Towards a Ludic Ecology:
Popular Participatory Peripatetic Performance

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Declaration

I, Robbie Wilson, declare that this thesis is my own work and that all material authored by others has been explicitly cited. This work has not been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

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Lastly, and most importantly, I am utterly indebted to Clunch, Dimps, and the Pilgrim; you have proved yourselves an endless source of ludic inspiration. Thank you.

Abstract

This practice-as-research project investigates the interrelations between performance, playfulness, and ecology, highlighting these as constituting an important nexus of study in the current ecological context. I explore ways of performatively facilitating ludic interactions between people and their environments, investigate what benefits might accrue from doing so, examine the structure and significance of these interactions, and consider the role of performance training in their facilitation. Conducting practice-as-research 'in the wild' (cf. Hutchins, 1995) provides a unique and valuable perspective from which to interrogate current and historical thinking regarding play. The rigorous supporting rationale provided suggests potential areas of impact and value for the practice beyond the performances themselves. The qualitative evidence presented supports my argument that ludic (playful) performance can positively recalibrate participants' environmental attitudes and relations.

In order to conduct this practical inquiry, I reflexively develop an original methodology: Popular Participatory Peripatetic Performance, or 4P for short. I fully integrate playfulness into three replicable models of practice, derived from 4P, each employing a different modality of peripatetic performance. They are: *Perplexpedition* – an intervention in public space; *Wandercast* – an audio-walk podcast; and *Spinstallation* – a performance workshop. Each of these forms a dynamic and responsive live artwork, enacted and documented in numerous iterations, which allows for reflexive development of the models themselves as well as the overarching 4P methodology; each constitutes research process and outcome. My aim in devising this tripartite approach has been to achieve significant comprehensiveness and also to render the project accessible and attractive to as wide a variety of participants as possible, thereby maximising its validity and the generalisability of its findings.

Ecology is formulated here in line with Gregory Bateson's "ecology of mind" ([1972] 2000: *xxiii*), which seeks a holistic understanding of living systems through the recognition of far-reaching patterns and formal regularities. This project builds upon Bateson's notion that play constitutes one such pattern to develop the conceptual framework and practical approach that I term *ludic ecology*. I also employ James J. Gibson's (1979) concept of

affordance and draw on Baz Kershaw's (2007) ecological approach to performance studies, using them interdependently to structure and support this project from both practical and theoretical perspectives.

This project contributes primarily to three fields: ecological performance, through an original methodology and modes of practice; practice-as-research, through a novel theoretical stance and documentation techniques; and play-studies, by refining a distinction between play and playfulness and elucidating their philosophical status. This writing aims to clarify these contributions and thus position the project as "praxis" not only as "theory imbricated within practice" (Nelson, 2013: 5), but also practice imbricated within theory.

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Each listing provides: the **image title**, the *instance of practice*, and the location of the video from which the image has been taken (online [where available] and in the Project Media Library [PML]).

Each Fig. number is a hyperlink which connects to the location of its respective image in the text.

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[1] I accept that the human perficipants are not actually wrestling, but I contend that this is nevertheless a clear example of social play. (Also, the Mini-Wrestlers, who are actually Mini-Explorers, are not wrestling either; they're having a group hug.)

Fig.49: **Mock-Vulcan-nerve-pinch**, C Unit – *Calamitous Life Support*, *Spinstallation S5: Creativity & Imagination*. http://bit.ly/2mdWzYs (PML\Spinstallation Video\S5 Creativity & Imagination\C Unit – Calamitous Life Support)

Preface: Guide to this Thesis

This text is interpolated with references to, and opportunities to engage with, the project's practice. The majority of this has been published on the project website (www.ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk). Hyperlinks to content published online appear throughout the text. There is also a Project Media Library (PML), submitted on a USB Memory Stick along with the hard copy of this writing, which contains additional unpublished content. The location of Media Library content appears alongside the above-mentioned hyperlinks (or when I reference unpublished content). Media Library locations are provided in brackets in the following form: (PML\Name of Strand & Type of Media\Name of File). For example: (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#3 The Family Vault).

As this is a PaR project, I encourage the reader to fully acquaint themselves with all aspects of my practice that is available digitally (either by linking from the text or exploring independently), so as to fully understand this project and appreciate its value. There are some instances, for example Chapter 5, where the practice and writing should be engaged with concurrently.

To echo the way in which my practice encourages participants to engage with their environments in non-habitual ways, this writing offers many opportunities to divert from linear progression through the text. I provide a large number of hyperlinks allowing the reader to jump forward and backward to other chapters, sections, and appendices in order to revisit certain concepts and discussions or trace threads in the web of argument. I am not suggesting that the reader *should* engage with the writing in this way, only that one *can* if one wishes. Where hyperlinks connect to an appendix I have provided a link at the end of that appendix, which leads back to the main text. In order to maintain cohesion of the main text, hyperlinks internal to the main text do not have accompanying links that connect back to the section where the link originated; i.e. hyperlinks internal to the main text are one-way only.

Each chapter has its own appendix containing various sections. In addition to sections that reproduce documents used within the practice, there are sections which expand upon various aspects of the main text. There are also many footnotes which are similarly expansive, as well as links to a few related blog posts that I have written. Together, they form a kind of 'expansion pack' of the sort available for certain video games. This expansion pack provides additional, supplementary detail on certain concepts and implicated issues or discussions. One reason for including this is that the writing implicates fields with which performance researchers may not be familiar, owing to the wide-ranging interdisciplinarity of this project. The expansion pack demonstrates the extensive scope of this project's epistemic web, shining lights on threads that extend beyond the area enclosed within the core thesis body, which is comprised of the main text and the practice. The expansion pack also factors into the mechanisms for engaging with this writing in the non-linear fashion described above. **The expansion pack serves to broaden the project's scope and increase the level of detail for the interested reader; however, the thesis' arguments can be understood without engaging with this additional detail.**

PLEASE NOTE: A small number of footnotes are highlighted in <mark>yellow</mark>. These do not form part of the expansion pack and should be read by all readers in order to avoid misunderstanding, since these footnotes contain important qualifying information.

Following the appendices, I provide a glossary of terms that I have either coined or redefined.

Part I: Contextualisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1: The Aim of the Game

In an era when many environmental relations (material, social, and conceptual) are decidedly fraught, resulting from rapid technological, geophysical, and societal change (Stokols et al., 2009), "(W)e must rethink and refeel our nature and destiny" (White, 1967: 1207). Participatory performance practitioners have an important role to play in this, not only by inviting "tiny acts of micropolitics that make a difference to the macropolitics that make a difference" (Miller, 2000: 117), but by finding ways to do so that are simultaneously "disruptive and interventionist…constructive and ameliorative" (Bishop, 2006: 11). I take up this participatory artistic baton in order to address this ecological imperative by seeking ecological recalibration through participatory practice-as-research (PaR), thereby conducting my inquiry "through the mechanic of felt experience" (Harpin & Nicholson, 2016: 3).

An early "hunch" (Kershaw, 2009c: 113) was that *playful* practice could enable the forging of potentially beneficial new environmental relationships and that *playfulness* itself might hold particular interest in this regard.[1] Any practice intending to explore, and perhaps change, personal ecologies would need to operate 'in the wild' (cf. Hutchins, 1995), i.e. meet participants where they are. For PaR, this means operating outside of formal performance spaces and intervening in the everyday.

I use the term 'personal ecologies' to refer to the ever-shifting systems and patterns of environmental relations in which a person is implicated, taken from the perspective of that person. Readers familiar with ecological thinking might perceive a problematic anthropocentrism here. However, this terminology is not to imply any ownership of

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[1] I also hoped that implicating playfulness into the practice would help to practically facilitate the work, both technically, in that play has always been fundamental to my performance training and practice, and pragmatically, since I hypothesised that participants might more readily engage with light-hearted practice.

ecologies by individuals, nor to indicate any endorsement of individualism, but rather to foreground our ambiguous status as manifestly agentive subjects that are always-already part of, and inseparable from, ecological systems that we cannot control. I refer to 'people' and 'individuals' in the interests of discursive parsimony; whether or not it is most ecologically and philosophically accurate to refer to people as individuals (cf. Hermans, 2001), I do so here.

As I explore in Chapter 4, this ecological stance troubles the putative objective-subjective boundary in that ecological systems of relation objectively exist yet are contingent upon one's subjective perspective. This project investigates the capacity of performance to shift participants' perspectives and assesses any resultant change to personal ecologies. I use the term *recalibration* to refer to subtle yet significant changes to the systems of environmental relations which constitute personal ecologies and therefore also to refer to changes to the people who are co-constituted by those ecologies. I suggest that my practice can effect an important recalibration. Employing Franco Berardi's terminology, this recalibration could be said to involve a shift from functional, machine-like "connection" with the elements of one's ecologies to aesthetic, ambiguous "conjunction", in which ontological change takes place (Berardi, 2014: 18).

My essential argument here, as demonstrated by my practice and articulated in this writing, is that, just as "[L]ove changes the lover" (ibid), play not only changes the player but does so in ways that are positive, beneficial, and philosophically significant.

Playfulness soon became a defining research focus, as it emerged that play is both of great cultural (Huizinga, [1938] 1970), evolutionary (Burghardt, 2005), and ecological (Bateson, [1972] 2000) importance and has not been studied through 'wild PaR' heretofore. PaR is a strong methodological candidate, however, since performance and play are intimately intertwined.[2] This project thus investigates the interrelations between performance,

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[2] The close and significant interrelations between play and performance are widely recognised (e.g. Schechner, 2013; Shepherd & Wallis, 2004: 122–127; Turner, 1982; Sutton-Smith, 1979a).

playfulness, and ecology,[3] seeking to contribute to our understanding of enduringly enigmatic playfulness, and hypothesising the potential for positive ecological change through playful performance. I describe playful person-environment interactions as *ludic ecology*.

The initial germ of the project was my interest in walking art as a means of investigating personal ecologies, owing to walking's characteristically in-the-wild nature.[4] The drawing of focus from walking itself to playfulness both revealed originality and prompted a broadening of methodology beyond 'purer' approaches to walking art (cf. Fulton, 2010), entailing the formation of Popular Participatory Peripatetic Performance (or 4P for short). Although the popular pillar facilitates playfulness, 4P has been specifically designed as a flexible methodology appropriate to various contexts,[5] hopefully providing a widely applicable research outcome. Playfulness assumes its integral position in the derivation of this project's practice from 4P. Together, 4P and my practice form one of my chief contributions and are outlined in the next section of this chapter.

Although I share Baz Kershaw's (2009c) and Robin Nelson's (2013) reservations regarding questions in PaR, my initial inquiry and methodological development gained clarity by extracting from the above hunches the following questions:

1. **How** can performance be structured and implemented so as to integrate playfulness into daily routines?
2. What **recalibration** (if any) of people's environmental relations might this provoke?
3. What **benefits** (if any) might this have?

As the project developed, my practice revealed itself to form investigative "[models]" (Bateson & Bateson, 1987: 37) and thus the project itself as an exploration of interrelations. This evidences Kershaw's observation that questions "significantly [restrict]

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[3] Performance has long engaged implicitly with matters of ecology through site-based practice, which can arguably be traced back to the Futurists, who took performance out onto the streets around 1911 (Goldberg, 2001: 16). In recent years, ecology has become an explicit concern within performance studies, the field having been illuminated by Kershaw (2007) and its developing breadth indicated by the publication of a dedicated edition of *Performance Research: On Ecology*, edited by Stephen Bottoms, Aaron Franks, and Paula Kramer in 2012. Ecology is now often used as an analytical framework in performance studies, for example in PaR (e.g. Riley & Hunter, 2009) and participatory performance (e.g. Harpin & Nicholson, 2012).

[4] A keen walker since childhood, I had been introduced to the notion of walking-as-arts-practice by Laura Bissell and David Overend's paper at the 2014 TaPRA conference (Performance and the Body Working Group).

[5] I make some suggestions as to other potential applications in the Conclusion (see 8.6).

the exploratory quality of research", since this revealing of my practice as constituting investigative models was seemingly spontaneous and scarcely connected to the above, having more to do with the "radical openness" (2009c: 112) of ludic performance. I note the irony in formulating this latter development as the following question:

4. What is the **structure** and **significance** of performative[6] ludic-environmental interactions as revealed by my practice?

This became the key focus, eventually illuminating playfulness as a philosophical phenomenon. Importantly, the inability of existing theories of play to account for my experience of the practice and observations of participants led to my formulation *play(fulness)*, which I argue advances play theory by refining a distinction between play and playfulness.

The rationality and orderliness of question-formation, however, generates tension with the non-linearity and "disorderliness" of creative process (Trimingham, 2002: 56). In reality, this project is not driven by delineated questions, it is an exploration by live and digital practice,[7] critical reflection, analysis of participation, and literature-based research, which together constitute the thesis, although even these multi-modal arguments necessarily cannot articulate everything at play within and around the practice. Nonetheless, in this document, certain chapters address certain questions most clearly, as expressed in the Thesis Roadmap at the end of this chapter. Interplay between all thesis elements has generated practical and theoretical insights hopefully of value to various fields, from play- to performance-studies to pedagogy. I aim to clarify these and thus position the project as "praxis": not only as "theory imbricated within practice" (Nelson, 2013: 5), but also practice imbricated within theory.

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[6] The concept of performativity is a mutable and vexed one (see Shepherd & Wallis 2004: 220–224). Here, I use the term performative in its general sense of instigating action or performance. There is also the sense, with which participants might identify, of engaging in action which connotes performance. Whether or not any action associated with this project can be objectively categorised as performance is less important than whether it bears some of the hallmarks of performance.

[7] The digital practice is hosted on the project's website www.ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk and in the Project Media Library (PML) that accompanies the hard copy of this writing.

Nelson notes the value of "insider accounts", not only as a resource for practitioners to learn about "other processes and compositional strategies", which I discuss in the Case Studies (Chapters 5–7), but also to gain a "fuller understanding about what is at stake in creative arts practice" (2013: 89). Further, I contend that PaR provides opportunities to understand more about what stake arts practice has in wider society, as I hope to show. Throughout, I have considered my role as both trained performer and researcher.

