant. Elaine and Read Johnson stomped around the room, squishing little people, and singing a song about being powerful and fat. Through this improvisation Elaine was able to perform both her problem, and her solution to this problem. Elaine was able to face her distressing behaviour through re-enacting and witnessing these actions in a drama therapy session. Instead of remaining vulnerable, Elaine found strength in her behaviour, transforming her performance into one of self-reliance and strength (Read Johnson 1992).

Drama therapy utilises play and experimentation to encourage clients to affirm the self, and challenge limiting beliefs. Yet while drama therapy may assist some people to confront and challenge their behaviours and beliefs, its imaginative and playful approach may inhibit others. Emunah explains that some groups of people may struggle to see the relevance of drama therapy sessions that tackle troubling issues in a playful manner, or do not directly address these issues (Emunah 1994). However, for others, this playful approach may help them feel more comfortable, or sustain their engagement.

While drama therapy shows potential for transformation, it is usually performed within a therapeutic environment and not to large groups of audience members. For this reason, it may not be useful to my project. However, artists at the Drama for Life festival, which I analyse in chapter four, show the ways in which drama therapy techniques can be used in performances staged to large audiences. The work of Bonfire Theatre draws upon approaches from drama therapy which they mix with those from Playback Theatre in support large groups of people to tell stories of success and suffering.

Playback theatre

Like drama therapy, Playback Theatre is also situated across art and therapy. Playback Theatre was developed by Jonathan Fox (2004, 2006, 2009) and Jo Salas (1983, 1996), together with a group of actors who formed the original Playback Theatre Company in New York in the 1970s (Fox 2007, 2010). A Playback Theatre cast is made up of six members consisting of the facilitator, four actors and musician. The facilitator invites one member from the audience to become a story-teller, and tell a story about a true life experience. This story is then played back to the story-teller and audience members. Performances draw upon metaphor, image, and rhythm, playing back the story in such a way that it can encourage story-tellers to take on new perspectives, or see things that had otherwise been overlooked. Playback Theatre is an ideal method for bringing people together to share and witness each other's stories. Often, Playback Theatre groups will work with the community in workshops or consultation prior to public performances to assess their needs and any issues that may be problematic or important.

Instead of searching for solutions to problems, playback fosters understanding. Playback practitioner and theorist, and daughter of Salas and Fox, Hannah Fox (2007, 2010) writes that Playback Theatre tells deeply personal stories in order to foster shared recognition and community connection. Rather than silencing dissenting and differing voices, Playback Theatre encourages diverse stories to be told. Both contradictory and converging stories may be expressed, those of both suffering and joy; playback does not attempt to reconcile these narratives into one unified voice, and instead allows each to be heard and acknowledged (Fox 2004; Hutt and Hosking 2004). Playback Theatre may bring together alienated and isolated voices, creating community cohesion through a performative dialogue that empathises and identifies with each teller’s experiences.

Jenny Hutt and Bev Hosking (2004) examine the use of playback as a method of reconciliation in Angola, India, Kiribati and Fiji. They cite how these processes able to bring about forgiveness and understanding across differences, and develop communities of empathy. During a Playback Theatre workshop in India, a man told of being tortured by the police; this experience was shared by many people in the

room, and everyone wept throughout the performance. When the performance had finished the man said ‘we have wept enough. Now I feel we can go forward’ (Hutt and Hosking 2004, p. 12). While this release of emotions was cathartic for audiences, and allowed them to share and move past their grief, it was also a forgetting of events, a letting go. I suggest that the playback performance was not an attempt to resist or unify against police corruption but a way of forgetting it. In valuing recognition over revolution this playback session did not attempt to create political or social change

While Playback Theatre can foster community connection and compassion, when aiming to transform the script of rape performances it also needs to cultivate agitation and resistance. Playback’s aptitude for facilitating understanding across differences may be useful in developing cooperation, yet not so effective in instituting change. Can Playback Theatre be a vehicle for both appreciating the other and protesting normative social scripts? Hannah Fox maintains that playback is not an attempt to fix problems, but a way to assist people ‘move into the first stage of the healing process’ (Fox 2007, p. 102). When working at a women’s shelter in the Bronx, in the United States, Fox listened to a woman’s story of discovering that her fifteen year old son was molesting her younger daughters. The teller related that she was able to forgive her son, as she did not in fact blame him for the abuse, saying: ‘It is society. It is bigger than him’ (Fox 2007, p. 102). This playback story cultivated empathy for both victims and perpetrator without making any attempt to uncover societal structures that produce sexual assault. The teller’s beliefs and assumptions were not questioned, and her perspective was simply supported. As Jonathan Fox claims, ‘in classic playback performance, there will be no sharing, no discussion; and no search for a solution or a cure - just another story’ (Fox 2004b, p. 2). This method encourages individual perspectives through not attempting to align or alter different perspectives. It does not attempt to impose change but simply performs each unique narrative.

Playback Theatre may be critiqued for not seeking to discover or portray a unified voice, nor determine a cohesive political direction. This lack of uniformity may be critiqued for having vague political goals and not actually creating any change. The discordant narratives of Playback Theatre may prove too ambiguous and unstable to

enable transformation of the rape script. However, in using a post-structuralist framework to discuss sexual assault, feminist theorist Chris Atmore (1999) points to potentials for diverse and multiplicitous voices to challenge traditional social frameworks. Atmore points out that discordant and contradictory voices are imperative in order to challenge established social scripts. She argues that the 'apparently seamless, noncontradictory narrative can be shown to be the product of the violent suppression of alternative meanings' (Atmore 1999, p. 90). The rape script has been created through a similar process of 'narratives, complexes and institutions which derive their strength not from outright, immutable, unbeatable force but rather from their power to structure our lives as imposing cultural scripts' (Marcus 1992, p. 389). Any attempt to maintain grand narratives inevitably renders some perspectives invisible and proscribes particular ways of being. Playback Theatre, on the other hand, may cultivate spaces to articulate alternative ways of relating, and therefore encourage the development of alternative social scripts. Hutt and Hosking's use of Playback Theatre may provide a way of doing this, as their careful and measured process supports participants to critique gender norms with women and men on the Pacific island of Kiribati. Workshops and performances were designed to develop trust and confidence in each other and in the playback form itself. Stories of resistance against the gender order, tales that told of renewed 'possibilities of relationships between women and men [were then able] to be voiced and witnessed in the community' (Hutt and Hosking 2004, p. 19). Playback's ability to promote dissenting voices, while also cultivating recognition, enables this method to challenge dominant scripts and develop shared compassion.

Key ideas from chapter 2

In this chapter I have considered several different ways of conceiving of performance with the intent of discovering which methods work best as an approach to social change. I am particularly interested in how performance can be a vehicle for transforming the scripts of gender and sexuality that produce rape. I have analysed different features of performance, looking at its ability to act as a form of mimesis, catharsis, social ritual, and social critique. Each of these aspects of performance has been found to articulate both problems and solutions, and I maintain that it is

imperative to pay attention to the context in which work is performed when choosing to accentuate any of these characteristics.

In exploring performance as a mimesis of life I asked if performance can represent traditional gender and sexual relationships while also agitating for change. Diamond's feminist analysis of mimetic representation offered a way for a theory of mimesis to negotiate transformation. She posits that performances which reflect reality can create a platform to view and critique this reality. Performative representations need not be fixed or resolute but instead seen as signs in a system that reveal the social workings of gender and sexuality. In a similar way Diamond has been able to find transformative potential in the theory of catharsis. While Aristotle's notion of catharsis is often interpreted as using performance to regulate and harmonise emotions, Diamond understands catharsis as a continual shudder, a disturbance of seeing and feeling. As a perpetual interplay between seeing and feeling cathartic performance can therefore agitate rather than control emotional responses. This theory allows traumatic narratives to be told in a way that encourages emotional and social reactions, providing spectators with the potential to recognize and be disturbed by dominant scripts of gender and sexuality (Diamond 1995).

Transformation in this analysis may be conceived as a way to agitate the emotions in order to raise awareness of hidden social issues. In a similar way, the notion of performance as ritual can also reinforce rather than agitate the social order. Instead of using ritual as a coercive attempt to align participants with existing social roles, in order to work towards transformation, ritual processes must invite individuals to reconsider and revise existing social scripts. Diamond's analysis is also pertinent when looking at performance as a critique of the social order. While Brecht's performances look to transform the social order through highlighting social norms in a way that makes them appear unusual, his analysis does not problematise gender norms, and therefore may be limited for my work. However, Diamond creates what she calls a gestic criticism, a method that reinterprets Brecht's theories so that they are pertinent to a feminist analysis. In a gestic criticism configurations of gender are made strange so that audiences are encouraged to question the gender order (Diamond 1988).

This chapter then looked at different methods of applied theatre, asking if they have the potential to transform the script of rape. I explored theatre for development, drama therapy and psychodrama, Playback Theatre, and Theatre of the Oppressed. Each of these forms focus on enabling communities to challenge dominant paradigms through performance. All of these approaches show both benefits and limitations for the social transformation of scripts of sexuality and gender. The lessons learnt from these types of applied theatre showed that, when motivating for change, performances must be cautious not to simply proscribe solutions and outcomes without allowing community members to voice their own ideas. If performance is to prevent the script of rape then it must take as a starting point communities' own attitudes and configurations of sexuality and gender, inviting participants to consider and critique the social implications of these.

Practices of theatre for development have the ability to work with a diversity of people due to their aptitude for working in local languages and with groups who do not have broad access to other media. This method of applied theatre can be a grassroots method of transformation that allows marginalized community members to express their opinions and motivate for change. Drama therapy and psychodrama foster personal transformation through encouraging clients to replay aspects of their lives, thereby gaining clarity and distance from their difficulties. With their roots in therapeutic practices however, these techniques are not usually performed on a public stage; these methods may therefore struggle to work as a primary method of rape prevention, which attempts to appeal to the broader population, instead of only those who are receiving therapy. Playback Theatre plays to public audiences, encouraging diverse stories, cultivating dialogue, and offering participants opportunities to empathise across similarity and difference. This method of performance shows a distinct promise for my project for its ability to promote community dialogue on difficult issues, so that audiences themselves can challenge dominant scripts that underpin the script of rape. Theatre of the Oppressed was created in order to assist communities to change the circumstances of their lives. Forum Theatre, which is one of the methods of Theatre of the Oppressed, may have a particular propensity to transform the script of rape due to its focus on behaviour change. This method can allow women and men to rehearse rejecting social conventions of femininity and masculinity that construct women as targets of

aggression and men as agents of violence. Yet this form may perpetuate the idea that individual women are responsible for preventing their own rapes, and therefore must be used in conjunction with critical theory around rape prevention.

I look at how some of these approaches are used by artists at the Drama for Life festival in chapter four, and in chapter six I examine how some of these approaches may be useful in the creation and performance of my own show, *Spreading the Love.* This next chapter however, looks at the role of pain in performance. As rape is often a painful event, and is usually viewed through the frameworks of pain, I ask if performances that examine pain have potentials for my project. Applied theatre often works in the context of pain, making performances with participants who are victims and perpetrators of crime, who are sick or suffering, or who are marginalised from their communities. There are varying approaches to dealing with this pain: applied theatre pieces attempt to access and comprehend participants' pain and the actions that led to it, or conversely, performances are used as a way of forgetting present pain. In the context of rape prevention, what is the best way to deal with pain? Can performances of pain lead to the transformation of normative scripts of sexuality and gender or do they inevitably reinforce them? The next chapter asks if performances that attempt to prevent rape should explore the pain of rape or otherwise seek new possibilities for sexed and gendered relations.

CHAPTER 3: PERFORMANCES OF PAIN

Representations of rape as a painful event can have beneficial effects; however it can also reinforce the exact issues it attempts to overcome. When victims of rape give testimony to their pain audiences may be aroused to empathise with victims' experiences, which can diminish the belief that they are to blame for their assault, and arouse feelings of culpability from perpetrators. However, it can also emphasise beliefs that victims are vulnerable, perpetrators are powerful, and construct rape as an event which marks those involved for the rest of their lives. Performing pain is therefore a contestable issue in the context of rape prevention and one that this chapter shall explore.

Popular accounts of rape name it as a painful event which often results in ongoing trauma (Alcoff and Gray 1993; Herman 1992). In 1974 the psychiatrist Ann Burgess and sociologist Lynda Holmstrom (1974) coined the term 'rape trauma syndrome', naming it as a specific form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that can occur after experiencing rape. This belief in a rape trauma syndrome or PTSD as a response to rape is so widespread that Nicola Gavey explains that it is sometimes used in court in order to provide evidence that a rape actually occurred (Gavey 2005, p. 230-1; Barron 1984, p. 301; Frazier & Borgida 1992). South Australia's leading government service for those affected by rape, Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service, claims that the pain of rape can cause physical, emotional, social and ideological distress, and that about one third of those who experience rape consequently experience PTSD (Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service 2009, p. 30-1).

Many theorists have sought to explain and analyse the notion of trauma as a specific psychological reaction to a painful event. Psychoanalyst and founder of the International Trauma Centre, Dori Laub (1992) argues that trauma is initially experienced as an absence, as a lack. In this framing it is not until one is able to form a narrative around traumatic events that they can actually be experienced 'as a known event and not simply as an overwhelming shock' (Laub 1992, p. 57). Speaking about the painful event enables victims to stop endlessly repeating the event so that they can move forward in their lives (Gobodo-Madikizela 2008, p. 175). Listeners to these narratives of trauma are therefore pivotal and become participants in the event

because it is not until testimonies of trauma are listened to that the events are actually experienced for the first time. In her analysis of forgiveness and empathy in the context of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela draws upon trauma theorists to argue that

> the incidence of trauma overwhelms the affective region of the mind and renders cognitive processing of the event impossible […] The process of rendering the trauma knowable then requires speaking out about trauma and "telling" it to someone who is a listener.
>
> (Gobodo-Madikizela 2008, p. 175)

She goes on to claim that 'public acknowledgment of atrocities and of the suffering and pain endured by victims is an important restorative step not only for individual victims and survivors, but also for the broader society' (Gobodo-Madikizela 2008, p. 180). Perhaps due to this emphasis on narrative, representation, and witnessing, applied theatre theorists have often used notions of trauma and trauma relief in conceptualising and delivering their work with individuals and communities who have experienced painful events (Thompson 2009, p. 43-77).

Yet representing notions of trauma and pain in representations about rape may actually reinforce the rape script. Marcus argues that explaining rape through a discourse of pain continues to configure 'female sexuality as an object, as property, and as an inner space' (Marcus 1992, p. 399). Her approach does not simply assume pain or trauma as a response to rape, but asks how these discourses perpetuate the notion of feminine vulnerability and masculine dominance. Renee Heberle also cautions that giving testimony of women's 'sexual suffering' may be an ineffective political strategy as it reifies the conditions which perpetuate rape (in Gavey 2005, p. 231). Linda Alcoff and Laura Gray argue that assuming that those who experience rape are necessarily traumatised 'essentializes and reifies survivors', and assumes that they will be fixed in these painful positions forever (Alcoff and Gray 1993, p. 282). They argue that rape survivors can shift and change their responses over time, and that even within the midst of pain, clarity and insight can be proffered. Like Marcus, Heberle, and Alcoff and Gray, Nicola Gavey also points out that it is problematic to assume that all people who experience rape will respond with trauma (2005, p. 228-231). Gavey insists that it is important to respect a plurality of

responses while also sensitively acknowledging individuals' pain. Laura Alcoff and Linda Gray write that rape survivors must be configured 'as fluid, constantly changing beings' who are not fixed within a trauma schema, but who are able to move through this reaction and onto different responses to rape (1993, p. 283). Marcus implores readers to 'imagine sexuality in terms of time and change', claiming that the conventions of rape culture deny women's sexuality the ability to alter over time (Marcus 1992, p. 399).

Just as the centrality of trauma in understanding the effects of rape may be politically ineffective in transforming the rape script, they may also be culturally specific and be of little value when working across different cultural contexts. Thompson contests the often unquestioned link between theatre, story-telling, and trauma relief which motivates some applied theatre projects, particularly those which are engaged as responses to crises (Thompson 2009, p. 45). He argues that a framework of trauma relief has limitations in applied theatre, and may even have adverse effects in certain contexts (p. 72-4). Thompson explains that notions of trauma have developed within specific cultural and historical contexts and emerged from Holocaust Studies and discourses on PTSD which arose between the First World War and the Vietnam War (Thompson 2009, p. 44). As an alternative to trauma relief, Thompson explains the ethnographic approach favoured by anthropologist Alexandra Argenti-Pillen, who examined the way non-government organisations in Sri Lanka worked with local discourses on violence (Thompson 2009, p. 22-3, 72-4). Argenti-Pillen found that, for rural communities in southern Sri Lanka, speaking about wartime violence disrupted local ways of working through violence which emphasised containment rather than public expression (in Thompson 2009, p. 74). Thompson uses Argenti-Pillen's ethnographic approach to implore applied theatre practitioners and theorists to look to the ways communities themselves have resisted violence using their own cultural resources rather 'than assuming that populations are "traumatised" and can be relieved through narrative-based storytelling' (Thompson 2009, p. 9). Thompson's perspective is not a simple glorification of all local practices but an incitement for practitioners and theorists to 'negotiate with existing practices in order to extend those that the particular community understand to be positive' (Thompson 2009, p. 75). As Thompson's discussion makes clear, performing pain must pay

particular attention to its audiences and context in order to take a step towards transformation.

With these arguments in mind I move on from reliance upon a traumatic framework and instead use the broader notion of pain to frame my analysis. While the notion of trauma is popularly associated with rape, it is politically limiting because it reiterates victims as permanently damaged (and perpetrators as unassailable). Conventional accounts of trauma also insist that events that led to the trauma be spoken of so that the speaker can be relieved of their distress, and this may not be appropriate in different cultural contexts. I understand pain, on the other hand, as a way of asking for acknowledgement (Das 1996; Thompson 2009, p. 146-9).

Those who are raped may not be traumatised by the experience, or even physically or emotionally hurt. The notion of pain, on the other hand, does not insist that rape victims show specific symptoms of PTSD but claims that a person has undergone an experience which momentarily ignored their subjectivity. Anthropologist Veena Das (1996) follows Wittgenstein's argument and claims that the statement 'I am in pain' is a request for recognition (Das 1996, p. 70). This is distinct from Elaine Scarry's often cited view in *The Body in Pain* (1985). Scarry describes pain as without referent, so that upon experiencing pain one searches for objects and people to link to this feeling. She claims that when attached to something, pain is able to garner a certain 'realness'. However, in attempting to attach pain to a particular object or person, Scarry's view of pain also enables it to be manipulated and used to advance a particular political position or unduly ascribe blame (Scarry 1985, pp. 15-19). For example, when the pain of rape is ascribed to the bodies of specific groups of men who are assumed to be 'typical perpetrators' it may be easier for authorities to gain a foothold into regulating the behaviours of these men (and overlooking the behaviours of others). A political position which rallies against men who are considered to be 'typical perpetrators' could then be popularly supported as a protective mechanism for the wider community. However, research suggests that the defining characteristic of most rapists is that they are known to their victim/s; there is therefore no 'typical perpetrator' in which pain can be attached to in order to prevent rape (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network 2009).

It is for this reason that I prefer Das' explanation of pain. Das' definition simply requests recognition of painful feelings rather than an attachment to a person or object which elicited pain. This view also has potential in the field of performance as it creates an interrelationship between those who perform it and those who witness these performances (in Thompson 2009, p. 156). When using this perspective, pain is able to be transformed through being recognised; the performance of pain can lead to its recognition, and thus transformation. When pain is performed the ethical imperative to acknowledge this pain can be accepted by audiences and so subjectivity of the victim is restored and apathy of the onlooker is subverted.

This chapter asks what types of performances about painful events are best placed to lead to transformation. Are representations of pain primarily useful for therapeutic purposes or can they also work towards preventing future pain? What is the role of the audience in determining the way pain is performed? And how can performances of pain encourage audiences to acknowledge pain without reifying it?

I consider these questions by looking at different types of what I call 'performances of pain'. These are works which seek to transform pain by exploring it through performance. I look to works from around the globe, searching for those which have particularly articulate and seemingly pertinent responses to pain. I analyse works from Israel, South Africa, Rwanda, Australia and the United States. These performances were created in order to respond to different painful events that occurred within these nations; the events were a gang rape, apartheid and the resulting Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), genocide, the Cronulla riots, and the attacks on New York and Washington on September eleventh in 2001. By looking at these different performances of pain I do not suggest that the events experienced were somehow similar. Instead, I have chosen very different performances so that a range of approaches can be critically analysed. These works were chosen for their abilities to deal with pain in ways that attempt transformation. I am interested in what made these performances pertinent and perhaps even elucidated transformative responses to pain.

Susan Sontag (1966, 2003, 2004) maintains that upon viewing images of pain, audiences must not be permitted to retreat into fiction, and are instead urged to

acknowledge the anguish as actual. Representations of pain are not to be seen as pure spectacle, nor as an attempt to foster sympathy. Instead, Sontag argues that representations of pain must encourage a response to and observation of the world. The work of Marc Rich (2010) and his interACT performance troupe hopes to encourage a critical consciousness about how sexist behaviour can lead to or condone rape. This work does not overlook the pain of rape but encourages audiences, who are college students from across the United States, to consider how alternative outcomes could be reached. I will briefly discuss interACT's work before moving onto more in depth explorations of other performances that represent pain. The first performance I analyse in depth is called *Backyard Games* (1993), a theatre in education show created and performed in Israel after the gang rape of a fifteen year old girl over five consecutive days by eleven boys aged between fifteen and seventeen. The show was based on the events leading to the rape, and the rape itself. I analyse this performance, asking how representations of rape can work to transform the script of rape instead of merely reinforcing it. I then look to performances which are not about rape but about other experiences of pain in order to discover what these works can offer my project of transforming the script of rape. I examine the shows *Thetha Ngikhulume* (1998), and *The Story I am About to Tell* (1997) which were inspired by the TRC in South Africa and performed within the country. Performers in these shows gave testimony of their own pain in order to forge reconciliation and encourage others to testify at the TRC. I then turn to an analysis of *Fagaala* (2005) which used dance to respond to the genocide in Rwanda. However, unlike *Thetha Ngikhulume* and *The Story I am About to Tell*, *Fagaala* mostly played to western audiences outside of Rwanda; the creators of *Fagaala* purposefully chose to not only represent pain, but to also create images of beauty.

I then move to Australia to consider a piece performed in Bankstown and the Sutherland Shire in Sydney, two areas which were polarised by 'the Cronulla riots' of 2005. The Cronulla Riots were an outbreak of racist violence against people of 'Middle Eastern appearance' on Cronulla beach in Sydney. It has been widely claimed that the media played a large part in inciting this violence in which white Australians sought to 'reclaim control of the beach' (Poynting 2006, p. 85). *Stories of Love and Hate* (2008) critically considered the Cronulla riots through re-performing testimony from those who had been involved in or witnessed the riots. Rather than

encouraging emotionally-driven responses, this show positioned itself as a way to think through what led to the violence. The final performance I look to is *The House with the Ocean View* which was performed in New York as a response to the attacks of September eleventh which are popularly referred to as 9/11 (Abramovic 2002). These attacks killed almost three thousand people and stimulated public debate around issues of terrorism and security. After the attacks there was a backlash of violence against Muslims living in the United States and support for American involvement in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (Woods 2011, p. 220-2). I frame these terrorist attacks as the original accident, designed to evoke pain and suffering in survivors. Instead of representing, retelling, or critically considering this accident, *The House with the Ocean View* became another accident, yet unlike the original accident, this one intended to foster intimacy and connection. Through analysing this broad range of performances of pain I search for ways that performance can be used to transform painful events and work towards transformation.

Susan Sontag and representing pain

In her essay 'Against Interpretation' (1966), Sontag critiques the trend of art criticism of the time for making aesthetic analysis merely a process of interpretation. She is dismissive of the attempt to understand art by translating symbols and metaphors hidden within the artworks. This agenda of interpretation asserts that proper viewing of a piece of art necessitates a mastering of the work, mining it for its latent meanings. According to Sontag, this act of interpretation is an attempt to tame art so that it becomes manageable, understandable. She argues that this approach is a retreat into intellectual rather than sensual experiences of art. Rather than construct clever arguments about a work's content, Sontag aims for critique to 'recover our senses', to 'reveal the sensuous surface[s]' of art (Sontag 1966, p. 14, 12). Sontag's argument suggests that performances of pain are not to be stripped back to the historical truths of their plots or motifs, but analysed through their abilities to inspire response.

In her later work, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (2003), Sontag develops her analysis of representing pain through art. In this text she asserts that representations of torment and violence do not necessarily stimulate spectators to end pain. Instead,

shocking representations can make spectators turn away in disgust. An overabundance of images of pain can actually create widespread apathy and political passivity. In light of this, Sontag argues that representations of pain must not be pure spectacle, removed from an awareness of pain as a lived reality. When images of pain are presented as spectacle, this suggests 'perversely, unseriously, that there is no real pain in the world' (Sontag 2003, p. 99). Pain is sidelined as occurring only within representation, appearing as distant or fictive. It is therefore vital to represent pain as a lived reality, as experiences that are endured by actual individuals and groups. Sontag concludes that we should 'let the atrocious images haunt us', to continually consider 'what human beings are capable of doing' (Sontag 2003, p. 102). Accepting and acknowledging cruelty and depravity is integral to reaching maturity, maintains Sontag (Sontag 2003, p. 102). However an acceptance of cruelty does not mean the cultivation of sympathy. Sontag claims that 'sympathy proclaims our innocence as well as our impotence' (Sontag 2003, p. 91). Sympathy insists that the images have nothing to do with us; it stifles political action, and proclaims that the pain is unrelated to one's life. Sympathy supposes that one did not participate in the cause of the pain, and cannot take part in its resolution. Rather than evoke sympathy or shock, Sontag argues that representations of pain must be an invitation to observe and examine the world (Sontag 2003, p. 104).

Staging pain through performance can therefore be a pertinent way of acknowledging particular painful events, and the effects these have on people. Representations of pain can ensure that traumatic events are not overlooked by history, and that those who were victimised by events are given opportunities to describe their own circumstances; as Sontag claims 'victims are interested in the representation of their own pains' (Sontag 2003, p. 100). Representations of pain may inspire awareness and acknowledgement in audiences, encouraging them to question rather than consolidate their world-views (Fitzpatrick 2010).

Sontag's analysis provides a framework for performance to encourage those who do not have first-hand experiences of the depicted pain to acknowledge pain of the other. She is interested in representations that foster awareness, empathy, and critical engagement with painful events, and those which also encourage viewers to accept that they '[c]an't understand, can't imagine' the actual events which are documented (Sontag 2003, p. 113). Her analysis points to a way forward, arguing that

representations of pain may not only reinforce pain but can agitate around the issues that caused it.

Representations of rape may encourage audiences to challenge the script of rape, enabling them to see its hypocrisy and horror. They can invite audiences to ponder and discover ways of unravelling stereotypes of gender and sexuality that perpetuate the script of rape. The interACT performance troupe, initiated by academic and theatre maker Marc Rich (2010), created a show about rape in order to encourage university students across the United States to see links between sexist behaviour and rape. interACT reveals the pain caused by rape as a way to encourage empathy from audiences and encourage their critical engagement with the issues raised (Rich 201, p.516-7). That is, while the play ends in pain, audiences are encouraged to consider how alternative endings could be reached. Their show uses elements of Forum Theatre to explore jealousy, mateship, and gender stereotypes, looking at how these can excuse or precipitate rape. Importantly, interACT engages university students to act as performer/educators. These student performers must go through a rigorous training period, in which they read and explore feminist work on rape, before they are given roles in the show. This is because interACT intend to move past simplistic role plays that merely preach 'rape is wrong', and instead encourage transformation through critical reasoning. Their show on rape plays to approximately two thousand students a year, aiming to appeal to college men, who are often left out of rape prevention initiatives, with the belief that rape is not relevant to them (Rich 2010 p.513-4). Rich writes that interACT uses humour to expose sexist behaviour, so that men are given opportunities to critique hyper-masculine behaviour. The interACT model effectively endeavours not to become 'sneaky teaching' wrapped up as entertainment, and works with young men and women to encourage critical consideration of rape (Rich 2010, p.516).

Backyard Games (1993)

The play, *Backyard Games*, was similarly an attempt to develop critical engagement with rape and the gender and sexual stereotypes which perpetuate it (Kotler 1993). This piece was markedly different to the interACT model: it did not use Forum Theatre, and was created by professional artists for secondary school students, rather

than being made by and for university students. I am interested in looking at *Backyard Games* due to its popular success, but also because of what theatre researcher Anat Gesser-Edelsburg (2005) argues was its ultimate failure.

Backyard Games shares similarities with the Australian play *Blackrock* (1995) which was written by Nick Enright and loosely based on the gang rape and murder of Leigh Leigh at Stockton Beach in Newcastle.[6] Both *Backyard Games* and *Blackrock* looked at the insidious power of male friendship, featuring male characters that encouraged each other to participate in a gang-rape, and then protected each other by not speaking of the incident. In both plays the female victims of rape were typified as sharing some of the blame for her attack by acting sexually provocatively. Subsequently, these plays have each been critiqued for giving a too-sensitive portrayal of rapists (Brien 2009; Heller-Nicholas 2013).

Gesser-Edelsburg (2005) argues that *Backyard Games* did not challenge sexual stereotypes and gender-related violence as the accompanying 'guidelines for the teacher and educator' professed to, but actually reinforced the notion that women are 'provocative victims' (Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 139). Written by Israeli playwright Edna Mazya, and directed by the then artistic director of Haifa Municipal Theatre, Oded Kotler, *Backyard Games* was performed more than one thousand times throughout Israel, and due to its success, travelled to several other countries (Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 139). In Australia the play was performed by Australian Theatre for Young People in Sydney in 2011 and called *Games in the Backyard*. Reviewer Deborah FitzGerald critiques the play for perpetuating standard stereotypes about rape. She writes that the work did not offer any new insights into rape but reinforced those which stifle change:

> The message for women is that after you have been abused and humiliated by your attackers, then you are abused and humiliated by the legal system. This is not a new concept and the idea that nothing much has changed in the way we deal with sexual assaults is utterly depressing

[6] *Blackrock* came from the play *A Property of the Clan* (1994) which was written by Enright for Freewheels Theatre in Education in Newcastle and was much more closely aligned with the events of Leigh Leigh's murder. *Blackrock* was made into a feature film in 1997 (Brien 2009, n.p; Heller-Nicholas 2013, p. 110).

(2011, n.p).

In Israel *Backyard Games* was performed at Haifa Municipal Theatre and in numerous high schools. The play was based upon the well-known case of the gang rape of a fifteen year old girl on Kibbutz Shomrat in Israel. The guidelines for the teacher and educator directly reference the case of Yael Greemberg, who in 1988 was raped over five consecutive days by eleven boys aged between fifteen and seventeen. The case against the boys was lengthy and marked by a to and fro between the court and the public. The state prosecutor initially threw out the case when he ruled that Greemberg was not in a fit emotional state for the trial. After public pressure, however, seven of the defendants had the cases against them reopened, yet they were soon acquitted due to 'reasonable doubt'. Further public outcry and lobbying by women's organisations caused the state prosecutor to appeal the case; four of the defendants eventually received prison sentences of one year (Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 139-40).

Due to the repeated public discussions about the case, and the extensive media coverage it received, the Department of Education, parents and teachers embraced a theatre production which was put forward as a way to address the issues which the case raised. However, while the play was presented as a way to challenge the beliefs which perpetuate rape, through interviews with six hundred and seventeen students who had seen the show at two high schools, Gesser-Edelsburg found that *Backyard Games* increased their belief that rape victims act provocatively and that perpetrators are seduced into their actions. Gesser-Edelsburg writes that Dvori, the rape victim in the play, was typified as an outsider who was socially unpopular and sometimes awkward; in the three different casts which put on *Backyard Games*, she was always played by a performer who was short, dark, and chubby. The perpetrators, however, were portrayed as popular, 'normal' boys who had not done anything wrong until this incident; they were good soldiers, and many belonged to elite units in the Israel Defence Force. The only boy who attempted to intervene in the rapes by warning Dvori was typified as physically subordinate, asthmatic and aggressive. Dvori was obviously in love with Asaf, who was the ringleader of the rapes (Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 147-8). Her desire not to have sex with the boys was not clearly voiced, as Dvori instead used what Gavey explains as 'dispreferring' the options put to her; she

told the boys she was 'tired' and felt unwell (Gavey 2005, p. 145; Gesser-Edelsburg 2005:156-7). The writer Mazya makes the distinction between rape and sex unclear, implicating Dvori in the incident, telling a journalist: 'In my play the boys do not seek Dvori out, they do not know she will be there. To the contrary, she knows they will be there' (in Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 142).

The rape itself is written in euphemisms in the script and staged like a seduction rather than an attack. In the court scene which opens the play it is Dvori's actions which are questioned, and not those of the young men. The back of *Backyard Games'* otherwise empty stage is scrawled with graffiti which reads: 'Don't leave me when I'm hard' (in Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 148-9). In the scene in which the rape occurs the lighting is red like sunset, and there are sounds of fire engines and cats mewing in the background. There is a sense of heat and mounting danger. Dvori tells a sexually provocative story to the young men while playing a game of Blind Man's Bluff and then removes her bra. One of the boys, Shmulik, forcibly pushes her to the ground, and although Dvori tries to push him off, he overpowers her. Stage directions do not say that Shmulik raped Dvori, instead writing that he 'drops his pants and sleeps with her' (in Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 149). After a few moments a shout is heard but the students who Gesser-Edelsburg interviewed told that they were unaware who was shouting: was it Dvori or Shmulik? (Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 148-50). The actions of the boys are minimised, and they are positioned as overcome with passion, rather than manipulative of Dvori's vulnerability as an outsider.

Gesser-Edelsburg writes that some teachers tried to work against the idea that Dvori provoked the boys' actions through pre-show discussions in which they argued that no one deserves to be raped despite their behaviour. However, these attempts proved futile as Gesser-Edelsburg discovered that of the students she interviewed, more believed that a victim deserves to be raped after the play than prior to it (Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 152-5). Similarly, students were also more likely to claim that a girl could avoid being raped if she changed her behaviour, and insisted that a fair percentage of boys could be drawn into raping girls. One ninth grade girl suggested that the reason why the performance was able to convince audiences that the girl deserved to be raped was because it was aesthetically powerful and moving. She

wrote: 'The performance was simply excellent and real. I felt as if it were really happening and I understood what happened at Kibbutz Shomrat' (in Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 155). Although *Backyard Games* did not claim to exactly replicate the events at Kibbutz Shomrat, it was considered by students to be a direct representation of Greemberg's rape instead of artistic interpretation. The play was received as a reenactment of real events, so the perspectives put forward were not framed as perspectives, but as what actually occurred. Thus Dvori, who was written as provocative, stood in for Greenberg, the actual rape victim, Greemberg, and the boys, who were characterised as innocent, were seen to be typical of the perpetrators at Kibbutz Shomrat.

Backyard Games did not challenge, but played into, assumptions about rape, victims, and perpetrators. In her seminal article exploring the impact of sex role stereotyping and the acceptance of 'rape myths', Martha Burt (1980) found that women who claimed they had been raped were less likely to be believed when their actions could be perceived as contravening normative notions of femininity or victimhood. Over half of her five hundred and ninety-eight adult respondents from Minnesota in the United States believed that '[i]n the majority of rapes, the victim was promiscuous or had a bad reputation' (Burt 1980, p. 229). Gavey also explains that women who claim rape have often been portrayed as attempting to enact revenge or save their reputation (2005, p. 21-5). She argues that 'within a rape trial the constant scrutiny has been on the woman and her body' (Gavey 2005, p. 24).

In its portrayal of Dvori as an outsider who craved the boys' attention, who willingly played with them seductively, *Backyard Games* did not challenge this notion that women do not invite rape through their provocative actions, but instead perpetuated it. Gesser-Edelsburg concludes that

> the creators of Backyard Games could have chosen to tell the story of the Shomrat rape differently, from the point of view of the victim. The theatrical text could have told of her feelings, her fears, her pains, her struggle and her breakdown after the rape. Through such a dramatic-experiential story young people could have been exposed to the violence of sexual coercion and identified with the weak party, whose story is belittled and denied.

(Gesser-Edelsburg 2005, p. 156)

Gesser-Edelsburg's analysis of *Backyard Games* reveals how representations of rape must be careful not to reproduce the ideas they seek to challenge. As Gesser-Edelsburg suggests, this can be avoided through performances which tell events from victim's perspectives, and ensure that these points of view remain prominent throughout (Iverson 2006).

Shows on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

This next performance which I consider tells the perspectives of both victims and perpetrators back to their communities. It is interesting to my analysis as it reveals some of the ways in which performances of pain can reignite pain from the past rather than transform it. Applied theatre theorist Stephanie Marlin-Curiel (2002, 2004) discusses several theatre for development pieces which were inspired by the TRC in South Africa; I discuss two of them here, the first of which is called *Thetha Ngikhulume* (Speak So That I May Speak) and *The Story I am about to Tell* (Linda 1998; Kumalo 1997). Between 1996 and 1998 TRC hearings were held across South Africa and broadcast across the nation on television and radio (Driver 2005, p. 219). The TRC used the technique of restorative justice, which is defined in their final report as working towards reintegrating both victims and perpetrators into society (in Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 276). Victims were invited to testify to their experiences while perpetrators were cross-examined and given amnesty if they met certain criteria.[7]

In order to be granted amnesty perpetrators had to prove that their actions were politically motivated, occurred within a specific time period, that they had fully disclosed all relevant facts of their crime/s, and that their actions were proportionate to the objective they sought. If these criteria were met perpetrators were given immunity from criminal and civil prosecution (Traces of Truth n.d). The final report on the TRC claimed that disclosure can assist perpetrators become relieved of their

[7] Perhaps problematically, the TRC did not bring female victims of sexual violence and their perpetrators face to face due to a concern over further shaming and traumatising victims. However, on a few occasions male victims of sexual humiliation were invited to speak to their perpetrators at TRC hearings. So although the TRC aimed to bring justice to victims through enabling them to face their perpetrators, it continued to assume that female victims of sexual violence needed to be protected from facing their perpetrators publicly, and their experiences were kept private (Driver 2005, p. 224).

guilt and work towards the reintegration of society (in Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 276). For victims, the acknowledgement of their painful experiences in a public setting could assist them 'transform narratives of "shame and humiliation" into narratives of "dignity and virtue"' (Minnow in Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 277). Marlin-Curiel argues that the use of theatre for development in South Africa shares several similarities with the TRC, notably in their shared strategies for reintegrating people through giving and witnessing personal testimony of painful experiences.

Thetha Ngikhulume was performed by the Victory Sonqoba Theatre Company and directed by Bongani Linda. Performers were both victims and perpetrators of apartheid from the township of Alexandra, in the city of Johannesburg. *Thetha Ngikhulume* told testimonies of abuses from the lived experiences of local residents back to the community (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 276). Unlike many testimonial performances, this piece was not created by an organisation or formal group, but by a local theatre director in order to voice his own concerns and those of his community. Through *Thetha Ngikhulume* Linda, the director, hoped to provide a vehicle for reconciliation between victims and perpetrators, promote healing in performers and spectators, and critique the actions of the TRC (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 279, p. 282-3).

In performing lived experiences of pain *Thetha Ngikhulume* offered opportunities for people to publicly tell of their own experiences in front of selected audiences who had experienced similar events (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 276). As the play did not have any legal repercussions, nor require that only the truth was told, actors were able to weave lived experiences, as well as hopes and fantasies into their narratives. Actors were not compelled to simply restate facts, but could also incorporate their bodily responses and imagination into their performances. These qualities enabled actors to offer their subjective expressions of events and potentially allow audiences to '*see* more, to *hear* more, to *feel* more' than the straightforward repetition of facts (Sontag 1966, p. 9, italics in original). *Thetha Ngikhulume* provided a space for victims and perpetrators to share experiences and opinions with their peers in an acknowledgement and sharing of their pain.

However, Linda told Marlin-Curiel that performances had to abruptly end, as instead of representing pain, they became a reliving of these experiences. Linda said: 'It became so real […] We couldn't differentiate between playing and reality' (Linda in Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 276). *Thetha Ngikhulume* ceased to be representation and instead stood in for the real as performances evoked past pain, and also told experiences that some audience members had heard for the first time (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 283). Laub gives a word of caution to those delivering testimony of traumatic events. She warns that: 'The act of telling might itself become severely traumatising, if the price of speaking is re-living; not relief but further retraumatisation' (Laub 1992, p. 67). *Thetha Ngikhulume* became a reliving of the initial trauma of apartheid so that by the second performance both spectators and actors were in tears (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 276). Instead of a tool for reflecting upon past pain, *Thetha Ngikhulume* provoked actual pain. Rather than narrating previous problems in order to ease painful memories, the play stimulated new anger and grief. Linda explains that the actors were unable to continue with their lines when they realised that the pain they expressed was shared by so many others in the audience. He said that during performances he and the other actors realised 'that we are not the only ones' and their pain could no longer be contained (in Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 284). Consequently, Linda cancelled the play immediately, in the middle of the performance, and it did not resume its tour of the township (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 283).

Although *Thetha Ngikhulume* attempted to share personal experiences of apartheid in order to foster peace and liberation from pain, this public forum aroused the community's distress. *Thetha Ngikhulume* was intimate, so close to the events narrated on stage that it became a traumatic event in itself. While Linda aimed to work towards reconciliation he instead believes that the performance made spectators 'be more hateful' (Marlin-Curiel 2004, p. 104). Naturalistic acting styles, together with a script that revealed painful recent events experienced by those on stage and in the audience, caused performances to disturb boundaries between representation and reality. *Thetha Ngikhulume* lost its efficacy to transform pain when it became 'too real', so that spectators were overwhelmed by emotion, and unable to critically consider the situation (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 285). Or, as Marlin-Curiel argues, the

performance 'did not prove a viable "alternative"' but only reiterated pain which had already been experienced (Marlin-Curiel, p. 285).

Another show inspired by the TRC and written about by Marlin-Curiel primarily strove to educate audiences about the hearings rather than specifically encourage reconciliation. *The Story I am About to Tell* created by the Khulumani Support Group, together with actors from the Market Theatre Laboratory, travelled around rural areas in South Africa, with each actor performing an abridged version of the statement they personally delivered to the TRC (Marlin-Curiel, p. 275-6).[8] While this restaging of actual events provided spectators with an opportunity to view what really happened at the TRC, it also became distressing for actors who had to continually re-perform pain they had actually experienced. During the tour of *The Story I am About to Tell* the actor Duma Khumalo struggled to differentiate between fictional performance and reality, as Marlin-Curiel writes: 'If he sometimes forgot his lines, it was because he had psychologically left the arena of the stage during these moments and actually relived the event' (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 281). Like *Thetha Ngikhulume, The Story I am About to Tell* struggled to maintain the distinction between representation and reality, so that these performances of pain provoked distress in spectators and performers. However, unlike *Thetha Ngikhulume* this play continued its tour and was not stopped because of its effects on actors.

Marlin-Curiel's analysis of *The Story I am about to Tell* and *Thetha Ngikhulume* shows how performances can reinforce pain, rather than suggest that change is possible, when these works are presented back to those who have lived experiences which resonate with those on stage. Instead of assisting in the transformation of distressing circumstances, performing actual painful experiences may re-traumatise actors and audiences by reminding them of anguish.

While many applied theatre projects claim the importance of remembering, Thompson instead argues for the value of forgetting. According to Thompson, in simply reliving pain performances can begin to stand in for, and continually repeat the painful event itself (Thompson 2009, p. 61-71). In the circumstances in which

[8] Khulumani means 'speak out' in Zulu and the support group provided advocacy to apartheid survivors (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 275-6).

Thetha Ngikhulume and *The Story I am About to Tell* played it may have been appropriate to use performance as a way to distract from pain and focus on beauty. Thompson argues that a focus on beauty can sometimes be more pertinent and useful than a focus on pain. As he explains:

> Maybe in the calm and peace of certain situations, urging an engagement with suffering of others can be an overt and explicitly performed process, but in a diverse range of more troubled contexts – contexts in which, I believe, applied theatre should be working – performances of beauty might be ultimately more rewarding.
>
> (Thompson 2009, p. 156)

A move towards beauty does not suggest politically removed, whimsical, nor nostalgic performances but seeks to create works which focus on joy and pleasure rather than 'violation and violence' (Salverson in Thompson 2009, p. 139). Using Thompson's suggestion, performance may become a distraction from pain, a relief, a way to temporarily alleviate anguish. For audiences in the aftermath of crises performance can bring a necessary respite. Thompson's argument points out the divergent needs of different audience groups. Audiences personally familiar with the painful events referred to on stage may benefit from works that depict beauty and allow forgetting. In using a realistic documentary style to explore apartheid and the TRC with those who had recent painful experiences of these historical events the performances *Thetha Ngikhulume* and *The Story I am About to Tell* perpetuated rather than transformed pain. Perhaps if these performances instead aimed for performances of beauty, or used a more emotionally removed performance style, they could have avoided reiterating the pain of actors and audience members.

Fagaala (2005)

These arguments show that the simple act of remembering trauma can feel too dangerous. As a seventy-two year old survivor of the genocide in Rwanda said: 'Even when we think about those things that happened, those memories, I don't know why we don't die' (Zijlstra 2011). Yet audiences who are far removed from the painful events which are referenced on stage may look to performance as a way of learning about and developing empathy for the pain of the other. Subsequently, these

audiences may seek to learn about painful events which they have little experience of through performances that inform and educate. This next piece, *Fagaala*, is based on the Rwandan genocide and reveals how expectations of reviewers from Australia and the United States contradicted the intentions of the artistic team (Acogny 2005). The piece has toured internationally since 2003, visiting the USA, Europe, Japan, Africa, and Australia (de Poyen, 2005). In Australia *Fagaala* played at the Melbourne International Arts festival and the Sydney Opera House in 2005. My analysis of *Fagaala* however, is mostly based on the critical response to the piece at the Melbourne International Arts Festival.

The genocide in Rwanda occurred between April and June 1994 and was remarkable for the speed in which Hutu extremists turned against the Tutsi ethnic minority. During the genocide Rwanda's Hutu paramilitary, *Interahamwe* ('We who strike together'), murdered almost one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus in only one hundred days (Gangully 2007, p. 50; Melvern 2000). *Fagaala* is a dance piece partly based on interviews and testimony of survivors of the genocide and was performed by the Senegalese Dance troupe, Jant-Bi, and choreographed by artistic director Germaine Acogny and Butoh-trained Kota Yamazaki (*Fagaala* Program Notes 2003). *Fagaala* means genocide in Wolof, which is one of the main languages spoken in Senegal. In an attempt to display a universal pain instead of one that is specific to Rwandans, the choreographers used abstraction and grand, rather than specific narratives. Moving away from naturalistic representations of violence, Acogny and Yamazaki used beauty in an attempt to 'make people aware' of atrocity, instead of provoking them to turn away in horror (de Poyen 2005).

Several reviewers and Acogny herself maintain that *Fagaala* did not set out to merely relate the events of the Rwandan genocide, but instead aimed to look at the wider, universal concepts of fear and forgiveness. In Melbourne, Acogny told interviewer Robin Usher (2005) that although the Rwandan genocide may be a depressing topic, a 'new order can be created through hope, love and forgiveness' (n.p). Agogny said she was angry about the western media coverage of stories coming from Africa, claiming that they portray the continent as filled with famine and war, and desperate for outside assistance. She told Usher that 'I strongly believe that if only one television station decided to broadcast positive news, that would

change the world' (n.p). Acogny positioned *Fagaala* as speaking back against this attempt to label Africa as a 'basket case' that requires outsiders to 'save it from itself' (Usher 2005, p. n.p).

Philipa Rothfield (2005), who reviewed *Fagaala* for *RealTime,* writes that the dance piece did not attempt to relate a cohesive narrative of the genocide, and instead generated 'a rolling series of dances' and then a 'radical silence' (Rothfield 2005, n.p). Rothfield explains that the imagery and kinetic energy of the piece suggested both horror and continued existence, yet writes that 'there is nothing about Fagaala that belittles its topic' (Rothfield 2005, n.p). She concludes by maintaining that 'Acogny managed to evoke the genocide in Rwanda without reducing it to the abject' (2005, n.p). In writing about the performance of *Fagaala* at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, Rita Felciano (2005) likewise argues that *Fagaala* broadens its perspective to not only look at the specifics of Rwandan history, but at genocide and violence more broadly. She reminds her readers that 'genocides have happened in history all over the world, and probably will occur again' (2005, n.p).

However, other critics were dismissive of this expansive approach to performing acts of violence, and seemed to want *Fagaala* to only narrate events which were specific to the Rwandan genocide. Upon returning from Rwanda's memorial sites performance theorist Jeff Stewart (2007) critiques the non-naturalistic and beautiful imagery of *Fagaala*. Stewart argues that witnessing representations of genocide demands embodying the horror felt by both victims and perpetrators (Stewart 2007, n.p). He claims that *Fagaala* did not evoke the barbaric nature of genocide and threatened to become 'merely "another work of art"' (Stewart 2007, n.p). On attending the Melbourne performance Stewart writes: 'Not until after the Friday night performance when the dancers and choreographer sat talking with the audience did I feel any relatedness to genocide and its affect' (Stewart 2007, n.p). He critiques *Fagaala* for turning genocide into a piece of art and refusing to actually bear witness to atrocity.

Fagaala is critiqued for similar reasons by reviewers from Australia and the United States. Writing about the Melbourne performance, reviewer for *The Sunday Age* Neil Jillet (2005) claims that *Fagaala* 'lacks cohesion and emotional force' (Jillet 2005, p.

n.p). Jillet's complaint appears to come from his critique that the dance is 'so abstract and generalised that it is hard to spot any visual reference to violent death' (Jillet 2005, p. n.p). Jennifer Dunning (2007) from *The New York Times* writes of the performance at the Harvey Theater in New York, and critiques the piece for not being a violent expose, but 'an unhurried, smoothly paced evocation of everyday life […] untouched by a larger terror, madness or fear' (Dunning 2007, p. n.p). Stewart, together with the reviewers Jillet and Dunning critique *Fagaala* for creating a piece of beauty and tranquillity in response to mass violence, maintaining that this approach does not appropriately convey the actual events of genocide. In creating works that are beautiful rather than violent, and evocative rather than descriptive, performance may risk trivialising crises, argues Stewart. As Stewart points out, the west has been criticised for not paying attention to and intervening in the Rwandan genocide (Stewart 2007, p. n.p). Art could be a way of educating people about events in Rwanda, mounting a political critique, and conveying otherwise information which is otherwise overlooked.

However explicit representations of trauma may also cause people to turn away, to feel overwhelmed by devastation or a perceived inability to change the circumstances. I looked at James Thompson's perspective on this argument in the last chapter. Thompson argued that in some contexts it may be more appropriate for performances to be a vehicle of forgetting rather than remembering. While realistic reproductions of traumatic events may evoke emotional responses in audiences, they may not necessarily lead to social awareness or change. Stylistic approaches to reproducing trauma, on the other hand, may point to possibilities for beauty, hope, and change. As Acogny argues: 'Art can show terrible things and yet elevate them so that people become aware of what they are looking at. Maybe if it's beautiful, we don't turn away' (in de Poyen 2005, n.p). As the program notes for *Fagaala*, and Acogny herself point out, the dance piece aims to encourage change through depictions of beauty and hope (in de Poyen 2005; *Fagaala* Program Notes 2003; Usher 2005).

While *Fagaala* mostly played to western audiences, local performances in Rwanda point to another difficulty in representing the events of the genocide. Throughout Rwanda applied theatre has been widely used as a way of forging reconciliation

between survivors and perpetrators of the genocide. Theatre for development theorist Ananda Breed (2009) argues however, that these shows may also mobilise political activity which encourages public killings and legal incrimination. Breed suggests that the activities of Rwanda's over three hundred theatre groups, which were set up post-genocide, encouraged people to admit to their activities in the atrocities. Through theatre, people were encouraged to confess in the community *Gacaca* courts, which were established to seek justice for the atrocities. Performances educated communities on how the *Gacaca* operated, and promoted participation in the courts. However, Breed maintains that offering testimony in Rwanda can lead to personal danger. Revenge killings have been common: one hundred and sixty-seven witnesses who gave evidence at the International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda between 1998 and 2008 were killed as a result of their testimony (Zijlstra 2011, n.p). Hope Azeda (2005), an applied theatre worker in Rwanda, explains that many Rwandans were afraid to testify at the *Gacaca* and in the accompanying theatre shows that promote the courts, as they worried about being killed if they gave information about perpetrators. Even sharing information during the creation and performances of applied theatre rehearsals and performances was dangerous as everything said in rehearsals may have been used as evidence in the *Gacaca*. With this in mind, the creation of performances of pain must be carefully considered, when information shared can put people at risk and encourage further acts of violence.

Simply assuming that revealing honest accounts of atrocities will lead to community acceptance, justice, and understanding is therefore problematic. As this analysis about performance on genocide in Rwanda show, attempting to transform traumatic events, it is imperative to consider the context of performances. Performances about the genocide that are staged within Rwanda must consider the safety of participants, and those that are staged outside Rwanda must take care not to reiterate stereotypes of violence in Africa. Although performances may aim to forge reconciliation or understanding they may actually ignite anger and retribution, lead to unexpected legal repercussions, and perpetuate stereotypes and beliefs in a violent other. While Stewart, Jillet and Dunning admonish *Fagaala* for its beauty rather than horror I claim that this strategy can actually transform pain, through encouraging reconciliation.

This approach used by *Fagaala* may be pertinent to my attempt to employ performance as a vehicle to transform the script of rape. Through focusing on beauty over pain, on what works rather than what does not, performance may encourage audiences to engage in otherwise distasteful or dangerous topics. This approach does not seek to educate audiences, but gently works to stimulate awareness and consideration of difficult issues. Rothfield writes that *Fagaala* did not only evoke death, but also life; it did not only represent genocide, but also showed the robustness of life (Rothfield 2005). The dance piece did not fix Rwandans in sites of pain, but also showed their resilience and the beauty of their lives. A similar approach may be used by performances that attempt to dismantle the script of rape, through stimulating people to consider sexual ethics rather than sexual violence.

Stories of Love and Hate (2008)

In looking to work created for an Australian context I turn to Urban Theatre Projects' (UTP) *Stories of Love and Hate* (Oades 2008). *Stories of Love and Hate* used performance as a way of restoring relationships after the Cronulla riots of 2005 (Chidiac & Farid n.d). Like *Fagaala*, this piece did not seek to apportion blame. However, unlike *Fagaala*, *Stories of Love and Hate* looked at the specific events of violence, through delivering direct testimony of some of those involved. *Stories of Love and Hate* was directed by Roslyn Oades and was created through dozens of interviews with community members engaged in the riot at Cronulla beach, a popular seaside spot in Sydney. Over five thousand people were involved in the riot, which Scott Poynting argues 'was the culmination of a campaign of populist incitement waged in the media and by the state' which set 'white' Australians against 'men of middle eastern appearance' (Poynting 2006, p. 85). This conflict became emblematic of a broader social dispute on immigration which was taking place across Australia and an increasing panic about a Middle Eastern/Muslim other who was constructed as inherently dangerous and violent (Poynting 2006, p. 89). *Stories of Love and Hate* wove together edited verbatim interviews with those on both sides of the riot, as well perspectives from other local people. Interviews told of people's first-hand experiences of the conflict and offered a personal account of race relations of the time. The show premiered in the two communities polarised by the events, Bankstown and the Sutherland Shire (Wake 2009b).

Stories of Love and Hate used the technique of headphone verbatim, which was pioneered by London director of Non-Fiction Theatre, Mark Wing-Davey.[9] In this method, actors onstage wear large headphones through which they hear, and then repeat, verbatim interviews. Each word, sound and utterance is repeated with the utmost precision, in a 'unique vocal mechanics' (Williams 2005, p. 41). Through utilising the technique of headphone verbatim, performers and audiences retain a critical distance from what is said. Oades deliberately cast actors against type in *Stories of Love and Hate* in order to inspire a critical distance between the event, and the account of the event. In an interview with performance theorists Bryoni Trezise and Caroline Wake (2009), Oades tells that audiences are:

> not being asked to believe that Mohammad is a girl, they're just being asked to believe that he is saying the words of a girl. Because they are not being asked to believe that 'that guy' is an 80 year old woman, they are suddenly liberated to hear the truth of 'her'.
>
> (p. 7)

While the words uttered on stage signify a subjective truth, they also draw attention to this subjectivity through being spoken by actors whose lack of physical resemblance makes it difficult to conflate them with the characters whose words they repeat. The act of repetition is made obvious, in a similar way to Brecht's *verfrerndungseffekt. Verfrerndungseffekt* deliberately represents the social order as something unnatural and unfamiliar, so that it is shown as something to be investigated (Smith 1991, p. 492). In a similar way, *Stories of Love and Hate* makes words strange and therefore frames them as worthy of analysis.

Stories of Love and Hate used a performance style that detached itself from the verbatim accounts it retold and thus invited critical contemplation of these attitudes. The method of headphone verbatim offers a way for opinions to become disembodied from their speaker, so that words themselves become objects of examination. The aural framing of headphone verbatim shifts the focus away from speakers and onto the words spoken, thus providing a way for audiences to critically analyse and deconstruct attitudes expressed in the play. In focusing upon the words

[9] Oades was a member of Non-Fiction Theatre from 2001-2 (Trezise and Wake 2009, p. 15).

spoken, rather than the speakers themselves, personalities are de-emphasised and points of view are positioned as worthy of scrutiny. This method of framing words encourages a reflective critique, potentially encouraging audiences to deconstruct the opinions heard on stage, and consider how they can also work to prevent violence.

Tim Carroll, collaborator on *Stories of Love and Hate* explains that the play purposefully did not immediately hone in on the painful event. Carroll said to Oades, in the same interview with Trezise and Wake, 'I would argue that that is why you developed your working process: not to talk directly to the topic, but to talk about it tangentially. In *Stories of Love and Hate*, you didn't begin by saying, "I want you to tell me about your experience of Cronulla"' (in Trezise and Wake 2009, p. 4). Oades maintains that *Stories of Love and Hate* was not an attempt to illuminate individuals' motives, but rather, a way to 'form a shared story' from fragments of personal conversations (in Trezise and Wake 2009, p. 4). This shared story did not seek to blame any individual or group, but instead pursued a critical overview of the conflict which allowed divergent points of view to be heard.

However, a seemingly balanced view of violence which deliberately avoids apportioning blame can disregard the opportunity to challenge dominant voices. In some circumstances, like those explored in Gesser-Edelsburg's analysis of *Backyard Games,* it may be more appropriate to be more critical of the actions of some people rather than others. This may be the case in the context of the Cronulla riots. In writing about the riots Scott Poynting (2006) argues that the Australian state gave people 'permission to hate' those who looked to be Middle Eastern, popularly characterising them as 'backward, uncivilised, irrational, violent, criminally inclined, misogynistic and a terrorist threat' (Poynting 2006, p. 88, 88-9). Due to the power imbalance between 'white' Australians and those of 'Middle Eastern appearance' it may have been more pertinent for *Stories of Love and Hate* to focus its narrative on the less dominant voice. It may be argued that 'white' Australians had a lot of spaces to publicly tell their own perspective, as some sections of the media were very interested in their point of view. Radio broadcaster on 2GB, Alan Jones, was found guilty by the Australian Communications and Media Authority of breaching the commercial code by promoting violence that lead to the Cronulla riots. Other print

and television media have also been criticised for encouraging racial vilification that culminated in the attacks (ABC News Online 2007).

In the context of the Cronulla riots, it was feared that narratives which put forward one point of view had the tendency to encourage acts of violence. Therefore in the context in which *Stories of Love and Hate* was performed, a performance which did not seek to blame particular individuals may have had greater opportunities for transformation. A performance that did seek to apportion blame to the 'white' surfers at Cronulla Beach may have inflamed racial tensions rather than operating as an early dialogue between the two groups. Other representations of the Cronulla riots staged within the local area were blamed for reigniting the conflict. A film entitled *The Combination*, described as 'a confronting picture of violence and racism among young Middle Eastern and white Australians, against the backdrop of the 2005 Cronulla riots', was accused of provoking two outbreaks of violence when it played in Parramatta (Brown 2009, n.p). Although the film's director pointed out that the two separate brawls were not racially motivated, the film was pulled from several Sydney locations out of a fear of inciting further violence (Brown 2009). Perhaps out of a similar concern *Stories of Love and Hate* purposefully aimed to allow many points of view to sit together, equally, side-by-side.

Oades claims that *Stories of Love and Hate* actually had a positive impact upon relationships between the communities involved in the riot, and became a platform for communication between the groups. She said that 'people felt so misrepresented by the media – a lot of the boys from Bankstown felt particularly misrepresented – that the offer to tell their story in their words, and then have it re-heard, was potent' (Oades in Trezise and Wake 2009, p. 8). Each interviewee was approached as a figure of inspiration explains Oades, as someone with an extraordinary story to tell. *Stories of Love and Hate* became a way for local people to tell their stories in their own words, without dividing them into either aggressors or victims, as it explored what these groups had in common, looking at themes of love, hate, and belonging (Trezise and Wake 2009, p. 4-5).

When Caroline Wake reviewed *Stories of Love and Hate* for *RealTime*, she argued that the play broadened responsibility of the riots to all Australians, rather than simply apportioning blame to those directly involved. Wake claims that 'the work

shifts the language of multiculturalism itself, returning responsibility to mainstream subjects and asking "How do you listen?"' (Wake 2009b, p. 36). The performance revealed the difficulty of listening, and situated the riots as a crisis of listening: of not-listening or repeating words differently. The final scene of the play reveals the inherent danger in attempting to listen, and how easy it is to misreport what is said. Wake wrote about one scene in which an interview with an old woman was piped over loud speakers while the actor Katia Molino repeated each sound she heard. Although Molino worked arduously to repeat each sound with the utmost fidelity, the words slightly changed in her re-telling. It is here that audiences became aware of the disjunct between what was said, and what was repeated. Wake reasons that this slippage of words highlighted the 'labour of listening', revealing that listening requires diligent attention to detail (Wake 2009b). *Stories of Love and Hate* invited audiences to interrogate their own listening, to ask themselves how they do the work of listening, and the role of listening in building community and connection. According to Wake 'the performance provides us with an opportunity to re-hear our fellow citizens and [in doing so] to rehearse new modes of local, cultural, and national belonging' (Wake 2009a, p. 36). Wake's interpretation of *Stories of Love and Hate* explains that the performance invited audiences to acknowledge their own role in creating and preventing conflict, inciting them to develop their own capacity for listening, rather than looking to blame others for violence and prejudice.

The approaches used by *Stories of Love and Hate* may offer a pertinent way for communities to work towards reconciliation after an act of violence. However, due to its even-handed approach I do not believe it to be an appropriate tool for dismantling the rape script. Gesser-Edelsburg's analysis of *Backyard Games* argues that performances about rape must not attempt to be even-handed but take on the victims' perspective. This is important due to the pervasiveness of the rape script to cloud opinion and judgement. An even-handed approach can affirm a lack of distinction between sex and rape and blame victims for seducing perpetrators.

The House with the Ocean View (2002)

In the last performance analysed in this chapter I ask if performances of pain can acknowledge pain without perpetuating it. How can performance foster a space that

both acknowledges and moves past pain? *The House with the Ocean View*, created and performed by Marina Abramovic, was her attempt to give New Yorkers space and time to grieve after the attacks of 9/11 (Phelan 2004b, p. 25-7). This piece is pertinent to my analysis for the way it responded to shared experiences of pain with a performance of intimacy and personal connection.

In *The House with the Ocean View* Abramovic lived in the Sean Kelly Gallery in New York for twelve days, sleeping, washing, and going to the toilet in full view. During this period she did not allow herself to 'eat, read, write, or speak' but she was able to 'hum and sing' (Phelan 2004b, p. 22). Audiences were invited to approach a line drawn on the floor, and have 'an energy dialogue' with the artist (Phelan 2004a, p. 574). At the back of the room was a telescope directed at Abramovic, focused so that it could 'discern each hair of her eyebrows' (Phelan 2004b, p. 23). People were able to book an hour to sleep in a 'dream room' next to her, and due to the popularity of the performance these places were quickly booked out (Phelan 2004b, p. 22). Abramovic's performance space was raised about six feet off the floor and divided into three rooms: one had a toilet with a shower, the second had a table and a chair, and the third contained a bed and Abramovic's clothes. Each stage had a ladder leading to the ground but its rungs were made from butcher's knives, making it impossible for Abramovic to leave, or audiences to enter her 'house'. Every day Abramovic wore a different colour suit which all had magnets sewn into their seams (Phelan 2004b, p. 22).

The House with the Ocean View was very popular with critics and audiences: it won the New York Dance and Performance Award and was awarded Best Show in a Commercial Gallery from the International Association of Art Critics. *The New York Times* ran four stories about the performance and it was featured in the successful television show, *Sex and the City* in 2003 (Phelan 2004a, p. 569).

Performance theorist Peggy Phelan (1993, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2004a, 2004b) was one of the many people who came to watch *The House with the Ocean View.* Phelan's analysis makes it clear that watching this performance was different to the way audiences watched the other works I've analysed in this chapter. One of Phelan's two papers on *The House with the Ocean View* is a series of letters to Abramovic, in

which she shares her experiences of the performance. In one of these letters she writes about approaching the white line, ready to have an energy dialogue with Abramovic:

> Immediately, our eyes met, locked. I was taken aback by the intensity, the density of your eyes […] Before long, I was sweating. You slowly came off the wall and began to walk towards me. As you walked, my body began to shake.
>
> (Phelan 2004b, p. 24)

Phelan writes about the multitude of emotions and thoughts that passed through her while having this energy dialogue with Abramovic. She thought about 'theories of aggressiveness, narcissism, exhibitionism, voyeurism, questions about love and sacrifice', and felt 'surprise at what I thought was a fairly dull and passive waiting [as it changed] into a genuine drama' (Phelan 2004b, p. 24).

The drama of *The House with the Ocean View* was created through the interrelation between audience members and Abramovic. Activities which occurred on stage (drinking water, showering, dressing, sleeping, going to the toilet) were banal and every day. It was not anticipated that audience members would just passively watch Abramovic perform these activities, but that they would have a wordless energy dialogue with her, in which they could intimately connect in ways that are not usually fostered in big, bustling cities like New York. Arguably, after an event like 9/11, this space and time for intimate sharing became even more important (Phelan 2004b, p. 25-7). Phelan wrote that *The House with the Ocean View* gave her the 'island of time' and silence she needed to reflect upon the overwhelming events of 9/11 (Phelan 2004a, p. 576).

The House with the Ocean View may be seen as inviting audience members to become witnesses to performance. Performances which position audience members as witnesses have some shared characteristics, explains Alex Lazaridis Ferguson (2010) in his analysis of performances at the PuSh Festival in Vancouver. He writes that performances which position their audiences as witnesses are distinguished through typically working in either small, intimate venues, or in spaces where both performers and witnesses can be seen. This encourages a looking back from performers to witnesses, so that the gaze remains reciprocal. These works have a tacit

or overt awareness of themselves as performances, simultaneously reminding witnesses of both the representational and the real. As Lazaridis Ferguson explains, performers in these works do not claim that they are all-knowing about their character or the performance, and refuse to offer witnesses a bundle of meanings which simply need to be unpacked. Instead, performers and witnesses are co-creators of the performance experience. The relationship, the interaction between performers and witnesses is foregrounded, and 'interpretation has been subordinated to encounter [so …] it is in the energy of the encounter that meaning is created, rather than having meaning encoded in the event beforehand by the artist' (Lazaridis Ferguson 2010, p. 3). Or as Phelan explains in her analysis of *The House with the Ocean View,* 'I was a witness to something I did not see and cannot describe' (Phelan 2004a, p. 576).