The radical openness of performance is here compounded by that of play(fulness) (Barnett, L., 2007). LudicrousPilgrim is the manifestation of my playfulness, his name binding playfulness to walking art within my practice;[8] this persona ensures that my practice both renders 4P in ludic form and employs ludic content. In order to establish a relationship between form and content in the writing also, and so that coherence obtains between written and practical components, both I and LudicrousPilgrim speak within this text. There is no authorial separation, however, since we are one and the same person. Though this has made for an artistically and academically stimulating process, at times LudicrousPilgrim has, as my supervisor observes, "come close to sabotaging" the writing's scholarly seriousness, risking the project's research-credentials.[9] Therefore, in the interests of research-intelligibility, this document is arguably more conventional than my practice, with LudicrousPilgrim's influence only becoming perceptible as the writing progresses.[10]

In this introductory chapter, I first outline the project's main contributions to knowledge, introducing the main methods involved in the practical and textual aspects of this research enquiry. Next, I address these practical and textual research methods in more detail, sketching out how the different elements of my practice revealed play(fulness)'s philosophical attributes and highlighting the important roles that humour and pedagogy play within this project. I then introduce three important touchstones in the project's conceptual framework: the ecological thinking of Gregory Bateson, Baz Kershaw, and James J. Gibson. As the conceptual framework that I develop is founded on ecological thinking, I often refer to it as an ecological framework. After having sketched certain of the above three scholars' significant concepts, I briefly discuss this project's epistemology, which is relational, experiential, and interdisciplinary. This chapter concludes with an overview of the remaining chapters.

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[8] Hence no gap between 'Ludicrous' and 'Pilgrim'.

[9] As will become clear, play(fulness) and seriousness are not mutually exclusive; however, in the context of a PhD, it is important that a project be both intelligible as research and taken seriously.

[10] Apart from possibly in a footnote or two during earlier chapters.

1.2: Contributions

As I intend to demonstrate through my writing and documentation, this project contributes primarily to PaR, ecological performance, and play-studies. The ordering below does not imply a value-ranking. The practice offers a new methodology for, and modes of, ecological performance and also new means of studying human play(fulness) in the wild; I propose a novel methodological stance on PaR; my conceptual framework outlines an original theory of play(fulness) and its significance; and my documentation practice contributes practically and theoretically to PaR documentation.

1.2.1: Practical Methodology & Models

The 4P methodology came about for the following reasons. Popular – i.e. novelty-seeking, present-tense, persona- rather than character-based, and using direct-address (Double, 2017: 8) – in order to engage a wide variety of people; Participatory, so that people practically experience and, where possible, influence the work in the hope that this might promote shifts in personal ecologies; and Peripatetic, so as to both take the project to participants, facilitating participation, and take participants through environments, facilitating exploration. Though the present aim is to propagate ludic ecology, 4P can be put to many other ends. From 4P, three modes of practice have been reflexively developed and refined:

Perplexpedition – an intervention in public space;

Wandercast – an audio-walk podcast; and

Spinstallation – a performance workshop.[11]

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[11] I note the similarity of, and inspiration drawn from, certain other practices to mine. Chapter 6, the *Wandercast* Case Study, contains a brief practice review for this strand and A6.1 provides information on further performative audio works. For practices relating to *Perplexpedition* and *Spinstallation*, see A5.3 & A7.6, although the reader might find it useful to read these appendices in conjunction with, or after having read, these strands' Case Studies (Chapters 5&7).

Together, they effect a triangulation of practical inquiry into play(fulness), performance, and environment, producing insights into their interrelationships. While their comparative looseness varies, all three aim to preserve participant agency and promote creativity by employing a general looseness of structure and significant interpretative and interactional flexibility. My tripartite approach also allows multiple effectivities of play(fulness)-through-4P to be concurrently investigated; I designed three strands with minimal overlap in order to maximise the project's comprehensiveness.

1.2.2: Both PaR and Practice-Based-Research

Although I did not set out with an explicit aim to do so, this project contributes theory in a number of areas, chiefly: play(fulness) (Chapter 2), pedagogy (Chapter 3), and epistem-ontology (Chapter 4). I also comment on PaR documentation (Chapter 5), performative podcasts (Chapter 6), and installation art (Chapter 7). The writing also contextualises, conceptualises, and analyses the practice, as is customary in PaR (Nelson, 2013: 33–37). With the intention of elucidating the subtleties and complexities of the research methodology and outcomes that have emerged over the course of this project, I describe the project as simultaneously constituting *both* PaR *and* practice-based-research. In making this claim, I adopt Nelson's usage of the term practice-based to refer to "research which draws from…practice but which is articulated in traditional word-based forms" (ibid: 10) in addition to my own sense that practice-based connotes outcomes that can reach beyond the discipline(s) in which the practice is situated. Simultaneously, my project operates in ways that characterise it also as PaR, as I outline below.

PaR and practice-based-research, when employed on their own, are each able to facilitate both practical and theoretical knowledge-production, but I contend that my project exceeds PaR's usual remit of critiquing theory in light of practical knowledge, leading to the significant theoretical contributions noted above. I describe my project as practice-based-research to give a sense of this 'going beyond'. However, my research is not just *based upon* my developing arts practice; my enquiry has taken place through and within my practice. This is evidenced by the fact that key insights emerged from the doing of the practice, such as the important role that both ambiguity and humour play within the

practice and theory of ludic ecology; both ambiguity and humour form threads that run throughout this writing. Furthermore, my practice constitutes evidence of my research enquiry and was examined as such. Therefore, I characterise my project as equally also PaR.

I am not suggesting that my project produces more, or better, knowledge than other projects but that certain elements of the knowledge produced here are best understood by using the framework of PaR and others by that of practice-based-research. Broadly speaking, practice-based-research tips the balance in Part I, with PaR doing the same in Part II (see 1.6: Thesis Roadmap). Crucially, however, each and every element is inseparably and causally interrelated, which is why I stress *both*/*and*; nothing in this project is unequivocally one or the other. This description is a means for me to understand what I have done in terms of research methodology, it does not indicate an approach that I rationally formulated in advance and consciously followed in shaping the project.

I suggest that practice-based also connotes broader conceptual reach across the academy. For example, my play(fulness) theory arose from interplay between practical, experiential "knowing" (Nelson, 2013: 20)[12] and the process of reviewing play studies literature. The *practice-based* theory could potentially be understood without experience of my *practice-as*-research, yet could not have been formulated in its absence. This 'both/and' abstraction emerged in hindsight; in the moment I made no distinction, hence the simultaneity of *both*/*and*. This stance emphasises the extent to which, as research directly involving arts practice becomes more established, it has the capacity to employ its characteristic interdisciplinarity (ibid: 34) to reach beyond the practice's home discipline whilst retaining its practical footing and constructive "disorderliness" (Trimingham, 2002: 56).

I note that others are also challenging such distinctions, prompting uptake of the term "practice research" (Mackey, 2016: 479), which strikes me as a useful umbrella term. I offer my 'both/and' stance as a novel, and hopefully useful, contribution to these debates,

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[12] Nelson uses the term "knowing" to trouble a sense of knowledge as "clearly bounded" and unproblematically objective: "knowing…acknowledges a subject engaged in the act indicated and perhaps engaged in a processual relationship spatially…proximal to the object to be understood" (2013: 20). I retain this sense, yet also use the term to indicate Barnett's "creative knowing *in situ*" (2012: 69 – italics original), which he associates with Mode 2 knowledge (Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons, 2001), and his "knowing-in-and-with-uncertainty", or Mode 3, which is both produced by and produces uncertainty (Barnett, R., 2012: 69). Both these forms of knowing manifest themselves as significant through-lines within this project.

and to the terrain of practice research, rather than as a standalone research methodology. My intention is to better understand and articulate the processes and trajectories at work within my research project, with the possibility that other researchers might find that my formulation serves to open up and elucidate their own practice research activity.

1.2.3: Ludic Ecology

As well as being shaped by critical reflection and participant feedback, each practical strand has evolved through mutual modification, i.e. in ecological relationship, with an original, developing (conceptual) framework for ludic ecology that incorporates my play(fulness) formulation. Although human play(fulness) has been studied ecologically (Bateson, [1972] 2000: 177–193) and ethology cites environmental resources as a key factor in animal play(fulness) (e.g. Auerbach, Kanarek & Burghardt, 2015; Baldwin & Baldwin, 1976), ludic ecology interweaves these threads and more, broadening our understanding of play(fulness) through a uniquely[13] synergistic approach that positions play(fulness) as a philosophically important phenomenon. Importantly, the central role of arts practice allows for a context- and affect-rich experience and understanding, adding unique value. As Matthew Reason observes, although arts projects' extrinsic benefits (such as creative potential in this case) can often be gained through other means, the intensifying quality of aesthetic production energises the process and thus can maximise its effectiveness (2017b: 47).

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[13] Claire Hind (2010) has conducted what she terms *practice-led* research into play and performance; however, Hind's research did not have an accompanying focus on environment, although there is a slight methodological similarity in that Hind's performances were participatory. However, rather than general play(fulness) in any environment, Hind's research investigated deep and dark play in a studio environment through macabre, sado-masochistically-inflected performances. Hind's engagement with play theory predominantly addresses Caillois and her conceptual framework focuses tightly on Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. Therefore, though certainly valid in its own right, it does not possess the same generalisability as this project, nor does it allow for the interweaving of its practice into people's daily lives; as such, Hind's research occupies a distinctly different place in the research landscape to that of this project.

1.2.4: Documentation[14]

My approach to PaR progresses documentation methods.[15] Archivability has been built into each strand from the outset.[16] Most importantly, my methods are intended to allow diachronic engagement with the practice whilst preserving the character of the original:

> ***Perplexpedition*** is constituted by the collaborative production of videos capturing the ludic activity of myself and participants. The editing process renders the footage into *affective documentation*, meaning that it teases out and expresses the affective experiences both of myself and participants, giving a sense of the live event and gesturally articulating the practical knowings generated.[17]

> ***Wandercast*** includes a "stable, transmissible [document]" (Spatz, 2015: 235), i.e. my podcast, which both *is* and *documents* practice and is always-already ready for activation-by-participation.

> ***Spinstallation*** culminates in ludic tasks comprising collaborative video production. I leave these videos unedited to preserve their DIY quality and indicate the ease with which the practice may be replicated. Although *Spinstallation*'s unedited videos do not tease out practical knowings to the same extent as *Perplexpedition*'s, they

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[14] The only elements of practice which are not documented are the early stages of a *Spinstallation* workshop, which mainly involves participants sitting around tables, and participants' *Wandercast* performances, which necessarily cannot be documented. I do, however, gather self-report feedback via questionnaires for both of these undocumented elements.

[15] I acknowledge also the innovative approaches of practitioner-researchers such as Joanne Scott, the value of whose multi-modal approach I recognise (see 2016: 20–23). I argue that my approaches go still further in the integration of documentation into the practice, and also develop documentary methods on more fronts, due to the tripartite nature of my practice.

[16] This follows Nelson's personal suggestion to do so during dialogue with him at Kent on the 20th of November, 2014.

[17] The term *affective documentation* was coined by my supervisor, Nicola Shaughnessy, to describe the approach I have developed. See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/category/perplexpedition/ (or PML\Perplexpedition Video) and Chapter 5.
Nelson advocates the use of "gestural poetic modes of expression" when accounting for one's practice in the written component of PaR (2013: 35). I have built this into the practice of *Perplexpedition*, effecting a form of ludic analysis within the strand itself.

nonetheless constitute both digital 4P practice and research documentation. Collaborative video production also allows all participants' performances to be documented, which would not otherwise be possible, and positions participants as research collaborators, thereby contributing a novel method of participant action research.

1.3: Methods

1.3.1: Practice – The Ludic Triangle

I have developed three different modal strands of practice in order to effect a dynamic, wide-ranging, multi-perspectival inquiry, hopefully producing understandings broader and deeper than those possible with a single-pronged approach. Producing one practice with three strands allows me to make the practice as accessible and attractive to as wide a range of people as possible in order to maximise the validity and generalisability of the findings. The three strands are crucial to pursuing the **how** question (Question 1) because this design allows comparison between structures. Without the three, it would not be possible to effectively weigh up the pros and cons of any one structure. Each strand constitutes research process and outcome, with documentation and digital aspects of the practice hosted online. All strands are informed by my concept of *rooted placelessness*, which refers to a mode of being in which presence in the moment is prioritised above other associations and places are perceived in a new light.[18]

Crucially, cross-pollination of discoveries and motifs between the strands has occurred throughout, producing one approach in three united manifestations rather than three independent practices. For example, the central role of ambiguity in play(fulness) emerged from *Perplexpedition* before being structured into *Wandercast* and *Spinstallation* and the presence of David Attenborough can be felt across all three.

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[18] This emerged from my practical explorations during a brief residency with John Fox and Sue Gill, formerly of Welfare State, wherein I wrestled with how to make grounded, vital work that would pursue my aims whilst being site-non-specific. The residency took place at and around the couple's home on Morecambe Bay from the 18th to the 21st of May, 2015. See A1.1 for further discussion.

The strands are united on aesthetic and structural fronts. They share a common aesthetic, largely derived from my sense of humour. I outline the importance of humour in a little more detail in the coming sub-sub-section. In terms of structure, while the activities involved in each strand may be simple, in each case they allow participants and myself to interact with the physical environment, the social environment of our spontaneous grouping, and the conceptual environment of the particular situation in ways that are sensory, imaginative, and innovative.

Perhaps most importantly, producing three strands enabled the formulation and pursuance of the fourth question regarding the **structure** and **significance** of performative ludic interactions between people and their environments, as it allowed comparisons across different performance structures to see what patterns connect them. I was keen to see how play(fulness) manifests differently through different modes of performance, as this would enable me to trace contrasts and commonalities and therefore find out more about play(fulness) than is possible when employing a single mode. Comparative analysis across the three strands – which each employ simple activities to reveal environments' ludic potential, and which are knitted together using a common aesthetic – makes possible an investigation into the tension between structure and process. I argue that structure-process-tension is characteristic of, and fundamental to, play(fulness) itself; it has emerged as a central theme throughout this project, often taking the form of balancing acts to be negotiated on different levels. Furthermore, structure-process-tension lies at the heart of Bateson's non-religious notion of the sacred, which I introduce in 1.4.1 below, and which factors into my argument for *ludic ecology*'s philosophical significance.

As intimated above, environments are taken here as comprised of inseparable, interrelated, interacting elements: physical, social, and conceptual. All strands seek to facilitate physical, social, and conceptual play(fulness) to varying extents in relation to various environments. I describe each strand briefly below:

Perplexpedition

These interventions foreground the inherent riskiness of play (Huizinga, 1970: 29) by instigating spontaneous, quick-fire, loosely-structured encounters between small groups and their immediate environment; for example, using a bike-rack as a climbing frame.
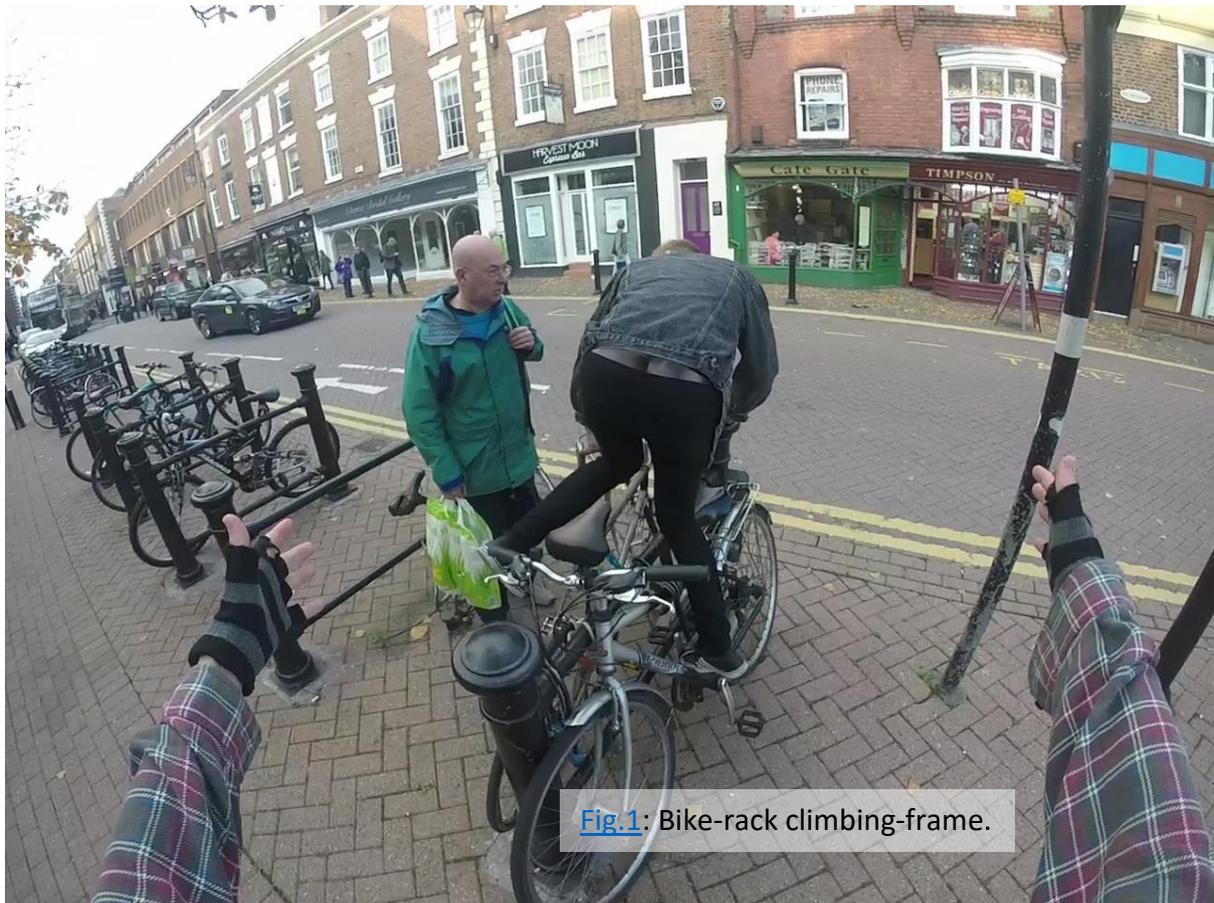
Fig.1: Bike-rack climbing-frame.

Wandercast

These audio-walks (currently) engage individual participants, inviting recalibration of their relationship to their environment by presencing the "playfulness of perception" (Home-Cook, 2015: 8) and, crucially, extending this into ludic action during a more sustained performative engagement; in Ep.2, for instance, participants seek out swinging opportunities.

Fig.2: Swinging under a bike-rack.

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[19] This is a still from an unpublished how-to video (PML\Wandercast Video\Tutorials\Raw Footage\Canters 20-10-15\Swing King (under)), of which there was going to be a series, demonstrating ways to approach the various tactics contained in *Wandercast Ep.2: Headphone Adventure Playground*. I aborted this element of the project because I concluded that the videos might overly determine participants' environmental interaction during the podcast, thus limiting their agency and creativity.

Spinstallation

These workshops constitute the most durational and overtly pedagogical strand, taking medium-sized groups of participants through a series of exercises, tailored to the particular setting, aiming to incrementally increase participants' play(fulness) and performativity towards the undertaking of a final ludic task. In a setting featuring many modes of transport, for example, the final task involved playful travel.

Fig.3: Travelling in an unusual way.

Spinstallation

All three strands have effected performative inquiry into play(fulness) as a philosophical phenomenon, though they foreground different aspects. *Perplexpedition* and *Spinstallation* highlight the ontological foundations of play(fulness) that I argue are grounded in productive ambiguity, whereas *Wandercast* foregrounds the way in which both performance and play(fulness) exemplify reality-constructing processes. I set out the elements of this argument and how it manifests in each of the strands in the Roadmap section at the end of this chapter (1.6 – 1.6.7).

The triangulatory design also aims to render the project accessible and attractive to as wide a variety of participants as possible, in order to maximise its validity. Even before practical explorations began, I hypothesised that few people would accept *Perplexpedition*'s out-of-the-blue play(fulness)-invitation. In order to maximise participation, I decided to devise opportunities for potential participants to opt in to the project and also to participate wherever and whenever they choose (thereby also producing a project with significant accessibility to future participants, practitioners, and researchers). This was a major reason for choosing the podcast format of *Wandercast*, which anyone in the world can engage with so long as they have internet access, a portable media device, and headphones.[20] However, whereas convenience and flexibility are gained with the podcast form, there is necessarily a loss of direct corporeal contact with the facilitator. Therefore, I chose also to develop the *Spinstallation* workshop, which offers both clear opt-in and prior information, while preserving face-to-face facilitation.

1.3.1.1: Humour

As I discuss in the Case Studies, the formal characteristics and structural dynamics of each strand call for distinct modes of facilitation and invite participation with differing qualities, illuminating the inquiry from multiple angles. Nonetheless, all strands embody the same LudicrousPilgrim aesthetic, i.e. my sense of playfulness. Humour is central to playfulness (Barnett, L., 2007: 955; Lieberman, 1977: *xi*); indeed, it is playfulness' most stable

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[20] My intention is to harness mobile devices and headphones to open participants out into their environments, reversing the inward-focus typically associated with these technologies (cf. Myers, 2011a: 79–80; Arnold, 2003: 245–246). I discuss this in more detail in Chapter 6.

component (Proyer & Jehle, 2013). Therefore, playfulness, like humour, is necessarily individual. Humour comprises a core aspect of 4P's popular pillar; my ludicrous brand of humour[21] also plays a key role in realising play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon. I contend that life is simultaneously magnificent and ludicrous, meaningful and arbitrary – in this project, these two poles snap together through what I call *irreverent reverence*.[22]

The ludic behaviour that this project has facilitated[23] supports my argument that playfulness is "*boundlessly [specific]*" across individuals, to borrow Kershaw's phrase (2009b: 4 – emphasis original); though singular, playfulnesses necessarily overlap. If this were not the case, playful interactions between individuals would not be possible, nor would sharing a joke.[24] I suggest that by developing three operationally-distinct modes of 4P, I have maximised the capacity for overlap of my ludic aesthetic with participants' notions of playfulness within the limitations inherent in a solo project. Nonetheless, just as not everyone will find the same joke funny, not everyone will mesh with my notion of the ludic; therefore, this project cannot claim universal appeal or validity. Indeed, *Wandercast* has attracted some negative feedback and a participant has walked out of *Spinstallation* on two occasions.

1.3.1.2: Pedagogy

This project employs and manifests a Freirean (1972) pedagogy of mutuality. Participants hopefully gain insight into their own play(ful) potential and that of their environments, i.e. their ludic ecology, whereas participants' performances and feedback illuminate my practice; each party both teaches and learns. Mutuality also manifests in that all parties perform. The project aims to propagate ludic ecology by creating performer-participants, or *perficipants*. Perficipants play a double role here as participants both in the performances

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[21] I would describe my sense of humour as a cross between Vic & Bob, Josie Long, and The Mighty Boosh.

[22] See A1.2 for further discussion/explanation of irreverent reverence.

[23] For example: making a stunt out of getting close to a tree in *Perplexpedition* (see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-legendary-trio/ or PML\Perplexpedition Video\#10 The Legendary Trio), attempting to grab a monkey's pink sock in *Wandercast* (Ep.3), and giving a tour of the Car Zoo in *Spinstallation* (see http://bit.ly/2vGcUux or PML\Spinstallation Video\S3 Ludic Stance\FiFi & Phaida\Car Zoo).

[24] See A2.1 for further discussion of playfulness-overlap and humour.

and the research, with myself in the role of performer-facilitator, or *perfilitator*.[25] More properly, perficiants can be considered co-investigators.[26]

Perfilitation here comprises the devising and refining of ludic-ecological 4P structures and implementing them so as to give participants the licence and confidence to become performers and engage in play(fulness). I have found that the latter is achieved most effectively by engendering as equitable a relationship as possible between myself and perficiants. Crucially, the above also means that, although I am its main author, this PaR comprises not only my practice, but also perficiants', as neither can exist without the other.

1.3.2: Writing - Towards a Ludic Academic Aesthetic

I follow May in understanding academic writing as a practice of key importance in PaR (2015: 60–65). However, this writing goes beyond "thick description" (ibid: 65). It aims for play(fulness) in form and content, constituting a "metalogue" on play(fulness) (Bateson, [1972] 2000: 1). One of my greatest challenges has been negotiating formal, textual play(fulness) whilst fulfilling academic expectations. The marked use of footnotes[27] and appendices represents one such strategy (also providing signposts and supplementary information), another being the generation of neologisms. This play is not necessarily intended as 'fun' in the typical sense. For game designer and philosopher Ian Bogost, fun requires diligent work on a system of materials "in the hopes that it might blush before you and release its secrets" (2016: 90). I have drawn together a variegated system of academic materials representing the implication and significance of play(fulness) in many fields from ethology to psychology to philosophy.

In developing my lines of thinking and constructing my arguments, I have made extensive use of "combinatory play", which, for Albert Einstein (1954: 25–26), is

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[25] Unless otherwise indicated, references to myself as perfilitator or to my perfilitation address the issue of my role in the work.

[26] I discuss this specifically in 7.4.1.

[27] In this I draw inspiration from David Woods (2005), of Ridiculusmus Theatre Company, who made similarly extensive use of footnotes in his PhD thesis. Footnotes are also recognised as having played an important role in the development of scholarship in history (Grafton, 1999). I characterise my expansive footnotes and appendices as being a bit like an 'expansion pack' on a video game.

quintessentially characteristic of productive thought.[28] Thus, in a sense, this document is a theoretical kaleidoscope, bringing the organic processes of art-creation into academic writing. For me, play, like life, exists in tension between order and chaos, structure and freedom, determinism and probability (cf. Bateson & Bateson, 1987); I aim for my project to embody this tension. Crucially, this project's textual and performative practices form a cohesive, holistic, internally-interactive "investigative space" (Nelson, 2013: 33), wherein findings manifested in numerous epistemic modalities freely circulate and impact one another.

There is no hard-and-fast distinction made here between ludic and non-ludic writing; to separate the two would effectively create a dichotomy discordant with the overall tenor of this project. Instead, two voices intermingle. Occasionally an overtly playful tone is perceptible; at other times it may be covertly at work in alliterative word choice or slightly ludicrous phrasing. LudicrousPilgrim is immanent within this text, the glint of his eye occasionally flashing from the page as when a comedian signals a joke with the subtlest of looks (Double, 2014: 329). This performative writing can be seen as an example of Linda Hutcheon's "doubly coded" notion of parody, which "both legitimizes and subverts" its subject (1989: 101). The subject here is the project itself, which aims to be both rigorously ludicrous and ludicrously rigorous, thereby manifesting formal play(fulness).

Having sketched out the project's main contributions and methods, I now introduce three key players in the formulation of the project's conceptual framework and outline some of their major concepts on which I have drawn.

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[28] Combinatorial thinking is also argued to comprise a robust link between play(fulness) and creativity (Runco, 2016: 99) and play(fulness) and learning (Lieberman, 1977: 128–138).

1.4: Ecology

1.4.1: Bateson – Ecology of Mind

The ecology of this project's title springs from Bateson's notion of mental ecology; the approach to ecology taken here can be considered largely Batesonian. Bateson distinguishes "ecology of mind" (2000: *xxiii*) from the "economics of energy and materials" that commonly comprises ecological study (ibid: 466).[29] Ecology of mind constitutes the study of form, pattern, relationship, interaction, information, ideas, and all immaterial aspects of living systems that are nonetheless imperative for their understanding (ibid: 250–251). Though I make use of additional perspectives, of especial importance here is that Bateson deems mental ecology the only means of understanding play (ibid: *xxiii*). He also saw play as a potent tool (1979: 116) in the development of his "pattern which connects" approach (ibid: 8), which pursues a holistic understanding of the natural world, synthesising his work in "anthropology, psychology, evolutionary biology, and communication theory" (Cashman, 2008: 45). Connection, for Bateson, is not the machine-like process denoted by Berardi's usage that I mentioned in 1.1 above, Bateson's pattern-which-connects evokes a mutability and aesthetic quality that makes it more akin to the meaning that Berardi attaches to the term "conjunction" (2014: 18). Indeed, Berardi (2014: 13–14) aligns his theory of conjunction with Bateson's ecology of mind. Bateson was deeply anti-anthropocentric, seeing in nature "the roots of human symmetry, beauty and ugliness, aesthetics, the human being's very aliveness and little bit of wisdom" (1979: 5); he aimed to scientifically reveal the "sacred unity" that binds ther universe together (ibid: 19).[30] In further exploring links between ecology, play, and also performance, I hope to shed a little light on these philosophical concerns.