Within critical theories on witnessing, there are a few distinct ways of writing about the witness (Brecht 1964; Stoddard 2009; Wake 2009c). Brecht famously describes the witness who retells a car accident in his essay 'The Street Scene'. Brecht's witness remains dispassionately detached from events, aiming to retell the accident without 'creating pure emotions', by remaining removed from the emotional experience (Brecht 1964, p. 122). On the other hand, Phelan and director of performance group Forced Entertainment, Tim Etchells, describe witnesses as aroused and disturbed (Wake 2009c). Etchells claims that as a form of ethical spectatorship, bearing witness must be an engagement with the event, so one is a participant in unfolding experiences (in Phelan 1999, p. 9). Wake writes that '[f]or Etchells, the performance event should function in the same way as the accident does – as a type of trauma that renders us speechless, then garrulous' (Wake 2009c, p. 5). Likewise, Phelan maintains that 'witnessing involves collapsing the spatial and emotional distance between [the witness] and the event' (in Wake 2009c, p. 1).

In her analysis of spectatorship and witnessing pain, Christine Stoddard (2009) explains that the notion of the witness 'suggests not only the juridical meaning of eyewitness (testifying to something seen), but also the function of authenticating, the actual experiencing of something in the moment of its occurrence, the inhabiting of proof through one's bodily presence' (Stoddard 2009, n.p). While spectators watch representations of the other, witnesses respond to the experiences of another,

explains Stoddard. While spectators may be able to give an account of what is seen, witnesses become a part of the event itself. Witnessing brings something into existence, both shaping and revealing an experience (Stoddard 2009).

In an attempt to clarify the way the term 'witness' is used in theatre and performance studies, Wake formulates a taxonomy of witnessing, using Brecht's 'The Street Scene' as a way of describing her analysis. She points out that within 'The Street Scene' there are in fact, two sites of witnessing: the accident, and the account. According to Wake, primary witnesses view performances as the accident, while secondary witnesses view performances as accounts of accidents (Wake 2009b). In this taxonomy the perspectives of Phelan and Etchells are considered those of primary witnesses, who consider performances as akin to accidents. Brecht's witness is therefore a secondary witness, who is one step removed, and engages with the account of the accident rather than the accident itself.

So according to Wake's taxonomy, Phelan is a primary witness, and *The House with the Ocean View* is the accident itself. However, the accident of *The House with the Ocean View* is not a testimony of, nor a literal re-presentation of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Instead, it attempted to become a quiet space and time for New Yorkers to pause and reflect upon their own overwhelming experiences of these attacks and their aftermath. Abramovic's accident was a tender act of social connection and sharing that countered the way 9/11 threatened social bonds. Describing the short and long term social effects of the 9/11 attacks on those in the United States Joshua Woods (2011) explains that 'many people perceived an increased threat to their personal safety and the safety of their family, friends and the nation as a whole' (Woods 2011, p. 214). He writes that after 9/11 there was an increased interest in protecting and affirming one's insider status and an escalating perception of the threat of the other (Woods 2011, p. 215). *The House with the Ocean View* was an accident which did not sever social bonds and increase fear, but sought connection and intimacy.

Witnessing *The House with the Ocean View* enabled Phelan to feel, and then transform her own distressing experiences of 9/11 (Phelan 2004a, p. 576). In bearing witness to this performance Phelan writes that she began to remember and

experience the events of that day, which at the time, were felt as a mass of confusion and distress. Phelan writes '[g]radually the whole day came flooding back to me, the feeling of drowning in an event whose density still cannot be fully taken in' (Phelan 2004b, p. 25). Perhaps incongruously, in beginning to experience this event, Phelan writes that she was given the opportunity to be absent from her own memories. In reliving these painful experiences while being held by Abramovic's uncompromising gaze, she writes that she was able to both remember and simultaneously forget. Through this wordless witnessing Phelan experienced intimacy and connection where once there was rupture and confusion. She explained that *The House with the Ocean View* highlighted a deeper sense of humanity, supporting New Yorkers to 'look at things from another perspective [and …] to think about love in the face of hate' (Phelan 2004b, p. 27).

In averting representation of the actual events of 9/11 Abramovic acknowledges Sontag's claim that suffering must not be made into spectacle, and that representations of pain cannot actually inspire an understanding of the lived events. Abramovic's approach did not encourage a distant, critical analysis, but allowed an emotional engagement with the painful event. In an interview with Laurie Anderson Abramovic told: 'I was there to be projected on […] You can't imagine how much I cried in that piece. This sadness comes because they project their own sadness onto me and I reflect it back' (Abramovic in Anderson 2003).

I argue that this approach, of situating performance as the accident itself, is pertinent for my project. In performing *The House with the Ocean View* as an accident which created intimate connection, rather than one which caused rupture, Abramovic showed how painful events can be transformed through performance. Through foregrounding intimacy and personal connection *The House with the Ocean View* transformed pain by allowing witnesses to sit quietly with their emotions. As audiences connected with the artist they were able to rebuild damaged social bonds. I suggest that this approach has the potential to gently rebuild the social bonds that are destroyed by rape, offering a safe space for people to acknowledge their emotions, while focusing on rebuilding trust and intimacy.

Key ideas from chapter 3

This chapter has explored the way performances of pain can work towards prevention. It began by looking at the difference between trauma and pain. While the notion of trauma is often linked to rape and used to frame applied theatre projects that work after crises, I claim that the concept of trauma is not effective for my purposes, as it reinforces rather than disrupts the script of rape. Popular concepts of rape as inevitably leading to trauma perpetuate the fear of rape and stops women from thwarting rape attempts. Marcus maintains that framing rape as a terrifying attack stops women from fighting back and attempting to avert assaults. She argues that 'rapes succeed *as a result* of women's fears', because women learn to become 'subjects of fear' rather than agents of violence (Marcus 1992, p. 394, my emphasis; p. 393).

Several performances from different countries were analysed in this chapter for the particularly lucid ways they attempted to transform pain. These works, *Backyard Games, Thetha Ngikhulume, The Story I am about to Tell, Fagaala, Stories of Love and Hate,* and *The House with the Ocean View* used different approaches to performing pain and were performed in multiple contexts for different audiences. Through an exploration of these performances I claim that works which seek to prevent rape must frame pain in specific ways. Firstly, as Gesser Edelsburg's analysis of *Backyard Games* makes clear, performances must ensure that the pain of rape is told from victims' perspectives. *Backyard Games* may have failed to produce the results it aimed for because neither the pain nor the perspective of Dvori, the rape victim, were evident throughout the piece. Instead, Dvori was constructed as somewhat inviting her own assault by being sexually provocative and desperate for attention. In coming from victims' point of view performances have greater capacity to undermine the notion that women incite their own rapes through provocative behaviour. This framing also ensures that perpetrators are not reconceived as the 'real' victims of rape. As *Backyard Games* showed, dominant social scripts of gender and sexuality can lead audiences to presume that perpetrators are actually victimised by their own sexual desires, a society that does not understand them, and that they are sexually misled by the women they rape.

Yet simply telling victims' stories and highlighting their pain is not necessarily transformative. When audience members have similar lived experiences to those represented on stage, a realistic performance style may encourage further pain, rather than transform it, as occurred in performances of *Thetha Ngikhulume* and *The Story I am about to Tell.* In these circumstances, when performers and audience share similar histories of recent pain, performances of beauty and forgetting may be more effective in encouraging the transformation of pain. The performance of *Fagaala,* which referenced the Rwandan genocide, showed how painful experiences may be made into beautiful pieces of art that enable audience members to transcend their feelings of sadness. *Fagaala* chose to represent the genocide abstractly, distancing itself from exact replication, and thus allowing audiences to also step back from pain. Painful events were woven into the fabric of everyday life, and were not allowed to take precedence. I argue that this approach may encourage audiences to acknowledge and move on from pain instead of fixing it to certain events and individuals.

Stories of Love and Hate likewise retained a critical distance from the painful events it retold. However, I would not recommend the approach used by this performance as a way to transform the script of rape. *Stories of Love and Hate* gave equal space and weight to the perspectives of both 'white' Australians and those who looked 'Middle Eastern'. As my analysis of *Backyard Games* shows, when telling stories about rape this type of equality is misled. I argue that performances which seek to transform beliefs that perpetuate rape must give the experiences of victims' greater significance than those of perpetrators.

On the other hand, Abramovic's *The House with the Ocean View* provided a significant approach to dealing with the pain of rape in performance. The approach modelled in this work is valuable for performances that attempt to transform the script of rape as it did not reiterate painful events but instead created a space of intimacy and connection. *The House with the Ocean View* indicated how performances of pain can emotionally engage with audiences who may have similar lived experiences to those referred to by the performance. Like Abramovic's work I suggest that the script of rape can be transformed through focusing on its alternatives, that is, by exploring relationships which are sexually ethical.

In the next chapter I analyse performances I attended at the Drama for Life festival in Johannesburg, South Africa, in order to seek further performative approaches for transformation. I am particularly interested in analysing these works as the festival is designed to showcase performances which seek to prevent the spread and impact of HIV. Many works at this festival sought to transform normative scripts of sexuality and gender that allow HIV to flourish. I ask how these works may assist me to develop a performance piece that works within my own context, in Adelaide, Australia. Attending this festival enabled me to view a multitude of applied drama pieces, watching performances, as well as audience responses to performances. I did not have to rely on reports by reviewers or applied theatre theorists, but could instead form my own critical interpretations based on attending performances.

CHAPTER 4: THE DRAMA FOR LIFE FESTIVAL

In 2010 I attended the Drama for Life (DFL) Festival and the African Research Conference (ARC) in Johannesburg, South Africa, in order to investigate the ways in which a range of artists use techniques of applied theatre. I was particularly interested in attending the DFL Festival due to its strong connections between the theories and practices of applied theatre and its focus on issues around gender and sexuality. Each performance at the week-long arts festival attempted to enhance 'the capacity of communities to take responsibility for the quality of their lives' and build 'capacity in HIV and AIDS education and prevention' (Drama for Life Festival Program 2010, p. 1). I look towards performances at the DFL Festival as vibrant examples of the way performances are used to intervene in issues around gender and sexuality in South Africa. This chapter will look at examples from the DFL Festival and ask how the methods can be effectively applied to my project of using performance to undermine scripts of gender and sexuality that produce rape.

The Drama for Life (DFL) festival comes from the program of the same name at Witwatersrand University. The DFL program began in 2008, launched by arts educator and drama therapist Warren Nebe. The program now has a range of postgraduate courses in applied drama, theatre in education and drama therapy. Scholars come from around South Africa and throughout the rest of Africa as it is the only program in Africa with a postgraduate course in applied drama.[10] The DFL Festival began in 2009 in Johannesburg, and in 2010 festival events were also held in the South African cities of Durban, Cape Town and Pietermaritzburg. The festival is an annual event and occurs each August/September across these cities in South Africa. The main part of the festival is one week of performances, workshops, poetry and installations at the Witwatersrand University campus in Johannesburg. These events are mostly staged by DFL students and local artists and are created to 'promote knowledge about HIV/AIDs, the realities of the pandemic and to seek innovative ways of communicating sex related issues' (Artslink.co.za 2010, n.p). In 2010 the festival took on the theme of 'Sex Actually', and it has retained this focus,

[10] Scholarships to the DFL programme are offered to outstanding students from across Africa who could not otherwise afford the course fees (Drama for Life, n.d[b]).

subsequently being referred to on the DFL homepage as the 'Drama for Life Sex Actually Festival' (n.d[a]).

The DFL Festival is closely followed by and integrated with the ARC. The ARC features performances, presentations, and panel discussions on the role of applied drama and theatre practices across Africa. While festival attendees are mostly DFL students and local artists, the ARC has a broader participation and was also attended by researchers in applied drama, alumni, and performing artists from over Africa. In 2010 there were two hundred attendees at the ARC who discussed their work on the intersections between gender, sexuality and HIV, the use of theatre in conflict and peace, and practice as research. This chapter focuses primarily on the performances which I viewed at the DFL Festival. However knowledge gleaned from the ARC enriches the investigation.

The DFL Festival provided a forum for difficult or taboo issues around sexuality to be explored and discussed publicly. Many different performances and events represented issues around sex and sexuality which are usually forbidden from official discourse. The festival was launched by the drag queen, Miss Diversity; one talked-about show, *Debbie Does My Dad*, written and performed by Bobby Gordon, depicted Gordon's life growing up with a father who was a porn star (Watsky 2010); the show *Pillow Talk*, created by Witwatersrand students Lumko Leqela and Andisiwe Mpinda and acted in by other students, gave explicit advice about improving sex in heterosexual relationships (Leqela 2010); and performers at the spoken word event *Lover and Another*, Eazy Stevezy and Deep Fried Man, discussed promiscuous sexual relationships. While these topics are discussed in the South African popular media, the DFL Festival looked to foster more critical and complex public discussions. The DFL Festival cultivated alternative dialogues around sex and sexuality, engaged audiences on issues around sexual ethics, and explored different performances of femininity and masculinity.

African cultures have long histories of using the arts as a vital form of education and therapy and continue to do so in contemporary times. Applied theatre is widely used throughout Africa. Geographically and linguistically isolated communities who have limited access to resources can be reached by performance, as it is adaptable to local

contexts, and does not depend upon literate audiences. Mainstream health and education organisations in South Africa often create performances as a way of educating communities and improving health outcomes (Wood and Jewkes 2009). Consequently, the field of applied theatre in South Africa is vital and highly developed.

Significantly, the issues of rape and HIV are intimately linked in many geographical regions, including South Africa. The National Population Unit of South Africa draws connections between high rates of HIV and rape, arguing that 'it is not a coincidence that South Africa has among the worst HIV rates and the worst rape statistics' (in Coombe 2002, p. 5). In 1995 Human Rights Watch dubbed South Africa the 'rape capital of the world', and fifteen years later in 2010, they wrote that this country had the highest number of rapes reported to the police.[11] Several theorists working in the area of rape prevention in South Africa claim that sexual coercion is common in schools, workplaces, amongst friends, in sexual relationships, and in marriages. It also seems that young women are at particular risk of being raped, while men who have some degree of social mobility are at a higher risk of committing rape (Bhana 2009, Jewkes and Abrahams 2002; Jewkes et al 2002; Jewkes et al 2009, Jewkes et al 2011; Wood and Jewkes 2009). In a recent study with one thousand, seven hundred and thirty-seven randomly selected South African men between the ages of eighteen and forty nine, twenty seven percent reported having committed a rape in their lifetime, and fifty three percent of those told that they had committed more than one act of rape (Jewkes et al 2011). Gang rapes in South Africa are also common. Nineteen point five percent of men who were interviewed for this study told that they had either participated, or assisted in, a gang rape.

Many theorists argue that a culture of male entitlement perpetuates this high rate of rape. While poverty and lack of education are sometimes put forward as risk factors

[11] The bold claim that South Africa was the 'rape capital of the world' was widely debated in South Africa at the time, with the then president, Thabo Mbeki, claiming that the statistics were not gathered correctly. The Human Rights Watch gained their statistics by following the dictates of local NGO's who argued that there were thirty five rapes for every one reported to the police. Since this time there has been debate within South Africa about the rates of rape and how these figures are gathered (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002). In 2010 Human Rights Watch cited research by the Medical Research Council of South Africa which found that twenty eight percent of men who were surveyed had raped a woman or girl.

for rape, when researching rape in South Africa, Rachel Jewkes, Yandisa Sikweyiya, Robert Morrell, and Kristin Dunkle (2011) found that this was not strictly the case. They found that men who had finished school and received some higher education were more likely to have committed rapes, although this petered off at the highest levels of income and education. They argue that having this little bit of money and education made these men believe they were entitled to women and gave them heightened status in their communities which may have given them more access to women. In an earlier paper in which they reported on interviews with pregnant teenagers in Cape Town, Katherine Wood and Rachel Jewkes (2009) wrote that: 'All but one of the informants interviewed described assault as a regular feature of their sexual relationships' (p. 41). Rape is a huge social problem in South Africa, exacerbated by a history of violence, and made more dangerous by the prevalence of HIV. South Africa provides an interesting context for my exploration on rape prevention due to the country's high rates of rape, the interconnections between rape and HIV, and the important investigations that are underway to prevent these.

The DFL Festival aims to pull together western forms of performance and traditional African forms of performance. Or, as Nebe puts it: 'Drama for Life has been built on the premise of acknowledging the historical relationship in the West between Educational Drama and Drama Therapy, and the historical relationship between Theatre for Development, Theatre of the Oppressed and Theatre-Making in Africa' (Johnson and Nebe 2013). My analysis of the DFL Festival divides performances into three different sections based on the approaches for transformation that these works used. The three sections are message-based performances, problem performances and dialogic performances. These terms were not utilised by the performance-makers to describe their performances; they are labels I created myself in order to clarify the approaches used and how they may be of value to my work. I consider *Hopes and Dreams* by Themba Interactive to be a message-based performance as it delivered information about how to cope with a recent HIV diagnosis, and about HIV in the context of a heterosexual partnership (Themba Interactive 2010). The dance pieces *Deep Night* and *Sexscape* by choreographer P.J Sabbagha, and *In the Tearoom,* written and directed by Onthatile Matshido, are all considered problem performances as they do not attempt to find solutions to the issues they present, but instead present problems in all their complexity (Sabbagha

2010a, 2010b; Matshido 2010). Bonfire Theatre Company's *Stories of Transformation* is typified as a dialogic performance due to the way it uses performance as a vehicle for public conversation (Bonfire Theatre 2010). Like problem performances, this approach does not seek solutions, but encourages audience members to share diverse stories and different opinions. I look for the ways the approaches used by artists at DFL could be applied to my project, questioning if they show potential for transforming the script of rape.

Message-based performances

In this first section I explore one performance at the DFL Festival, *Hopes and Dreams* by Themba Interactive, which I refer to as a 'message-based performance'. I call applied drama works that are designed to deliver specific information to their audiences 'message-based performances'. These shows are typically produced by a variety of people, including non-government organisations, government organisations, theatre companies, schools, health centres, and groups of artists or community members. While some theorists critique performances which are overtly instructional for being didactic and domesticating audiences, *Hopes and Dreams* showed that this is not necessarily the case (Boal 1985; Chinyowa 2005; Freire 1970; Gaskell and Taylor 2007). In her research on different types of drama in South Africa Loren Kruger (1999, 2004) points out that although it may seem unusual to western adults when characters offer advice, this approach is familiar to many African audiences, who are used to live performances in which performers and audiences are invited to offer advice to characters and comment upon the show both during and after performances (Kruger 1999, p. 114). It is also worth noting that all theatrical traditions have some history with creating (or justifying) performance as a medium to deliver information (Prentki 1998; Taylor and Gaskell 2007). I consider *Hopes and Dreams* to be a message-based performance as it sought to offer and clarify information about HIV as well as prevent stigma around a positive diagnosis.

'Themba' means 'trust' in the Zulu language. On their website Themba Interactive write that they use applied drama as a way of educating South Africans about the prevention of HIV/AIDs, sexual reproduction, human rights, social justice and

diversity. Themba Interactive is a theatre company that makes work aimed at marginalised young people, and an education program for government and private companies (Themba Interactive 2013e). The company, which was initially called 'Themba HIV & AIDs Organisation' was establsihed by Kim Hope and Theresa Lynne in 2002 in response to Archbishop Thabo Makgoba's invitation to use theatre to prevent the transmission of HIV amongst at-risk young people (Themba Interactive 2013d). At present, Themba Interactive is one of the leading professional theatre companies for young people in South Africa and regularly performs free shows to government schools across the Gauteng region about issues that affect young people in these communities.

Hopes and Dreams began with the cast performing high energy singing and dancing to an accompanying djembe drum beat. After this initial explosion of noise and energy we were asked to hold one minute's silence for all those who have been affected by HIV. Then a short scene, or an anti-model, was enacted (Boal 1992, p. 232). In this scene a young female character Cindy found out that that she tested positive for HIV and blamed her boyfriend Jabu. Cindy told Jabu that she was leaving him. She was angry and claimed that she'd already had an abortion, and didn't want to have a baby with HIV. Jabu begged her to return but Cindy only answered 'I am dying because of you'. The scene ended with Jabu getting really drunk with his friend.

Once the anti-model was over the performers asked the audience what the scene was about: we answered 'HIV', 'relationships', and 'communication'. In order to prompt a discussion on these themes, the facilitators hot-seated Cindy and Jabu, questioned them on their actions and motivations in the scene, and asked them about HIV, relationships, and communication. Hot-seating is a technique in which a character is placed in a 'hot-seat' so they can be asked questions about their motivations and behaviours by facilitators and audience members. Cindy and Jabu answered all questions with the facilitators interrupting to correct any untrue assumptions that the characters had. The audience asked Cindy and Jabu several questions, such as 'how old are you?', 'how long have you known you were HIV positive?' and 'how do you keep healthy?'. In turn, the facilitators explained to Cindy and Jabu that babies don't

automatically get HIV if the mother is infected, and reassured Cindy that abortion is legal in South Africa.

The audience was then invited to question and offer advice to Cindy and Jabu as if we were one of their friends. Amongst other advice I suggested that if I were Cindy's friend I'd encourage her to gain support for her new status by meeting other people with HIV; the facilitators invited me on stage to act this out with Cindy. Taking the role of Cindy's friend I came onto the stage and tried to soothe her, telling her that she may cope better if she befriended others with HIV. However, Cindy was unresponsive and questioned my assumption. My intervention was useless and I neither managed to change Cindy's mind nor reassure her that she was going to be all right. There was no 'magic', and HIV remained a complex issue that was not so easily solved. The notion of 'magic' in a Theatre of the Oppressed work is a solution that may seem apt when performed on stage, but cannot be realistically enacted off stage (Jackson in Boal 1992, p. xxvi-xxvii). The aim of Forum Theatre is to rehearse actions for 'real life', using the stage as a safe space to practice a range of practical options (Boal 1992, p. 174). An option that works on stage but is impossible or impractical off stage is considered to be 'magic' and therefore invalid.

I took my seat in the audience and the facilitators asked 'what would you do if your boyfriend told you he had HIV?'. An interesting discussion ensued. The woman sitting next to me said that images of HIV are really scary and she would break up with him so she didn't have to face this. Many people began to offer differing opinions. Another woman said that perhaps Jabu didn't disclose his HIV status as he wanted Cindy to fall in love with him first. She then reasoned that he would disclose his status once she was in love with him and couldn't leave him so easily. Although we were not getting any closer to a definitive answer about how, when, and whether or not to disclose one's positive status to an intimate partner, the discussion was energised, with most audience members engaging with each other's different opinions. The facilitators soon stopped our discussion and invited us to repeat a call and response with the performers: we said 'I have HIV', and responded with 'I still care for you'. This was followed by a few scenes in which people successfully disclosed their positive status to friends and family, with one character admitting that they had HIV, and the other character responding that they still cared for them.

One of the strengths of Themba Interactive's work may be in the way it flexibly draws upon different techniques of applied drama in order to use the methods that are most appropriate for various issues and audiences. Themba Interactive explains their work as 'a unique blend of renowned Brazilian artist Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre and applied drama techniques' (Themba Interactive 2013c, n.p). Because *Hopes and Dreams* did not rigidly adhere to Boal's Forum Theatre they were able to avoid some of the didactic, and therefore non-critical, messages which Forum Theatre is sometimes accused of perpetuating. For example, in his work with students in grade ten and eleven at Thabo Luthuli School in KwaZulu-Natal Dennis Francis (2010) wrote about the use of Forum Theatre to foster open dialogue about sexuality and HIV. Francis found, however, that the students' final Forum Theatre piece was didactic, merely delivering biomedical information about HIV, and reinforcing gendered stereotypes. While Boal assumes that Forum Theatre will enable spect-actors to challenge normative views, Francis contends that that this is not always the case: his high school students did not use Forum Theatre to confront the status quo, but instead to reiterate its terms.

In moving away from a rigid adherence to Boalian techniques Themba Interactive can perhaps more accurately represent the issue of HIV and suit the cultural contexts they work within. Chinyowa points out that the strict division between 'oppressed' and 'oppressor' that traditional Forum Theatre demands is a generalisation which is out of place in the context of post-apartheid South Africa (2013). This notion of a fixed oppressed and oppressor are also misplaced when exploring the issue of HIV. Boal's methods have their roots in overcoming political oppression in which people have set and often predetermined roles, and HIV is a virus and cannot be examined in this same way. Themba Interactive broke from Boal's method and did not divide their scene into a simplistic relationship between an oppressed and an oppressor. Although Cindy suggested that Jabu passed on the virus to her, he was not positioned as the oppressor, and appeared as kind and concerned. Likewise, Cindy did not take on the role of the oppressed, as she yelled at Jabu, stood up for her own rights, and defiantly left him even though he begged her to stay; Cindy was not the submissive woman who had been taken advantage of and Jabu was not the cruel oppressor.

Hopes and Dreams appeared to supplement the use of Boalian Forum Theatre with some techniques used in Enhanced Forum Theatre which was developed by theorists and practitioners Bruce Burton (2007) and John O'Toole as a way of examining issues in more complexity than in Boal's method.[12] *Hopes and Dreams* drew upon the Enhanced Forum Theatre technique of using several scenes as an anti-model to show the changing relationship between Cindy and Jabu. The play used the technique of hot-seating, which is also used in Enhanced Forum Theatre. Burton argues that this technique has the ability to reveal some of the complexities of the problem; it can reveal the characters' motivations and their private thoughts and feelings about the conflict. Also like Enhanced Forum Theatre, *Hopes and Dreams* focused on making the performance aesthetically relevant to audiences. The play drew upon African performance styles to ensure it appeared pertinent. It used traditional African drumming and dance, improvisation, audience interaction, and direct address, all of which are frequently used in popular performance throughout South Africa (Chinyowa 2009; Kruger 1999).

The language and style utilised by *Hopes and Dreams* enabled it to appeal to South African young people and deliver messages without becoming didactic. The characters Cindy and Jabu were able to remain realistically young, with the same kinds of attitudes and knowledge as their target audiences, as it was facilitators who expanded on knowledge and corrected their misinterpretations. The performance did not didactically present information to young people, as characters were not framed as experts who delivered advice, but who went through experiences that stimulated audience discussion on the issues of HIV and relationships.

Perhaps Themba Interactive's most pertinent strategy for social change is the way the company is structured. Themba Interactive is made up of people who have the same backgrounds as their target communities. The company trains peer educators in two correctional facilities in Johannesburg, and runs an internship project, in which young people from disadvantaged learning backgrounds are educated in sexual

[12] Enhanced Forum Theatre brings together Boalian Forum Theatre with techniques used in improvisation and process drama, and was developed to tackle the issue of bullying in NSW schools from 1999-2001 (Burton 2007, p. 34). This method aims to encourage a more thorough interpretation of the issue, and to critically examine the history of the situation. To do this Enhanced Forum Theatre uses several techniques, including using more than one scene as an anti-model, and instead creating three scenes which follow the development of the problem over time.

health and applied drama. The company purposefully aims to work with skilled artists who share the same backgrounds as their audiences of marginalised young people from around South Africa. In doing so, Themba Interactive remains relevant and accessible to their viewers and can quickly respond to the needs of their target communities. In order to engage with young people on their own level the company is made up of enthusiastic youth who appear as role models as well as working artists.

The importance of this strategy of ensuring that messages delivered through performance are given by those who have similar backgrounds to audience members is highlighted by a performance from the ensemble, DFL Playback Theatre Company. DFL Masters student Ngefor Shella Zanjam (2011) wrote about the DFL Playback Theatre Company's performance at Hillbrow Theatre for the DFL Festival in 2010. Her analysis showed the disconnection which can occur when there are vast differences between performers and audiences. In this particular show, all six performers were white South African and all seventy five members of the audience were black South Africans. This affected the eagerness of the audience to participate, and Zanjam characterised this performance as 'silent'. Zanjam writes that because intimacy was not established the few participants who did engage were laughed at and derided by other audience members. One audience member was overheard to say that playback was obviously 'a white man's thing' (in Zanjam 2011, p. 43).

Marlin-Curiel points out that although most theatre for development work in Africa is initiated by community workers and artists from outside the communities in which they work there is what she calls 'a more radical, "corrected" strain of TfD', that shares similarities with Themba Interactive's approach (Marlin-Curiel 2002, p. 279). In this method, which descended from the work of theatre for development practitioner Ngugi wa Miiri and his group the Zimbabwean Association of Community Theatre, practitioners work with their own communities instead of importing theatre workers and shows. Ngugi's approach is to encourage artists to work with their own communities, and when looking for theatre workers, employ local people (Manyozo 2002; Marlin-Curiel 2002). In his analysis of the Marotholi Travelling Theatre in Lesotho, Zakes Mda (1993) found that people's levels of conscientisation rose in direct correspondence to the level of local participation. He

argues that conscientisation, or critical analyses, only occurs when the people themselves produce and distribute their own messages, and 'identify and solve their own problems' (Mda 1993, p. 196). Prentki claims that performance can be a grass-roots method of activism, using the participation of local people, and an awareness of specific community needs is necessary to create long-lasting transformation. In order for this to occur performances and messages must be 'in the language and style of the community', as is the work of Themba Interactive (Prentki 1998, p. 428).

Hopes and Dreams was more than a theatrical instruction manual designed to give its audiences expert information. Instead, performances were sites which enabled audiences to critically engage with the issue of HIV, encouraging people to consider this familiar issue in new ways, and clarifying understandings and misunderstandings. The play did not simply attempt to persuade its audiences to adopt a specific point of view, but instead created a stimulating learning environment which encouraged people to come to a consensus about the best approach to the problems presented. This is what Ian Gaskell and Robin Taylor, who analyse the work on Won Smol Bag Theatre Company in Vanuatu, refer to as 'constitutive' self-persuasion, rather than 'instrumental' persuasion (Gaskell and Taylor 2004; Taylor and Gaskell 2007). Whereas performances which elicit instrumental persuasion urge audiences to engage with a potentially abstract point of view, works which rely upon constitutive self-persuasion incite audiences to engage with the learning experience of the performance itself. *Hopes and Dreams* did not deliver messages from the stage as a one-way monologue, but used performance as a way of stimulating a shared negotiation and vital learning experience.

While I refer to *Hopes and Dreams* as a message-based performance, this show was not simply a vehicle to transmit expert knowledge to marginalised communities. The company structure of Themba Interactive ensures that the group is led by the young people who are targeted by Themba's messages. Messages are not only delivered to these groups, but guided by, and created in partnership with these communities (Themba Interactive 2013b). Through being deeply embedded within their target communities, Themba Interactive has a thorough understanding of the themes they raise and the potential sensitivities which may be involved in presenting these themes. Through working with skilled young people, Themba Interactive enables

youth to express their own opinions on issues of pertinence to them. Young people themselves drive social change, speaking to their communities in a way that allows them to change their personal circumstances, and also encourage shared transformation. In this way, those who are usually relegated to listening are involved in creating the messages which their communities are asked to listen to.

This strategy of engaging with members of target communities to deliver health and education messages back to communities has promise for this investigation. In looking to transform scripts of sexuality and gender that produce rape applied theatre can be a compelling tool due to its ability to cheaply and effectively present information. However, as has been shown in the analysis of *Hopes and Dreams*, when this information does not appear as relevant to audiences they may quickly dismiss it as emanating from a distant authority who does not understand their circumstances or needs. When members of these communities themselves are engaged in creating and delivering this information it is received as more relevant and applicable to audiences' lives. In their analysis of a peer education program between sex workers in a mining region of South Africa Catherine Campbell and Zodwa Mzaidume (2011) claim that when individuals from target communities delivered health messages themselves these marginalised women were empowered to become advocates for and experts within their communities.

Problem performances

While message-based performances suggest a specific way forward, problem performances show the issue at hand without offering any solutions. I use the term 'problem performance' to denote works which explore social issues in order to inspire social change. Significantly, problem performances frame the social issues they discuss as ethical conundrums rather than issues that can be easily solved. The issues raised in problem performances are often complex ones without a clear solution: these works are designed to encourage debate and critical reflection rather than easy solutions. In these performances problems are framed as significant and worthy of social consideration. At the DFL Festival I saw several performances which I would typify as problem performances. These were *Deep Night* and

Sexscape choreographed by P.J Sabbagha and *In the Tearoom* written and directed by Onthatile Matshido. Each of these works explored social problems which are pertinent in contemporary South Africa. They worked towards social transformation by engaging audiences in complex issues, framing them as significant, and encouraging people to reflect upon them. *Deep Night*, *Sexscape* and *In the Tearoom* were able to raise topics which are ordinarily difficult or sensitive and craft them in such a way that a straight-forward conclusion was not likely. They engaged audiences in sensitive and complex issues through a focus on visual aesthetics and poetic consideration of the issues.