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[29] Unless indicated otherwise, either explicitly or by context, use of the terms mental ecology or Batesonian ecology hereafter refers to Bateson's "ecology of mind" (2000: *xxiii*). Bateson's key texts are [1972] 2000, 1979, 1987 & 1991. See also Hoffmeyer, ed., (2008) for a collection which outlines Bateson's importance as a precursor to biosemiotics.

[30] It is important to point out that Bateson's notion of the sacred denies the possibility of the supernatural or transcendent (1987: 50–64).

1.4.2: Kershaw – Ecological Performance

I take an approach to performance studies informed by Kershaw, arguing that individuals can be "performed by" certain performance structures. For Kershaw, this phenomenon exemplifies, and can help humanity to recognise, the way in which our species is performed by Earth's ecologies, puncturing the belief that we possess unilateral agency with which to control them (2015: 115). The phenomenon also meshes with Reason's notion that arts-participation brings heightened attention, and thus increased presence, through a decentring of oneself, or "unselfing" (2017b: 46), which, Reason argues, obtains alongside the intensification I cited in above.

Kershaw further argues that, due to global forms of change within politics, economics, media, and technology, the twentieth-century saw humanity develop into "performative societies", which are "crucially constituted through performance", such that performance pervades every instance of human action and experience (2007: 11–12). Tethering this second point to the current ecological crisis, Kershaw characterises the processes by which performative societies arose and are perpetuated as manifesting "performance addiction". Endemic vicious circles are thus established that both reinforce their performative underpinnings and compound their effects, for instance climate change (ibid: 12–15).

One might wonder, then, what difference artistic performance can make to a species defined and trapped by this phenomenon. Is it not like attempting to change the ocean by pouring water into it? Not so, says Kershaw (2015). His claim is not that identifiable artistic performances (that is, those which are more-or-less objectively framed as performance by virtue of association with particular traditions) effect instantaneous recalibration between individuals, communities, or societies and the environments they inhabit. Rather, such performances afford recognition of relations between humans and their environments (which, from an ecological perspective, are not strictly separable), forming the precursor necessary for potential recalibration (ibid: 119).

As with cognitive-behavioural therapy, thinking about how one acts can beget change in how one acts, begetting change in how one thinks. Similarly, engaging in, and being performed by, carefully structured performance activity can promote the recalibration

of one's performative existence. If humanity is suffering from performance addiction, perhaps performative-behavioural therapy is called for. This is where LudicrousPilgrim comes in.[31] By creating peripatetic structures which foreground and compound play's inherent implication in performance, I intend to reveal the abundance of ludic affordances (which I introduce below) within quotidian situations and to invite their enaction. If play is "always a performance" (Sutton-Smith, 1979a: 298), then such affordances are the ludic analogue of "minimalist [units] of performing", which Kershaw suggests model recalibration-processes (2015: 131). This project's ludic focus, I argue, affords recalibration that promotes *irreverent reverence*. Kershaw, too, posits the value of taking critical matters of ecology lightly (2012: 5); extending this, I argue that the ludicrous itself possesses particular potency in revealing existential paradoxes. In being ludically, and ludicrously, performed by our environment, we might develop "reflexive responsibility" (Kershaw, 2015: 131) for it, whilst simultaneously marvelling and laughing at, and thus better understanding, this magnificent, paradoxical world.

1.4.3: Gibson – Affordances

I use Gibson's concept of affordances to describe the ludic potential of agent-in-environment systems. Gibson's thinking around affordances arguably remained in evolution from his first writing on motion perception in 1938 until his death (Jones, 2003: 108–113), leaving a concept that has been much debated. Gibson first coined the term in *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems* (1966: 285), latterly describing affordances as "what [the environment] *offers* the animal, what it *provides* or *furnishes*, either for good or ill", thus defining affordances as environmental properties, but "measured *relative to the animal*" ([1979] 1986: 127 – emphasis original, see also [1977] 2017: 67). Rather than environmental properties, I follow later work by Chemero (2003) and Stoffregen (2003) in taking affordances to be *relations* between organisms' abilities and environmental

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[31] I am being a little playful here; just to be clear, I am not suggesting that the practice of this project constitutes therapy, only that it may be viewed as therapeutic within the specific context that Kershaw (2007) outlines. Nonetheless, *Wandercast* perficipants commonly reported experiences of a therapeutic nature (I discuss this in 6.4.2).

features.[32] For example, books afford reading only to individuals literate in the particular language when in sufficiently well-lit situations. I thus deem affordances properties of organism-environment systems.

1.4.3.1: Ludic Affordances

Fig.4: Man vaults bollard.

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[32] Gibson (1966, [1977] 2017, [1979] 1986) are his key texts on affordances. Later notable contributions to affordance theory include Heft (1989), Turvey (1992), Greeno (1994), and Reed (1996). The most famous empirical study of affordances is Warren's (1984) study of stair climbing. All these later works take affordances to be (animal-relative) properties of the environment. As noted, I find Chemero (2003) and Stoffregen (2003) more convincing. Chemero (2003) defines affordances as relations between animal and environment, whereas Stoffregen (2003) takes affordances to be properties of animal-environment systems. Though their approaches and foci are slightly different, both authors acknowledge the equivalence of their definitions. Therefore, I use them interchangeably according to context.

My concern here is for ludic affordances, a (primarily) physical example of which is that a bollard affords vaulting,[33] although this project values the perception and enaction of socially-[34] and conceptually-inflected[35] affordances equally highly. I contend that there are almost always features of people's environments that match their (perhaps unwitting) ludic abilities; this project develops performance structures that aim to bring this to people's attention.

Any impact directly attributable to the performances themselves is likely to be modest and time-limited. This project can only demonstrate the plausibility, not the actuality, of its long-term effectiveness. Nonetheless, according to the reputable concept of neuroplasticity,[36] together with Bateson's notion of self-validating ideas (1979: 205), sustained enaction of ludic affordances will likely lead to the development of a ludic disposition[37] as well as increased ludic ability. It is hoped that, by revealing the abundance of ludic affordances, some perficants might perceive and enact them more regularly in the future; their doing so would signal the beginnings, or progression, of a ludic ecology.

A threshold-moment came when perficants (and LudicrousPilgrim) first vaulted a bollard; *Perplexpedition* provided structure for this performance of ludicrousness (see Chapter 5). In revealing and enacting this common ludic affordance, the event recalibrated

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[33] Fig.4 is a still from http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/penryn-playfulness/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S-ZERO Penryn Playfulness). For more bollard-vaulting, see also http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/bollard-buddies-1/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#1 Bollard Buddies 1) and http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/bollard-buddies-2/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#2 Bollard Buddies 2).

[34] E.g. http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-big-show/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#5.5 The Big Show) and http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/finding-fufu/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#6 Finding FuFu).

[35] E.g. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1W8WiavKfE0 (PML\Spinstallation Video\S3 Ludic Stance\Rizzie & Kacke\The Valley of the Cigarettes) and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WVwLEfHC7Q (PML\Spinstallation Video\S3 Ludic Stance\FiFi & Phaida\Car Zoo). I say 'inflected' because, at least where humans are concerned, I doubt the existence of any affordance that strictly pertains only to one aspect (e.g. the physical) of an environment, hence why I asserted earlier that the various aspects of environments are inseparable.

[36] The origin of the principle that patterns of behaviour are associated with physical changes within the brain is widely credited to William James in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) and the coining of the term neuroplasticity to Jerzy Konorski in *Conditioned reflexes and neuron organization* (1948). More recently, advances in technology have facilitated the gathering of empirical data from studies of humans which show that: physical training induces structural changes in grey matter (Draganski et. al., 2004), practising mindfulness leads to regional increases in grey matter density (Hölzel et. al., 2011), physical training induces architectural changes in white matter (Scholz et. al., 2009), and mindfulness training is associated with localised increases in cortical thickness (Lazar et. al., 2005). So the repetition of both physical and mental activity (by which I mean the activities' general focus, rather than implying that any activity can be purely 'physical' or 'mental') has been shown to relate directly to physical changes in the brain.

[37] I use the term disposition in its regular sense, meaning to be inclined towards something, not in its technical sense of an effectivity that always actualises given appropriate conditions (Turvey, 1992: 178).

ecologies by interrupting perficipants' daily routines, disrupting behavioural norms, and challenging what it means to be 'grown-up'. Bollard-vaulting became symbolic of the project overall, catalysing my inquiry into play(fulness)'s social, developmental, and pedagogical significance, as well as its relation to wellbeing.

With the project's key contributions, methods, and concepts introduced, I now present the epistemology that runs through them so as to sketch out the context and framework within which the claims and arguments of this thesis should be judged. As this project questions the veracity of the objective-subjective dichotomy, the reader's subjective experience of the practice forms an intrinsic part of the project's epistemological ecology. Since this thesis posits both the "ontological reality…[and]…causal autonomy of pure relations" (Hoffmeyer, 2008: 4), it can only be fully apprehended by treating it as a whole and by remaining open and sensitive to the knowledge that exists in, and arisies from, the relations between its many elements. The knowledge associated with this project will always exceed that which can be articulated through this writing; furthermore, the arguments of this thesis are not solely linguistic, they find expression through the effectivities and affectivities of the practice and the project as a whole.

1.5: Epistemology

I hold that the know-how generated by this project's practice is irreducible to the know-that associated with the writing (again, following May, 2015). However, I can render a proportion of the project's know-how intelligible, in the form of what Nelson terms "know-what" (2013: 37), through critical reflection, analysis, and explication; this takes place mainly in Part II. I take Whalley & Miller's stance, whereby all knowledge produced arises from the interaction between the project's elements (2004: 5 – and, I would add, the individual constructing that knowledge); I consider my thesis to manifest in relations between all elements, both live and archivable (2010: 222).

Also, anyone can interact with my know-how as perfilitator, and thereby generate related know-how of their own as a perficipant, by accessing the *Wandercast* podcasts. The *Perplexpedition* video practice hosted online also makes this know-how accessible, although not so fulsomely as *Wandercast* because it does not require the same corporeal engagement. By accessing this writing online, interested parties are able to engage another thesis element and thus the knowledge-producing relations it bears to other accessible elements.

My central claim regarding the capacity of the practice to propagate ludic ecology could be tested scientifically, though I do not attempt this here. The subjective notion of playfulness employed precludes a completely objective approach, however. My claims regarding play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon are non-falsifiable in the Popperian[38] sense because they are aesthetical and/or metaphysical in character. The qualitative evidence presented supports the plausibility of ludic ecology's propagation through 4P, which is further supported by the web of empirical sources and theoretical argumentation within this writing; I aim to strike a balance between tacit, aesthetic, affective *knowing* and articulable *evidence*, as Reason suggests (2017a: 32–36).[39] I hope to elucidate (cf. May, 2015: 18–21) how performance practice might facilitate moves towards a ludic ecology and

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[38] In *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, Karl Popper ([1959] 2002) sets out a logical framework for empirical science. His convention of falsification involves comparing a theory's predictions against appropriate experimental results. If its predictions are verified, the theory is only supported, not proven. If they are consistently contradicted, the theory is falsified (ibid: 9–10). Falsification establishes a deductive scientific framework and asserts that scientific theories must be open to falsification in order to count as such. Importantly, Popper is careful not to cast non-empirical study, which he terms metaphysical, in pejorative terms. If a negative correlation between my practice and ludic ecology, or crucial aspects of it, were found, this would likely falsify my main claim; a lack of positive correlation would show it to be unsupported. Critically, this would not entail negative impact on the value of my practice as art and neither would it rob the practice of research value, since it could still elucidate issues around performance, play(fulness), and environment (there are also the non-falsifiable aspects to this research, which would be largely unaffected).

[39] Reason is asserting the value of participatory arts practice and its research within a prevalent hierarchy of evidence that valorises the quantifiable at the expense of the experiential, consequently distorting worldviews by "[twisting] the facts…to fit the [quantitative] tools we have to hand" (2017a: 28). This means knowledge is limited to that which can be measured (ibid). In arts practice by contrast, Reason argues, evidence is often "implicit within rather than independent from the knowledge" (ibid: 29). For Reason, it is this contingent knowledge/evidence that comprises art-participation's significance; he argues that its value demands recognition in combination with articulable evidence, whose worth he also recognises. May, following Wittgenstein, makes a similar point when he argues that propositional knowledge rests on an inarticulable bedrock of the tacit, suggesting that PaR is in a position to interrogate this bedrock (2015: 53–56). In challenging habitual patterns of environmental interaction, I hope to contribute to this interrogation.

what the practical and philosophical implications of a ludic ecology might be, with the possibility of elucidating ecologically- and ludically-inflected performance more generally.

1.5.1: Rigour

A major source of this project's rigour is "syncretism, not…depth mining" (Nelson, 2013: 34), syncretism being the union of a number of diverse systems, practices, or ways of thinking. Yet, I contend that depth of a different sort is afforded – a depth-of-field – by revealing Batesonian patterns-which-connect seemingly disparate phenomena or fields of knowledge, thus affording deeper understanding of larger wholes. This may hold for other syncretic PaR projects also, though I do not assert that syncretism represents the only formula or structure for rigorous PaR. I see value in Benjamin Spatz's position, which prioritises disciplinary mastery of technique (2015: 230); however, since my practice is itself interdisciplinary (hence **4**P), Spatz's approach is not appropriate here. Like Popper (2002: *xix–xx*) and May (2015: 7), I am a methodological pluralist; therefore, I find unhelpful Spatz's assertion that his is the strong form of PaR, with Nelson's and others' being weak (ibid: 232–234).[40]

Spatz also argues that, since they cannot be accessed, cited, and critiqued diachronically, the designation of live events as research outcomes lacks rigour (2015: 232). I disagree; live events afford direct engagement with practical knowledges, which would not otherwise be possible, so have their place in rigorously structured PaR. However, I recognise that live events necessarily have small research audiences compared with outcomes that can be accessed anywhere, anytime. For this reason, I have made every effort to render this research significantly accessible across time.

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[40] I say this notwithstanding the fact that my practical triad appear to constitute "new knowledge in the form of new technique", according to Spatz's strong form of PaR (2015: 233).

1.6: Thesis Roadmap (Overview of Structure)

This writing is structured using three sections: Part I – Contextualisation (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4), Part II – Case Studies (Chapters 5, 6, 7), and Part III – Consolidation (Chapter 8). Taken together with this project's practice, and in combination with one another, the three sections develop my notion of *ludic ecology*, articulate how my practice allows for its active propagation, and consider its potential significance. In this introductory chapter, I have begun the project's contextualisation, setting out the genesis of the project, its main contributions, its methods, key authors in its conceptual framework, and its epistemology. I conclude this chapter by giving an overview of the writing's overall structure and that of the remaining chapters, sketching their arguments and noting the major sources that I will draw upon. This overview acts as a roadmap for the writing; its purpose is to orient the reader and facilitate one's navigation through the thesis. The complexity of certain concepts, and their interrelatedness with others, mean that I will introduce them at the appropriate moment as I go along, so as not to overcomplicate matters. As noted in the Preface, at times I address this complexity by providing expansive and supplementary detail in footnotes and appendices.

1.6.1: The Macro-Structure of Parts I & II

Part I contextualises and theoretically grounds the practice in a number of ways. Chapter 2 (*Play & Creativity*) establishes my position on the nature of play and playfulness. Chapter 3 (*Social & Personal Context – Ludic Pedagogy*) justifies the project in terms of its opposition to the contemporary inhibition and institutionalisation of the notion of the ludic that I develop in Chapter 2 and places in an explicitly pedagogical context certain principles that my project embodies. Chapter 4 (*Conceptual Framework – Ludic Ecology*) develops both my conception of ludic ecology, expanding upon my work in Chapter 2, and my arguments for ludic ecology's significance, including its capacity, when actively engaged in through my practice, to exemplify perceptual processes.

As throughout the project, the relationships between writing and practice are ecological; Chapters 2–4 have both modified, and been modified by, the practice. In other

words, the linguistic thinking rendered here has been shaped by the "doing-thinking" (Nelson, 2013: 19) of the practice and vice versa. As I mentioned in 1.2.2 above, the project's practice-based methodology is most in evidence in Part I, leading to theoretical contributions that could potentially benefit disciplines other than participatory or ecological performance; for instance, play studies (Chapters 2 & 4), education (Chapter 3), and ecological philosophy (Chapter 4).

Part II comprises the case studies, which describe important elements of know-how (articulated as know-what) associated with each practical strand. Chapter 5 (*Perplexpedition*) explains the tactics I developed for turning participants into performers and how to use video editing to create digital practice that disseminates the work while remaining true to the ludic character of the live event. Chapter 6 (*Wandercast*) outlines how I produced podcasts that create the sensation of myself, the perfilitator, being present in the moment with perficipants and thus create the feeling of interactivity despite my physical absence. Chapter 7 (*Spinstallation*) elucidates how to negotiate the necessary compromise when conducting this practice officially within institutional contexts and also how to produce workshops that progressively increase perficipants' ludic confidence.

Additionally, Part II further animates and practically grounds the theory introduced in Part I, also expanding it in some areas. Chapter 5 describes and analyses this strand's third iteration, *The Family Vault*, in which I first experienced the practice taking on a life of its own, and which I would later articulate using Kershaw's "performed by" phenomenon (2015: 115). Chapter 6 employs phenomenology to address performative ludic-environmental interactions' capacity to exemplify perceptual processes. Chapter 7 addresses the methodological issues that arise when performatively facilitating perficipants' engagement in ludic ecology within formal pedagogical contexts.

Since Part II articulates the know-what arising from my practice and demonstrates how the practice itself addresses all four research questions, it is thus where the *both/and* balance tips in favour of PaR. My practice constitutes an answer (crucially, not *the* answer) to the question of **how** performance can propagate ludic ecology. Perficipant performances and feedback across all three strands indicate (modest) **recalibration** of their ecologies. Whereas Part I chiefly establishes what **benefits** might be gained, e.g. the flexibility necessary for creativity and the tolerance of ambiguity, Part II articulates how these

manifest. Lastly, my insider perspective and participant performances and feedback together constitute a practical investigation into the **structure** and **significance** of performative ludic-environmental interactions.

The fact that Part II introduces further theory, after Part I has both drawn on a wide range of theory from many disciplines and generated theory of its own, may lead some readers to question whether there is a surfeit of theory in this project. Although I accept that this practice research project may contain more theory and less "know-what" (Nelson, 2013: 37) than others, I maintain that this is proportional in the circumstances. Firstly, it is generally accepted that there is no single way in which to conduct practice research, hence the sheer range of terminology (practice-as, practice-based, practice-led, artistic research, etc.) that has prompted many researchers to adopt the term practice research (Mackey, 2016: 479). So long as arts practice forms an intrinsic and irreplaceable part of the enquiry, as it does here, then the constitution of each project depends upon the particular researcher and the context of their enquiry. It is in order to explain the constitution of my project that I have developed the notion of *both*/*and*. Secondly, it is also generally accepted that, as Melissa Trimingham puts it, practice research should allow for "constant change within a specified structure of working" (2002: 55). By 'specified structure', Trimingham does not mean to specify the amount of theory permissible. Moreover, as I noted at the outset when discussing my research questions, the parameters of this project have changed as I have responded to its evolving dynamics; I have followed my nose in this respect. Thirdly, I would like to make the following analogy (notwithstanding my assertion that this project must be considered as a whole in order to be fully appreciated):

> One does not need to know about the complexities of the physical forces and processes involved in a bike's movement in order to ride it, but this knowledge might help one to understand why the process feels, and why the bike responds, as it does. My practice is like riding a bike, whilst my conceptual framework helps to unlock how riding works, why we ride, and what riding might mean.

1.6.2: Chapter 2 – Play & Creativity

Chapter 2 takes the form of a literature review.[41] I chart the development and diversification of play theory, tracing a path from biology (Groos, 1898, 1901), through history of culture (Huizinga, [1938] 1970), sociology (Caillois, [1958] 1961), and psychology (Piaget, [1951] 1962) to the coalescence of an identifiable, though multidisciplinary, field (Sutton-Smith, 1979a, 1979b, 1997) and almost full-circle back to ethology (Burghardt, 2005, 2010a, 2010b, 2014), which is where I see some of the most important contemporary work as taking place. For reasons of space, and since play(fulness) is my primary object of investigation here, my review of creativity literature is less expansive and focused on the single field of psychology. Of prime importance are Stein's observation that creativity requires the "capacity to tolerate ambiguity" (1953: 312), which suggests that the ambiguity of play(fulness) may benefit creativity, and Runco's process-oriented concept of 'personal creativity', which involves the creation of "original interpretations" of the objective world (1996: 4). This groundwork allows me to outline my argument for robust, indirect links between play(fulness) and creativity. This forms one of my key claims for play(fulness)'s potential benefits (Question 3: **benefits**).

Crucially, Chapter 2 is also where I formally distinguish between play and playfulness, prompted by practical findings (Question 4: **structure** and **significance**). I argue that play involves the adoption of a subjunctive, 'as if' mode of engagement with the environment alongside an instinctive, 'as is' mode and that playfulness both adds further complexity to one's environmental engagement and always-already carries positive affect. I argue that playfulness, which my project ultimately aims to facilitate, associates with greater creative potential by virtue of necessitating greater cognitive complexity. Although play(fulness) takes no account per se of whether the ideas and behaviours that it generates are useful or not (a necessary condition for creativity – Runco & Jaeger, 2012: 95), I argue that play(fulness) is linked to creative potential because it is an engine of novelty. For this reason (ludic being a synonym for playfulness), I argue that performative ludic-

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[41] I appreciate that it may be unorthodox for a PaR project to prioritise a literature review, rather than a practice review as Nelson (2013) suggests. The both-PaR-and-practice-based-research approach influenced this decision (as well as the literature review influencing the realisation of my both/and approach); I also think it is important to set out what I mean by play(fulness). Furthermore, we have the best of both worlds here since I also include a brief practice review for each strand at A5.3, 6.2 & A7.6.

environmental interactions can employ novelty and positive affect to positively recalibrate perficipants' relationships with their environments.

1.6.3: Chapter 3 – Social & Personal Context – Ludic Pedagogy

Chapter 3 sets out two key contexts of the project. In describing the social context, I argue that the current education system inhibits play(fulness), as conceptualised during Chapter 2, and that the prevalence of institutionalised play(fulness) promotes forms of the phenomenon with limited creative potential. This social contextualisation demonstrates the project's timeliness and necessity, as the twin pressures of ludic inhibition and institutionalisation both come at a time when escalating uncertainty and increasing job-automation renders play(fulness) and creative potential increasingly valuable (Question 3: **benefits**). I use the English education system as a social barometer because it is where the structural socio-political trends that contribute to ludic inhibition (quantification, marketisation, and the accountability agenda) can be most visibly perceived and also because education is the process most clearly involved in inducting younger generations into society. I draw particularly on Paulo Freire (1972), Ronald Barnett (2009, 2012), and David K. Cohen (2011) with regard to pedagogical theory and Matt Omasta & Drew Chappell (2015a, 2015b) for theory on the institutionalisation of play(fulness); although, my arguments in the first half of the chapter are supported by evidence from a range of sources.

The personal context inidcates how the project has been shaped by my personal history, focusing on my experience of working in education and my conservatoire acting training. These two areas of my life provide three important evidence sources in the form of interviews with three women I know well: my mum, Lesley Wilson, who recently retired from a career in primary education and at whose school I worked for a number of years; my friend, Alix Robertson, who worked as an English teacher before becoming an educational journalist; and the course convenor, and main tutor, of my acting training, Andrea Brooks. Both contexts intertwine further in the second half of the chapter as I set out the principles embodied by my practice which reveal and demonstrate that this project constitutes a critical response to the situation described in the first half of the chapter. Thus teased out

from the practice that embodies them and placed in Chapter 3's explicitly pedagogical context, these principles form my model for progressive education: ludic pedagogy (LP). For the purposes of this project, LP engages adult perficipants with the aim of positively recalibrating their personal ecologies. Nonetheless, Chapter 3 shows that LP's principles are applicable at all levels across the majority of pedagogical contexts (Questions 2: **recalibration** & 3: **benefits**).

1.6.4: Chapter 4 – Conceptual Framework – Ludic Ecology

Chapter 4 establishes the project's conceptual framework: ludic ecology. It builds upon the working definition of play(fulness) developed in Chapter 2, extending it so as to reveal play(fulness)'s ontogenetic and potential phylogenetic importance, and outlines my position on the nature of interactions between people and environments, which I take to be fundamentally ecological (Question 4: **structure** and **significance**). Over the course of Chapter 4, I develop my argument that play(fulness) is a philosophical phenomenon (Question 3: **benefits** & 4: **structure** and **significance**).

My play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument has four main parts to it, which are all interwoven. Firstly, invoking a core element of this project's Batesonian epistemology by characterising play(fulness) *relationally*, i.e. as a pattern of behaviour, I argue that play(fulness) can exemplify, and thus illuminate, the fundamental place that relations occupy in the structuring of reality (i.e. that relations take primacy over relata, or 'things'). Secondly, my theory of play(fulness) as instantiating a subjunctive 'as if' mode of world-engagement in parallel with the instinctive 'as is' mode positions play(fulness) as a useful exemplar of certain paradoxical conditions that structure our experience in ways that violate classical logic. I argue that the intentionally ludicrous character of my practice highlights the extra-logical nature of our experience particularly effectively. Thirdly, I argue that the characteristic give-and-take unpredictability of play(fulness), the way in which interactors must constantly adapt and adjust in order to perpetuate play(fulness), exemplifies the strictly holistic nature of ecological systems, i.e. no part of the system can exert unilateral control. This means, I argue, that play(fulness) can help us apprehend our embeddedness in ecological systems that are always-already beyond our control, with the

attendant possibility that this may enable us to develop healthier relationships with our environment (including other beings). Fourthly, I argue that attending to extrinsically afunctional ludic affordances can foreground the way in which we constantly pull out from the multitude those affordances that we perceive as we actively co-constitute our experience. (As I mentioned when introducing the concept in 1.4.3 above, I take affordances to be relational entities.) This element of the argument parallels the phenomenological thesis that to perceive the world is to interact with it and that sensory perception operates by *beckonings* and *invitations* between subject and world (Cazeaux, 2005), which comes to the fore when discussing *Wandercast* in Chapter 6. Accordingly, I argue that my practice exemplifies certain perceptual processes.

Unsurprisingly, Bateson's ([1972] 2000, 1979, 1987 & 1991) work provides the major source on which I draw in Chapter 4. In addition to this, Bogost's (2016) play theory facilitates my development of the notion of play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon. Cashman's (2008) critique of elements of Bateson's thinking, which I largely refute, also furthers the development of my philosophical argument. In respect of affordances, I attend to the concept's origin in Gibson (1966, [1977] 2017, [1979] 1986) and draw also on later work by Chemero (2003), Stoffregen (2003), and Turner (2005).

Aspects of my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument, i.e. ludic ecology's **structure** and **significance**, return in each of the case studies. The notion that relations, not relata, are most fundamental returns in *Perplexpedition* (Chapter 5) in that interactors form a system irreducible to its parts. *Wandercast* (Chapter 6) exemplifies perceptual processes, i.e. reveals certain ways in which we construct our reality. *Spinstallation* (Chapter 7) positions itself, and the project as a whole, as a means of engaging life as art through play(fulness), thereby perhaps bringing reality closer.

All three case studies are structured according to the type of analysis best afforded by each strand, which is different in each case. This demonstrates the comprehensiveness generated by The Ludic Triangle – my three-stranded approach – in respect of this project's investigation into performance, playfulness, and ecology.