The well-known award-winning South African choreographer P.J Sabbagha presented two well-attended performances on the first and last evenings of the DFL festival, *Deep Night* and *Sexscape. Deep Night* was a dance piece created in collaboration with dancer Dada Masilo and performed by Masilo together with Witwatersrand students Bifikile Sedibi, Ivan Teme, and Songezo Mcillizeli (City of Johannesburg 2009). On the other hand, *Sexscape* was a physical theatre piece created in collaboration with dancers from Witwatersrand School of Arts especially for the DFL Festival in 2010 (DFL Festival Program 2010). Each were well-crafted and intensely physical, alternately serene and beautiful, and then suddenly tumultuous and shocking. Both *Deep Night* and *Sexscape* explored the highly-charged atmosphere of sexual relationships between young people. *Deep Night* looked at youth clubbing culture, set in the early hours of the morning, the 'witching hour', when young people had taken lots of drugs and alcohol and were frantically attempting to hook up before the night was over (Btdanceproject 2010). Behind the dancers time-lapsed images were projected showing the streetscape outside a nightclub, giving the stage a green hue, and the piece an urban, gritty feel. In a similar way, *Sexscape* explored 'the aftermath and residues of our sexual relationships' (Drama for Life Festival Program 2010, p. 7). The dance piece staged the dynamics of attraction as two or more dancers admired each other from across the stage, and slowly came together for sensual, erotic and turbulent engagements. Throughout each of these small sequences there was always one person on stage watching. This was the eternal witness, sometimes seeming like a curious onlooker, and at other times seeming like an inner judge who was attempting to perceive and evaluate these sporadic and intense sexual exchanges.

Both dance pieces incorporated natural elements of decay, fragility and chaos. The wind was an integral element in *Deep Night*, appearing in the form of a combative leaf blower, which shook up and disturbed ordinarily peaceful scenes. During one sequence a woman entered the stage and begun to dance. She was interrupted, however, by a man who brought the large leaf blower onstage, and aggressively chased her with it, blowing off her clothes, and eventually her wig as she desperately struggled to keep them on. Left alone, bald, and in her underwear, the woman looked vulnerable and shaken. Another man entered and tried to cover her up with newspapers; however, these too were eventually blown across the stage by the fan. The stage of *Sexscape* was packed full of autumn leaves, which crackled as the dancers leapt across them, and flew around the room when they threw them at each other. Nothing was allowed to rest, remain peaceful or beautiful; all that was serene became chaos.

Deep Night and *Sexscape* did not present the issue of HIV as simple, but as a complex layering of behaviours and interrelationships. There were no simple guidelines for prevention, messages about safe sex, or pointers towards right and wrong; instead highly sexual and potentially dangerous youth cultures were simply represented onstage. Risk and danger were presented but never resolved. The pieces were not designed to deliver information about HIV, but to engage audiences on the issue of living in a landscape in which this virus is common. When speaking about the piece, Sabbagha said that he is motivated by the notion that many young people would rather have casual sex with someone they just met, and risk becoming infected with HIV than have a conversation about condoms. Sabbagha went on to say that although there is a lot of HIV and AIDS education in South Africa this is mostly based on fear and shame (Btdanceproject 2010). His pieces for the DFL Festival were not about fear or shame but were beautiful and physically fierce performances which encouraged audiences to critically consider sexuality and desire in contemporary South Africa.

Sabbagha's performances used beauty and aesthetic quality to engage audiences on the issue of HIV. Mda argues that performances which privilege aesthetics are often successful in managing to critically engage audiences. He writes that 'those works

which were of high aesthetic quality in the utilisation of popular performance modes […] were the most effective in drawing people to participate in a critical analysis process' (Mda in Prentki and Preston 2009, p. 193). The audiences with whom I attended *Deep Night* and *Sexscape* certainly appeared to be critically engaged with the works. The audience member I sat next to during *Deep Night* speculated that AIDS was like the never-ending wind from the leaf blower which eventually turned all dances into disarray, and another at *Sexscape* suggested that the autumn leaves strewn across the stage represented all the dying people in South Africa due to AIDS. These audience members were actively trying to engage with the meanings made by the performances, and appeared both affected by the work, and stimulated by its suggestions.

Likewise, the problem performance *In the Tearoom* also used high aesthetic quality to critically engage its audiences in sensitive issues: issues which are usually difficult to publicly discuss, such as extra-marital sexual relationships and homosexuality. This performance was slow and beautiful, performed by two actors, a man and a woman, who wore masks and simple costumes and were silent throughout the entire show. This man and woman appeared as husband and wife, and they repeated the same sequence again and again, through a series of stylised gestures, creating the image of a ritualised, monotonous existence. This repeated sequence began with the man coming to the breakfast table and sitting down. His wife put on his jacket and placed his breakfast in front of him; he ate, his wife gave him his briefcase, and he left the house for work. At the end of the work day the man re-entered his home, his wife took his briefcase and his jacket, and gave him his dinner. Every day was repeated in exactly the same way, with the lives of these two characters completely interwoven and dependent upon each other, yet completely silent and seemingly distant.

Once this quiet, repetitive ritual was established, however, the man broke away from it. On his way to work he stopped by a toilet and had sex with another man. The ritual then continued, unabated: the man came home from work, his wife took his jacket and briefcase, and he ate his dinner. Nothing changed and no words were spoken. However, their once seemingly comfortable relationship now began to appear as oppressive and a charade. As the piece continued, the endless daytime

ritual repeated. Yet now the man sometimes broke free from his role by having anonymous sex before quickly slipping back into his endless routine. The man and woman began to be reduced to the roles they played. They began to appear as nothing more than the 'wife' and 'husband' masks and costumes they wore, and the precise movements they continually replayed. *In the Tearoom* ended by seeming sad and stifling; it showed two characters who did not communicate, and suggested the risky implications of this.

In the Tearoom opened up a space for audience members to critically consider and discuss sex, marriage, relationships, infidelity, heterosexuality, and homosexuality. While South African society, like most societies, upholds heterosexual, monogamous, and marriage-like relationships as the ultimate relationship goal, *In the Tearoom* problematised this idea by presenting a situation in which this type of relationship is stifling, boring, and in the context of HIV, dangerous. Instead of showing heterosexual marriage-like relationships as the ideal model of intimacy *In the Tearoom* presented these as oppressive, dishonest, and potentially dangerous.

Within this framework same-sex desires were likewise presented as problematic. The male character did not discuss his sexual behaviour with either his female or male partners, nor did he negotiate safe sex. His same-sex sexual encounters were furtive and secret; they took place in public toilets, with strangers who seemed to be similarly having brief and opportunistic meetings. The show did not, however, only position sex between men as a risk factor for contracting HIV, but also suggested that secrecy and lack of communication are also unsafe. *In the Tearoom* thus encouraged audiences to question their personal and cultural assumptions about sex, sexuality and gender. The show prompted audiences to question their personal and shared assumptions, suggesting that sexual practices which are usually typified as safe could also become problematic, and that those which are widely considered deviant may need to become culturally validated so that they can be safe.

This strategy of using performance as a way of raising sensitive issues was widely used at the DFL Festival. In an essay about the show she wrote and directed for the DFL Festival in 2010 called *Hi, I am Gay,* Selloane Mokuku who is a former DFL student, argued that it's widely acknowledged that the inability to talk about sex

leads to dangerous sexual practices. An audience member who was invited onstage during *Hi, I am Gay*, told the rest of the audience that an inability to name and openly discuss sex and sexuality is a major obstacle in reducing the transmission of HIV and AIDS (Mokuku 2010). Many shows at the DFL Festival affirmed that through public acknowledgment of a range of sexual desires people can more easily keep themselves and their sexual partners safe. In fact, as Kruger explains in her analysis of popular South African television soap opera *Soul City*, fictional performances may be uniquely able to suggest sensitive issues to audiences who do not want to speak about them.[13] For example, after a story line in *Soul City* in which a young girl is raped by her uncle some male viewers reported that they felt personally humiliated by the inclusion of the character of the uncle. Kruger points out that this is remarkable considering that the uncle character fits the profile of an average rapist in contemporary South Africa: he was unemployed, in his late teens or early 20's, and appeared to commit rape due to his anger at a society that promised him a more prosperous future (Jewkes et al 2011; Kruger 2004). Raising this sensitive issue through a fictional drama may have encouraged audiences to discuss their humiliation, anger, and confusion about sensitive issues. While the 'ABC' (Abstain, Be faithful, Condomize), method of HIV prevention is prevalent across South Africa, *In the Tearoom* suggested that other types of conversations around HIV may be necessary (Mitchell and Smith 2001). Through telling a fictional story, *In the Tearoom* raised the issues of homosexuality and sex outside primary relationships, and potentially prompted audiences to become more comfortable with discussing these issues.

In the Tearoom suggested the difficulty of enacting gay or bisexual practices, and the pressure to retain at least the illusion of a monogamous marriage. The male character in this piece is framed as potentially passing on HIV to his female and male partners through a lack of safe sex practices. Lane et al (2011) point out that men who have sex with men, and are also in relationships with women but hide their same-sex

[13] *Soul City* is a soap opera on prime time television, which has associate programmes in print media and radio, including educational supplements in newspapers, and radio dramas in all of South Africa's eleven official languages; these programmes are highly successful and reach over eighty percent of people in South Africa. *Soul City* began in 1991 as a way of reducing the transmission of HIV. Programmes are a partnership between the Institute for Urban Primary Health Care and the South African Broadcasting Corporation. It uses South African English interwoven with other local languages, especially Zulu and Sesotho (Kruger 2009a, 2009b; Usdin 2009).

relationships, are at a higher risk of contracting HIV than the rest of the population. This is because these men may not gain access to the types of health information they need and may feel reluctant or unable to use condoms. Requesting to use condoms with a long-term female partner may raise suspicions, as may attempting to access condoms in small towns and villages. Subsequently, they also put their partners at greater risk of catching HIV.

These individuals may struggle to negotiate safer sexual practices due to the social stigma around same-sex desires. In their studies about sexuality in South Africa Jacklyn Cock (2003) and Henriette Gunkell (2010) each argue that homosexuality is popularly considered un-African and imported from the west. Despite the progressive clause in the new South African constitution which guarantees equal rights to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, most people in the country do not have access to the social environments which allow them to publicly express their same-sex desires and alternative gender practices (Cock 2003; Gunkell 2010; Lane et al 2011). A homosexual identity is still only readily available to 'white, middle class, urban men' (Gevisser and Cameron in Cock 2003; Gunkell 2010). *In the Tearoom* therefore posited that the spread of HIV is enhanced by social norms which position heterosexual, monogamous marriage as the ultimate or only option for sexual relationships.

The problems that were raised by *In the Tearoom, Deep Night,* and *Sexscape* were not solved in neat and tidy finales. Instead, they were simply presented as social issues in all their complexities. The characters were not positioned as all-knowing and instead made decisions which are common although potentially risky. These shows were intended to stimulate debate rather than proscribe answers, they were intended to engage audiences in problems rather than offer solutions. While problem performances may incorporate educational components and be sensitive to their audiences' emotional responses, they do not predominantly aim to educate nor protect their audiences. In using this approach, some pitfalls which are typical in theatre for development projects may be avoided. Owen Seda, a presenter at the ARC, spoke about his work with Amani Trust Popular Travelling Theatre Project in Zimbabwe and explained some contradictions which can occur in the field of theatre for development. Seda told that theatre for development projects intend to raise

people's consciousness, and therefore can problematically assume that local people themselves do not comprehend the complexity of an issue until an outside expert reveals it. As Seda argued, theatre for development practices claim that external agents who design shows only have power and authority which is equal to that of local participants, yet performances regularly claim a superior position, and speak with an authoritative voice. Dr Emelda Ngufor Samba, who ran a project in Cameroon called 'Enabling the Disabled through Theatre' and also presented at the ARC conference, agreed with Seda, and argued that practitioners cannot presume that the communities they work with are lacking nor assume what their needs are. She cautioned against an attempt to simply educate or deliver information to audiences and participants. *In the Tearoom, Deep Night,* and *Sexscape* avoided the contradictions pointed out by Seda and Samba and did not attempt to educate audiences but instead sought to stimulate people's own critical capacities. These shows presented common social issues and provoked audience members to consider the issues and come up with their own conclusions.

This approach also shows promise for my attempt to transform the script of rape using applied theatre. Unlike message-based performances, which I also consider relevant to my work, problem performances ask questions rather than prescribe solutions or offer answers. Through asking questions, these performances anticipate that audience members will not only receive information, but also consider the complexity of the problem. As rape is a complex problem without a clear solution this is a pertinent approach for this area. A problem performance on the issue of rape could require audience members to contemplate the varying social scripts which are engaged in rape, and the difficulties involved in transforming current notions of gender and sexuality. The other approach used by *Deep Night, Sexscape,* and *In the Tearoom* which is valuable for my project is the way they framed their explorations as art rather than overt political action. This framing enabled more people to engage with the difficult issues they contemplated, because unlike a public lecture, art is considered to be appropriate for non-experts, and an enjoyable way to spend free-time. Since the issue of rape is usually only considered pertinent for women, and is not a topic generally discussed in polite company, this strategy of framing explorations around issues to do with rape as art could be a successful way of engaging a variety of people. As performers from Won Smolbag Theatre Company

point out, a sexual health nurse cannot just walk into a community and begin conducting condom demonstrations, or talking about incest. Yet when performances sensitively weave these issues into their narratives, post-show discussions can bring up these usually taboo topics (Taylor and Gaskell 2007, p. 15-16).

Dialogic performances

Distinct from message-based works and problem performances, dialogic performances are not presented to their audiences in a finished state. Instead, these shows are completed in conjunction with their audiences. Like problem performances, dialogic plays do not impose solutions to problems. However, unlike problem performances, dialogic plays stage the critical discussion between audience members, so that this debate is not kept private, but made into a public exchange. Dialogic performances are forums for audience members to express their own ideas and reflect upon the points of view of other audience members. They function as public dialogues which enable different points of view to be expressed with the purpose of either reaching a shared understanding or consensus decisions. At the DFL Festival I attended several works which aimed to create a dialogue between audience members. Two different performances of *Stories of Transformation* by Bonfire Theatre Project were especially notable. These shows used Playback Theatre to create a dialogue with their audiences. The first show I saw was at an orphanage in Kliptown, Johannesburg, and the second was at Witwatersrand University for a crowd of festival participants. [14]

Audiences of *Stories of Transformation* were not asked to 'look; listen; and … enjoy' a performance but to participate in creating the performance through offering their own ideas and opinions, or getting on stage themselves (Taylor and Gaskell 2007, p. 22). Accordingly, both performances were completely different, as the shows were entirely shaped by their audiences. Improvisation and play were heavily relied upon, as these performance techniques encourage spontaneous participation, rather than

[14] Bonfire also performed *Stories of transformation* on the fifth and final day of the DFL Festival to an audience of students and other DFL Festival attendees, however, I do not analyse this performance here.

written scripts with a predetermined beginning, middle, and end. Unlike these performances, in *Stories of Transformation* demarcations between audiences and performers sometimes became blurred: audiences told stories which were then acted out by performers, and performers watched and reflected upon the action onstage. *Stories of Transformation* provided a forum for audience members to discuss their own perspectives; this show was not taken *to* communities but was created *with* communities (Chinyowa 2005, p. 235).

Like most groups who perform the playback method, Bonfire Theatre Project worked with a conductor, four actors and a musician. The conductor was Paula Kingwill, the four actors were Lesley Palmer, Thando Doni, Phumza Tshem, Sean O'Connor, and the musician was Chris Wildman. Bonfire Theatre Project began in October 2005, co-founded by Kingwill, who is a drama therapist, and who directed the company until 2010. The company is made up of diverse performers skilled in drama therapy, music therapy, music and acting. Bonfire Theatre Project presents Playback Theatre performances, yet supplements this form with methods from other applied theatre styles, including Theatre of the Oppressed and drama therapy. They work with businesses, community organisations, and school groups, presenting their work at conferences and festivals around South Africa, and more recently, in Swaziland (Bonfire Theatre Company 2013a).

The *Stories of Transformation* which was performed at the Wits Amphitheatre at Witwatersrand University began with a short warm-up with the whole audience, in which we told the person next to us the title of a story about growing up in a world with HIV. When we were asked to call these out the actors performed fluid sculptures to our suggestions. Then a few short stories were told by audience members and played back by the cast. Kingwill followed this by telling her audience that it was time for a longer story about personal experiences of change and transition, or love and sex, in the context of HIV. One person volunteered to tell her story and was invited to join the facilitator on stage. She told her story, guided by Kingwill, who asked questions that drove the story forward and ensured clarity. The story teller told about growing up in South Africa and feeling like a nerd. When she had an opportunity for a change she took it, and instead of being scary and hostile it became an exciting new beginning. The storyteller told that she moved to the United

States and met a man who really believed in her. She said he was very cool and they fell in love; soon they were holding spoken word poetry slams in the home which they shared. Kingwill invited the actors and musician to playback the woman's story, guiding them by saying 'this is a story about finding a whole new person in me'. This story was then played back by the actors and musician, after which Kingwill asked the storyteller 'what did this show you about yourself?'; the woman answered, 'it made me feel like anything was possible'. The audience was prompted to reflect and connect with the women's experiences, with Kingwill inviting us to call out responses, asking 'perhaps you saw something of your own story?'.

After this another long story was told by a young man in the audience. He told a sad and personal story about finding out he had HIV and running away from his partner because he was worried he would infect her. Before playing back his story Kingwill framed it for the actors and musician, saying 'this is a story about finding love and not being prepared to lose it. This is a story of deep, deep commitment'. Through Kingwill's questioning and the playback performance, the story teller himself, and the rest of the audience, were encouraged to understand his behaviour differently. After watching the playback performance the storyteller was asked what it showed him, and he said it was 'finding a way to me'. When speaking of his experiences the story teller appeared conflicted about his actions, and seemed unsure of whether or not he had done the right thing. However, upon playing back the story, he appeared to begin to look at his behaviour more empathically.

Stories of Transformation was not only a method to share different perspectives, but also a way of reflecting story tellers' experiences back to themselves in a way that showed them what they hadn't noticed when they were living the experience. Stories were played back with such empathy that they encouraged deeper and renewed understandings of storytellers' actions. In this way, *Stories of Transformation* became a dialogue with the self as well as performative conversations between audience members. Kingwill ensured that her questions framed stories as having broader implications than the merely personal or anecdotal; performances were not only one person's reminiscences, but were framed as pieces of evidence about the broader themes of change and HIV. When speaking to the woman who had moved to the United States Kingwill ensured that this story did not merely tell about one

person meeting someone who believed in them, but in the context of change and HIV, it felt like a reminder that change can be an opportunity for renewal. When speaking to the man who left his girlfriend when he found out his HIV status, his feelings of panic and danger were not emphasised; Bonfire Theatre Project instead accentuated his commitment to not infecting his partner. In this way, the story telling process assisted people to view both themselves and each other as responsible agents of transformation. A previous audience member from a Bonfire Theatre Project show, Marisja Kocznur, wrote that the show 'really forced people to get involved and to consider each other and see each other in a different light' (Bonfire Theatre Company 2013b).

I again joined Bonfire Theatre Project as they left Witwatersrand University and journeyed to the township of Kliptown to present their Playback Theatre piece *Stories of Transformation* to Soweto Kliptown Youth (SKY). Bonfire Theatre Project was going to present a show exploring the issues of HIV and AIDS for the adults who worked in an orphanage for children whose parents had died of AIDS. However, when we arrived in Kliptown all the adults from SKY had left for a training program so Bonfire Theatre Project was asked to present their show to the children. They were thus called upon to present a show which needed to be completely different from the one they had prepared: the children at the orphanage appeared to range in age from four to ten, so Bonfire Theatre Project did not want to present their original show, which explored the sophisticated issues of sexual risk and responsibility. To add to this, none of the performers spoke Zulu, which was the children's primary language, and the company had not organised a Zulu-speaking conductor as the original adult audience had good English language skills.[15] Consequently, Bonfire Theatre Project had to drastically and rapidly alter their approach.

The performance began with warm-ups led by the actors and involving the whole audience. This immediately positioned the show as interactive and physical, and engaged the audiences' bodies and imaginations. Then Kingwill began to ask the children about moments when they felt proud; these were briefly acted on stage as

[15] After the performance Kingwill told me that, if Bonfire had known they would be working with the children at SKY, they would have organised a Zulu-speaking conductor; although the process they used was flexible and functional it was not ideal. Kingwill was concerned that she may have missed some of the storyteller's more subtle intentions.

stories. The children told of their proud moments: a small boy said he felt proud when he kicked a soccer goal, and a young girl said she was proud of learning English at school. Kingwill then introduced the theme of change, saying that they wanted to talk about change because the children were growing up in a changing world. As an example, she spoke of the change from winter to summer, and as she did so, the actors mimed changing their clothes. The children were asked to tell stories about change in their lives. In Playback Theatre performances storytellers usually speak their stories loud enough so they can be heard by everyone present, but Bonfire Theatre Project used a different approach to accommodate the needs of their young audience at SKY. Kingwill prompted the children gently and quietly through questions in English, and the young storytellers would quietly tell their stories in English and Zulu to Kingwill. After clarifying that she had understood the storytellers' words correctly the facilitator then repeated the story in English to the audience, actors and musician. The actors and musician then enacted this story.

In response to Kingwills' invitation one little girl came onstage, and told a story about Cinderella, who changed into a princess when she received new shoes from her mother. The actors and musician played this story back to the audience. Another young girl spoke about her birthday, and a spontaneous birthday party was performed. The children were invited on stage to take part in fun actions which were led by the actors. Many children joined the actors onstage to dance to improvised music and play party games to celebrate the story teller's birthday.

As they were working with children, Bonfire Theatre Project decided to elicit stories about pride and change rather than risk and responsibility. Because the company did not share fluency in the same language as their audience they decided to use a highly physical yet gentle style of performance; Kingwill quietly questioned storytellers, and the stories were acted out as much as possible. Bonfire Theatre Project was remarkable in their capacity to quickly adapt their show. In order to inspire a sense of fun and play, they drew upon a highly interactive method and invited audience members to play on stage with the performers. Rather than a typical Playback Theatre show in which audience members sit quietly and watch, *Stories of Transformation* framed their Kliptown show as play, and encouraged their audience to come onto the stage with them. Chinyowa argues that play is a pertinent strategy

to engage with audiences and writes that '[p]lay allows the co-players or participants to engage in spontaneous activity thereby allowing them room to articulate their own point of view' (Chinyowa 2005, p. v).

Although Playback Theatre usually tells true stories from people's lives, the stories told at SKY were a combination of lived experience and aspiration. Although this use of fantasy rather than reality may have arisen because of the audience's lack of familiarity with the playback form, it may also point to the immediate needs of the audience. While the young people of SKY had experienced the illness and death of their parents, poverty, institutionalised care, and potential HIV infection, the stories they told were about joy and personal success. They did not choose, nor were they prompted, to re-enact stories of struggle and sadness, and instead *Stories of Transformation* became a way for the children to reframe their lives. Consequently, *Stories of Transformation* avoided becoming an example of what South African choreographer Lliane Loots (2010) refers to as 'victim art'. 'Victim art' are artworks which tell problems from the point of view of the victim, and typically encourage audiences to feel pity for their suffering. Loots explains that the historical violence of South Africa and the political insistence upon silence and secrecy has meant that art has been used a way to tell politically motivated stories. Loots is not suggesting that stories in which the protagonist suffers must not be told, but that these must be performed in a way that confronts normative notions of victimhood, and challenges the types of histories which are routinely retold. In retelling histories from the victim's perspective, rather than the successors, Loots argues that history itself can be challenged. But if these stories are only told in ways that reiterate the suffering of victims then they miss the opportunity to transform victims into empowered subjects. *Stories of Transformation* became a way to challenge ideas about who speaks for history and which voices are considered to be authentic. Children were positioned as protagonists who could speak about their lives in whatever ways they wanted. Performances acted as a platform for the young people of SKY to define themselves instead of being defined through lenses of loss and pity. The show gave the children a stage to perform their own stories, allowing them to re-name, re-write, and re-remember the world (Loots 2010, p. 123).

At each performance of *Stories of Transformation,* the one at Witwatersrand University, and the show at the orphanage in Kliptown, Bonfire Theatre Project fostered a multiplicity of voices and opinions rather than sought to create a shared narrative. Both shows embraced dialogue rather than debate as differing perspectives did not jostle for precedence but sat together side-by-side. At the university show one story teller told of an unexpected happy experience, while the other story teller told of a painful personal event. These two experiences were not compared and neither was positioned as more relevant or important than the other. Bonfire Theatre Project did not reach for debate, but instead looked for, as Professor Kurt April writes on their website, 'harmony, synergy, community, [and] enrichment' (in Bonfire Theatre Company 2013b). This acceptance of multiplicity and lack of criticism inspired a deep sharing amongst participants and encouraged a greater diversity of voices to share. *Stories of Transformation* was able to affirm the experiences of the children at SKY, through listening to the stories, and placing their experiences on stage. After attending another Bonfire Theatre Project performance at the Twilight Children's Centre an audience member told '[t]he way in which you dramatised their stories of pain and hope gave the boys inspiration and courage to pursue their dreams.' (Bonfire Theatre Company 2013b)**.** In *Stories of Transformation* solidarity was emphasised over difference, and a shared harmony was created through an acceptance of multiplicity.

Playback theorists Jenny Hutt and Bev Hosking write that Playback Theatre does not attempt to solve problems nor seek finality to the issues brought up by participants. Instead, performances embody an attitude of 'open inquiry, respect for humanity and engagement with a wide range of people and perspectives' (Hutt and Hosking 2004, p. 32). *Stories of Transformation* encouraged empathic understanding of different perspectives over judgement and problem-solving. When audience members responded to each other's stories it was not to critique them or offer opposing views, but to offer *different* views. The man who ran away after testing positive for HIV was not lectured about the other choices he could have taken. He was instead encouraged to view his behaviour as symbolic of his commitment to his girlfriend rather than as an indicator of his capacity for risk and danger. The young girl who told a story about Cinderella when she was asked to speak about her own life was not chastised or asked to tell a 'true' story; instead, her Cinderella story was acted out,

just like all the other stories; her perspective, understanding, and needs were brought to life by the actors and musician alongside those of her peers.

This strategy of using performance as a tool for public dialogue is pertinent to my analysis. Functioning as a dialogue, performance can support and encourage people to discuss complex issues like rape, sexuality, and gender. An attitude of open enquiry, which was evident in *Stories of Transformation*, allows people to express their ideas on these potentially sensitive issues. Many applied theatre theorists discuss the importance of using performance as a form of dialogue rather than as a monologue (Boal 1985; Chinyowa 2005; Freire 1970; Prentki 1998). Educational theorist Freire argues that 'conscientisation' cannot occur without dialogue, writing that '[w]ithout dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education' (in Prentki 1998, p. 422). Freire maintains that performances are not an end product in themselves, but bridges between the growing critical consciousness of participants, and their propensity to take action to change their lives. This perspective shifts away from the concept of performance as a one-way delivery of information as it prefers to ask questions, stimulate, and provoke. It positions participants as experts who are able to critically consider their decisions and does not presume that applied theatre performances can solve problems. Instead, performances are used as vehicles of shared reflection and analysis that support people to deal with the issues in their lives.

Key ideas from chapter 4

The works I have analysed from the DFL Festival reveal ways performance can be used to transform normative scripts around gender and sexuality. Several approaches used by these performances are particularly useful to my attempt to apply performance to the issue of rape prevention. *Hopes and Dreams*, by the group Themba Interactive, sought change through delivering pertinent information about HIV. As a strategy for rape prevention, their performances crafted messages specifically for its audiences, paying attention to contexts of language and culture. The messages delivered by *Hopes and Dreams* therefore appeared relevant and applicable to the lives of audience members. This approach could be used in

performances that work to prevent rape, and seem especially valuable as a way of communicating with those who are hard to reach with rape prevention messages, or people who are traditionally excluded from rape prevention projects.

The pieces *Deep Night* and *Sexscape* by Sabbagha, and *In the Tearoom,* by Matshido, took a different approach and refused to resolve the problems presented on stage. I suggest that this approach is also valuable to using performance as a form of rape prevention as it stimulates audience members to discover their own solutions. This is an entirely different approach to standard prevention programs, most of which focus on offering didactic advice, such as the 'ABC' HIV campaign in South Africa, and the well-known 'no means no' campaign run by the Canadian Federation of Students (Brouard & Crewe 2012, p. 55; Graduate Students' Union 2013). These campaigns are deliberately simple in order to be memorable yet end up portraying complex social problems as simplistic. While this catch-cry approach may be effective in raising awareness, it may be too basic to actually encourage behaviour change. On the other hand, problem performances show issues in all their complexity, and stimulate audiences themselves to discover their own solutions.

Sabbagha and Matshido used another strategy which is also valuable to my investigation. These artists framed *Deep Night, Sexscape,* and *In the Tearoom* as art instead of overt political action. Each of these three works did not push the 'issues' of their shows. I suggest that performances which aim for rape prevention could likewise be framed as art and entertainment. This could offer a way of engaging with the wider community, and not only women, who are usually targeted by rape prevention programs. New audiences could be encouraged to attend these performances which appear as interesting shows with captivating stories and skilled artists. In framing their work as art and entertainment rather than socially efficacious performance, Sabbagha and Matshido were able to raise complex and potentially offensive issues. Issues around rape and sexuality are also sensitive topics which are often considered inappropriate to discuss in public; performances may be able to bring these issues up in ways that engage audiences in the issue rather than offends or upsets them.

While I attest to the pertinence of these types of performances for dismantling the rape script, they do not facilitate critical discussions of audience members but provoke people to consider the problems raised by performances themselves. While this approach may be pertinent when working with some audiences, and on some issues, it does not provide a specific space and support for this dialogue. On the other hand, *Stories of Transformation* by Bonfire Theatre Company attempted to facilitate critical discussions. In a similar way, I suggest that when applied to the issue of rape prevention, performances could stimulate audiences to consider alternative ways of performing gender and sexuality that undermine the script of rape. In asking people in the audience for their own perspective, approaches to rape prevention would be specific to each group's needs and viewpoints. This method is one where prevention approaches do not need to offer appropriate solutions to dismantling the script of rape, but can instead create and manage spaces for people to consider this question for themselves. As Bonfire Theatre Company showed, this can allow divergent opinions to be shared, as consensus is not sought. Instead, public engagement and discussion are pursued, not in order to discover the best solution, but to allow people to come together to talk through a shared concern. I will explore how each of these approaches modelled by artists at the DFL Festival can be woven into the creation and performance of my own show, *Spreading the Love,* in chapter six. The next chapter, however, looks to a distinctly different style of performance, which does not come from applied theatre, but from the tradition of feminist performance art.

CHAPTER 5: EXPLICIT BODY PERFORMANCES AND RAPE PREVENTION

This chapter looks to a completely different type of performance from the works at the Drama for Life festival. I now turn to a type of feminist performance art, which I refer to as 'explicit body performance'. I ask if any of the approaches used in some of these performances may be employed in conjunction with those I have just identified from the DFL Festival to create an effective approach to transforming the script of rape. Explicit body performances are vastly different to applied theatre pieces. While applied theatre pieces are often considered in terms of their efficacy, rather than their potential for entertainment, and are analysed as 'social' rather than 'aesthetic' dramas, explicit body performances are looked at somewhat differently. In Schechner's entertainment-efficacy braid explicit body performances may be placed closer towards entertainment than efficacy. These works are framed, watched, and critiqued as pieces of art instead of processes of social engagement and transformation (Schechner 1974, 1988, p. 129-63; Schechner 2006, p. 76-7; Schechner in Turner 1987b, p. 6). As distinct from applied theatre, explicit body performances are focused on issues of gender and sexuality. Explicit body performances seek to overturn normative social processes, interrogating 'socio-cultural understandings of the "appropriate" and/or the appropriately transgressive', and questioning who has the right to 'author' the body (Schneider 1997, p. 3). They often use humour, parody, and extreme imagery, choosing to employ shock tactics and spectacle to disrupt normative ways of constructing and viewing the body.

Although explicit body performances and applied theatre pieces have distinct differences, I suggest that some approaches used in both types of performance may be used together. This is because both of these types of performance may be employed to promote social transformation. Approaches used in explicit body performances may serve as a useful adjunct to those from the DFL Festival due to the way they embody radically different ways of presenting gender and sexuality. This chapter asks if some of these approaches may be pertinent to my analysis of using performance to disrupt the script of rape, and looks to several explicit body performances to investigate if that is the case.

The term 'explicit body performances' is taken from Rebecca Schneider's book, *The Explicit Body in Performance* (1997). In this text Schneider examines avant-garde feminist performance art from the 1960s to the early 1990s which attempts to highlight the historical significations of the specific bodies on stage. Despite my suggestion that these types of performances may have potential to disrupt the script of rape, neither Schneider, nor the artists whose work I look at, claim that their work functions as a kind of rape prevention. Instead, they speak of their work as examining normative socio-cultural constructions of sexuality and relationships. In a discussion of her *Post-Porn Modernist* Annie Sprinkle said: 'My work is about deconstructing mainstream images of what is sexy' (in Stewart 1990, n.p). In an interview with Richard Schechner artist Karen Finley said that she 'stir[s] people to be responsible for what's going on in their own personal lives, in their one-to-one relationships' (Schechner and Finley 1988, p. 153). It is my original contribution to this area, therefore, to suggest that explicit body performances can be useful to rape prevention efforts and that some approaches used may be incorporated into applied theatre pieces.

Some eight years earlier theatre critic Elinor Fuchs (1989) wrote about some of the same artists and performances as Schneider. Yet while Schneider prefers the general descriptor 'explicit body' to name the work she critiques, Fuchs divided these women artists into activating either 'sacred', or 'obscene' bodies.[16] In these works women artists often stripped on stage, revealed their semi-clothed or naked bodies, and explicitly subverted traditional ideas of feminine sexuality. Schneider explains that explicit body performers draw attention to the social significations given to their bodies on stage:

> the explicit body in representation is foremost a site of social markings, physical parts and gestural signatures […] all of which

[16] According to Fuchs, Carolee Schneemann employs the sacred body through her focus on beauty and celebration, but Annie Sprinkle and Karen Finley explore the obscene due to their preferences for the 'aggressive, scatological, and sometimes pornographic' (Fuchs 1989, p. 33). I am skeptical of Fuchs' division between the sacred and obscene for its suggestion that appropriate representations construct women as virtuous, sensitive, and spiritual. I argue that distinguishing between 'sacred' and 'obscene' performances of women's bodies does not problematize normative gender constructions, but rather reinforces the notion that there are appropriate and inappropriate ways to be a woman. This chapter looks to Schneider's perspective, rather than the point of view put forward by Fuchs.