1.6.5: Chapter 5 – *Perplexpedition* Case Study

Part II begins where my practice began, with *Perplexpedition*. The initial experiments of this strand were instrumental in establishing the practice's overall aesthetic. A key part of this aesthetic development occurred through the documentation process, which I later characterised as 'digital practice' in recognition of its being fundamental, not secondary, to the practice as a whole. This digital practice, *Perplexpedition* video, offers the most fulsome direct documentation of perfilitation and perficiption, so Chapter 5 is structured around close-viewing analysis of this video material. Chapter 5 argues that *Perplexpedition*'s digital practice constitutes *affective documentation*, one of the central facets of my claim that my documentation processes contribute to knowledge. As noted above, Chapter 5 also addresses the notion of play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon; I argue that perficipants, perfilitator, and other aspects of the *Perplexpedition* environment form a system, irreducible to its parts, that *performs* all involved. In making this argument, I employ Thomas Fuchs & Hanne De Jaegher's (2009) concept of *enactive intersubjectivity*, which combines phenomenological and dynamical systems approaches, and which I show meshes beneficially with ecological viewpoints. Employing enactive intersubjectivity allows me to elucidate the aforementioned ecological-philosophical argument from another perspective.

Following from my recognition of digital practice as fundamental to this project, and as a driver of its development, I also argue against both Angela Piccini & Caroline Rye's (2009) and Spatz's (2015) respective stances on PaR documentation. I contest Piccini & Rye's (2009) assertion that a disjunction obtains between the live elements of PaR and its documentation such that the documentation must be considered a separate artwork; instead, I argue that *Perplexpedition* is evidence that continuity between live performance and its documentation can be maintained. Spatz (2015), on the other hand, considers PaR documentation to produce standalone academic documents, which I contest since I consider PaR to be situated within both academia and the art world. In Chapter 5, I negotiate a path between Piccini & Rye's (2009) and Spatz's (2015) positions, thereby demonstrating the originality of my stance on documentation.

1.6.6: Chapter 6 – *Wandercast* Case Study

The spatial and temporal distance between myself and perficipants in *Wandercast* entails that my method of gathering information regarding perficipants' performances had to be remote also. Given that perficipants access the podcast via my website, I constructed a questionnaire using Google Forms, tailored the questionnaire to each episode, and provided a link to the relevant questionnaire on the webpage for each podcast. The *Wandercast* questionnaire collected the largest amount of written perficipant feedback of any strand; Chapter 6 is therefore structured around my analysis of this feedback. *Wandercast* is also the strand that most draws most directly on existing practices. For this reason, Chapter 6 begins with a brief practice review.

The element of play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon taken up in Chapter 6 is the argument that, through my practice, play(fulness) exemplifies perceptual process. I draw on the phenomenological thinking of Clive Cazeaux (2005) and the performance studies perspectives of George Home-Cook (2015) and Misha Myers (2011a) to develop this line of argument. In so doing, I show that *Wandercast* combines the perception-exemplifying capacities of both play(fulness) and aurality to increase the potential for exemplification. A multiplying of exemplification leads also to increased potential ecological recalibration, I argue. Chapter 6 also develops the notion of performative-behavioural therapy that I introduced in 1.4.2 above; although I did not intentionally design it to be so, many perficipants found their *Wandercast* experience therapeutic.

1.6.7: Chapter 7 – *Spinstallation* Case Study

As I noted in 1.6.1 above, Chapter 7 articulates the know-how I have developed relating to the practicalities of devising ludic-ecological workshops that sit officially within institutional contexts. Negotiating this terrain has entailed significant ongoing changes to the structure of successive iterations of the workshop, as well as changes to the methods employed in designing and delivering each one. For this reason, Chapter 7 focuses on methodological issues. Chapter 7 also articulates know-how as to the mitigation of perficipants' self-consciousness when engaging in play(fulness) with strangers, which is important if the

practice of ludic ecology is to develop widely. In this respect, I drew upon both traditional drama / popular performance techniques and visual art-making, further evidencing this project's interdisciplinarity. Since *Spinstallation* was conceived of as putting a spin on the concept of the installation, Claire Bishop (2005) is the author whose work contributes most to Chapter 7.

Spinstallation is also the strand in which my practice most clearly exhibits the principles that, in Chapter 3, I formulated into my model for progressive education: ludic pedagogy (LP). Chapter 7 therefore articulates the practice research that *Spinstallation* undertakes into the workings and effectivities of LP. I am frank about the difficulties that I faced, especially when conducting *Spinstallation* as part of official University programmes, with the inherent balancing of stakeholder expectations and requirements that this entails. However, these difficulties provide further evidence of the ludic inhibition within education that I describe in Chapter 3. Difficulties notwithstanding, I argue that *Spinstallation* not only propagates play(fulness), and the creative potential associated with play(fulness), but also introduces perficipants to tactics that allow them to interact with their environment as a found installation and therefore to live their lives as art.

1.6.8: Part III – Consolidation – Chapter 8 – Conclusion

Chapter 8 fulfils a number of functions characteristic of a conclusion chapter. I begin by revisiting the project's origins in walking arts. Next, I further unpick, and thereby expand upon, the epistemology that I outlined in 1.5 above, foregrounding the central themes of ambiguity and relationality, which both take on increased importance throughout this document. I then reflect upon and evaluate each strand, assessing their relative qualities as both artworks and research methods. After this, I summarise the project's findings – which arise from my practice and the practice-based research that the strands make possible – and mark the key insider insights that I have discovered, which are comprised both of the know-how articulated as know-what and also the fundamental importance of ambiguity within the ludic and therefore within my practice. I next suggest some possible applications and avenues for further practical development and research.

I characterise Part III, which consists solely of Chapter 8, as consolidation. One reason for this is that in Chapter 8 I revisit, and fully integrate, Bateson's notion of sacred unity that I introduced in 1.4.1 above, as well as reintegrate the project's origins and epistemology, in order to show my web of argumentation at its broadest. I argue that Bateson's naturalised notion of the sacred can be both investigated and experienced by engaging with the environment through ludic-ecological performance, thereby consolidating my arguments both for playfulness-as-philosophical-phenomenon and for positive recalibration of personal ecologies through my practice.

Chapter 2: Play & Creativity

2.1: Introduction

In this chapter, I aim to establish and describe potential links between play(fulness) and creativity. (I use the above construction when referring to play and playfulness both jointly and severally.) Since I will argue that playfulness presupposes play, I will separate them once having discussed key players in the development of play studies and addressed the current state of play.[1] Unorthodox though it may be for a practice research project to prioritise a literature review above a practice review, the putative recognisability of play(fulness) belies its enduringly enigmatic nature (Bateson, P., 2010: 42); therefore, if I am to investigate play(fulness) through my practice, it is imperative to establish what has been said on this issue and what my position is.

As is reflective of the multitude of disciplines implicated in its study, and as I explained in the thesis' roadmap in 1.6.2, my discussion of play theory and research is wide-ranging. I plot the historical development of play theory, sketching its evolution from biology (Groos, 1898, 1901), through history of culture (Huizinga, [1938] 1970), sociology (Caillois, [1958] 1961), and psychology (Piaget, [1951] 1962). I then discuss more recent research within what has become the multidisciplinary field of play studies (Sutton-Smith, 1979a, 1979b, 1997), especially ethology (Burghardt, 2005, 2010a, 2010b, 2014), which I see as a discipline that is making particularly important contributions to contemporary play studies. This review prompts my next step: to provide a refinement to a distinction between play and playfulness, thereby establishing my theoretical position on play(fulness). My formulation, I argue, allows me to more fully and effectively analyse The Ludic Triangle of my practice than existing positions on play(fulness) would enable me to do.

Once I have set my stall out, so to speak, with regard to the conception of play(fulness) that I will employ, I provide an account of current and historical perspectives on the nature of creativity. This allows me to sketch links between these important yet

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[1] For comprehensive reviews, see Sutton-Smith (1997) and Burghardt (2005); for a summary of play research since 2001, see Lester & Russell (2008).

enduringly slippery families of phenomena. Although other disciplines address creativity, such as philosophy, my discussion of the subject is more closely focused on the field of psychology, as this most neatly meshes with my treatment of play(fulness). However, the overall argument does take on philosophical implications.

As research into play advances, the more widespread, diverse, and heterogeneous it is revealed to be, both in form and potential function (Burghardt, 2014). Nonetheless, the pursuit of an understanding of certain play-phenomena through practical and textual means has yielded many insights of consequence here. Indeed, dissatisfaction with computational theories of cognition led to my finding Fuchs & De Jaegher's (2009) *enactive intersubjectivity*,[2] which unlocked my felt-experience of *Perplexpedition* as a dynamical system, which then led to this project's ecological framework. As mentioned, my play(fulness) formulation was developed so as to better account for experiences of my practice.

2.2: Key Historical Players

2.2.1: Karl Groos

According to ethologist Gordon Burghardt, academic interest in play began over a century ago (2010b: 11); he cites Groos' treatises on animal (1898) and human play (1901)[3] as its origin. Groos remarks that two theories were current at his time of writing: that animals, including humans, play to expend excess energy, or as a key part of their ontogenesis (1898: *xix*).[4] Groos favours the latter, using natural science to construct a biological (as opposed to physiological) play-theory. This is unsurprising, since Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*

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[2] Enactive intersubjectivity is integrated into my analysis of *Perplexpedition* in 5.3 – 5.3.8.

[3] Groos makes clear in the introduction to *The Play of Man* that his thesis with regard to human play differs from his animal play thesis in terminology and degree of complexity rather than in a substantive sense (1901: 1–5). For this reason, I reference Groos' earlier work on animal play, since this is where he sets out the underlying theory.

[4] The fact that Groos cites previous work suggests that the academic treatment of play has a longer history than is acknowledged above by Burghardt, although Burghardt does elsewhere mention the surplus energy theory (Graham & Burghardt, 2010: 395). It is also worth mentioning that Huizinga ([1938] 1970), who also features in this discussion, drew upon a long philosophical tradition with roots in antiquity for his study of play (Anchor, 1978: 63). It is therefore likely that Burghardt (2010b) is referring to academia in the modern sense.

(1859) was sufficiently accepted and embedded by this stage, as Wake observes in his review of Groos (1898), for evolutionary principles to be deemed applicable to psychology – and therefore also biology – as well as physiology (Wake, 1899: 306).[5]

Groos summarises his theory thus: "the animal does not play because he [sic] is young, he has a period of youth because he must play" (1898: *xx*). He argues that, in species for whom intelligence has surpassed pure instinct in its usefulness, animals must develop their intelligence through play to compensate for incomplete instincts (ibid). This would limit play to those species with prolonged juvenile periods, yet play has been observed in species with no such developmental stage, including insects (Graham & Burghardt, 2010: 400). Stanley criticises Groos for erroneously categorising "work" behaviours as play, such as a child's first steps (1899: 87). Although Stanley posits a false work/play dichotomy, together with the prior objection, Groos' conception is thus deemed simultaneously too narrow and too broad, a criticism that Caillois ([1958] 1961) would later level against Huizinga ([1938] 1970).[6]

The quest for play's developmental role(s) still animates contemporary researchers, having led to a dedicated Oxford handbook (Nathan & Pellegrini, 2010). Variations on the singularly functional, evolutionary fitness theory propounded by Groos still abound according to Pellis et al., who criticise this view for being totalising and simplistic (2015:

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[5] The use of the word 'psychology' together with 'evolutionary' here should not be taken as implying problematic concepts associated, rightly or wrongly, with evolutionary psychology, such as genetic determinism. Though evolutionary psychology is implicated in contemporary play studies, it is not central to this discussion. Suffice to say, I agree with Wake that "(P)lants, animals, and man [sic] form links in a continuous chain of being" (1899: 306), which indicates the usefulness of non-anthropocentric investigations of play (and the majority of human behaviour). This is not to imply linear progress from plants to animals to man; rather that there are commonalities which run deep, hence Gregory Bateson's "pattern which connects" (1979: 8). Further, I oppose the view that there exists a universal and fundamental human nature, for which evolutionary psychology has been criticised ([Grosvenor, 2002] although, it may be that this criticism and others levelled against evolutionary psychology are straw-man, or otherwise flawed, arguments [Kurzban, 2002]). As per the title of this thesis, I prefer an ecological approach. Since this project only involves humans, the relevant ecologies implicate humans' physical, social, and conceptual environments, which are not to be taken as existing separately from one another. Nonetheless, recent studies of play by well-regarded researchers have been explicitly framed in terms of evolutionary psychology (e.g. Burghardt, 2010a) and the academic fields of animal and human play are becoming increasingly synthesised (see Nathan & Pellegrini, 2010). I see this move as positive and thus do not separate out discussions of human and non-human animal play. Also, borrowing a practice from Burghardt (2010b), I refer throughout to non-human animals simply as animals unless the context implies the designation of all species.
[6] See 2.2.2 below. Also, whether or not a child's first steps constitute work has no bearing on whether they may also constitute play; I contend that play can be found in most types of activity, including work.

331–332).[7] Nonetheless, by associating play with useful discoveries, Groos presents the likelihood of a connection between play and creativity, which still stands.

2.2.2: Johan Huizinga

We now shift perspective from the biological to the cultural, focusing on the treatment of play that has arguably exerted the greatest influence on the field (Burghardt, 2010b: 14). In *Homo Ludens* (1970), Huizinga argues that play is the source from which all culture springs, summarising the formal characteristics of play as

> a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious', but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings which tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world by disguise or other means. (1970: 32)

The kinds of play that Huizinga is interested in arise through competition and/or representation, by which he means display (ibid). Display signals play's links to performance, yet competition is incompatible with my aims and objectives; furthermore, the emphasis on order in the above description appears antithetical to creativity, which associates with flexibility and originality (Guilford, 1957: 112), so its application here seems limited. This is odd given that Huizinga (1970) devotes entire chapters to poetry,

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[7] This is despite explanations involving evolutionary fitness benefits forming a cornerstone of contemporary play research, with Burghardt (one of the co-authors of Pellis et al. [2015]) being one of the key players in the field. Burghardt (1984, 2005, 2010b, 2014) argues for an understanding of play more nuanced and multifaceted than it having a single function, although it is worth noting that Pellis et al. (2015) make simplifications of their own. For example, they assert that "Groos, and most modern writers" have a fatally limited view of play because these authors "see play as a property of childhood" (ibid: 331–332). Firstly, they state this without evidence or argument; I suggest that the statement is a significant generalisation. Secondly, this is a patently false representation of Groos' position. He argues that understanding the play of the young will go a long way to understanding adult play (1898: 75), which seems reasonable and, crucially, implicitly demonstrates that he does not deem play to be a property of childhood. In fact, Groos explicitly states that "(P)lay is found in adult animals" (ibid: 81). Thirdly, it is wrong to imply that any researcher who claims that "benefits accrued by playing [in childhood have] an impact on the [sic] survival and reproductive success later in life" (Pellis et al., 2015: 331) commits them to the view that play occurs only in childhood.

philosophy, and art (chapters 7, 9, & 10 respectively), and that the work as a whole presents play as generative of culture.

Huizinga's (1970) chief relation to creativity lies in the potential of competitive play to drive creative cultural production,[8] such as the Internet's origins in the military, whose originary function is inter-nation competition (Burghardt, 2005: 393). Essentially non-competitive play is equally generative, however. For example, efforts to synchronise mechanised musical instruments led to the development of spread-spectrum wireless communication (Johnson, 2017: 88–93). My interest is in collaborative play(ful) activity that, if it produces creative outputs at all, will be associated with "personal" (Runco, 1996), or 'little-c', creativity, as opposed to the "capital C" creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996: 27)[9] associated with conceiving of something as impactful as the internet.

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[8] Here we see parallels between Groos and Huizinga in that they both ascribe to play creative power and both deem play to be inherent in those species which display it; Groos attests the existence of a "play instinct" (1898: 80) and Huizinga asserts that "play is a necessity" (1970: 28). Where the former sees play as the creative incursion of intelligence into ontogenesis, the latter sees it as the force behind the genesis of culture.

[9] Csiksentmihalyi also uses the term "personally creative" (1996: 25); since both his and Runco's (1996) personal creativity theories were published in the same year, it is unclear who was the originator. I use Runco's theory because, firstly, it is more conceptually robust and, secondly, because Csiksentmihalyi's notion of personal creativity is derived from his study of capital C creativity (more commonly referred to in the literature as 'Big C'), which demonstrates that personal creativity is only of secondary concern to him, whereas it is of primary concern here. Furthermore, though Runco (2014) and I would disagree, Csiksentmihalyi also bizarrely states that personal- and Big-C-creativity are largely unrelated to one another (1996: 26).

'Big C' creativity requires that the product be new to the world, e.g. the internet, whereas 'little c' creativity requires that it be new to the individual. Interacting with a public bike rack as if it were a climbing frame could be considered creative if the individual had no former experience of doing so.

(See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-legendary-trio/ or PML\Perplexpedition Video\#10 The Legendary Trio to see this event taking place. However, I cannot be certain that the individual in question had no previous experience of this practice.) I have limited myself to the big/little dualism at this stage to save space, I discuss broader conceptions of creativity in 2.5-2.5.2 below. Also, despite making use of the terms 'Big C' and 'little c', etc., here to structure my discussion, I recognise that they represent a false dichotomy (Runco, 2014).

As mentioned above, Caillois (1961), who Henricks notes is commonly thought to have improved upon *Homo Ludens* (2010: 158), criticises its overarching thesis for being simultaneously too narrow and too wide (Caillois, 1961: 4). The charge of narrowness is levelled at Huizinga's focus on the competitive aspect of play (Ehrmann, 1968: 31). Yet, since Huizinga (1970) is clear about this from the outset, this seems an unfair criticism. The problem arises when Huizinga fails to state that his conception of play does not have universal application beyond the "higher forms" (1970: 32) of play he is considering, i.e. agonistic play. He therefore contributes to the confusion, yet I argue that *Homo Ludens* should be thought of as context-specific in this way, especially since the subtitle to the book is *A Study of the Play Element in Culture* and not 'A Study of Play'. Anchor makes a similar point when he describes *Homo Ludens* as not being an inquiry into the activity of play, but rather "a study of play as a structure that manifests itself in all spheres of human culture" (1978: 78). In light of recent advances, which I have hinted at above and address directly below, I would rather say that Huizinga here studies *structural elements* of play as they manifest themselves in human culture. It may well be objected that to study the presence of play in culture, one must know what play is. Conversely, however, one can only discover what something is by studying it. As I hope will become clear, some humility is apt in the face of play's enduring ambiguity.

Indeed, Huizinga's mysterious "irreducible quality of pure playfulness" (1970: 25–26) provides a major focus for this project. For Caillois (1961), though, this forms part of the 'too broad' half of his criticism. As Ehrmann observes, Caillois argues that "Huizinga fails to delineate with precision the sphere of play" (1968: 31). What Caillois (1961) deems a failing, I, along with Ehrmann (1968), perceive as a strength.[10] After all, Huizinga is quite clear that his approach is not a scientific one (1970: 18), where such precision might be necessary.[11] My project seeks to problematise, and hopefully erase, the commonly perceived boundary between the ludic and the quotidian, so precise delineations in this regard are somewhat counterproductive here also. Huizinga's largely aesthetic treatment of play is more appropriate for this PaR than Caillois' quasi-scientific approach, which led the latter to

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[10] Yet, such is the ambiguity of play that the opposite interpretation is possible (see Henricks, 2010: 167).
[11] See Anchor (1978) for a lengthy study of Huizinga, the second half of which deals with *Homo Ludens* and the various critiques that address it.

"[succumb] to his own classifications, believing that he could confine play within them" (Ehrmann, 1968: 32).

2.2.3: Roger Caillois

Given the foregoing points, I will not cover Caillois (1961) in detail.[12] However, to provide context, I briefly state his system of classification. Caillois offers a six-part definition of play (1961: 9–10), but this differs little from Huizinga's description so I will not repeat it here. The main thrust of *Man, Play and Games* is the classification of games, so as to enable the construction of a sociology derived from them (ibid: 57–67). Caillois' classification contains four categories, each of which exist upon a polarised continuum between *paidia* (turbulence, spontaneous gaiety) and *ludus* (a binding tendency which constrains *paidia*) (ibid: 12–13). The categories are *agôn* (competition), *alea* (chance), *mimicry* (simulation), and *ilinx* (vertigo) (ibid: 12–36). The choice of terminology for Caillois' continuum is curious. Firstly, ludic is derived from *ludus*, connoting spontaneity rather than binding (OED, 2014); secondly, he chooses *paidia* because its root means 'child', yet often "(C)hildren's games…are played in profound seriousness" (Huizinga, 1970: 24), so should not be considered the supreme bastion of turbulence. *Homo Ludens* is certainly not without its inconsistencies,[13] yet it retains a respect for the mysteriousness of play that Caillois attempts to banish (Caillois, 1961: 4–5). This makes Huizinga's work more relevant here,

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[12] See Henricks (2010) for an evaluation of Caillois' contribution to the study of play. From my perspective, there are in Caillois deeply problematic arguments which make me doubt the value of his thesis; one of these pertains directly to my profession of performance: "the boxers, cyclists, jockeys, or actors who earn their living in the ring, track, or hippodrome or on the stage, and who must think of prize, salary, or title…are not players but workers. When they play, it is at some other game" (1961: 6). This statement is extremely hard to defend logically. Speaking as an actor, were we to consider our careers in terms of salary there would be a shortage of trained actors, not an enormous surplus. The decision to strive to become a professional actor seldom has a basis in economics. Furthermore, if the element of play were somehow erased as soon as one became professional in any of the disciplines mentioned, each would cease to be a viable profession as no one would pay to watch or otherwise engage with them; they would become deathly dull and lifeless. This betrays a striking shallowness of thinking on Caillois' (1961) part; to assert that actors can only play when they are not working simply beggars belief. The work of creating a performance cannot be achieved without play; it is primarily the jobs actors do to support themselves when they are not working as an actor that are lacking in play. There is a false dichotomy between work and play here, a point to which I return below.

[13] An obvious one, appearing at the end of the lengthy quote above, being the secrecy and tendency to self-disguise supposedly displayed by social groupings formed through play. This assertion is not borne out by *Homo Ludens* as a whole and is the target of one of Caillois' critiques with which I agree in part, in that play is often "spectacular and ostentatious" (1961: 4). However, as I point out, I do not agree that play itself "somehow expends" the secret or mysterious (ibid).

particularly to a consideration of creativity, since, like play, creativity is (mysteriously) unpredictable (Runco, 2008: 93); therefore, Huizinga (1970) features more prominently in this writing than Caillois (1961).

2.2.4: Jean Piaget

The notion of a functional imperative for the existence of play, eschewed by both Huizinga and Caillois (Henricks, 2010: 162), reappears[14] in Piaget's *Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood* ([1951] 1962). For Piaget, play is essential for, and is a process of, cognitive development. As I have mentioned, play's developmental role remains a central concern in its study. Where Groos (1898, 1901) sees play as the process whereby inherited instincts are developed through the application of intelligence, Piaget sees play as the polar opposite of imitation, both of which are associated with ontogenetic psychological tendencies (assimilation and accommodation respectively) that must be held in equilibrium by intelligence in order for adaptation to take place (1962: 86–87). The upshot of the tension and interplay between these two psychological forces, according to Piaget, is the development of representational thought (ibid: 273).[15] Here we see an example of the balancing act that I introduced in 1.3.1, and which forms a thematic thread that runs throughout this project, aiding its analysis.

Notwithstanding the fact that my project seeks neither to explain nor invoke mental representations, Piaget's (1962) theory, on the face of it, seems to designate play as part of an ecological adaptive process. One accommodates the external world, leading to imitation, and assimilates oneself into it, expressed *in extremis* by play, thereby engaging with one's environment in a process of mutual modification. This suggests that his approach may be useful in my pursuit of shifting the calibration of personal ecologies towards the ludic.

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[14] *Homo Ludens* was written in 1938, *Man, Play and Games* is an expansion of an essay written by Caillois in 1946, and *Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood* was published in 1951. I am not implying that Piaget was directly influenced by or was responding to Huizinga and Caillois, I am simply observing the chronological relation of the three works.

[15] See Flavell (1963) for a "classic" yet nonetheless "problematic" (Müller, Burman, & Hutchison, 2013: 53) summary and critique of Piaget's approach to developmental psychology.

Despite appearances, however, Piaget's framework has been argued to offer no such active, intellective role for play (Sutton-Smith, 1966: 106).

In simplified terms, Piaget's system holds that imitation (the positive extension of accommodation) results in the image-like internalisation of external reality into one's cognitive structures. Play (the "assimilation of external reality to pre-existing concepts" derived from accommodation) involves the attachment of these images onto external reality through a diversification of symbols; thus, play effects a transformation of the objective world, but one inherently limited by one's internal images of that world (ibid: 104–106). As Sutton-Smith observes, for Piaget "the symbols of play are merely the reproductions of images pre-established through the copyist activity of imitation following accommodation…[therefore]…imitation is an essential factor in the constitution of representative activity, whereas play is not" (ibid: 106). Sutton-Smith suggests that this criticism of Piaget's theory with regard to play also has (presumably negative) implications for its application to creativity and other phenomena related to divergent thinking (ibid: 110).

In later work, Sutton-Smith discusses Piaget's play-theory more favourably as "figure-ground decontextualisation" (1997: 31), implying an opening up of creative potential through the possible perception of new meanings, associations, and applications. This suggests at most an indirect relation between play and creativity, since actual creativity would be governed and driven by something that is not play; decontextualisation is not of itself creative. Piaget, though, denies even this possibility to adults, since he argues play to be a "vital function of the mind" (1962: 168) only in childhood, which limits any functional value to this period alone, a view criticised by Pellis et al. (2015).[16] Unless we take creativity to be without functional value, which would be to ignore half of its standard definition (Runco & Jaeger, 2012), then aspects of Piaget's (1962) theory appear to prevent it from allowing any operative relation between play and creativity in adults.

It is worth noting here that the divergent thinking Sutton-Smith refers to provides researchers only with estimates of creative potential, not measures of creativity (Runco, 2008). Thus, although playfulness (in children) has been positively correlated with divergent

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[16] See footnote 8 above for more on this.

thinking (Lieberman, 1965), any link with creativity is likely to be neither direct nor fully accessible to empirical study.[17] It follows that theoretical plausibility, as I am building here, will always have a major adjudicatory role to play. Although, as I argue in 2.7 below, I do not deem a copyist epistemology to be as problematic as Sutton-Smith (1966) suggests, he identifies sufficient issues with Piaget's play-theory, especially its restrictive account of adult play, to entail its sparing and selective application to this project. Nonetheless, this discussion has produced two particularly pertinent points: firstly, that any link between play(fulness) and creativity is likely to be indirect and, secondly, that empirical approaches are unlikely to capture it. Seen in this light, this project's subjective approach gains further support.

There are many more scholars whose work on play could have been included here.[18] Those featured have been chosen because they define particular moments in the study of play.[19] However, for all the progress made through the different approaches discussed so far, we aren't much closer to establishing what play is. Is it a process of cultural production? Is it a process of cognitive development? Is there even a singular thing that we can call 'play'? Current thinking proposes a negative answer, as the coming section shows.

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[17] For more on the latter, see A2.2.

[18] For comprehensive reviews, see Sutton-Smith (1997) and Burghardt (2005). Gregory Bateson's theory of play is addressed in 4.2.1–4.2.2 & 5.2.2. Although his work pertains to both play and creativity, I am bracketing Csikszentmihalyi out of this discussion. Csikszentmihalyi studies the "*experience of playfulness*, rather than play itself" (1979: 260 – emphasis original), whereas my orientation is opposite; I move from the experience, as manifested in my practice, to the phenomenon itself and what it does. Furthermore, for Csikszentmihalyi, play-research is only a vehicle for studying flow (ibid: 268), which is described as experiencing equilibrium of skills and challenges within an activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975: 36). Csikszentmihalyi positions play as a subset of flow (1979: 268), yet also argues that "playing a game does not guarantee that one is experiencing flow" (1975: 37), which is not possible if play exists within flow. However, there are useful notions associated with flow. For example, the "merging of action and awareness" characterises my experience of perfilitating *Perplexpedition*, although Csikszentmihalyi qualifies this notion of merging by saying that there is no awareness of alternatives (1979: 260). This signals a divergence with my thinking, since the subjunctive (an 'as if' mode) is fundamental to my notion of play(fulness), as I explain in 2.4 below. Csikszentmihalyi also makes the error of characterising play as "unrelated to real-life" (ibid: 268).