> bear ghosts of historical meaning, markings delineating social hierarchies of privilege and disprivilege.
>
> (Schneider 1997, p. 2)

Schneider identifies four themes as evident across the explicit body performances she researches: firstly, explicit body performances tend to interrogate historical legacies of gender and/or race; secondly, they critically challenge classic notions of perspectivalism which label some as able to see, and others as to-be-seen; thirdly, they expose how different genders, races and classes are considered to have different levels of desirability, and differing authorities to desire; and fourthly, explicit body performances regularly question who gets to mark art and ideas as appropriate and inappropriate (Schneider 1997, p. 3). While Schneider has this broad view of explicit body performances in this chapter I focus on the way artists play with and subvert normative notions of femininity, masculinity, race, and desire.

The artists whose work I explore in this chapter perform an assertive feminine sexuality and this concurs with contemporary approaches to rape prevention. Amongst other theorists, Moira Carmody and Nicola Gavey suggest that women must become more comfortable with knowing and defending their own desires in order to assert them (Burkett and Hamilton 2012; Gavey 2005; Carmody 2006, 2009a, 2009b). These theorists point out that women are not socialised to respond to their own desires, particularly when these wants are sexual, and instead learn to fulfill the desires of men. As a story of a devout seeker of sexual pleasure Sprinkle's autobiographical show reveals approaches for asserting women as agents of desire, and therefore points to possibilities for a new script of sexual ethics. However, this strategy of performing an overt sexual desire must be used with an awareness of context, as they may be particularly potent for white, western women, and could struggle to work effectively beyond this capacity.

Yet in a review of Schneider's text, feminist performance theorist Jill Davis (1999) points out that performances analysed by Schneider employ only a small range of bodies from a narrow geographical area: almost all performers are white, slim, able-bodied, feminine, English-speaking women from the United States; their performances are often solo performance art pieces which are performed in galleries,

theatres and nightclubs, either in New York or other major cities across the United States. While Davis critiques Schneider's work for the narrow range of bodies in explicit body performances, I suggest that this is because the approaches employed by this form are specific to these kinds of bodies. As my analysis reveals, the sexual explicitness performed by some white artists in Schneider's text may not be politically expedient for Indigenous Australian and African American women, for example.[17] As a genre, this style may have subversive potentials for only a narrow range of bodies. However, I am not interested in transposing the whole of this genre onto my analysis of performance as a form of rape prevention, but of exploring the different approaches that these artists use, and searching for the ways they could subvert notions of gender and sexuality. This chapter then opens by analysing performances familiar to the canon of explicit body performance, before turning to works created by Australian artists. Although the artists whose work I look at have created a range of artworks, I focus on only one or a few of their pieces so that I can conduct a deeper analysis of the performance techniques they offer.

This chapter begins by looking at porn star turned performance artist Annie Sprinkle's *Post Porn Modernist Show*, which emphasised an assertive feminine sexual desire that actively seeks its own pleasure and satisfaction (Carrellas 1996). Sprinkle's show is relevant to my analysis as this strategy of encouraging women to declare and seek their own sexual pleasure has been described by some feminists as essential for breaking down a script of rape and creating new notions of sexual ethics (Burkett and Hamilton 2012; Gavey, 2005; Carmody 2006, 2009a, 2009b). The following section explores several scenes from two plays by Karen Finley, *We Keep Our Victims Ready* and *The Constant State of Desire* (Finley 1990b; Finley 1986). These performances explored the implications of cultural norms of gender and desire, and aroused confusion and discomfort in the artist and audience members (Schechner and Finley 1988, p. 154-5; Schuler 1990). They are significant to my analysis as they use a provocative performance style to explore the grotesque implications of normative gender constructions.

[17] However, some artists with disabilities draw upon the techniques of explicit body performance to great effect, subverting the socio-cultural conceptions of their bodies. Among these are *The Freak and the Showgirl* by Mat Fraser and Julie Atlas Muz which toured to the Adelaide Fringe Festival in 2011 (Fraser & Muz 2011). In one scene of this performance Fraser performs a strip tease in which he removes his prosthetic arm; in another he re-performs the performances of 'Seal Boy' who was a sideshow performer who had Phocomelia, the same disability as Fraser.

The third and fourth sections seek to expand the range of performances which Schneider examines as explicit body performances. These works are by Australian artists and have been mostly performed to Australian audiences. I first turn to look at the short drag king piece, *Romeo's Striptease*, by cabaret performer Moira Finucane (Smith 1994). *Romeo's Striptease* is interesting to my analysis as it problematised the binary distinction between femininity and masculinity. *Romeo's Striptease* suggested that the genders are not in fact opposite, but overlapping and interconnected. The performances *Pussy Whipped*, *Evil Dick,* and *Versus*, by an ensemble called The Kingpins are examined in the final section of this chapter (The Kingpins 2000, 2001, 2002). These performances are noteworthy for the ways they played with and confused gendered and raced norms which are perpetuated by popular culture. In parodying these popular presentations The Kingpins dislodged the stranglehold of these norms and usurped their power. I ask if any approaches used in these works may be applicable to my analysis of how performance can disrupt the script of rape through transforming normative scripts of sexuality and gender.

Annie Sprinkle

Sprinkle's work playfully blurs boundaries between art and porn, and she describes her work as neither one nor the other, but as *both* (Brown and Mclen Novick 1995, n.p). Her performances question the notion that women are necessarily oppressed by sexual representations of their bodies, and that the only sexually empowering position for women to take is to resist such depictions. Performances by Sprinkle, particularly her autobiographical shows, challenge the notion that women are 'implicitly without desire' (Gavey 2005, p. 104). Instead, Sprinkle represents herself as a sexually assertive agent of desire who is free to decide upon the sexual acts she wishes to practice.

The *Post Porn Modernist Show* was a series of autobiographical vignettes presented as performance art; it incorporated slideshow, dance, audience interaction, and a sex toy show-and-tell. Sprinkle performed the show like an intimate conversation, speaking directly to the audience, playfully sharing some of her outrageous

adventures in sex. The Post Porn Modernist shows have had three distinct evolutions under three separate names: *Post Porn Modernist*, *Post Post Porn Modernist*, and *Post Porn Modernist Show* (Cubiero 1989; deRidder 1994). The first version of this work initially showed at the Harmony Theatre in New York City in 1989. Sprinkle developed this version of the performance with director Emilio Cubiero then enhanced the interactive format of the piece with performance artist Williem deRidder. The latest version of the piece was created in conjunction with director Barbara Carrellas (Carrellas 1996). Sprinkle has toured the successful Post Porn Modernist shows around the United States and internationally, taking the *Post Porn Modernist Show* to the Adelaide Festival in 1996. My analysis is largely based on the script of this performance.

Yet one scene in her earlier *Post Porn Modernist* is pertinent for my analysis. Sprinkle's most well-known and controversial scene was called 'Public Cervix Announcement'.[18] In this scene Sprinkle lay down on the edge of the stage, inserted a speculum into her vagina, and invited audience members to line up and view the 'beautiful mystery' of the cervix with a torch (DeRidder 1994, n.p). 'Public Cervix Announcement' caused a furore in response to its explicitness. The vice squad banned this scene in Cleveland, despite the fact that when Sprinkle performed her live sex shows in this city she never had any problems with the law (Williams 1993, p. 117). This scene also unsettled even the most erudite theorists of the explicit body. Schneider writes of feeling a mounting sense of anxiety as she stood in line waiting for her turn to see Sprinkle's cervix. She apprehensively asked herself: 'How was I to focus my particular gaze? Who was I when I looked? And how would my looking be any different from the man with the large camera several spots in front of me'? (Schneider 1997, p. 55). Richard Schechner, on the other hand, decided not to view Sprinkle's cervix even though he directed the artist in *The Prometheus Project* which inspired this explicit scene. He tells that, although he was curious, he did not line up as he was worried about appearing 'sexually excited' in front of the female companions with whom he attended the show (in Schneider 1997, p. 55).

[18] 'Public Cervix Announcement', was not staged in *Post Porn Modernist Show*, and was only shown in the earlier *Post Post Porn Modernist*, as repeated performances of the piece gave Sprinkle angry bouts of thrush (deRidder 1994, Carrellas 1996, n.p).

'Public Cervix Announcement' both drew upon and disturbed standard erotic imagery: Sprinkle dressed in high heels and wore her hair characteristically big; she sat with legs widespread and smiled as she invited people to peer at her vulva and inside her vagina. Yet she unsettled standard narratives of sexual desire by gazing back at viewers, and framing their looking as spectacle. Feminist performance theorist Jill Dolan (1987, 1988, 2001, 2006) writes about a 'dynamics of desire' which structures the narrative of performance as well as the 'relationship between spectator and spectacle' (1987, p. 156). A normative dynamic of desire places women in the position of spectacle and men in the position of spectator. This dynamic does not foster, foresee, or allow for women's active sexuality and men's responsiveness. Sprinkle disrupts this dynamic of desire by positioning her own body as both spectator and spectacle. Sprinkle's cervix is framed as spectacle, however, it is the spectator themselves who ultimately becomes the spectacle, with Sprinkle gazing back and watching their reaction along with the rest of the audience.

Those looking at Sprinkle's cervix were asked to narrate their responses into a microphone which was piped throughout the audience. Schneider writes that one man excitedly gushed into the microphone , 'it looks just like the head of my penis!' (Schneider 1997, p. 55). Schneider explains that 'Public Cervix Announcement' unsettles classic notions of perspectivalism. Classic perspectivalism maintains a strict boundary between who looks and who is looked at. This theory of looking affirms that the looked-at is a spectacle to be gazed upon, an image of desire laid open for potential consumption. The person who looks is free to look without being looked at; importantly, the image of desire does not gaze back. Yet when audience members looked at Sprinkle's cervix, Sprinkle looked back: Sprinkle refused to become a mere spectacle, and watched people peering inside her vagina. Those who chose to view the cervix could no longer claim to be disinterested viewers, as their desire was put on show, alongside, and potentially eclipsing, the object of desire on stage. This looking back caused anxiety in audience members as it was not simply Sprinkle's cervix which was on show, but also the way they looked at the cervix. This disturbance, this questioning, remained 'the most fascinating aspect of the performance', writes Schneider (1997, p. 55). In 'Public Cervix Announcement' Sprinkle disrupted the notion that women's bodies are always out of reach, by

inviting everyone in the audience to peer inside her vagina and undermined a dynamic of desire by placing herself as both spectacle and spectator.

Unlike standard erotic representations of women's bodies, 'Public Cervix Announcement' displayed the cervix, and thus made a spectacle of a part of women's bodies which is usually kept private. By situating her cervix at the centre of the scene, and allowing audience members to search for and find it with a torch, Sprinkle transgressed the divide between private and public. This transgression has been a feminist aim since the second wave as a strict division between public and private has been used to maintain women's knowledge and sexuality as private while their bodies are made public. In her discussion of the way young women negotiate their sexuality in the context of HIV/AIDS in South Africa Shakila Reddy (2010) argues that the binary distinction between public and private inhibits 'young women from asserting themselves as responsible agents, which would require crossing the public-private boundary' (p. 90). Reddy claims that the separation between public and private regulates and controls women's sexuality and entrenches gender inequalities (p. 89). She argues that this dichotomy between public and private is central to contemporary concepts of sexuality, but without challenging this dichotomy, women are not able to take control and have agency over their own sexualities.

'Public Cervix Announcement' was no longer performed in the 1996 version of Sprinkle's performance. The *Post Porn Modernist Show* followed a trajectory of transformation. The performance told the story of Sprinkle's life as she transformed from Ellen Steinberg, the shy Jewish schoolgirl, to Annie Sprinkle, porn star and performance artist, and finally to Anya, the sexual mystic. Sprinkle revealed how she transformed from being 'absolutely terrified of sex', to sexual exhibitionist, and developed a generous and experimental attitude to sexual pleasure (Carrellas 1996, n.p). She said that she transformed from Ellen to Annie by simply beginning to act like Annie. As Sprinkle changed her performance of herself, her own sense of her identity also began to shift. Through simply acting like Annie, Ellen actually became Annie. Her body was not a passive vehicle to express a static, inner state, but a constant creator and potential transformer of identity. While the materiality of the body is often conceived of as an expression of an inner self, Sprinkle described how altering the performance of her body transformed her own perception of her identity.

One scene in *Post Porn Modernist Show* depicted some of the challenges women face when asserting themselves as agents of desire. While Sprinkle focused predominantly on sexual pleasure, rather than sexual violence, the scene '100 Blow Jobs' examined the issue of rape (Carrellas 1996, n.p). '100 Blow Jobs' represents Sprinkle's worst one hundred sexual experiences that she had in her career as a sex worker, in which she estimates having sex with three thousand people, and as a sexually promiscuous young woman who had sex with about five hundred people 'for various other reasons' including 'kicks, thrills and fun' and as a way to barter for 'just about anything […] even dentistry' (Carrellas 1996, n.p). In this scene a line of dildos stood on a board and Sprinkle caressed and sucked them one by one while a soundtrack of voices played. Gradually, the voices became more menacing, repeating conflicting and increasingly threatening phrases:

> "I paid you so do what I tell you." "Ow, stop! That hurts." "God will strike you dead. Resist temptation." "She just promotes violence towards women." "I want to go home now." "But I spent over $45 on dinner. The least you could do is give me a blow job." "I don't want to." "Just do it."
>
> (Carrellas 1996, n.p)

The voices overlapped with catcalls and sirens as Sprinkle kept sucking until she choked and cried. However, although this scene turned nasty and suggested violence, Sprinkle did not end this scene by exclaiming her humiliation and her treatment. Instead, she finished sucking the dildos, cried, choked, and continued on by giving herself the Aphrodite award for sexual service. In the script performed at the Adelaide Festival, Sprinkle finished '100 Blow Jobs' by saying:

> In spite of it all, I don't consider myself any kind of victim because I learned a lot from those 100 worst sexual experiences. On some level I take responsibility for having helped to create that in my life. Now I never end up in horrible sexual experiences. I guess I just don't need them. I've learned what I like and what I don't like and I have learned to say no.
>
> Besides, I wouldn't have wanted to miss out on all the incredible, exciting, wonderful experiences that I've had.

(Carrellas 1996)[19]

Sprinkle did not make this scene into a personal revelation of rape but instead turned it into a litany against living in a society that does not foster sexual pleasure. In fact, the societal refusal of sexual pleasure is constructed as a type of sexual assault. Philosopher of performance practices, Shannon Bell, quotes Sprinkle as saying at the end of the scene 'we are ALL sexually abused by virtue of the fact that we live in a sex-negative society' (in Sprinkle and Cody 2001, p. 13, emphasis in original).

In *Post Porn Modernist Show* Sprinkle used approaches which are pertinent to my attempt to dismantle scripts of sexuality and gender that underpin rape. Sprinkle disrupts classic notions of perspectivalism which claim that women, and those on stage, can be looked at but cannot look back. Through looking back when audience members were gazing at her cervix Sprinkle positioned herself as an agent who can actively comment upon and change her situation. This attitude of looking back is pertinent, as in order to stand up against the script of rape, women must claim their active place in the representational system. This means that transformation can occur through providing women with spaces in which they can disrupt a normative dynamic of desire so that they too can be actors in this exchange. Furthermore, in 'Public Cervix Announcement' Sprinkle disrupted the binary between public and private. In upturning this distinction Sprinkle broke down the notion that women's bodies are public and their knowledge is private; she challenged the belief that women's own desires are supposed to remain private while desire for them is public. This strategy is pertinent to my analysis due to its capacity to both assert women's knowledge as publicly pertinent, and their bodies as within their private command. Just as transformation is a focus of *Post Porn Modernist Show,* transformation is also a key feature of my research. While I suggest that Sprinkle's concept of transformation has limitations as it does not acknowledge the social nature of change, her focus upon performance as a driving tool for transformation is valuable for my project. I aim to build upon Sprinkle's concept of remaking the self through performing oneself differently and utilise it in the creation of my performance.

[19] In *Post Post Porn Modernist* this scene ends with Sprinkle saying 'Life goes on and it's good. I believe I came out a winner' (deRidder 1994, n.p).

Sprinkle showed that through altering her bodily gestures, and deliberately repeating acts differently, she could transform her identity. In a similar way Butler writes that the gendered body 'has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality' (Butler 1990, p. 185). In *Post Porn Modernist Show* Sprinkle subverted the notion that identity is an internal, unshifting core, as she revealed how she changed herself through altering her gestures and acts. Sprinkle showed no attempt to find her 'true' expression or identity, but instead retained an interest in performing, becoming, and perpetual reconstruction. Sprinkle exposed identity as a series of shifting signs, so that her body did not reflect her interiority, but her desire. Her performance exposed that there was no authentic self to be revealed, nor any true or false representations of the self. *Post Porn Modernist Show* displayed identity as an unstable reference point, as a changing performance which could be experimented with and explored.

However, I suggest that Sprinkle's narrative of her transformation differed from Butler's theories in the way Sprinkle conceived of her personal choice. Sprinkle's notion of transformation appeared like an entirely personal and straight-forward decision. However, Butler argues that the subject does not have the capacity to completely organise themselves according to their own desires (Magnus 2006, p. 82). Transformation is not simply a matter of wearing different costumes and performing different acts, but is made possible within one's cultural and historical context. Sprinkle's attitude to transformation suggests that anyone can simply begin to perform themselves differently, and therefore become a different kind of person. However, Butler maintains that the subject is constituted by their social environment; therefore, transformation is not a solo pursuit, but occurs in conjunction with one's socio-cultural context (Butler 2004, p. 204-231; Zivi 2008, p. 165). This suggests that the body is socially situated, and not all women are able to transform as Sprinkle did. It also suggests that transforming into a sexually generous woman has different meanings for different bodies.

In choosing to be a sexually generous woman Sprinkle became very well-liked. In *Post Porn Modernist Show* she says:

> Ellen was fat and ugly, and no one seemed to want her. Annie was voluptuous and sexy, and everyone seemed to want her.

> Ellen desperately needed attention. Annie Sprinkle got it.
>
> (Carrellas 1996, n.p)

Within her socio-cultural environment of young, middle-class urbanites, many of whom were sex workers, gender-fluid, and/or queer Sprinkle's personal transformation was accepted and welcomed (Carrellas 1996, n.p; Drohojowska 1992, n.p). It gave her personal and financial gains. Her transformation from 'boring' Ellen to 'exciting' Annie was enabled as it was recognised, and then supported by her social environment (Carrellas 1996, n.p). So while Sprinkle does not acknowledge the importance of her social environment, and the socio-cultural inscriptions of her specific body, Butlerian theories argue that transformation is a socially mediated activity. The approaches used by Sprinkle are therefore dependent upon the social system in which they are employed.

Sprinkle reclaims the term 'slut', naming herself as a woman who seeks her own sexual pleasures and generously shares these with others. While the reclamation of the term 'slut' may be a pertinent political exercise for some women, such as those who are white and middle class, for other women the debate may be different. Prominent feminist theorist, bell hooks (1981, 1992, 1994), argues that most black women in the United States are more interested in appearing respectable rather than sexually lascivious (1992, p. 157). hooks writes that the ability to take on the slut persona as an act of liberation is a freedom which black women do not possess. She argues that because black women are already constructed as sluts within a racist society, they cannot rework their own images so that, like Sprinkle, being a slut is dangerously cool. In writing about Madonna, whom hooks claims appropriates black culture in order to bolster her 'radical chic', hooks writes that:

> the very image of sexual agency that she is able to project and affirm with material gain has been the stick this society has used to justify its continued beating and assault on the black female body.
>
> (hooks 1992, p. 160)

According to hooks, black women who perform themselves as sexually aggressive, such as Tina Turner, do not enliven their reputations but potentially reaffirm the denigration of the black female body.

In agreeing with this sentiment, Alice Walker points out that in pornography white women are treated like objects, but black women 'are treated like shit' (in Mayall and Russell 1993, p. 277). In their study of racism in pornography, Alice Mayall and Diana Russell (1993) write that African American and Jewish women are portrayed as enjoying violence and rape and revelling in their victimised positions in pornographic videos, books and magazines. These pornographic works draw upon racist iconography, and link African American women with animalism, masochism, and pollution, while also positioning African American children as sexually promiscuous.

In an Australian context, Hannah McGlade (2006) argues that it may be more pertinent for Aboriginal women to position themselves as worthy of legal protection instead of subjects as of desire. McGlade, amongst other writers, contends that Aboriginal women have been discriminated against socially and in court by the erroneous belief that rape is a traditional part of Aboriginal cultures (McGlade 2006, p. 7, 9-11; Ammerman et al 2003, p. 4). Aboriginal women have been stereotyped as 'promiscuous, inherently bad, alcoholic, dishonest and culturally inferior' and this has been woven into public perception and recent sexual assault trials (McGlade 2006, p. 7). McGlade's argument suggests that the sexually overt tone and subject matter of Sprinkle's performances may not be politically effective in shifting the script of rape for Aboriginal women. With this in mind, a permissive sex discourse, as modeled by Sprinkle, does not acknowledge the raced and gendered nature of sexual relations but assumes that a move towards pleasure is liberating for all.

Karen Finley

While Sprinkle presents a kind of utopic vision of sexual pleasure and freedom, Finley problematises women's relationship with desire through dark and angry performances in which she weaves stories of violence, rape, incest, desire, consumption and innocence. Her monologues are layered and complex, a seeming mass of contradictions which are often fraught, angry, seductive and, ultimately, confounding. Finley is erotic on stage, often removing her clothing, then covering her naked body with food and other, often messy, accoutrements. Finley has

variously smeared chocolate, ice cream, eggs, breast milk, honey, canned yams, peaches, sauerkraut and kidney beans on her naked or near-naked body (Kolson 1989; McKenna 1986). In doing this she personifies women's role as both consumable and corrupted object. When covered in food Finley appears both delicious and degraded, her body polluted but still erotic (Dolan, 1991, p. 66-7).

Finley directly refers to rape in several of her monologues, including 'Why Can't This Veal Calf Walk?' from *We Keep Our Victims Ready* (Finley, 1990, p. 128-133). Where-as Sprinkle's *Post Porn Modernist Show* is an autobiographical show, Finley's pieces do not speak of her own life, but are fictional, nightmarish, monologues which take social mores to their extremes.[20] *We Keep Our Victims Ready* was first performed in 1989 and toured to cities throughout the United States and Europe from 1989-90. Like most of Finley's monologues, it is comprised of a series of short vignettes and performed with an almost bare stage and few props, consisting of foodstuffs, a chair or stool, and a table (Beavis 2003, p. 72-3). The vignette 'Why Can't This Veal Calf Walk?' commemorated sixteen year old African American Tawana Brawley who alleged that she was abducted and raped by six white men including one who appeared to be a police officer. Brawley made this claim after being found semi-conscious and covered in faeces in woodland in New York (Davies 2008; Debelle 2002; *The New York Times* 1988). The case initially appeared to be a police cover-up, and Finley was incensed with the ways racism and sexism wove together to create suspicion around Brawley. After a seven month investigation a grand jury eventually found Brawley's claim to be false and her boyfriend at the time told media outlet *Newsday* that Brawley had falsified her allegations as she feared being beaten by her mother's boyfriend for going missing for four days. Although Brawley continued not to speak to the media it was eventually believed that in a desperate state she had covered her own body with faeces and hidden herself in woodland to avoid being beaten (*The New York Times* 1988; Mcfadden 1988; Winerip 2013). Yet Finley did not explore the specifics of Brawley's case and created 'Why Can't This Veal Calf Walk?' before Brawley's claim was discovered to be falsified. 'Why Can't This Veal Calf Walk?' is not

[20] Finley's monologues however, are sometimes mistakenly interpreted as autobiographical, an issue that Finley critiques, writing 'why does something need to be factual to be valid?' (Carli 2009, n.p).

specifically about Brawley, but about the broader issues of race and sexual victimisation.

In 'Why Can't This Veal Calf Walk?' Finley smeared chocolate over her body so that she appeared as both edible object of desire and filthy object of degradation; she was attractive and repulsive, seemingly delicious but defiled.[21] In this monologue Finley's character was raped as a child and continued to face sexual and physical abuse throughout her life. The character was blamed for her own abuse:

> Everyone says I deserved it – | I'm a hussy, I'm a tramp | I'm a whore
> 'Cause I wear lipstick? | work at night? | and drink bourbon straight?
>
> (Finley 1990a, p. 129)

In the script the protagonist went on to attempt to harm herself, hoping that she would be undesirable and therefore left untouched by men. These acts of self-harm, which she did in order to protect herself, ended up replacing the abusers' violence. When her body eventually became her own 'Private Property' she sliced, burnt, and hit it, before cobbling it back together with plastic surgery (Finley 1990a, p. 133).

Another monologue, called 'Refrigerator', from the performance *The Constant State of Desire* also referenced rape. This earlier monologue was first performed in 1986 in well-known avant-garde performance venue, The Kitchen in New York. *The Constant State of Desire* slightly changed in each performance due to Finley's preference for improvisation and her tendency to go into a trance-like state during her performances. I base this analysis on Finley's published version in her collection of monologues, entitled *Shock Treatment* (Finley 1990a). In this monologue Finley became a five year old girl who was put into the refrigerator by her father and raped with carrots, celery, zucchini and cucumbers (Finley 1990a, pp. 20-1). The young girl was told by her father that their 'secret game' was teaching her 'what it's like to be a woman, to be loved' (Finley 1990a, p. 20). When the girl's mother returned home she did not notice her daughter's distress and only yelled at her for ruining the vegetables. The little girl wondered: 'Is this what it's like to be a mama? Oh, no. Is

[21] Finley was dubbed 'The chocolate smeared woman' by newspaper columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak for putting chocolate on her naked body in *We Keep Our Victims Ready* (Brenson 1990). In 1998 she ironically reclaimed this title through producing a show entitled *The Return of the Chocolate-Smeared Woman*, which embraced 'the deviant character the right had imposed on me' (Carr 2000, n.p).

this what it's like to be a daddy? Oh, no. It's just being part of the whole human race' (Finley 1990a, p. 21). The little girl in 'Refrigerator' literally became the food, with her feet and fingers sticking into the condiments, and the vegetables pressed into her 'little hole' (Finley 1990a, p. 20). While the mother in this piece told that she intended to make her partner's favourite dish, the little girl wanted to scream, but 'I'M DADDY'S FAVOURITE' (Finley 1990a, p. 21, emphasis in original).

In 'Why Can't This Veal Calf Walk?' and 'Refrigerator', rape was not an anomaly, but conventional. It was not condemned by society, but routinely overlooked, enabled by cultural norms of heterosexuality, and embedded into the seemingly wholesome context of the average American family. The monstrous rubbed up against the mundane: the doctor and the police, who are supposed to care and protect, routinely rape women in the course of their duties; mother could not cook the vegetables for dinner as they were used to rape her daughter. Rape was constructed as deeply embedded into cultural norms and enabled by the types of relationships which society upholds as central and foundational.

Although Finley took on a range of different characters throughout *A Constant State of Desire* and *We Keep Our Victims Ready*, she did not assist audiences to place the characters, refusing to explicitly act them out, name them, use different props, accents, or costumes, or in any way mark shifts between the two. Audiences were left to make up their own minds about characters, their relationships to each other, and to Finley herself. Audiences were not given traditional performance cues which may have assisted them to comprehend the meanings which Finley intended. Her performance style and structure was deliberately radical, 'part of a conscious attempt to disrupt the inevitability of most performance' (Finley in Robinson et al 1987, p. 42). At times, she was a tirade of voices pouring forth fury and the mundane, and at other times she spoke too quickly, left long blank pauses, mumbled and repeated herself. Her style was visceral rather than polished, with her voice acting as a rhythmical chant keeping time, or a barometer which both incited and guided audience emotions.

This potentially confounding performance style enabled Finley to reclaim rather than fetishize representations of women and femininity. Instead of seeking to affirm a

distinctly feminine identity, Finley strove to make femininity appear alien and strange. A fruitful way of examining this technique is through Elin Diamond's reworking of Brecht's *verfremdungseffekt. Verfremdungseffekt* challenges the notion that the performer's body resembles what it stands in for, and invites spectators to look beyond the representations on stage (Diamond 1997, p. 48-9). Just as Brechtian actors do not impersonate their characters but rather show how these characters act, Diamond supposes that in performance gender must not be impersonated, but its workings revealed. Through a non-realistic performance style Finley's audiences were prompted to see femininity as unusual, and as an effect of regulatory practices of gender, rather than their precondition. Diamond affirms that 'by foregrounding the expectation of resemblance the ideology of gender is exposed and thrown back to the spectator' (Diamond 1988, p. 84). Finley's representation of 'woman' highlights gender as a system to be analysed, rather than reproducing the idea that femininity is a natural and uncontrived way of being.

While Brechtian theory may provide a useful way to analyse Finley's work due to the way it pulls apart representation from reality, feminist scholars, including Diamond, critique Brecht for his stubborn gender blindness (Diamond 1988, 1995, 1997). Whereas Brecht aims for a politics of reinterpretation through representation, Diamond turns to Irigaray, who is suspicious of women's bodies being positioned as mimetic reproductions. Irigaray claims that in order to disturb a representational system which overlooks the feminine, or constructs woman as a passive mirror image of man, women must deliberately exaggerate the established gender order and therefore befuddle it. While Brecht uses representation in an attempt to uncover the real, Irigaray disturbs any notion of unitary truth. Irigaray argues for what she calls a 'hysterical mimesis', in which women 'assume the feminine role deliberately [in order] to thwart it' (Irigaray 1985b, p. 76).

Mimicking the nineteenth century hysteric, Finley problematised normative notions of femininity through presenting the grotesque implications of gender constructions. Finley disturbs the idea that woman is a (failed) mirror image of man, and therefore highlights socio-cultural constructions of femininity through deliberate overstatement. She explains, 'I think I use my body the same way my body is looked at out in public (in Cartsensen 1997, p. 10). Whereas realism affirms the search for

truth, and sustains the arrangement of the world, hysteria is 'the trope par excellence for the ruination of truth-making' (Diamond 1997, p. 5). As the hysteric, Finley uses contradictory gesture and text, fosters plurality and ambiguity, and refuses linear narrative, thus revealing gaps and inadequacies within normative meanings. While realism fosters narrative closure, hysterical performance creates a dislocation between gesture and text that causes spectators to question meaning. Finley's style may likewise be seen as a deliberate disturbance which problematises normative notions of 'woman'.

However, the technique of hysteria may be difficult for some audience members to read. Feminist performance critic, Catherine Schuler (1990), writes about audience responses to Finley's *The Constant State of Desire* at the Dance Place in Washington DC in 1988 after interviewing fifteen spectators straight after the show. Schuler found that Finley's repeated acts of self-degradation were either not understood, or misunderstood, by these audience members. Schuler's interviewees reported that they felt alienated from the work and angry with Finley. Some interviewees told Schuler that *The Constant State of Desire* was 'gender neutral'; these people did not appear to notice the nuanced critique of gender norms that Finley attempted to elucidate (Schuler 1990, p. 132). Even Finley's references to cutting off the balls of bankers on Wall Street, boiling them, and rolling them in shit and Hershey's kisses and selling them for one hundred dollars a pound was considered by several audience members to be a 'gender neutral' critique of over consumption (Schuler 1990, p. 134).[22] While Finley's work has inspired a plethora of popular and critical discussion, Schuler's argument suggests that audience members may need an understanding of hysteric performance in order to comprehend the meanings Finley intends (Bowman 2006; Carr 2000; Ditkoff 2001; Erickson 1990; Joseph 1990; Miranda 2011).

While Finley's approaches for confronting standard notions of gender and sexuality are powerful and memorable, I do not, however, believe that they would work well in

[22] The live performance of this piece titled 'Cut Off Balls' is slightly different to the printed version called 'Enter Entrepreneur' from the text *Shock Treatment.* Schuler describes Finley's performance at the Dance Place in Washington, DC, writing that the castrated chocolate-covered balls are fed to pampered eleven year old boys who 'eat their daddies' balls' (Schuler 1990, p. 134). In 'Enter Entrepreneur' the chocolate-covered balls are sold to 'gourmet shops for one hundred dollars a pound' (Finley 1990a, p. 10).

the context of rape prevention. Through visceral performances which present contradictory, violent, and extreme imagery, Finley invited audiences to question taken-for-granted cultural norms, and exposed the violence which underscores the normative gender order. 'Why Can't this Veal Calf Walk' from *We Keep Our Victims Ready,* and *The Constant State of Desire* constructed rape as an issue upheld by cultural norms, thereby naming it as a socio-cultural process, rather than an individual issue. While this is vitally important for breaking down the script of rape I believe that it is too confrontational for most primary rape prevention projects. Finley's hysteric performance style can be received as confusing and complex and is best used carefully. As I would like to engage with women and men of all ages and from a diversity of backgrounds, and not just those who are familiar with an hysteric performance style or the traditions of avant-garde art, I do not believe this approach will be effective. A more playful approach will possibly be a more effective way of confronting norms around gender, sexuality, and violence with the broader population, rather than Finley's performance style which is deliberately uncomfortable and often confrontational. The artists I explore in the remainder of this chapter choose playful performance styles which draw audiences in through joy, intrigue, and beautiful aesthetics.

Moira Finucane

In my attempt to analyse how explicit body performances can dismantle the script of rape I have so far suggested that works by Sprinkle and Finley problematise normative constructions of women through their representations of femininity and desire. However, as many contemporary feminist theorists point out, a politics of rape prevention cannot only focus on femininity but must also analyse constructions of masculinity (Carmody 2006, 2009a, 2009b; Gavey 2005). The remainder of this chapter looks to the ways women artists perform masculinity and femininity through the art of drag. Through an exploration of a drag piece by Moira Finucane, and several by The King Pins, I explore the ways configurations of sex and gender can shift through performances that cross over the man/woman gender binary. The following drag king shows are somewhat different to the explicit body performances examined by Schneider, as they explore both femininity and masculinity, and are

performed by Australian artists, mostly to audiences in Australia. I do not suggest that all drag performances are necessarily explicit body performances. However the pieces I analyse here can be identified as explicit body performances as they draw attention to the socio-cultural constructions of the bodies on stage and challenge normative categories of sex, gender, race, and desire (Schneider 1997, p. 3).

Historically, drag kinging has been a way for women performers to practice, play with and disarm the cultural power of masculinity. According to lesbian cultural theorist Eve Shapiro (2007), performing drag can be a way for the performer to rehearse their own transformations and prepare for new everyday performances of gender. She writes that some drag kings have used this artistic form as a way to experiment with performances of masculinity before potentially using them in their everyday lives. Shapiro explains how drag creates opportunities for performers to shift their personal gender identities while creating communities of opposition to mainstream norms. Giving women a space to practice performing themselves as men can disarm the script of rape which Marcus claims relies upon the complementary characters of feminine women and masculine men. Marcus argues that women's performances of normative femininity can make them more liable to accept the role of rape victim as the feminine qualities of acquiescence and passivity lead women to accept, rather than fight off, a rape attempt. As professional artists who create works around themes of gender Finucane and The King Pins do not appear to stage their drag acts in order to practice their own gender transformations, but as a way of playing with and parodying notions of masculinity and femininity and exploring the wider cultural implications of this play.

The art of drag kinging did not become widespread in Australia until the mid to late 1990s while drag queening had been a popular form of entertainment since the early 1900s (Shapiro 2007, p. 251). Preceding the popularity of drag kinging were performances by male impersonators, which have been a popular theatrical form for the past two hundred years. While drag kinging and male impersonation share some similarities, drag kinging often makes the difference between the sexed body and gendered performance explicit (Smith 2008). In her analyses of drag kings in the United States and England, American academic Judith Halberstam (1997, 1998) argues that African American drag king may have a longer history than white drag,

albeit unrecorded. She also points out that there were a few African American male impersonators in the early 1900s and white male impersonators didn't arrive until much later (Halberstam 1998, p. 233-5). Drag kinging has developed its popularity in Australia, the United States and England through a plethora of drag competitions and contests at queer and lesbian spaces which are often performed in conjunction with drag queening, or genderqueer performances (Crowley, 2003; Halberstam, 1998; Shiller, 1996). Halberstam charts the emerging culture of drag kinging in New York in 1996 stating that most performers were lesbian and most acts occurred within lesbian and gay environments. Australian academic Vicki Crowley writes that in 1998 the Adelaide Feast Festival unofficially (and mockingly) attempted to make *The Guinness Book of World Records* for the most number of drag kings on stage with an exhilarating drag king performance by 'Ben [Dover] and his Sixteen Sexy Boys' (Crowley, 2003, p. 286).[23]

Romeo's Striptease was a short drag king work performed by white Australian performer Moira Finucane and directed by Jackie Smith. It has been a long running performance piece, first performed publicly in 1994 and recently, in 2012, toured parts of Australia with *The Burlesque Hour (Glory Box Edition)* (Bradford Syke 2012; St Clair 2012). The piece itself is almost four minutes long and is usually performed as part of Finucane and Smith's long-running *The Burlesque Hour. The Burlesque Hour* is a constantly evolving set of scenes created and performed by a regular group of Melbourne-based female artists who are joined by an assortment of special guests who are mostly well-known female and male performers from around Australia and the world. These shows employ burlesque, dance, circus, vaudeville, butoh, monologue and performance art, and are erotic, grandiose, carnal, and often darkly funny (Funder 2010, p. 18).

Although *The Burlesque Hour* is usually performed to mainstream audiences, the performance of *Romeo's Striptease* that I explore here is based on my own viewing of the piece in front of a predominantly LGBTQI crowd at the Feast Festival's

[23] The Feast Festival is a yearly series of events held in Adelaide, Australia, which celebrates lesbian, gay, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) cultures (Feast Festival 2013).

opening night party in 2010.[24] *Romeo's Striptease* was performed on a large stage in between acts by local and interstate bands, DJ's and comedians.

Romeo's Striptease began with Finucane strutting on stage in tight jeans, leather jacket, cowboy boots, sideburns and stubble to the loud rock music of 1980s Australian rock band The Divinyls' well-known song 'I Touch Myself'. Romeo appeared as the classic 'Italian Stallion', with long dark hair pulled into a low ponytail, sideburns, and facial stubble. He was cock-sure, carnal, and enamoured by his own sexual potency. Romeo's gait was wide and his hips were thrust towards the audience, and he appeared hot-blooded and passionate. Romeo overtly flirted with screaming audience members and strutted around the stage before slowly beginning to pull off his clothes. Slowly peeling off his jacket, Romeo carefully placed it on the back of his chair then sat, pulling open his legs and stroking his bulge. He then cockily took off his big boots before placing them, neatly, side by side, under his chair. Romeo pulled off his clothing with masculine arrogance then folded each piece of clothing into a neat pile, so his steamy strip was slightly confused by an exact neatness.

Throughout the piece Romeo's masculinity began to appear questionable, even dubious, as it was disjointed by his neatness and the apparent womanliness of the performer's body. The performance of Romeo's masculinity was so over-the-top that he did not appear as a man, but as a woman performing as a man, or a drag king. However, Romeo did not appear to have the curvaceous body of a woman, but the straight up-and-down body of a man. As Romeo stripped I became not only interested in the comedy and erotic appeal of Romeo's strip, but also curious about the body this strip would reveal. As he pulled off his top, Romeo did not reveal the breasts of a woman, the tied down breasts of a drag king, nor a bare chested man. Instead, Romeo had a flat chest like a man, but wore tassels on his nipples like a female stripper. When he pulled off his tight pants to reveal a bulge in his Y-fronts, Romeo rearranged, stroked, and caressed this bulge, teasing and enticing the crowd with the promise of a cock. Yet then, like the explosion of orgasm, Romeo quickly

[24] Prior to this, I also saw *Romeo's Striptease* performed as part of *The Burlesque Hour* at the Feast Festival in 2004. I have seen *The Burlesque Hour* performed in both Melbourne and Adelaide several times when *Romeo's Striptease* was not staged.

pulled a long pink feather boa from his pants, climaxing in a bundle of frothy feathers, before strutting off stage before I could see if any bulge remained.

As his clothes came off Romeo's gender became further confused. His body and gestures sometimes appeared feminine, and at other times, overwhelmingly masculine. In an interview Finucane tells that *Romeo's Striptease* does not end with any revelation of her true gender identity, as she says 'at the end of the piece […] people still think I must be a man because his physicality doesn't change' (in Boucher and French 2011, p. 197).[25]

As a drag show, *Romeo's Striptease* played with the dynamic between stage persona and the 'real' sex of the performer (Boucher and French 2011; Butler 1988, 1990, 2004; Halberstam 1997, 1998; St Clair 2012). Judith Butler's (1988, 1990, 2004) well known theory of gender performativity has been broadly drawn upon by drag artists who use this theoretical analysis to make sense of and describe their work (Halberstam 1997). Butler argues that gender is neither stable nor internal but is instead social and performative. She claims that gender is not expressed, but performed, and as it is performed it creates that which it is said to reveal (Butler 1990, p. 192). Thus gender is an idea created through a '*stylized repetition of acts*' through time rather than an expression of an internal, unchanging core (Butler 1990, p. 191, emphasis in original). Butler argues that drag disturbs the notion of an original gender, as she writes: 'In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself' (Butler, 1990, p. 187). Drag artists reveal gender as a series of gestures and acts that can be continually mimicked and appropriated. Rather than copying any original gender, drag copies a set of imitative practices that refer to an illusionary gendered core (Butler, 1990).

Yet *Romeo's Striptease* was different from other drag acts because as he took off his clothes, the performer's 'real' sex or gender identity was not made clear, but became even more contradictory. At times Romeo appeared like a woman dressed as a man,

[25] In their analysis of *Romeo's Striptease* Georgie Boucher and Sarah French write that when Finucane took off her clothes she had an 'indisputably female body'; however on my first viewing of the piece Finucane was quite slim which perhaps accentuated her small hips and breasts (2011, p. 197). I only realised that the performer had a female body when I recognised her on stage in future scenes.

and at other times he seemed to be a man dressed as a drag king, that is, a man performing himself as a woman dressed as a man. Romeo continued to shift before audiences' very eyes, so that as he undressed, and seemingly revealed more, he actually revealed less and hid more. This performance problematised the notion that 'woman' is a pure, unadulterated identity which is completely opposite to 'man'. The body on stage was sexed as both, rather than either man and/or woman. *Romeo's Striptease* played with this confounding intertwine of man and woman, masculine and feminine: it was never revealed if Romeo was *really* a woman performing as a man, or *really* a man performing as a woman performing as a man. Through confusing the binaries of woman/man and feminine/masculine, *Romeo's Striptease* refused to reify static and innate notions of sex and gender. In *Romeo's Striptease* there was no authentic self to be revealed, but only shifting performances of and gestures towards womanliness, manliness, femininity and masculinity.

Romeo's masculinity may be seen as embodying what Jonathan Bollen, Adrian Kiernander and Bruce Parr (2008) refer to as 'wog boy style' in their analysis of representations of masculinity in Australian drama since the 1950s. The term 'wog', explains Tony Mitchell (1992), has changed from a term used by Anglo-Celtic Australians to mark 'othered' immigrants from Greece, Italy, and other parts of southern Europe, to a name which is affectionately used by these groups themselves. Since the Second World War the term 'wog' has shifted from a term of derision to one that is also used to mark group solidarity and pride. Like terms such as 'queer', which has been similarly used as a derogatory put-down but has subsequently been reclaimed by the very groups it was used against, the label of 'wog' carries with it a risky defiance, and reveals both a celebration of and opposition to Southern European cultures (Bollen et al 2008; Mitchell 1992; Samuels 1999). Romeo's wog boy style was largely evidenced through his expressive, energetic movements, and his erotic allure (Bollen et al 2008). Bollen et al write that a wog boy style shares similarities with an ocker Anglo-Australian masculinity: both have sexist attitudes towards women, an inordinate attachment to fast cars, and rely upon vulgarity to mark class distinctions. However, there is one major difference between these two masculinities, and this is that 'wog boys can dance' (Bollen et al 2008, p. 110). And Romeo certainly could move.

Performances of wog masculinity have had an erotic and exotic appeal within Australian culture with their promise of a man who can dance and an escape from ocker impassivity. This admiration has been characterised by a mix of desire, fantasy, and anxiety (Bollen et al 2008, p. 8, 123-4). However, in his analysis of the hugely successful stage show *Wogs Out of Work*, Mitchell argues that performances in which Anglo actors play non-Anglo roles perpetuates the notion that some racialised bodies are able to represent, while others are to-be-represented (Mitchell 1992, p. 2). This is where Finucane's performance of Romeo becomes problematic. According to Mitchell, mimicry can be a pertinent political tool when Greek-Australian actors play the parts of Greek-Australian characters and mimic authoritative Anglo masculinities. He writes that when the Greek-Australian actor Nick Gianapolis' dark-haired Greek character from *Wogs Out of Work* donned a blonde wig and attempted to be a typical Australian surfie, he parodied the way majority cultures position themselves as possessing idealised bodies that other bodies necessarily covet. This enabled *Wogs Out of Work* to speak back to normative representations, using spoof to destabilise the authority of Anglo-Australian culture. However, Mitchell argues that this mimicry is an ineffective political act when Anglo cultures represent non-Anglo others (Mitchell 1992, p. 5).

Finucane's Romeo could be read as a celebration and affirmation of wog boy style, with its suggestion that Anglo Australian women covet this representation as a way of theatricalising erotic appeal. However, it may also been seen as reinforcing the practice where non-Anglo identities are constructed and framed by Anglo cultures who use these representations for their own benefit. While power is gendered it is also raced. While off stage Finucane is able to harnesses her Anglo social power and authority which is helpful in forging a successful stage career, in *Romeo's Striptease* she drew upon the danger and excitement of an ethnic other (Perera and Pugliese 1998, p. 53). In fact Finucane seems to have a penchant for what Perera and Pugliese term 'ethno drag': from 2009-2010 Finucane performed the full-length show *The Feast of Argentina Gina Catalina* in which she played the sensuous and food-loving thick-accented Argentinian 'Gina Catalina' who was raised by wolves; in a sombre short piece which is part of *The Burlesque Hour* Finucane appeared as a Middle Eastern woman, wearing a long black shroud which covered her entire body and face, before being burnt by a dark liquid which looked like oil (Boucher and French 2011).

While reviews and articles on Finucane's work ignore the implications of this ethno-drag, I claim that these roles cannot simply be viewed in terms of an actor freely choosing a role for its theatrical impact, without an analysis of the power and history imbued within these choices. The role of popular, professional burlesque performer is not available to all people or all women. In order to succeed in this profession the performer's body must fit with preconceived notions of what types of bodies are acceptable and appropriate. Amy Shields-Dobson (2011) coined the term 'hetero-sexy' to refer to the types of bodies in representation which are considered erotic and attractive. In her analysis of MySpace profiles Shields-Dobson expands the idea that femininity itself is sexualised, and claims that a certain type of feminine body is routinely typified as sexy; these bodies are white, able-bodied, slim, heterosexual, and young (2011, n.p). In the world of Australian live theatre and burlesque this ideal may slightly shift to incorporate alternative bodies, however, in mainstream performance actors who appear Anglo reign supreme. In Australia there are performance companies and troupes such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led Ilbijerri, and festivals such as OzAsia, in which non-Anglo bodies predominate. However, in mainstream Australian performance most bodies appear as Anglo.

Like Perera and Pugliese, I am concerned with 'the discursive and institutional structures and the relations of force and power that historically delimit or, alternatively, make available, the possibility of occupying specific subject positions and cultural sites' (1998, p. 59). It is not enough to simply claim that an actor's job is to perform different roles which includes portraying difference across race, culture, and gender. Throughout this thesis I posit that representations of bodies can alter the ways these bodies are conceived of and related to. I therefore must also acknowledge that some representations can be politically regressive and normalise, rather than destabilise, established relations of power. While Finucane's Romeo problematised a binary relationship to gender, I argue that it also reiterated racial stereotypes and normalised a fetish for the other (Bhabha 1983).

This fetishisation of the other is not distinct to Finucane. Drag shows and explicit body performances have each been criticised for being unresponsive to a critique of

race alongside their subversions of gender and sexuality (Crowley 2003; Davy, 1995; Halberstam, 1997; Shapiro, 2007). Halberstam writes that when she first began attending drag king competitions at HerShe bar in New York in 1996, the drag kings, who were mostly white, struggled to emulate white men (Halberstam 1997, p. 107).[26] Performances of whiteness are usually upheld through marking blackness, or the other, so that whiteness continues to remain unremarkable in itself but only in relation to another (Davy 1995; Nichol 2004). There is a growing body of knowledge, writes Fiona Nichol (2006), on the ways in which people who are not white are marginalised within queer culture, which positions white bodies as central. She claims that even when this creative work is considered transgressive, it continues to bolster hegemony, or 'naturalise hegemonic identities and interests' (2006, p. 244; Ang 1995). Like some other drag performances, *Romeo's Striptease* challenged binary distinctions between masculinity and femininity, but did not disrupt normative constructions of race. Finucane's performance perpetuated the notion that Anglo culture is central and can use the other to enhance the erotic allure of performances. *Romeo's Striptease* showed that some types of masculinity are more likely to be parodied than others. This means that white, straight, masculine maleness retains its power and is rarely challenged.

The Kingpins

Staying within Australia, I now look at three drag pieces by the ensemble The Kingpins. The Kingpins are striking in the way they drag masculinities and femininities, with reference to both black and white music icons. Based in Sydney, the ensemble is made up of performance and visual artists Angelica Mesiti, Técha Noble, and sisters, Emma and Katie Price. The ensemble first began collaborating in 2000 and their work has shown in galleries and clubs in cities across Australia and internationally. The ensemble creates live performances and video installations which draw heavily upon music videos and parody contemporary consumer culture. In the performances I analyse Noble and Emma Price take on the role of popular male rockers and rappers while Mesiti and Katie Price perform as their female back-

[26] However, Halberstam writes that over time, these women found the 'soft underbelly' of white male masculinities, and began performing as Elvis, bikers, cowboys, beatniks, and 1950s greasers (Halberstam 1997, p. 107).

up dancers (Smith, 2008). While Noble and Emma Price perform male rockers, unlike Finucane in Romeo's Striptease, it is clear that they have women's bodies. The works I look at here are *Pussy Whipped* (2000), *Evil Dick* (2001), and *Versus* (2002).

While the other explicit body performances I have analysed here focus more overtly on sexual desire, and strip off on stage, revealing their naked or semi-naked bodies, The Kingpins are slightly different in their approach. Although their work does not focus on sexual desire, The Kingpins examine desire more broadly, looking at the ways different bodies are represented in a dynamic of desire within popular consumer culture. I look at performances by The Kingpins through the lens of explicit body performance as like the performances that Schneider discusses they literalise the gestural signatures of gender, race, class, age and sexuality in order to analyse the historical legacies of these categories. Like the tradition of explicit body performance their work questions the social body-image in order to reveal the ideologies behind these representations (Stern 2008, p. 23-5). However, this analysis of some of The Kingpins' work expands upon the explicit body genre, as while their performances stimulate audiences to interrogate social meanings of the bodies on stage, they parody representations of bodies which are revered within popular culture, and analyse the implications of their own young, white, and middle class bodies.

The Kingpins playfully parody powerful cultural icons, including rappers, booty dancers, glam rockers, and back-up dancers (Brophy 2005; Frost n.d; Phillips 2005; Purcell 2003).[27] They play with constructions of gender and race, using a combination of satire, glam, outrageous costumes and tightly choreographed routines. Although many of their characters are men, Kingpin Emma Price told reviewer Charles Purcell that their shows are 'not so much about wanting to have a dick but the privileges that come with it', and she continued, saying '[p]enis envy? It's more like celebrity envy' (in Purcell 2003, n.p). In performing powerful cultural icons Emma Price told that 'it gives us the chance to be stars for a day' (in Purcell 2003, n.p).

[27] The Kingpins reproduce middle class whiteness in a later video work, *Welcome to the Jingle* (2003) which parodies consumerism and uniformity. However, I do not analyse this work here.

One of The Kingpins early shows *Pussy Whipped* featured Noble and Emma Price dressed as heavy metal white male rockers Axel Rose and Slash from the band Guns N' Roses; they wore leather pants and wild blonde wigs, mimed playing electric guitars, and lip-synched to the rock lyrics. Mesiti and Katie Price performed as their female back-up dancers, and wore huge hair and backless sequined tops. While the male rockers jumped into the audience and crowd surfed, the female dancers performed choreographed routines and endlessly thrust against the male rockers (Smith 2008). Not long after *Pussy Whipped,* The Kingpins performed *Evil Dick* in which Noble and Emma Price performed as gangsta rappers, dressed in stereotypical rapper gear of baggy pants and gold chains. Noble and Emma Price paraded through the crowd with a huge gun as they lip-synched to a mash-up of misogynist lyrics. As the gangsta rappers, Noble and Emma Price were accompanied by the gyrating of Mesiti and Katie Price, who performed as their booty dancers in gold bikinis and gender-bending dark beards (Brophy 2005; Frost 2013; Purcell 2003; Smith 2008).

Pussy Whipped and *Evil Dick* explicitly presented a mash-up of violent lyrics within rap music there-by framing and drawing attention to these words. In making their performances of rapper subculture extreme the group betrayed the misogyny within this subculture and mocked its terms. Rap music has been condemned in both popular media and scholarly articles for its propensity for misogynist lyrics with some critics maintaining that these violent and sometimes sexually aggressive lyrics perpetuate violence against women, or decreases listeners' propensity to stand up against gendered violence (Armstrong 2001; Barongan and Nagayama Hall 1995; Eisikovits and Buchbinder 1997; hooks 1994; Light 1992; Staples 1993; Waldron 1996). hooks claims that the most assertive celebration of rape culture is rap music (hooks 1994). Yet hooks also points out that there are black men making 'rap against rape' but these songs do not receive popular attention (hooks 1994, p. 129). Some rap music has misogynist lyrics and typifies the kinds of gender norms which are evident in the script of rape. In his analysis of the lyrics of gangsta rap, Edward Armstrong echoes hooks' assertion, writing that 'gangsta rap music is a "celebration" of rape culture and its most powerful contemporary voice' (Armstrong 2001, p. 105).

It may be argued that by performing rap music drag kings simply reproduce the misogyny of rap subcultures. However, The Kingpins subverted the aggressive lyrics they performed through their use of drag and excess. Their dragging of rap music did not simply copy this genre but re-presented it in a way that revealed it as a copy, a sample. In doing so they portrayed the performative nature of rap music and framed it as nothing more than a series of symbols and gestures which are popularly coveted. By emulating these rappers The Kingpins stole their power and prestige and unravelled the status of rapper idols, playfully questioning the popular culture that reveres them.

The Kingpins used humour and parody to undermine popular cultural icons. In his review of The Kingpins later show *Rhapsody Happens* (2005) which I do not examine here, Philip Brophy attests to this use of playful parody to subvert cultural norms, writing that The Kingpins 'are a girl gang of thrill-seeking artists. If it shits you that they're dressing up, screaming, laughing and having fun – that's your problem. They aren't going to give you a poe-faced affectation of post-feminist griping' (Brophy 2005, p. n.p). While their work can be analysed as serious political commentary, it never appeared solemn or sombre. Instead, The Kingpins appeared to be having a raucous good time, seeming enviable and cool like the representations they mimicked, and evoking feelings of pleasure and amusement above all.

While this comic strategy may initially seem simplistic, performing fun and stimulating laughter may in fact be a pertinent strategy for social transformation. In their analysis of gender subversion in the animated television comedy *Futurama*, Alison Pullen and Carl Rhodes (2013) argue that comedy and parody are particularly pertinent ways of using media culture to undermine gender oppression. They claim that parody tugs at a social reality which is ordinarily accepted or overlooked by its audience. In laughing at parodies of gender and sexuality Pullen and Rhodes claim that audiences are doing several things: firstly, they are acknowledging that social norms exist, secondly they are critically looking at these norms, and thirdly they are recognising how these norms are performed (2013, p. 529). Parody can simultaneously position an issue as both 'serious and laughable' at the same time. Audiences identify with the social issue which is being depicted while laughing at its temporary overthrow (Pullen and Rhodes 2013, p. 526). The Kingpins reveal the

power held by the cultural icons they emulate while concurrently undermining this power by showing the icons as imitable and ridiculous. Through laughing at pop culture idols The Kingpins entice audiences to critically consider, and ultimately, refuse to accept the status quo.

In continuing to play with notions of gender and race in rock and rap music, The Kingpins re-staged Run DMC/Aerosmith's smash hit *Walk This Way* with their video installation *Versus* (2002), which first showed as part of the *Cerebellum* exhibition at the Performance Space in Sydney. The original film clip was a remake of an earlier classic by white male rock group, Aerosmith. The Kingpins spoof the later 1986 remix, which is a mock battle between Steve Tyler and Joe Perry from Aerosmith, who are eventually overthrown by African American hip-hop trio Run DMC. Reviewer Andrew Frost (n.d) writes that this song was perhaps the earliest example of a mash-up, in which two very different genres or performances are mixed together to create a confounding and stimulating layering of meanings and styles.

In The Kingpins' version of this track for *Versus,* they played with the notion of mash-up and reproduction. The video alternates between Aerosmith and Run DMC and The Kingpins dressed up as each of these bands to simulate this well-known video clip. As the white band Aerosmith, The Kingpins were in a graffiti-lined garage amongst tufts of smoke. Noble and Emma Price acted as the male glam rockers, with well-kept long hair, acid-wash denim and leather pants; they straddled microphone stands and lip-synched directly into the camera. Mesiti and Katie Price were their back-up dancers and dressed in miniskirts and ripped stockings. As the African American rappers Run DMC, Noble and Emma Price were once again the male band members. Noble and Emma Price decked themselves in bling, wore gold tracksuits, thick gold chains, and gold in their teeth; they accentuated these characters propensity for violence by painting thick red wounds across their faces. As their booty-shaking backup dancers, Mesiti and Katie Price also adorned themselves in gold, donning tiny, shiny bikinis which rode up their flesh to expose firm booties which the camera focused on and followed. Confusing the hyper-femininity of these back-up dancers, like in their performance of *Evil Dick,* Mesiti and Katie Price once again paired their tiny bikinis with dark beards which were drawn across their faces.

When Noble and Emma Price acted as gangsta-rappers in *Evil Dick* and *Versus* they did not appear as African American rappers, but as white rappers who were emulating African American rapper culture. They looked fake, like copies of far distant originals, desperate to seem real by parading their danger, toughness, and thuggery. The Kingpins did not paint themselves black when performing as African American rappers, but instead styled their bodies and clothing according to rapper subcultures (Erickson 1990, p. 226-7). Subsequently, Noble and Emma Price looked like copies, appearing as white hip-hop artists styling themselves according to African American ghetto culture (Olson and Shobe 2008, p. 994).

The Kingpins' overtly framed *Pussy Whipped, Evil Dick,* and *Versus* as copies. Of the three works I have described here, *Versus* is most explicitly framed as artifice and reproduction. In this video work copying is constantly repeated and referred to. *Versus* is framed as a copy and homage to the original work by Aerosmith/Run DMC. Yet it is also positioned in relation to another remake of this song, by white Australian fashion and performance artist Leigh Bowery and his group Raw Sewage (Bowery 1991). A copy of Raw Sewage's clip played in the background of *Versus*: it featured on television sets stacked up the white rockers garage and in the background of the rappers' studio (Smith 2008). Like Raw Sewage's video, The Kingpins dragged gender and race, pointing to each as a play of illusion, and showing the places where these untwisted, re-twisted, and fell apart.

In reviewing the exhibition Cerebellum at Sydney's Performance Space, of which *Versus* was a part, Tracey Clement (2002) compares *Versus* to Raw Sewage's version of *Walk This Way.* Clement writes that while The Kingpins' clip looked like a convincing imitation of a rock/rap music video, Raw Sewage did not mimic popular culture, but instead agitated for new possibilities based on ambiguous gender identities and polymorphous bodies. The three members of Raw Sewage sang *Walk This Way* in falsetto voices, wearing black face, with their eyes, noses, and lips covered in white paint. Part-way through the clip they pulled off long caftans which covered their whole bodies to reveal white torsos, black stockings, and long black gloves. It was difficult at first to tell the sex of performers as they were all wearing merkins (pubic wigs); it soon becomes clear that the performers all have their penises taped between their legs (Bancroft 2012, p. 70). As Clement puts it, '[t]hese

ambiguous creatures are both black and white. They are in drag, neither male nor female' (2002, n.p). In referencing video clips of Aerosmith/Run DMC and Raw Sewage The Kingpins overtly displayed their work as a copy, another remake, a new layer of meanings attached to the song *Walk This Way.* Through linking their own remake to Raw Sewage's remake The Kingpins overtly framed *Versus* as a tussle of overlapping meanings, and a sampling of other samplings.

In imitating popular cultural icons through drag performances I suggest that The Kingpins disrupt normative gender roles and point towards transformation of the self. However, as I discussed in my analysis of Sprinkle's work, Butler's theories of agency suggest that the subject is not able to transform themselves through simply changing their performance of the self. According to Butler, the self is socially constituted, and is created through social systems, including those of gender (Butler 1988, 1990, 2004; Magnus 2006).

Butler points out that performances of gender must be constantly repeated and redone in order to appear authentic. Yet this repetition can never be an exact replica of a thing or idea. In fact Schneider claims that the very notion of repetition suggests that there must be a space between the copy, and what it copies (Schneider 2000, p. 23). Difference is therefore inherent in repetition, and even if one is compelled to reenact the norms of gender, these can never be repeated in exactly the same way. They may also be repeated differently on purpose. While Butler makes it clear that in order to be intelligible one must repeat normative performances of gender, Schneider adds to this by asserting that these norms continue to shift over space and time. Just as Butler claims that subversion is slippery and impermanent, Schneider proposes that the status quo is likewise shifting and temporal. Norms pass for fixed, natural states of being (Schneider 1997, p. 46). Because social structures themselves are continually shifting, so the self too, must continually twist to accommodate these changes. Schneider claims that if we look through time and place we can begin to see how altering singular performances can become part of transforming larger social structures. The self, twisted through time, cannot return to the status quo as it too is always moving. Indeed there is no fixity to return to; transformation therefore is not only possible, but inevitable (Schneider 1997, p. 182).

Personal acts of gender subversion encourage further rebellions due to the human capacity for mimesis. Schneider uses Aristotelian theory to propose that the capacity to copy may in fact be the authentic human experience (2000, p. 25). Copying and re-performing gender may be an important part of developing the mature self, claims Bollen. Bollen explains that children and young people in particular play with and practice everyday performances of gender as part of growing up and becoming part of a gendered social order. While subversive gender performances like those of The Kingpins may not immediately alter norms of gender that underpin the script of rape, Bollen encourages readers to consider that small rebellions are remembered and can be evoked into the future, thus inspiring different ways of doing gender. When audiences remember subversive gender performances by The Kingpins they may draw inspiration, courage, determination, and solidarity. When attending these subversive gender performances audience members may not simply watch, but go on to reenact and redo their own performances of gender. They may use their own bodies to play with and re-perform the meanings they constructed from the stage, or alternatively, to debate or defy them. Thus, the staged subversive acts continue to reverberate through time and across different bodies. Their re-enactments are not exact reproductions, but a kind of ghosting or looping of memories (Diamond 1997, p. 147; Schneider 1997, p. 2). These subversive performances cannot know their effects, but nonetheless, are a continual embodied dialogue of transformation. The self is revealed as reproduction, as an endless copy without any original.

The Kingpins' focus on the self as a constantly changing reproduction of past performances is pertinent to my project. Through framing revered cultural icons as copies, and recopying these performances differently, The Kingpins expose the potential for transformation through performance. Their work suggests that change is inevitable in reproduction. This concept is relevant to my own analysis, as it is a pertinent way to conceive of transformation through performance and re-performance. I suggest this notion of deliberately repeating socially revered performances differently could challenge notions of gender and sexuality. In altering the ways gender and sexuality are performed it can become clear that these social scripts are able to be altered. This suggests that rape, which is upheld by normative scripts of gender and sexuality, can be prevented.

The Kingpins use of parody and play as a tool of subversion is also valuable for my investigation. In using parody and play The Kingpins do not alienate their audiences, as critics of Finley claim that her monologues do. Instead, The Kingpins invite people to knowingly laugh at their representations. In laughing at their performances audiences are inspired to question the normative constructions of gender and sexuality which are parodied by The Kingpins. I suggest that funny and subversive performances are an apt way of engaging the wider population in primary rape prevention projects, instead of performance that can repel audiences through angry or hostile work.

Key ideas from chapter 5

In this chapter I have explored the way some explicit body performances problematise hegemonic constructions of gender and sexuality that underpin the rape script. In closing, I suggest that explicit body performances are perhaps most pertinent for their ability to viscerally display the terms of the debate. As Fuchs and theatre theorist Angela Czekay (1993) claim, those who attended Sprinkle's performances were not relaxed and lulled into a fictive world. Instead, audiences' own assumptions were put on stage to be confronted. While Fuchs was enraged while watching Sprinkle, she also writes that '[t]his is a moment I won't easily forget in the theatre' (Fuchs 1989, p. 43). This conflict about the pleasures being presented on stage may entice audience members to question and reconsider standard scripts of gender and sexuality.

Sprinkle used several approaches which I believe are useful to this analysis of performance as a form of rape prevention. She asserted herself as a sexual agent, which could challenge the three organising discourses of heterosexuality outlined by Holloway. These discourses, which she calls the male sex drive discourse, to have/hold, and the permissive sex discourse, marginalise women's own desires and pleasures, and claim that male sexual desires are paramount (in Gavey 2005, p. 103-122). When women are positioned as agents of their own desires the marginalisation of women's desires is undermined, and a different approach to negotiating sex is suggested. Sprinkle also disrupted the divide between public and private, which has

been a feminist project since the second wave. The public/private divide is used to regulate divisions between women and men, and through upending this binary distinction, Sprinkle suggested that women's knowledge can be public and their bodies can be private. Yet Sprinkle's provocative performance style may only overturn scripts of white, middle class femininity, and struggle to challenge stereotypes of other types of femininities. For this reason, I caution that her overtly sexual approach may only work within certain contexts, and could even reinforce some stereotypes of gender, race, and sexuality.

Finley's attitude towards challenging normative notions of gender and sexuality were remarkably different to Sprinkle's. Finley exposed the violence which underscores the normative gender order through visceral performances which presented contradictory, violent, and extreme imagery. Her works constructed rape as an issue upheld by cultural norms, thereby naming it as a socio-cultural process, rather than an individual issue. It confronted taken-for-granted cultural norms and invited audiences to question the implications of these ideas. However, Finley's hysteric performance style can be received as confusing and complex and is best used carefully. Despite the potential for Finley's performances to disrupt the script of rape, I do not believe her shocking, trance-like, and often angry style is applicable to my work, as I will be creating a performance which seeks to engage with the wider community.

Finucane's *Romeo's Striptease* shows some promise for my analysis of performance as a tool to disrupt the rape script. The piece blurred binary distinctions which uphold the script of rape, like those between women and men, feminine and masculine. In disturbing these distinctions *Romeo's Striptease* unsettled notions of an inner sexualised core, which claims that men have a unique hold on sexual aggression, and women are particularly sexually vulnerable. Yet Finucane's fetishisation of the other is to be avoided, and *Romeo's Striptease* serves as a warning to performance-makers to be wary of reproducing stereotypes around race, culture, and gender. White performers who predominate in performances of the explicit body must work against the tendency to position white bodies as central, and assume whiteness as an unmarked category. In *Romeo's Striptease* Finucane perpetuated the notion that some

masculinities are able to be parodied, while white, straight, masculine maleness is considered to be unremarkable and therefore beyond comedy.

The Kingpins suggested a path to transformation by overturning ideas of what is natural. Through the use of imitation and parody the ensemble pointed to the unnaturalness and constructedness of performances of the self. They deflated popular icons through suggesting that these performances of the self were repetitions of past performances. As repetitions, these performances were framed as objects which could be studied, emulated, parodied and ultimately shifted. In doing so, The Kingpins highlighted how transformation is inevitable as performances are constantly copied and repeated, slightly changing with each repetition. As the self necessarily shifts with each repeated performance, normative performances which uphold the script of rape can be radically altered simply by beginning to repeat these performances differently. Subversive performances will be emulated due to the human capacity for copying, and thus the script of rape can be gradually eroded over time. The Kingpins employed parody and humour to make their political points. While I consider that Finley's performance style is too radical to engage the wider community on sensitive issues, I suggest that the use of parody, as modelled by The Kingpins is a more apt tool for engaging the general public.

The next chapter explores the creation and performance of my own show, *Spreading the Love*. I analyse my own work in this thesis as it discusses my attempt to use performance as a vehicle for rape prevention. Chapter six looks at the challenges I faced when negotiating the aims of performances with the project's partners, and the ways I dealt with these challenges. *Spreading the Love* drew upon some of the approaches which I have identified throughout this thesis, endeavouring to apply these to my own geographical and cultural context. I intended to create a performance that worked on the primary prevention of rape, and for this performance to be held in a series of public places, engaging with passersby as participants and audiences. I use examples from the tour of *Spreading the Love* to explore how participants engaged with the piece, and how their comments may have challenged notions of gender and sexuality that perpetuate the script of rape.

CHAPTER 6: *SPREADING THE LOVE*

This final chapter analyses my own performance, *Spreading the Love.* I look at this work as another case study in which to examine ways that performance could transform scripts of gender and sexuality that enable rape. Although I analyse *Spreading the Love* here, it was not part of this research, but was created through my work as an independent artist. While I was creating and performing in *Spreading the Love* I was not enrolled as a Ph.D. candidate, and was largely motivated to create the show by the promise of an income and an opportunity to create participatory performances on the streets of Adelaide. Yet *Spreading the Love* is an interesting case study as it worked with some of the approaches used by other performances explored in this thesis. By examining the inception of performances this chapter offers insight into the challenges of creating a work that engages with the public around rape prevention.

Spreading the Love was a performance installation that toured public spaces around Adelaide, Australia as a co-production between local governments and the Feast Festival, Adelaide's annual celebration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered/transsexual, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) arts and culture (Feast Festival 2013). This chapter analyses live performances and short films from November 2010 and 2011 when the show toured public squares, shopping centres, community festivals, markets and beaches, inviting passersby to share their opinions and experiences.

In order to investigate how participants experienced *Spreading the Love*, this chapter examines some specific moments from live performances and draws upon several conversations which were part of the performances and short films. The following examples and excerpts from conversations were chosen for their ability to show how *Spreading the Love* worked in practice, and all quotes are taken directly from the films. Participants are referred to by pseudonyms. This chapter begins by examining how the groundwork for *Spreading the Love* was laid, how the terms of the

performance were negotiated and changed, before going on to look at specific examples and excerpts from conversations during the two years it toured.[28]

Preparing the ground

In 2010 I was engaged to create *Spreading the Love* as part of the Feast Festival's creative partnership with local councils, which was formed as a way of celebrating LGBTQI cultures throughout the suburbs of Adelaide. Eight local councils paid for the performances and were consulted with throughout their development.[29] The councils, the Feast Festival, and myself wanted to stage performances that enlivened public spaces and invited passersby to participate in creating art which explored a topical issue. We wanted a performance that would spontaneously engage with people, to encourage their creativity and social awareness. In her recent book, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012), Claire Bishop discusses performance-makers' renewed interest in collaboration with members of the public, particularly across Europe, which has had a long history of public funding for the arts (Bishop 2012, p. 1). In what Bishop refers to as 'participatory' performances, the audience move from being a 'viewer' to being a 'participant' (Bishop 2012, p. 2). Participatory art usually values process over finished product, and values the intangible, for example, social connection, and notions like 'raised consciousness' (Bishop 2012, p. 6). We wanted *Spreading the Love* to be a participatory piece of performance that would draw upon some approaches used in applied theatre.

I explained some further ideas to councils: I wanted to create a show which explored how different people negotiated sex. The show was to be called *4Play* and was to be a playful explanation of 'asking for', 'expecting' and 'wanting' sex, exploring the miscommunications around negotiating sex and asking those who passed by how

[28] I performed *Spreading the Love* in November 2010, 2011 and 2012. This paper however, focuses only on performances from the years 2010 and 2011 as the work in 2012 was quite different to the previous years. In 2012 I toured back to public places within the same council areas, yet in this year I did not have a bed which I invited passersby into. Instead, in 2012 I asked passersby to join me on a large bus which was overhauled into a small theatre and watch the short films made in 2011, while participating in craft activities around the notion of love. Adults and children filled the bus with messages of love, dedicated hearts to those they love, and chatted to me and each other about the topics raised in films.

[29] Participating councils were: Adelaide City Council, Alexandrina Council, The City of Charles Sturt, The City of Golden Grove, The City of Marion, The City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters, The City of Port Adelaide, and The City of Unley.

they resolved these issues. It would seek to elucidate Gavey's cultural scaffolding of rape, and work towards rape prevention by exploring ambiguous areas of consent, including forced sex, coercive sex, as well as ambiguous consent, experiences that appear to be rape but are not labelled as such, and at choosing to have sex so that one is not raped (Gavey 2005, p. 136).

However, negotiating the terms of *Spreading the Love* with local councils proved to be challenging. As discussions continued it became clear that I had different aims to the councils. This challenge when working with a range of stakeholders who have different perspectives and intentions for performances would most likely be familiar to applied theatre artists, who often create work with several different partner organisations. In a keynote address which opened the International Drama in Education Research Institute (IDiERI) conference in Sydney in 2009 John O'Toole (2010) argued that applied theatre projects do indeed frequently face a mismatch between the aims of the sponsors and the researchers, or as I experienced, between the artist and those who are paying for the work.

The Cultural Development Officer from The City of Unley, Mathew Ives, who was the project's primary liaison from local government, advised me that councils would refuse the type of show I was interested in creating as it would be perceived as potentially inappropriate or offensive. In order to pay for performances they would have to be approved by councillors and council officers, and meet their objective of contributing to local community and cultural life by providing opportunities for cultural expressions and learning. I was assured that my ideas for a show that talked to members of the public about sex or rape would not gain approval (Mr M Ives, 2013, pers. comm. 13 August).

The concerns of council suggested that they believed explicit conversations about sex and rape would not be appropriate light-hearted holiday atmospheres like malls, beaches and markets, which were filled with children and young people. Feminist researcher Barbara Baird (2008) writes about what she calls 'child fundamentalism' in which the figure of the child is used to bolster nostalgia for an imagined harmonious past. Baird reasons that children are seen as 'asexual' (and innocent) while adults are constructed as 'sexual' (and therefore potentially dangerous). This

reasoning suggests that in order to protect seemingly vulnerable children, adults must construct social and cultural environments so as to retain children's alleged 'innocence' and unknowingness about sexuality. Although it was not discussed, it was also possible that councils were worried about funding a sexually explicit performance which was part of an LGBTQI festival because non-heterosexual sexualities are normatively considered to be more dangerous, inappropriate, and awkward to discuss with children, and indeed everyone else.

My initial intentions for performances were vastly different to the objectives of councils. While I was interested in creating work which was sexually overt and discussed rape, the partnership between council's and the Feast Festival was not set-up with these aims in mind. The partnership between local councils and the Feast Festival was established in 2008 and the performances created for councils in the two years prior to my performances featured a visual artist who drew and painted surreal and comical images which were projected on a wall behind her; these works did not overtly explore sexuality or gender but were vehicles for LGBTQI artists and arts to engage with Adelaide's suburbs. Councils' funding for *Spreading the Love* came from an allocation for reoccurring community and cultural development projects, such as those concerned with Reconciliation Week, South Australian Living Artist's (SALA) festival, and other regular community arts projects.

As discussions with councils continued I became aware that one or two influential council members were apprehensive about their whole partnership with Adelaide's LGBTQI festival and feared that this may have encouraged them to commission another less-controversial artist, or work with another organisation that didn't foreground issues of gender and sexuality.[30] I therefore felt that in order to secure support for my project I needed to ensure performances accommodated councils' concerns while also accomplishing the aims of my project.

I came to the conclusion that these councils would never support the type of show I originally intended, and consequently, completely altered my intentions for

[30] The contents of a confidential council meeting were leaked and I was told that one or two prominent council members were concerned about the public perception of supporting Adelaide's LGBTQI festival.

performances. Although the councils wanted to partner Adelaide's LGBTQI festival, which usually stages sexually provocative work, they wanted to support mainstream performances that wouldn't shock residents. In Ives' opinion, councils would not like the theme 'negotiating sex', but would agree to fund public art about the more family-friendly theme of 'love'. So I changed *4Play* into *Spreading the Love.* I altered my ideas so that instead of provoking public discussions about sex and rape I would stage conversations about love and relationships. This compromise with councils was a significant limit on my capacity to create a show which challenged the script of rape. These issues that I faced in attempting to stage performances which engage with the public around rape prevention points towards some of the problems involved in creating this kind of work. Rape may be considered too provocative, complex, and not an issue that should be addressed through the seemingly light-heartedness of performance.

Upon discovering that the councils were not interested in funding my show if it attempted to stimulate public discussions around rape or sex I completely reconsidered the tone of the work. I instead began to think of the show as viewing, unpicking, and debating normative beliefs around gender and sexuality. I wanted to create a work that would assist people to problematise normative notions of gender and sexuality and therefore interrupt the conditions which perpetuate rape. Rather than a performance that overtly prevented rape, I began to think of *Spreading the Love* as subtly working on the issues that reiterate rape, namely hegemonic constructions of femininity and masculinity. I began to think about *Spreading the Love* as one tool to stimulate discussion on expectations and entitlements in relationships, and the role of gender in intimate relationships. I did not speak to the councils any more about using the show to explore issues around rape or sexual assault, and only one participant raised the issue herself.[31]

I reasoned that my performances would need to pick at the edges of the rape script, and be a subtle challenge, rather than a fiery debate. My intention for *Spreading the Love* was that it would create discussions which fostered the challenge of normative

[31] This participant only interacted briefly with *Spreading the Love.* She told me that her sister had been raped by a boyfriend and I said that I hoped this show would stop that kind of behaviour. She expressed her agreement and left. As this was such a short interaction it was not used in the short films.

beliefs around gender and sexuality. I wanted to stimulate public conversations where people could explore other ways to perform their gender, and discuss the impact of gender in relationships. I wanted to create spaces in which women and men could present themselves in different ways. Where women could perform their strength and show themselves as sexual subjects. Where men could perform their vulnerability and problematise the idea that they are only attracted to women who primarily aim to please. I wanted to create an intimate space where people could reflect upon their own ideas of gender and how this impacts upon their intimate relationships. This would be an open space which invited passersby to have public discussions around expectations and entitlement in relationships. The show would encourage people to critically reflect upon ideas of love. Although I was not able to encourage passersby to explicitly challenge the rape script, I could encourage them to challenge scripts around love and romance.

Notions of love and romance may seem far away from the ideas that perpetuate rape, however, Gavey points out that there is a connection between these ideas. As many feminists point out and Gavey explains, most rapes occur within the context of relationships. Gavey cites research which claims that most women are raped by men they know, and many of these are committed by those that they are in intimate relationships with (Gavey 2005, p. 38-42, 61-3). Karen Weiss (2009) claims that rape within romantic relationships may be downplayed and instead considered as 'spousal duty'. Weiss also writes that forced sex has become synonymous with passion rather than aggression; it is framed as an act which shows a man's desire for a woman, rather than his disrespect. In this context rape can be normalised as symptomatic of women's sexual allure and men's overwhelming lust. Consequently, notions of love and romance can disguise rape so that it appears like sex. Scripts of love and romance have some of the same ideas that are in the rape script: namely, that women are innately passive (due to their penetrable vaginas), and men are naturally aggressive (due to their penetrating penises).

In order to foster public conversations that challenge normative beliefs around gender and sexuality I would ask questions which encourage women to explain how they are not merely 'destroyed' in relationships, and prompt men to talk about how they are not uniquely the 'destroyer'. I would ask people questions around 'whose

desires are paramount [in intimate relationships]? What counts as active or passive, whose boundaries are breached, who gives and takes pleasure'? (Waldby 1995, p. 267). I intended to look for what Catherine Waldby calls a 'reciprocity of destruction' in which both women and men destroy and are destroyed (Waldby 1995, p. 266). Although Waldby is referring to the act of sex itself, I wanted to explore how these ideas of 'destroyer' and 'destroyed' reverberate throughout the rest of intimate relationships. Rape takes the ideologies of masculinity and femininity to their extremes, but they are reproduced in other daily interactions. For example, whose needs for pleasure predominate, who is considered to be more dominant/submissive, and who is expected to acquiesce to the other's needs? *Spreading the Love* would therefore attempt to show how members of the public challenge gender extremes in the ways they have love relationships, and performances would therefore aim to subtly undermine norms that perpetuate the rape script.

I would ask members of the public about their expectations and entitlements in relationships. What would women sacrifice for love and romance and what would men? What are the expectations of men and women in romance? How do people challenge these ideas in their lives? I wanted to show people choosing different types of relationships and different gender expressions. I wanted to stimulate discussion on what motivates people to challenge gender norms in their relationships, and the ways in which they do so. Furthermore, I wanted these to be other passersby, people who viewers could identify with. As performances were not able to be publically presented as working against rape I would need to ask questions that subtly led participants to unpick the norms which perpetuate rape.

Just as I hoped my line of questioning would encourage participants to challenge gender extremes, I turned to the set design to stimulate participants' consideration of sex and intimacy. The designer, Kerry Ireland, and I aimed to create a set which would prompt passers-by to consider sex, while also encouraging people to share their innermost ideas, secret wishes, and private fears about gender, sexuality and relationships. *Spreading the Love* used its set design to attract the interests of passersby, prompt people to engage with the subject of sexuality, and be an intimate space in which participants could disturb and expanded upon normative notions of femininity, masculinity, and heterosexuality.

Spreading the Love: The performances

The performance installation looked akin to a bedroom, taken out of its natural environment of the house and placed within a public setting. Passersby were therefore immediately confronted with an inversion of the public and private. Feminist critics like Reddy argue that a public/private dichotomy reinforces sexed and gendered norms that adversely influence women (2010, p.89). Rape is normatively considered a private issue as it often occurs in domestic or secluded locations, is usually perpetrated by someone known to the woman, and is thought to attack women's 'private' parts. However, in order for rape to be prevented it must be considered a public issue. It must be acknowledged that shared norms around gender and sexuality enable it to occur, and that it impacts upon the health and well-being of the entire population. Through symbolically inverting the public/private divide *Spreading the Love* hoped to interrogate the rigidity of this boundary and stimulate participants to consider and converse on similar transgressions.

The primary focus of the *Spreading the Love* set was a double bed with a red quilt cover and pillows adorned with large red love hearts. I lay on or in the bed, wearing a sexy red dress, lacy stockings and, if it was sunny, heart-shaped sunglasses. As people passed by I invited them to join me in bed; this was sometimes flirtatious and at other times friendly depending on the context and who I was propositioning. I would then briefly explain the project, inviting people to participate by initially asking if they could offer me any advice on love.

There were often one or two participants in bed with me and sometimes more. Conversations were filmed by Jennifer Soggee who stood next to the bed with a video camera. Lily Pook-Ryan walked around the set offering cookies or cakes and explaining the project to other passersby. Pook-Ryan would also invite passersby to enter the Love Booth, which was a red cubicle with large yellow letters across it that spelt its name. A video camera was placed inside the Love Booth, and people were invited to speak directly into it, revealing their secrets, hopes and fears in love. Comments made in the Love Booth were prompted by question cards that Pook-Ryan handed out and were intended to provoke reflection on the way one's gen er

impacts upon relationships (see appendix 1). People in the Love Booth told who they love and why, while others told of something they regretted in love, and still others told what they were looking for in a lover. During love interviews I prompted and attempted to extend the line of enquiry each participant was exploring. On the other side of the bed sat a large television set and yellow stools. Headphones were placed on these stools, with a sign inviting people to sit, listen, and watch edited interviews and Love Booth statements. After each performance I edited most interviews together to create a five to seven minute short film, which I interspersed with photos taken at the event. Each short film was then shown at all subsequent performances over that year. So by the time the tour ended in 2010 six films were showing at each show, and at the end of 2011, seven films aired during the live show of *Spreading the Love*.

Performances were purposefully created to enable differing levels of participation so that more people could respond to the work. During each of the fifteen one-hour performances, passersby could participate in several ways. They could join me on the bed for a 'love interview', reveal more private information in the Love Booth, view footage of previous love interviews and Love Booth recordings, write a message of love on a heart which toured with the installation, eat heart-shaped cookies, or stand back and watch as others had a love interview. In a love interview I asked a series of differing questions, including 'how do you show your love?', 'do men and women have different ways of showing love?', and 'what won't you accept in love?'. I also asked people to respond to the ideas which they saw represented in the accompanying short films.

Sometimes crowds built up to watch performances, particularly those at the Feast Festival, Henley Square, and on the main street of Goolwa. When these crowds gathered they were sometimes drawn in to conversations on the bed so that these became larger and more public dialogues, and at other times people just watched quietly, entered the Love Booth, or put on headphones so they could view the films. Many people joined me in bed for private conversations and when I felt that these people preferred privacy I kept my voice low and did not invite feedback from the crowd or other passersby. Some people even requested that the camera was turned off so that the conversation remained between the two of us; in these cases I asked

Soggee to leave and spoke quietly with the person for five to ten minutes. Secrets revealed in these conversations were about illicit love or problems in love. I became some people's confidant, counsellor, and confessor. I was flirted with, told I was being annoying, and trusted like a dear old friend.

Among the people I talked to were those who are often excluded from rape prevention campaigns. Participants included: straight couples, lesbian couples, gay, bi and straight men, lesbian, bi and straight women, strippers, trans- and gender-queer people, those who are middle and working class, people from Anglo, Mediterranean, and Asian backgrounds, those in middle and older age, mothers with children, fathers with children, adolescents, groups of friends and business colleagues. *Spreading the Love* enquired into the opinions of these people and provided a space for public dialogue on negotiation, hopes, and expectations within relationships.

Footage taken at each show was quickly edited into a short film which was then shown at subsequent performances; there were fifteen live shows and thirteen short films.[32] Each conversation that was over several minutes long was edited into an excerpt and included in the short film for that location. Conversation excerpts and Love Booth statements were chosen to be included in short films for their capacity to stimulate dialogue, or challenge norms around gender and sexuality. As the performance toured, a dialogue emerged and grew. As performances did not seek to impose specific ideas on passersby I allowed all views on sexuality to circulate. Many participants returned to successive performances to see themselves on film, bringing their friends and family to participate and express their own opinions. Performances became a space in which private thoughts could be publicly articulated, shared, and commented upon.

Spreading the Love intervened in discourses about gender and sexuality through five different registers that interacted with and enhanced each other. Firstly, passersby were able to talk intimately with a stranger in bed about love and relationships. Secondly, people could choose to talk anonymously in the Love Booth, revealing

[32] Although there were fifteen live performances only thirteen short films were created. This is because the Feast Festival had four performances which were cut into only two short films.

secrets that may or may not be made into films. Thirdly, people could join in a group discussion where participants challenged and inspired each other. A fourth way that *Spreading the Love* challenged discourses about gender, sexuality and rape was through allowing people to simply watch the live show, stand around the bed and listen to people chat with me, watch others enter and leave the Love Booth, and see others interacting with Lily or leaving messages of love on the set. Finally, *Spreading the Love* attempted to disrupt normative discourses of gender and sexuality through inviting people to interact with the set itself, watch the resulting short films, eat heart-shaped cookies, and leave messages of love.

Participants usually engaged with the show across several of these five registers. Each register enhanced the efficacy of the other, as participants continued to think more deeply about the different concepts raised by others, or the ideas they had themselves expressed. For example, I watched one young woman write 'I love [name of boyfriend]' on a heart-shaped note which she was going to leave on the *Spreading the Love* set. She thus began to participate in *Spreading the Love* through the register of interacting with the set. I then asked this woman questions about her note and we discussed her relationship. She thus moved from interacting with the set, to the register of talking intimately with a stranger in bed. During this discussion the young woman revealed her dissatisfaction with her boyfriend's lack of commitment to her. Following our conversation she transitioned back to the register of interacting with the set, and I watched her cross her boyfriend's name off her original heart-shaped note and replace it with her own name.

Ethics

As *Spreading the Love* explored negotiation and consent, and as I worked with members of the public who knew nothing of my intentions, the issue of how passersby agreed to have public conversations with me is pertinent to this discussion. I treated this show in a similar way to the other community art pieces I have created. I told all potential participants the purpose of *Spreading the Love* (to explore what Adelaideans think about love and relationships) and how the footage of them would be used (as part of other *Spreading the Love* live shows, on my YouTube channel, and potentially as part of other activities like conferences and film festivals). If people wanted to be involved they were asked to sign a consent form prior to their

involvement (see appendix 2). Films made from previous shows were playing at all performances so passersby could gain an insight into the ways they might be represented.[33]

When passersby told Pook-Ryan they were happy to talk to me she would motion them over to the bed and alert me that there was a person waiting. Depending upon how the conversation I was currently doing was going, I would sometimes invite the new participant to join in the current conversation. Before I did this I always asked permission from the person to whom I was currently chatting. When the participant was revealing personal information, or if they had requested a private chat without any recordings, then I never invited anyone else to join us. Each of these impromptu group conversations appeared to be enhanced by having another person join in.

Potentially the camera put some people off who may have otherwise approached the bed. *Spreading the Love* revealed the identities of participants in short films, and only used pseudonyms when referring to them in written work, such as this thesis. As such, a handful of people wanted to have conversations with me but did not want to be filmed. One couple who did not want to be filmed were an elderly couple who confessed they had been having an affair for twenty years. Another person who did not want to be filmed had a high profile job and didn't want her words made public; she lay in bed with me and told me secrets, saying how 'good it is to talk'.

Despite gaining participants' consent to take part in films, two specific ethical issues arose during performances. Firstly, I felt that although participants may have agreed to take part in performances, they may not have clearly understood the ramifications. Participants may have felt happy talking in bed with me in the sleepy beachside suburb of Goolwa, for example, and agree for their words and image to be made public, but they may not realise the implications of this upon themselves, or others they know. They may not have planned to reveal such personal information when they gave their consent, nor understood how it could later impact upon their lives. Secondly, I was concerned about the implications for those who only incidentally appeared in films and therefore did not give their consent to participate.

[33] No films played at the first performance. This first show was very experimental, and I used it to stimulate ideas and gain footage for subsequent performances.

For those who were only incidentally involved in *Spreading the Love*, like those who were referred to in films or standing with participants but not part of the project itself, the information revealed about them could be potentially harmful. For example, an older woman named Stephanie, whose conversation with me is explored at length later in this chapter, came to *Spreading the Love* accompanied by her adult daughter and husband. All gave their approval to be filmed, but only Stephanie and her daughter spoke. When I asked Stephanie if she was still in love with her husband she said 'actually, no. He might be still in love with me, but not me anymore'. She also explained the enormous freedom she felt now that she was no longer in love with her husband. The short film made from this footage toured Adelaide. As Stephanie was such a strong character, and her ideas so surprising, many people commented upon this conversation. The footage shows Stephanie and her daughter speaking, while the husband lurks in the background. As Adelaide is a small city, it is reasonable to assume that people who know this family may see the footage. Their employers, friends, family, or neighbours may view the footage and think differently about these people. The husband, who only features incidentally, is characterised as controlling, lazy, and unfaithful. This may be radically different to the way he presents himself at work, or to his friends. Subsequently, the release of this footage may have substantial repercussions. It's presence in my films raises ethical issues. Stephanie could be manipulative and controlling, while her husband is submissive and shy. Stephanie could be using the films as a way to bolster her credibility and destroy her husbands' reputation.

On another occasion a middle-aged man confessed that he no longer loved his pregnant girlfriend but had not yet told her. Although he wanted to be filmed, I was concerned that he may not foresee potential ramifications, and that revealing this information may have a harmful effect on his girlfriend. I therefore decided to be discrete about this man's identity in short films by using only the audio of his words, without showing video footage of his face.

Each of these examples exposes a tension between wanting to create captivating art, and trying to protect participants (and those they mention). On several occasions I had to decide whether or not to include riveting narratives in my films, knowing that

they may have the potential to harm participants or those who incidentally take part. In choosing to include conversations such as those described above *Spreading the Love*'s status as an intimate art project was enhanced, however, it could have negatively impacted upon the lives of those who took part. Through choosing to frame *Spreading the Love* as a piece of art, rather than art-as-research, I favoured the creation of entertaining conversations over protecting the interests of participants. Ironically, as a project that intended to explore the ethics of consent, *Spreading the Love* may have used unsound ethical practices itself. The negotiation of consent in *Spreading the Love* may have contradicted its intention to unravel the script of rape through not taking appropriate care of all involved.

Neither councils nor Australian arts organisations have ethical guidelines that are relevant to the ways *Spreading the Love* worked with members of the public. Several of the councils who were involved in creating the work have their own policies for engaging with the public. However these policies function to give council workers guidance on engaging with the public when decision-making in their local area, for example if a new park is to be built. Therefore council guidelines did not prove to be relevant for *Spreading the Love*. The Australia Council for the Arts and a coalition between Arts Victoria, Vic Health, and Castanet have created documents that outline ethical practices of engaging with non-professional artists to create art.[34] While these agencies had no part in funding or creating the project they do outline how Australian artists usually engage with non-artists to create art.

The Australia Council for the Arts maintains that all collaborations with community members must be 'inclusive, respectful and able to demonstrate that they are based on the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders' (Australia Council for the Arts n.d, n.p). Arts Victoria, Vic Health, and Castanet cite the importance of consulting with communities that artists intend to work throughout the whole project, in order to create work that is meaningful and to gain insight into the amount of support the project would have (Arts Victoria, Vic Health and Castanet 2013, p. 21-22). I have conducted my previous community arts practice in these ways, consulting and

[34] Castanet is a network of organisations in Victoria, Australia, that include Arts Access, Cultural Development Network, and Multicultural Arts Victoria. None of these organisations, nor Australia's leading arts body, the Australia Council for the Arts, have specific ethical requirements for artists who engage with passersby (Castanet 2014).

working with members of the public before finally staging a finished performance. However *Spreading the Love* took a widely different approach than that referred to by the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria, Vic Health, and Castanet and as such, does not fit in with their definitions of 'community art'. For example, instead of collaborating with the general public to plan and design performances which are then presented to audiences, as community arts guidelines outline, *Spreading the Love* used performances themselves as a process to engage with the public.

The process of negotiation with the public that I used in *Spreading the Love* does, however, have precedence in what performance theorist Shannon Jackson refers to as 'socially engaged art'. According to Jackson, socially engaged art responds to its current environment, and seeks to be a conversation with political, social, and geographical contexts (Jackson 2011, p. 42). Jackson's theorization describes art which stages its negotiation with the public. This type of performance reveals itself as a process, and not just a finished product that is created through careful pre-planning with members of the public, or a specific set of stakeholders. Socially engaged art performs its negotiation with its surroundings, revealing itself as a dynamic process that can fail, try again, trip over itself, gain momentum, and try it all again. Akin to this approach, *Spreading the Love* continually performed its negotiation with passersby, altering and adjusting itself according to the anticipated needs of each person and each location. It did not seek to abide by one set of immovable ethical guidelines that were established prior to performances but instead largely improvised in each circumstance. Jackson's explanation of socially engaged art shows that the style of negotiating with passersby in *Spreading the Love* has precedence in contemporary arts practice. In looking at the different approaches to working with the public that artists and researchers take, it becomes clear that they have different aims for their work, and therefore different ethical concerns. In fact, this difference in ways of working suggests a tension when using art as research. As art and research have different ethical approaches to their work there must be a constant conversation which weighs up the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches.

This next section looks at the similarities *Spreading the Love* shares with several other works explored in this thesis. It begins by analysing an approach which uses

performance to share local wisdom. While this strategy has several advantages, it became problematic for me when some participants expressed ideas that complemented, rather than disturbed, the script of rape.

Similarity to other performances studied in this thesis

Spreading the Love shared some approaches for transformation with other works explored in this thesis. In particular, *Spreading the Love* used approaches which were also utilised in two applied theatre performances, and two dance pieces performed at the DFL festival, which I examined in chapter four. Like these works, *Spreading the Love* amplified local wisdom, became a site for conversation, and was framed as art rather than political action. *Spreading the Love* also shared a similar approach to that of Marina Abramovic in *The House with the Ocean View,* which I explored in chapter three. Both *The House with the Ocean View* and *Spreading the Love* primarily consisted of intimate encounters with members of the public. I intend to examine what *Spreading the Love* shares with these works in order to discuss why I chose particular approaches in my own work. This is not an attempt to categorise *Spreading the Love* as a certain type of performance – either applied theatre or performance art – but instead to explore what aspects of performance may assist transformation of the script of rape.

Like Themba Interactive in their DFL show *Hopes and Dreams, Spreading the Love* used performance to frame the opinions of people who are not usually considered experts as important information. This strategy intended to position messages as particularly pertinent as they were developed by passersby for other passersby. *Spreading the Love* did not directly challenge participant's ideas, but encouraged other passersby to respond to these ideas. In this way, it was intended that wisdom would arise from the people themselves rather than outside experts. This approach may be risky, as some participants' ideas could reinforce rather than challenge the script of rape, but it aimed to stimulate honest dialogue and open debate. My approach corresponds to Miranda Young-Jahangeer's (2013) work at a women's prison in South Africa, where she found that applied theatre opened up democratic discussions on important social issues, and posed questions rather than offered answers. Young-Jahangeer argues that although popular positions may not necessarily be progressive, they must be respected and allowed to resonate so that

open and honest discussions can begin (2013, p. 202). Young-Jahangeer's argument persuasively points out the importance of allowing people to express perspectives which contradict the aims of the work. However, I believe that in order for this to be an effective approach to transformation, performances must take a critical approach to participants' viewpoints, and question and discuss the implications of their ideas.

Hopes and Dreams and *Spreading the Love* used this approach, which is popular in the field of applied theatre, of using performance to amplify the wisdom held by members of the public. While this approach fosters participation and limits a tendency for performance to deliver didactic health and educational messages, it can also be a problematic approach to disrupting the script of rape. As Shakila Reddy (2010) writes in her examination of destabilising gender boundaries in order to prevent HIV in South Africa, it is not easy for most people to challenge hegemonic gender norms. In order to challenge these norms people must be willing to forego the pleasure and social acceptance they receive by adhering to collectively held gender boundaries and 'risk becoming 'abnormal' or 'other'' (Reddy 2010, p.90). In order to disrupt the script of rape *Spreading the Love* anticipated that passersby would challenge normative notions of gender and sexuality that comprise the rape script. However, several participants expressed ideas that supported, rather than contradicted, the script of rape. As I was determined to amplify local wisdom, rather than proscribe a set of unassailable truths from the bed, I did not directly challenge these regressive ideas.

In failing to critique ideas that perpetuate the script of rape in favour of allowing a multiplicity of meanings to interact and flow from the stage, *Spreading the Love* struggled to disrupt the script of rape. Performances did not specifically invite participation by those who could have something vital to contribute to public knowledge about rape and rape prevention. Those who did participate may have been motivated to be part of *Spreading the Love* in order to gain personal fame, or pursue their own unique agendas, rather than the aims I had for the work. Therefore, despite my intention for passersby to critically challenge normative notions of masculinity and femininity and consequently, destabilize the script of rape, the views expressed in *Spreading the Love* were not necessarily views that did so.

One man in the Love Booth remarked that in the 1970s he had written a song for his girlfriend at the time which celebrated her orgasm. He went on to claim that no man had ever written a song about his girlfriend's orgasm before, and suggested that his acknowledgement of women's sexual pleasure was astoundingly progressive. When I expressed an interest in the song he ran home to get a copy for me and I got permission to play it in the film he was in. His song repeated the phrase 'just like a wave', characterising women's orgasm as gentle, akin to nature, and given to her by a potent man. When this film toured I sometimes heard women laughing at this man's words and song, as they scoffed at his depiction of female sexuality. Yet many others did not see the humour in this man's characterisation. I suggest that this is because I did not clearly parody his ideas, or draw attention to the ways they typecast women's sexual pleasure.

Another woman who joined me in bed for a love interview expressed her opinion that the problem with modern-day intimate relationships is that men have forgotten how to act like 'real' men and women nowadays neglect to behave as 'real' women. While *Spreading the Love* intended to break down a gender binary which insists that certain traits like power and aggression are inherently more masculine and qualities of nurturing and empathy belong only to women, this woman argued for a solidification of the gender binary. I purposefully cut the film so that her ideas were shown alongside those of a softly-spoken young man who appeared gentle and wanted a 'strong' woman. Yet I remained concerned that this subtle challenge to the woman's ideas was not obvious enough to be felt by viewers. In this case, *Spreading the Love* did not do enough to assist viewers of the films form a critique of views that align with the script of rape.

Freire's notion of 'popular education' offers insight into ways that participants could be supported to critically consider the ideas of others (Freire 1970). Freire argues that education must be about community empowerment instead of merely learning specific information which teachers consider to be valuable (Freire 2002; 2006a; 2006b). Freire's philosophy engages learners in dialogue that invites them to be become 'co-investigators' in building awareness (Freire 2006a, 106). Learning expands into a process of *conscientizacao*, or developing awareness and taking action against oppressions (Freire 2006a). Like a Freirean approach, *Spreading the*

Love positioned participants as expert investigators who had vital information to share. However, unlike Freire, *Spreading the Love* did not take a critical approach to knowledge. *Spreading the Love* encouraged diverse understandings without examining the implications of these. In attempting to transform the script of rape, I argue that this approach of amplifying local wisdom must be accompanied by a critical approach to information that attempts to not only express ideas, but also critically analyse them.

Another approach seen at the DFL festival was the use of performance as a vehicle for conversation. Bonfire Theatre fostered dialogue between audience members in their performances, *Stories of Transformation.* Neither *Stories of Transformation* nor *Spreading the Love* were shows in which actors performed scripted works to audiences. Instead, shows were entirely comprised of conversations with audience members or passersby. These conversations were intended to stimulate reflection and engagement from other audience members or passersby, who then added to this expanding exploration of an issue.

In *Spreading the Love* passersby were encouraged to climb into bed so they could join in conversations they found interesting, or watch conversations on the television screen and then respond to some of the ideas which were raised. I prompted people to respond to each other's opinions and often began conversations by citing popular and reoccurring ideas and asking for their own perspectives. In one conversation the notion of 'soul mates' was responded to, expanded upon, and problematised by several participants who were all unknown to each other. Sofia told me that she used to believe in the idea of soul mates, and consequently, would always feel like there was something missing from her life. In response to this, Erin came and joined us in bed said that the concept of one soul mate was in her opinion a fallacy, and that everyone had multiple soul mates. Nancy, also passing by, joined us to swoon about her new husband who told her 'you are just not my wife, you are just not my lover, you are my soul mate. You know I would die for you!'. The opinions of these three women were slightly different, and we sat in bed together to discuss the nuances and implications of each. *Spreading the Love* provided these young women with a space to test out and share their ideas on love and fate, and as this was an open and public dialogue, it stimulated other passersby to consider their own opinions.

Hannah, a middle-aged woman, watched the film in which these ideas were expressed and responded to this emerging dialogue on soul mates in her conversation with me. Hannah problematised the implications of this belief and argued that adhering to a concept of soul mates fosters an understanding of love based on 'uncontrollable passion' rather than communication and negotiation. She went on to argue that 'the notion of romantic love that is sold to us by the media is very debilitating. I think it's particularly debilitating for women cos it's a patriarchal notion of love'. Hannah pointed out that the notion of soul mates assumes that relationships are based upon a pre-determined destiny that cannot be altered, questioned or transformed. She told that adhering to this belief does not allow women to break out of traditional gendered roles and create relationships based on equality and freedom. Hannah problematised the belief in soul mates and encouraged the dialogue to go deeper. Through allowing a diversity of opinions *Spreading the Love* fostered critical consideration of different viewpoints.

Like the dance pieces *Deep Night* and *Sexscape* by P.J Sabaghha which were performed at the DFL festival, *Spreading the Love* positioned itself as art rather than political action. In being framed as art these performances may have been more accessible to those who are not willing or able to attend activities which are overtly positioned as political. As pieces of art, *Deep Night, Sexscape*, and *Spreading the Love* may have also been considered more engaging and interesting than an overtly political activity, and therefore acted as effective tools for prevention.

The members of Won Smolbag Theatre Company, an applied theatre group in Vanuatu, point out that performance is a way to engage with the wider community, instead of only those considered as important decision-makers. Members of Won Smolbag said that when an 'expert' visits villages to deliver lectures it is usually only considered appropriate for men to attend. Theatre performances, on the other hand, are considered to be appropriate for everyone, including women and children (in Taylor and Gaskell 2007, p. 15).

Performance theorist Tim Prentki argues that performance is more likely to engage with people as it is an interesting way of presenting information. He writes that

'when people's attention is held through being entertained, they are far more likely to understand and to learn than when a lecture is being delivered to them' (Prentki 1998, p. 429). Using performance to deliver information or stimulate community dialogue can be a lot more interesting than standard techniques like lectures and power point presentations. I aimed to make performances appear intimate, fun and sexy rather than serious and educational. It was primarily a piece of interactive art.

Spreading the Love enticed passersby to engage in a piece of playful art which aimed to rejoice and reflect rather than confront and oppose. To facilitate this approach, performances used a playful set and tone: passersby were offered cupcakes and home-made heart cookies rather than health pamphlets, the Love Booth and bed were bright and colourful, and passersby were invited to leave messages of love which toured with the piece. At one performance in Norwood Mall a pillow fight spontaneously broke out, as participants began hitting each other and those who passed by with pillows before dramatically falling across the bed. At a show at the Fullarton Plant and Craft Market a whole group of strangers ended up cuddling under the covers after a downpour which sent people scurrying for the bed, which due to wet weather, was under a small marquee. After one conversation, in which an older woman spoke about her son's death, she demanded a group hug from myself and two other participants, and we all snuggled in bed and looked out onto the main street of Goolwa. The Love Booth became a mischievous site for old and young couples and a place of confessions and seductions. Many people interacted with the installation in a highly playful manner: one single middle-aged woman jokingly sang a made up a song for the camera to advertise the fact that she wanted to find a lover; older men often cheekily flirted with me and mockingly acted aghast as I tried to cajole them into bed. In each of these circumstances I tried to emphasise what Waldby calls women's capacity to destroy and men's capacity to be destroyed while always remaining jovial and non-confrontational (1995, p.266-7). Performances were sometimes flirtatious, often cheeky, and always preferred a playful rather than an overtly political move towards transformation.

Spreading the Love was similar to Abramovic's *The House with the Ocean View* as both pieces used performance as a way of creating intimacy. Working with New Yorkers after the 9/11 attacks, *The House With the Ocean View* aimed to foster

intimacy and connection, where previously there had been widespread fear of the other. Likewise, *Spreading the Love* worked to create environments in which strangers could intimately share with myself and each other. My performances usually created a quiet space of reflection in which people could feel, consider, and discuss their connections with others. Both *The House With The Ocean View* and *Spreading the Love* strove to foster peaceful communities through intimate, reflective environments. Through conducting conversations in bed, participants were encouraged to relate to my questions and each other in intimate ways. My questions were usually direct, and I was warm and familiar, like a dear friend. People lay in bed with me, sometimes cuddling, sometimes curled up under the blankets because it was cold or cosy. This intimate space sometimes invited covert considerations and personal sharing. Although a conversation on the bed may have begun with one person, as others passed by, some stopped and joined in, so the conversation would become more like an intimate shared discussion, as one person's perspectives on love and ethics was added to and debated. Sometimes people told me secrets they had never before revealed. Lying in bed with a stranger, in a mall or on the street, stories of regret and concern were shared. After these shared stories participants left the quiet comfort of my bed and returned to the busy, sometimes alienating spaces around it. Within busy public places spaces of intimacy and connection were discovered and shared with those we usually only passed by.

Conversations

In 2010 my conversation with two women in their twenties who were in a relationship with each other, Lauren and Melanie, revealed the way *Spreading the Love* attempted to clarify the notion of 'love' so that it does not disguise abuse. During our conversation the women explained that when they first began their relationship, Lauren would become distant and upset when Melanie said 'I love you'; consequently, Melanie would feel confused and slightly rejected. Eventually, Lauren told Melanie she was uncomfortable with the word 'love', as other people had used it to excuse abusive behaviour towards her. However, both women agreed that they needed a special word to describe their feelings for each other. They came up with the word 'lump', which is a combination of the words 'love' and 'hump'. As Lauren said:

> For us it's almost like lump is the same as what anyone else would call love but because I guess my experiences have lent themselves to people saying that they love me and then doing stuff to me that I don't want them to do then it's kinda like twisted inside my head. So it's almost like the creation of the word 'lump' gives me a way of expressing that without associating it with something that I don't want to experience.

Lauren explained that she did not trust the word 'love' as it has been used to manipulate her. She said that so-called 'love' had been used as a way to keep her a victim of sexual abuse and ensure that she did not tell anyone. Abusive behaviour was normalised, and perpetrators relied upon the fact that this twisted view of love was not problematised in Lauren's everyday life. My conversation with Lauren and Melanie showed the way 'love' is used to cover up and excuse acts of rape and the creative approach which one couple used to cope with and eventually overcome this situation.

The following year Lauren returned to *Spreading the Love* and revealed that she and Melanie now comfortably used the word 'love' to describe their feelings for each other. In returning to performances in 2011, Lauren spoke back to the attitudes expressed by her one-year younger self, saying that over the previous year she had become more content and assertive. During this second conversation without Melanie, Lauren was more interested in speaking about her relationship with her mother, and explained how his relationship had grown because she finally felt strong enough to tell her about the abuse she experienced. *Spreading the Love* celebrated Melanie's growing confidence and supported her to express her own desires while respecting those of others.

A woman in her thirties named Amber explained the idea of sexual ethics as it applied to her own life. Her explanation of negotiating sex ethically shared similarities to the *Sex & Ethics* program. Amber talked about learning to discover and share her own desires and vulnerabilities in sex. She began by establishing all the many differences between herself and her husband, saying 'cos he's a truck driver and I'm an artist we don't really have much in common'. While Amber is a white

Australian woman from the city, her husband is an Aboriginal Australian man who grew up in the bush. As the conversation continued, Amber said she felt like she was hiding secrets from her husband when they had sex. During sex she became aware that she did not trust her husband completely. She also felt unable to share her fears and vulnerabilities. In thinking about ethical sexual negotiation Amber told me that she had spoken to her husband's family, asking them about how Aboriginal people respectfully move onto somebody else's land. Amber's husband's family told her:

> You declare everything; you declare absolutely everything about yourself […] And then, you expect nothing. And that's how you cross into somebody else's country. So to me that's how you have a relationship (*Me: yes*) and you keep declaring because there's always going to be something else. And then you can go into somebody else's space, I suppose, cos sex is entering into somebody else's cunt-ry (*laughter*)

Amber's articulation of ethical sexual negotiation recalls the four stages charted in the *Sex & Ethics Workbook.* In the handout called 'What is the sexual ethics framework?' the four steps are written as:

Caring for myself

+

Being aware of my desires and wants and
the possible impact on the other person

+

Negotiating and 'asking'

+

Reflection

(Carmody 2009b, p. 55)

Amber's story about being told how Aboriginal people ethically move into somebody else's land, and her growing awareness about the importance of stating her own desires, shares similarities with these stages. Amber and the sexual ethics framework both explain that negotiation is a constant and reoccurring process that occurs both prior to and throughout each sexual exchange.

Carmody's sexual ethics framework supports those who follow them to transform their personal existence through paying attention to the conditions which make ethical choices possible. It does not impose moral codes but determines 'the conditions for ethical exploration for different types of people' (Carmody 2009c, p. 84). Those who engaged with performances were positioned as agents of change who are able and eager to make ethical decisions. In these ways performances worked to develop an ethical climate through creating 'new stories based on caring, responsibility and empathy' (Carmody 2009c, p. 125).

Leah, who is a sex worker, spoke about the need for increased public and private conversations about sex. She advocated open and honest discussions about sex, arguing that talking openly about sexual acts and issues challenges the widespread constructions of sex as dirty or private. Leah explained that perpetuating the belief that sex is dirty does not aid awareness of 'what is and what is not ok', but instead shuts down the potential to discover and negotiate one's desires. In summarising her opinion that sex needs to be openly discussed in order for the differences between good and bad sex to be more clearly delineated, Leah explained:

> to be able to talk about when we say yes allows us to then talk about why we say no … if we are told that all sex is wrong then we never get to stand up and say, actually, this bit is wrong, but this bit is right.

In Leah's experience, open discussion of sex leads to more ethical sex. She maintained that sex workers discuss sex a lot, and this attitude of openly sharing one's desires enables a greater understanding of the potential for both pleasure and risk. *Spreading the Love* gave Leah the opportunity to come out as an unacknowledged local expert and share her wisdom on sex which had been gained by an almost twenty-year career in the sex industry.

Spreading the Love sought to encourage the social norm of ethical engagement by placing community members as experts who encouraged others to adopt norms of ethical engagement. The central power of the state may have limited capacity to stop rape through imposing laws and penalties; it is perhaps therefore pertinent to work with communities themselves to transform social norms so that they do not include rape (Carmody 2009c, p. 86). In becoming a participant and spokesperson for a

project which worked towards rape prevention, Leah's knowledge shifted in status from the purely personal, to that of a kind of best practice.

Some participants gave advice which contrasted the messages which are delivered by existing authorities on relationships. Although Relationships Australia (2013), a leading provider of relationship support services for Australians, describe divorce as traumatic and potentially dangerous, participants Troy and Yvonne discussed it as a crucial route to more confidently discovering one's own desires. This couple, aged in their early forties, drew upon their own experiences to suggest that sexual negotiation requires practice across several different types of relationships. They suggested that what is ordinarily considered a relationship failure – i.e. divorce – can actually be an important stage in one's personal growth. As they explained:

Troy: Our theory is that everyone needs a first marriage.

Yvonne: They do.

Troy: Everyone needs a first marriage to work out what works and what doesn't, what they like and what they dislike about being married.

Later, they said:

Yvonne: A lot of people mix sex with emotion and feelings.

Troy: They can be two different things.

Yvonne: Yeah they can be two different things. So you can have –

Troy: Friends with benefits.

Yvonne argued that the advantage of casual relationships is that they allow one to 'scratch the itch' while also practising the negotiation of sexual desires. The couple refused to classify their own relationship when I enquired, telling me that they preferred not to label their feelings for each other for fear of restricting or prescribing the way their relationship would unfold. They suggested that the rush to categorise relationships unnecessarily shaped the way these were able to develop. As they got older, they wished to approach their sexual liaisons with greater fluidity and freedom. Troy and Yvonne told me that having many varied relationships assists one to develop the skills of sexual negotiation, and that people should not rush into

marriage or marriage-like relationships; they should take their time developing commitment and enjoy casual relationships in the meantime. Drawing upon their own experiences of marriage, divorce, casual, and intimate relationships, this couple suggested that sexual ethics can be developed through experimentation, self-expression and reflection.

The perspectives offered by Troy and Yvonne contradicted normative ideals around relationship harmony as they suggested that divorce is a positive process. They position casual relationships as pertinent sites for developing ethical sex and maintain that marriage can be limiting. Their ideas echo the arguments of feminist theorist Heather Brook (2007) who maintains that, in placing marriage 'at the top of the conjugal tree', a hierarchy of relationships that no longer reflect social values, nor allow for a diversity of gendered expressions, is continued and consolidated, (p. 197). Troy and Yvonne destabilise the power held by this traditional and heterosexist institution by claiming that a 'first marriage' is not in fact a pinnacle and prized romantic event, but only an initial process in developing ethical relationships. Some of the real benefits of marriage, according to Troy and Yvonne, are only felt once the partnership is over and one can use this learning to build other relationships, which are potentially more ethical as they allow for greater liberty and exploration. Although it is ethically dubious to suggest on camera that your recent ex marriage was a disaster, the conversation with Troy and Yvonne is interesting for the way it offered an alternative to normative perspectives on marriage.

These two participants stressed the importance of freedom, experimentation, and continual discovery in personal relationships. Their opinions pointed to ways of thinking about relationships which break from the structures of marriage and life-long fidelity, and turned to more flexible ways of relating. They challenged the ideal of marriage as the ultimate relationship style and instead point out that divorce and casual relationships, which are usually conceived of as failures or subordinate to marriage, can stimulate great personal growth. In shifting from the widely-sanctioned normative view of relationships and marriage Troy and Yvonne challenged the status quo to consider the ethical implications of placing one style of relationship as the most sought-after.

Women participants spoke of themselves as both subjects and objects of desire, and pointed out how their approaches to relationships enabled them to express their own desires and seek their own pleasures. Two middle-aged women friends, Jo and Louise, giggled as they discussed the benefit of 'friends with benefits' relationships, which involved 'adult sleepovers […] without falling in love'. As they laughed and lounged in bed with me Louise told about her enjoyment of 'fantasy crushes' in which 'mostly nothing happens' except a lot of looking and secret fantasising. During our conversation Jo's 'friend with benefits' stood off to the side, listening to our conversation, and looking after her daughters. We threw a few questions out to him, but he was reluctant to be in the spotlight, and preferred to listen. Jo affirmed the importance of enjoying sensual pleasures with this man who she said was 'not a boyfriend, but not just a friend', and told that she did not want to rush into any formal relationship. Jo clearly stated her intentions for her current relationship in front of her 'friend with benefits' in a way which was casual and playful but still clear. Performances gave her a vehicle to express both her enjoyment, and her desire to keep things fun and casual.

As Jo and Louise expressed such pleasure about having a 'friend with benefits' I began to ask other women of their experiences with this style of relationship. In response, Mandy told that she would like to create this type of relationship as it could allow her to get to know someone before 'falling in love with a wanker'. On the other hand, an participant at a later show named Rachael said that she wanted 'Prince Charming and that whole trip' but admitted that her current situation was 'on the complete opposite end of the spectrum than that' as she had been single for a long time. Mandy and Rachael expressed longing for a relationship which they had dreamt of but never achieved. They both told that their previous relationships with men had been hurtful and left them feeling cautious. While Mandy's strategy to avoid being hurt in future relationships was to purposefully take longer before falling in love, Rachael was determined to not settle for anything less than a perfect prince. *Spreading the Love* provided a place for these women to share their private hopes and fears in love, and then elevated these hopes and fears from the private to the public realm. In making private thoughts public Mandy's and Rachael's ideas were promoted in status, so that they appeared worthy of shared consideration, and their lived experiences were framed as offering advice which could be pertinent for many.

Spreading the Love facilitated this movement from private discussion into public performance through providing a space which was both public and private. Performances complicated the binary distinction between public and private through making 'the private so explicitly public' (Schneider 1997, p. 72). Confusing this binary distinction between private/public has been an important part of feminist attempts to claim women as agents whose knowledge is pertinent to many. Disrupting this binary can undermine the script of rape, as it offers the opportunity for women to claim themselves as sexual agents who can name, choose, and negotiate their own pleasures, desires, and sexual acts. While women and sex are each considered as part of the private sphere, men and knowledge are typified as representative of the public sphere. This distinction inhibits women from asserting themselves as having important knowledge, and as being sexual agents. To do so would necessitate crossing the boundary between public and private (Reddy 2010, p. 90). *Spreading the Love* transgressed this binary distinction by inviting people to talk about personal matters in a public space, and then sharing this personal knowledge as a form of public dialogue. Performances staged the transgression of the private/public divide, and thus challenged normative distinctions between women, knowledge, sex, and agency.

An older woman, Stephanie, publicly articulated her journey from dutiful wife and mother to a woman who was aware of her own desires. Stephanie revealed herself as a shifting performance, which altered over time, and could be performed differently in different contexts. In the context of *Spreading the Love* she chose to perform herself as remarkably different to the ways she had been constructed throughout her marriage. *Spreading the Love* offered people a stage to articulate and affirm new performances of the self. Participants were supported and encouraged to publicly perform themselves in different ways, and these performances were then amplified and circulated so that they could be repeated and remembered.

Stephanie attended *Spreading the Love* with her husband and adult daughter, joining a group conversation with two middle-aged women friends and their two daughters. Her husband listened to what Stephanie said but did not interact with the other participants during the thirty minutes they stayed, while her daughter listened and

joined in this and other conversations. These women were telling me about their misadventures in love and Stephanie added her own story. She told of the complexity of negotiating her own pleasures and desires in her relationship with her husband. She explained that she wrestled with dominant narratives of femininity which construct women as passive and responsible for meeting men's desires. In attempting to break away from restrictive feminine role Stephanie explained that she had to alter the terms of her marriage. She told that when she was younger she performed the traditional role of wife, yet felt unfilled and unappreciated in this position. As Stephanie got older she broke out of these constraints through falling out of love with her husband and staying in what may be called a 'companion marriage'. In gesturing to her husband she said:

> I was in love with him. I was my own slave because of love, you understand? I was ready to do anything for love, anything, everything, but since I got mature, and older and older – right now I'm sixty years old – so right now, maybe, I got my children. I don't want to be in love anymore because I need my freedom. I'm getting tired and sick of being a slave for such a long, long years.

In a traditional marriage, with conventional gendered roles, Stephanie explained that she could not feel free. She emphasised that now, 'I'm happy with my situation'. In moving away from traditional roles with normative feminine qualities of receptivity and submission, or what Stephanie calls 'being a slave', she gained happiness.

Stephanie stood amongst this group of young and older women, next to her husband, telling about her pain, struggle, and eventual freedom upon deciding to emotionally and sexually divorce herself from her marriage. Stephanie whispered to me that her husband had an affair and that her anger around this prompted her to begin exploring her own desires instead of only those of her partner and family. Stephanie's husband hung his head and stepped back from the camera but did not leave the performance nor interject and try and save his reputation. Although Stephanie told us that her husband used to assume a dominant and controlling role in their home, during her conversation he appeared diminutive and passive and did not say a word except in greeting.

In her performance at *Spreading the Love*, Stephanie performed herself as assertively transforming from submissive wife to an empowered older woman with active interests and strong opinions. She was able to publicly declare this change in front of her husband, daughter, and other woman, proudly telling about the changes she recently accomplished to the camera. When Stephanie and her daughter finished talking to me they walked off with Stephanie's husband in tow. The other women commented on what a powerful and courageous woman Stephanie was, and the conversation shifted from what types of qualities the two friends wanted in male partners, to what types of lives they themselves wanted to lead. Stephanie's subversive performance was memorable for these two women, and others who watched the short films also commented upon her strength and perspective. It became an alternative performance of femininity which other women were able to remember and copy. This performance showed an older woman who remained married to man that she was no longer in love with, but kept her pride, strength, and connection to family intact. Popular rhetoric tells women that the only way to claw back their dignity is to leave their cheating husbands (Sampson 2013). However, Stephanie grew through her husband's betrayal, and neither rejected him, nor succumbed to the idea that she must 'win him back again'. These conversations with women, including Stephanie, gave participants an opportunity to perform themselves as challenging traditional notions of gender. In doing so, performances offered a way to disrupt normative scripts of gender and sexuality which underpin the script of rape.

Spreading the Love also supported men to perform themselves differently, in ways that challenge normative ideas of gender and heterosexuality. A shy young participant named Sean identified as 'gender non-conformist', and talked about the difficulty in expressing his gender/s within an intimate relationship. Sean said he had not had many girlfriends or boyfriends but recently met and dated a woman whom he met online. He believed that his gender non-conformity made him nervous about approaching women and men sexually so an online dating situation suited him perfectly. I told Sean that several young LGBTQI people who had joined me in bed also said they felt more comfortable establishing dating relationships online, and Sean replied that in virtual environments he felt free from the restrictions placed on him by everyday performances of gender. Sean preferred to switch between genders,

sometimes performing himself as a woman, and at other times as a man. However, he sometimes found it difficult to pass as a woman, as this required extensive make-up and more extravagant costumery than what he wore as a man. In those environments which determined what types of clothes Sean must wear, such as at work or school, he felt he had to keep his femininity suppressed, and had to act like the man he appeared to be. Sean was reluctant to discuss his pleasure in dressing as a woman with his ex-girlfriend, and told that in breaking up with her he felt more able to challenge the fixity of gender norms. Sean said: 'after the break-up happened I've started cross-dressing in public and it's actually become quite a lot more fun'. Sean challenged strict divisions between femininity and masculinity and revealed how he enacts gender in a way which blurs and mixes these categories. In this excerpt from my conversation with Sean he explained that he prefers a flexible approach to performing gender:

Me:	So do you identify as male or female or none of those categories?
Sean:	Whatever I feel like at the day, on any given day
Me:	Oh I love people like you, that's fabulous. So it's like 'however I'm feeling'?
(*Sean nods)*	
Me:	And sometimes are you in-between male and female?
Sean:	A little bit. Unfortunately I haven't got any clothing that sorta fits with in-between because I just find unisex clothing boring in comparison to, you know, masculine suits or feminine dresses and all that so *(he trails off)*
Me:	- So what are you today – male or female or in-between?
Sean:	I suppose I'm male due to how I'm dressed

Spreading the Love allowed Sean a space in which he could discuss, practice, and affirm a flexible approach to performing the self. Sean's conversation in bed with me was conducted while he was dressed as a man, but upon my request, he emailed me photos in which s/he was a woman. The film of Sean's conversation subsequently showed him as a man, and then as a woman; while Sean's words played there was

footage of him as a man, and then images of him/her as a woman. Sean performed his gender in opposition to a fixed gender system which claims that men must act masculinely and women must be feminine. In *Spreading the Love* these alternative performances of gender were filmed, circulated, and shared throughout the suburbs of Adelaide as the performance toured. Consequently Sean's subversive gender performance, albeit only transient, was able to be remembered and recalled by both Sean and other participants. Sean's radical gender performance had reverberations into the future, as it was repeated on film, and was able to be repeated and copied by Sean himself, and others who watched the film. *Spreading the Love* supported and amplified shifting performances of the self, revealing that the self is not fixed, but can be performed differently within different contexts and over time. It facilitated the transformation of gender norms by filming and circulating subversive gender performances, so that they could be more easily remembered and recalled by participants, and reverberate into the future.

While Sean challenged masculine norms by moving between everyday performances of masculinity and femininity, my conversation with an older man named Dan revealed how he also performed himself differently over time, albeit in less flamboyant ways. Dan became a single parent to his two young children in the 1970s after his wife died. Unlike other men of his generation, he said that he did not go out and look for a mother for his children, but accepted his new role as a single parent, and soon discovered the enriched relationships with his children that this allowed him to develop. He told me: 'my single parent role gave me those connections with my kids'. Dan said that taking on parenting roles was especially important for men, who have traditionally accepted less responsibility in child-rearing than mothers. Dan told:

> I think as a male in that situation it gave me, looking back on it, I think I developed a love for my children that I don't think most men – in a normal situation with mum and dad would have experienced

Dan claimed that most men of his generation missed out on deep relationships with their children because they refused to take on nurturing roles. He admitted that he too would not have been able to develop intimate and affectionate relationships with his children and challenge standard concepts of masculinity if his wife did not die. In

Dan's conversation with me he described how he changed from being a traditional man who was somewhat removed from domestic duties and caring roles into a single parent of two young children. While Dan's performance of his masculinity was neither fluid nor theatrical like Sean's it likewise revealed the ways in which performances of the self can shift over time, and according to different circumstances.

Key ideas from chapter 6

In concluding this chapter I would like to reflect upon the intentions of *Spreading the Love* as a vehicle for transforming the script of rape, and thereby offer some suggestions for performances which have similar aims.

My experience in negotiating the terms of *Spreading the Love* with councils suggests that it could take a lot of time to gain support for a project which stages conversations about sex and rape in public spaces like shopping centres, beaches, and malls. This could be especially pronounced when working in spaces frequented by certain populations, like children and young people, who are popularly perceived as innocent and asexual. With this in mind, I suggest that it is fundamental to have project partners who are willing to stage public conversations about sex and rape.

Spreading the Love's ultimate focus on love and relationship rather than sex and rape was not ideal for my project, however, I suggest that it was still a pertinent angle from which to approach rape prevention. In questioning people about the types of behaviours and attitudes that they are willing to accept and offer in their intimate relationships *Spreading the Love* attempted to deconstruct standards of gender and sexuality that routinely disguise rape. While the notion that men are entitled to sex in mature heterosexual relationships, and that women have sex in order to nurture their male partners may seem old-fashioned, popular writer on sex Bettina Arndt (2013), recently wrote in *The Sydney Morning Herald* that men should seek a female partner who 'sees it as part of her responsibility to keep sex on the agenda' and doesn't baulk at 'taking one for the team'. While Arndt's attitude was widely criticised by bloggers and their readers, her advice to men and the discussion it stirred attests to both the cultural potency of this opinion and the way it continues to engage popular debate (Arndt 2013, n.p; Ford 2013a; Ford 2013b; Hamilton 2013; Krupka 2013).

In enquiring into people's experiences of love and relationships *Spreading the Love* sought to explore the types of beliefs which encourage or condone this style of thinking. Performances staged public debate on opinions around love and relationships, and encouraged people to question the ethical implications of these. These debates were amplified and circulated as performances toured throughout Adelaide. Despite the limitations of *Spreading the Love* I believe that performances stimulated pertinent discussions on gender, sexuality, and relationships. Performances promoted attitudes that underpin mutually beneficial relationships, and also encouraged participants to consider themselves as ethical subjects who were able to make considered decisions. In this way, *Spreading the Love* became part of an ongoing process to transform the script of rape.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has developed existing knowledge on rape prevention and applied theatre through bringing these two different fields together and examining how performance can be used to create innovative rape prevention activities. I argue that through looking at pertinent approaches from a range of different performances, which have been created in different contexts and on different issues, an interesting approach to rape prevention can be discovered. This thesis has asked how a rape prevention strategy can work with those who are not usually targeted by prevention efforts. I have enquired into the types of techniques which may position a prevention event as relevant to the wider community, and not only those considered at-risk. Throughout this work a broad approach that looks to social norms is favoured over a perspective which seeks to alter the knowledge or behaviour of individuals. This is because, as I argue in this thesis, rape is not only an individual issue in which dangerous men target vulnerable women. Instead, as Sharon Marcus argues, rape can be understood as a script which is enabled by socio-cultural discourses of gender and sexuality. In order to transform these, notions of femininity and masculinity must be questioned and reconsidered, and the way in which sexual desire and behaviour is normatively conceived of must shift. This then, is a process which needs to be undertaken by the wider community, and not only those who are considered at-risk. In shifting normative notions of gender and sexuality I claim that the script of rape will be transformed, and new scripts based on ethical negotiation and responsible sexual behaviour can be created.

In reflecting upon this examination of how performance can be used to prevent rape I claim that the most useful performances would have two main qualities. Firstly, I argue that performances which seek to prevent rape must not inadvertently reiterate the rape script. Performances that seek to prevent rape can inadvertently reproduce the rape script in several ways. They may construct femininity as vulnerable and masculinity as aggressive, writing women as sexual victims rather than sexual subjects. Explicit body performers like Annie Sprinkle show some ways in which women can reperform their bodies so that they assert themselves as sexual agents and active seekers of their own pleasure. Sprinkle's *Post Porn Modernist Show*

undermined a script of rape which relies upon women who are passive and seek only to fulfil men's desires. In some contexts, this approach is valuable and could be repeated.

Performances must ensure they do not reiterate the rape script by reproducing stereotypes of victims and perpetrators. Anat Gesser Edelsburg argues that the popular play *Backyard Games* actually reiterated the very stereotypes it professed to challenge (2005, p. 139). This play perpetuated the idea that victims were seductive and perpetrators were otherwise good young men merely in need of sexual release. The pervasiveness of these kinds of attitudes means that performances which seek to transform the rape script must purposefully challenge these ideas.

Performances which seek to prevent rape must take care not to restate the fear of rape by positioning it as the worst thing that can happen to a woman. Linking rape with inevitable and incredible fear encourages the idea that if a sexually coercive event does not inspire fear then it is not really rape; it also reinforces the notion that women are vulnerable and men are dangerous. When creating performances which act as primary methods of rape prevention and work with the broader population I claim that the most pertinent performances are those which encourage neither fear nor forgetting, but instead retain a critical distance from the issue, foster analysis, and open a space for new scripts.

Secondly, I claim that performances which seek to prevent rape must perceive social transformation as a lengthy and dynamic process, or what Michael Balfour calls a series of 'little changes' (2009). Looking back on my hopes at the beginning of embarking on this research I now question whether any attempt to prevent rape through the use of performance is too ambitious a goal. While my project sought to use performance as a way of transforming the social script of rape, at the conclusion of my project I am left questioning the notion of social transformation. Balfour argues that when theatre makers aim to achieve transformation they often manipulate communities, and become an agent of the NGO or government organisation that funds them. Instead of the perhaps unrealistically ambitious or manipulative attempt at transformation I suggest that performance may function more like a dialogue of mutual learning and understanding. Balfour quotes Bill MacDonald, who argues that

the field of applied theatre must develop a culture which allows performance to not only focus 'on methods and models of change, but on [developing] shared political values and on an ethics of practice' (Balfour 2009, p. 355).

Perhaps a more modest appraisal of the function of performance in the prevention of rape would be to work with participants to develop awareness and consideration of sexual ethics, or challenge and contradict the script of rape. Assuming anything more may ignore the multiple social systems and ways of thinking that perpetuate rape, and also minimise the role of performance so that it is only seen as having a purely utilitarian function. This ignores the potential of performance to bring in different, unimagined consequences, and suggests that the road towards rape prevention is easy and effortless. Ideally, performance would be part of a continuing broader movement towards rape prevention, which includes a range of other services, organisations, and individuals, who work with the wider community to challenge scripts of gender and sexuality that produce rape.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Describe your perfect partner	**What makes a man/woman sexy?**
Do men and women want different things in love?	**Do men and women love differently?**
What do you secretly want in love?	**What would you sacrifice for love?**
Are modern-day relationships happy?	**What makes a relationship equal?**
What's your biggest love regret?	**What's your best love advice?**

Appendix 2

Consent to participate in *Spreading the Love*

I consent to my words and image being used in the short films *Spreading the Love* by Aurora Murphy in conjunction with the Feast Festival, Adelaide City Council, Alexandrina Council, The City of Charles Sturt, The City of Golden Grove, The City of Marion, The City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters, The City of Port Adelaide, and The City of Unley. The films will be screened across Adelaide as part of the *Spreading the Love* tour. They will be put on YouTube at a later stage, and may be used for other purposes by participating partners.

Any enquires can be directed to aurora@auroramurphy.com or the Feast Festival.

Full Name **Signed**

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