[19] Although he built on the work of others (as is always the case in human endeavour), Groos (1898, 1901) provides the first thorough and systematic treatment of play in the modern era; Huizinga ([1938] 1970) and Caillois ([1958] 1961) together cemented the importance of play in the consideration of culture and society; and Piaget ([1951] 1962) was instrumental in making play a key concern in developmental psychology, in addition to establishing the field of cognitive development itself (according to Flavell, 1996: 200).

2.3: Current State of Play

Recalling that Pellis et al. (2015) deem the question 'why do animals play?' totalising and simplistic, arguably the same can be said for the question 'what is play?' It is a heterogeneous category with wide internal variation (Burghardt, 2014). Accordingly, whilst it limits their explanatory power, viewing the theories outlined above as context-dependent and, rather than illuminating what play *is*, seeing them in terms of what play *does* is more appropriate and useful. If one wishes to tackle what play is, it seems sensible to limit oneself to a description which allows for wide-ranging heterogeneity. In animal play studies, three categories are typically used, which can occur simultaneously:

> solitary (or parallel) locomotor-rotational play (jumping, leaping, twisting, swinging, running), object play (carrying, dropping, manipulating, biting, mouthing), and social play (chasing, wrestling). (Burghardt, 2010a: 340)

Most people will have directly experienced the majority of the above examples during their childhood and would be able to identify them in the play of young children. Many of them are also identifiable in the practice of this project:[20]

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[20] See Chapters 5, 6, 7 and various material on the project website.

Fig.5: Woman jumps footpath (locomotor-rotational).

Fig.6: Manipulating objects.

Fig.7: Wrestlers wrestle (social).

However, these categories are insufficient to capture the diversity of human play in child- and adulthood. In their report on the crisis of play in US kindergartens, Miller & Almon identify twelve key types,[21] but emphasise that, in reality, many will overlap and thus strict categorisation is not intended. Their typology is as follows:

> large-motor, small-motor, mastery, rule-based, construction, make-believe,
> symbolic, language, sensory, rough-and-tumble, and risk-taking play, and playing
> with the arts. (2009: 53–54)[22]

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[21] It should be noted that all twelve types can also be found in animals, which emphasises the need for an approach to studying play that admits the possibility of identifying play in any species (Burghardt, 2010b: 10).

[22] Although aimed at those working in early-years education, brief reflection reveals that this typology is appropriate for adult play also. For example: football and many sports involve large-motor play, yet pool, darts, and board games involve small-motor play; additionally, board-games often involve symbolic play, as with Monopoly, and sometimes construction, as with Mouse Trap (although some would perhaps argue that Mouse Trap is a child's game); adult social conversations between acquaintances, friends, and even between students and supervisors are often shot through with linguistic play, making this perhaps the most common form in adulthood; also, make-believe play is not confined to childhood, with fancy-dress parties being common, and 'cosplay' being a more niche example, but one which has recently hugely increased in popularity since its origins in the 1930s (Go, 2015).

I offer these categorical tools as an illustration of the complexity of play, yet, while it is important to remain aware of them, their practical use here is limited. I am investigating performative ludic-environmental interactions of any type and have little interest in the categorisation of those interactions per se. An analysis of the creative potential afforded by different play-types might be interesting; however, this would run the risk of narrowing focus and energy onto particular types, unhelpfully instrumentalising play and losing sight of its intrinsic value.

Furthermore, no number of play-categories can definitively determine what play is. Biologist Patrick Bateson[23] (2010: 41), even warns against accepting the putative notion that play is instantly recognisable, as does Burghardt (2010b: 9–10), since this runs the risk of our projecting experiences, motivations, and dispositions drawn from our own adult human experiences that might not actually be in evidence. Burghardt (2005, 2010b) argues that an ethological approach might get us closest to a definition of play. With the aim of enabling common understanding across the multidisciplinary field of play research,[24] Burghardt developed a set of five criteria, all of which must be satisfied in at least one respect for an instance of play to be identified:

> Play [1] is incompletely functional in the context in which it appears; [2] is spontaneous, pleasurable, rewarding, or voluntary; [3] differs from other more serious behaviours in form (e.g., exaggerated) or timing (e.g., occurring early in life before the more serious version is needed); [4] is repeated, but not in abnormal and unvarying stereotypic form (e.g. distressed rocking, pacing); and [5] is initiated in the absence of acute or chronic stress. (2010b: 17)

As a working definition of play, this is the best currently available. However, it is not without its problems, which reveal themselves in consideration of human play, for example in this project.[25] Although I accept the scientific necessity of repeated observations for the

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[23] Interestingly, the two Batesons who feature in this writing are related. Patrick Bateson's grandfather's cousin was the geneticist William Bateson, whose son was Gregory Bateson. In this chapter, unless otherwise stated, I am referring to Patrick Bateson.

[24] To illustrate, the *American Journal of Play* caters for communities as diverse as "psychologists, historians, early childhood specialists, animal play researchers, folklorists, sociologists, play therapists, and toy and game designers" (Burghardt, 2010b: 11).

[25] Animal play being Burghardt's focus, the following issues may have eluded, or might not overly concern, him. Nonetheless, for a definition that claims to capture play in "any species or context" (2010b: 17), I think they are worth mentioning.

gathering of reliable data, I see no logical reason why any particular instance of play must be repeated in order to count as such. I hope that perficipants will repeat and vary the tactics they encounter, but Burghardt's definition entails that, unless they do so, perficipants' performances do not count as play.

I also find the descriptors spontaneous, pleasurable, and rewarding problematic for a definition of play. Voluntary is the descriptor I have least issue with.[26] However, consider being coerced into playing a family board game at Christmas; can this be considered voluntary, spontaneous, pleasurable, or rewarding? Burghardt may retort that this individual is not really playing, just as he would deny play to much of professional sportspeople's activity (2010b: 10),[27] who surely find their career rewarding despite any contractual obligations. One may indeed say that one was "just going through the motions" in my hypothetical board game. However, one would then be pretending to play, which I argue is certainly playing, only at one remove from others' activity, thus highlighting how scientific definitions struggle when faced with the complexity of human play.

Although Burghardt acknowledges the subjective nature of descriptors such as pleasurable (2010b: 14),[28] I find their inclusion problematic for a supposedly objective definition. In *Perplexpedition #3*,[29] for example, the dad describes his impending bollard-vault as "horrendous" and, in *#8*,[30] LionMan is unsure whether "enjoyment" characterises his experience. However, these perficipants' bodily- and vocal-tonal-communication suggests that they enjoy their overall performance. Furthermore, there seems a hint of irony to the utterances quoted above. Sound judgements in such circumstances appear prohibitively slippery. Also, perficipants of *Spinstallation S4* felt that the presence of instructions rendered their Main-Task-play inauthentic, yet it has every appearance of

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[26] However, this would seem to implicate the notion of free will in the definition of play. This significantly, and perhaps interestingly, complicates the issue, but is not something I will explore here.

[27] Denying play to professionals implies a false dichotomy between work and play, for which I criticised Stanley and Caillois earlier. See footnote 13 and also Sutton-Smith (1997: 188-190) and Malaby (2009).

[28] Burghardt argues that the presence of subjective terms such as pleasurable are offset by others such as spontaneous. Whereas the former is difficult to ascertain in animals that are behaviourally starkly different from ourselves, such as fish, Burghardt claims that the latter can be more reliably identified (2010b: 14). However, he does not reveal how spontaneity might be identified in a fish, which strikes me as a tall order.

[29] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-family-vault/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#3 The Family Vault).

[30] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/dont-kick-lionman/. (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#8 [Don't] Kick LionMan).

play.[31] Burghardt's definition is useful, since it highlights how play may be rewarding regardless of enjoyment; however, the difficulties discussed above indicate why I concern myself with the relations at play within the performances, eschewing their objective categorisation.

2.4: Play/Playfulness Distinction

If my criticisms of Burghardt's (2010b) definition hold, it appears that we must again acknowledge that we do not really know what play is. However, I argue that a positive move is to distinguish between, and develop separate concepts for, play and playfulness,[32] which Burghardt seems to conflate in his definition. Naturally, I am not the first to conceive of such a move. Bateson, too, observes that "(N)ot all play is playful" (2015: R15), elsewhere seeming to imply that he prefers a neutral definition of play (2010: 41), which I support. Sutton-Smith describes the playful as "metaplay … that which plays with the

[31]

Clockwise from top-left: large-motor (dancing), make-believe (creature pointing), symbolic (praising trees). See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-2-squadron/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S4 Playfulness, Creativity & Imagination) and 7.6.1.

[32] The conceptual discussion that follows aims to develop conceptions of play and playfulness equipped to deal with the complexity of both child and adult human play; this is their focus, which has been developed from the standpoint of this project. Nonetheless, animal play research is still useful in this endeavour and is included in what follows, although I make no specific claims regarding any potential application of either concept in this area. Although it is necessary at times to frame these concepts in terms of what play and playfulness *are*, both concepts are processual and intended as elucidations of what each group of phenomena *do*. Neither concept is claimed to represent an exhaustive definition.

frames of play", leaving "the frames of the mundane" as the playthings of play. This formulation sees play proceed in a structured, largely steady fashion, with playfulness being the agent of disruption, subverting expectation (1997: 147–148). Don Handelman extends Sutton-Smith's distinction, asserting that the playful "may permeate both serious reality and play, or…may surge into presence within the mundane" (2001: 11,504). I maintain that this is incorrect and also logically inconsistent with Sutton-Smith's description. I agree with Sutton-Smith's implicit assertion that playfulness presupposes play: to be playful is to play playfully.

Handelman (2001) posits a dichotomy between that which is serious and that which is play,[33] a dichotomy that has been deemed problematic at least since Huizinga (1970: 24). Further, a criticism Ehrmann (1968) makes of both Caillois (1961) and Huizinga (1970) applies here also. He makes the important observation that these authors uncritically treat reality as a given, as external to play, and as the "yardstick" by which it is measured. This Ehrmann deems "methodologically unsound", since reality cannot exist prior to its manifestations, which, in this case, are instances of play;[34] thus, play and reality form one and the same problem (1968: 33). In other words, play is every bit as much a constituent part of reality as the Higgs boson, gravitational waves, and bollards. The difference between the items in the foregoing list is the level or scale at which they can be perceived, and to which discussions of them primarily pertain, not whether or not they are real, or how real they are. (I say this notwithstanding the fact that future discoveries may alter scientific opinion; the results of the Large Hadron Collider that indicated the presence of the Higgs boson are real enough, independent of whether future findings revise the accepted interpretation of these early results.)

A further definition is useful in unpicking my stance regarding play. For Droogers, play is "the capacity to deal simultaneously and subjunctively with two or more ways of classifying reality" (2006: 81), although I would say that play is the enactment of this capacity. Furthermore, in its enactment, the subjunctive mode of interaction with the world

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[33] As with Burghardt (2010b), I feel that the false dichotomy between work and play also underlies and influences Handelman's (2001) thinking on the subject.

[34] In this Ehrmann is not making an idealist claim, i.e. denying the existence of an objective universe, the "Noumena" of Kantian philosophy ([1781] 1922: 203). Rather he is making the point that the phenomena of play are not some mysterious category separate to all others and set against those phenomena that make up our experience; the phenomena of play constitute subjective reality just as do all other phenomena.

necessarily enters into reality and participates in its co-constitution. Remembering Groos, we could describe play as the instantiation of an additional, coexistent mode of engagement with one's environment[35] beyond "blind instinct" (1898: xx), but not replacing it. In Sutton-Smith's conception, this description of play might be termed the addition of a subjunctive ('as if') mode to one's indicative ('as is') mode of world-engagement; I call this phenomenon *subjunctivity*.[36] The subjunctive relates to potentiality and alternative interpretations and is not limited to classical logic – it is extra-logical – whereas the indicative relates to unambiguous functionality and proceeds by classical logic; it is the synchronous layering and coexistence of the two that I term subjunctivity. (The alternative, or original, interpretations associated with the subjunctive will be revealed as particularly significant during my discussion of creativity in the next section of this chapter.) This conception of play can also be described as a bifurcation of one's engagement with the world – from habitual, unilinear indicative engagement to a multilayered engagement comprising both indicative and subjunctive. In this respect, my formulation distinguishes playfulness from play by virtue of playfulness' greater complexity manifesting in further bifurcations, i.e. more complex layering.[37]

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[35] Environment is taken here (as it is throughout this writing, unless otherwise stated or where the context implicitly implies another usage) to mean my tripled notion of environment as physical, social, and conceptual that I introduced in 1.3.1. The term *world* should also be taken as an identically tripled notion.

[36] Here, I am drawing on Turner's notions of "subjunctive" and "indicative" (1982: 82–84), although this should not be taken to imply the limitation of this discussion only to pretend-play; I am here construing the 'as if' of the subjunctive in the broadest possible terms, including physical action such as leaping. Turner uses the term *subjunctivity*, but to refer to the subjunctive mode only, rather than as implying also the indicative. Subjunctivity appears also in Shepherd & Wallis' section on play and performance (2004: 124), although their precise usage is unclear.

We can relate the indicative to the subjectively, but straightforwardly, logical according to previous experience, which is by no means to imply that it is unique to humans. It is logical for flying animals to bash themselves against window panes, for example, because their subjective reality contains no notion of glass. For them, the indicative, 'as is', mode entails that they should be able to fly through that 'space'. Indeed, humans have been known to walk headlong into plate glass doors. A similar principle can be seen at work when human individuals become frustrated at a piece of technology that "doesn't work", when in fact it is the individual's operation of it which is at fault. The subjunctive mode I associate with play, by contrast, can expand beyond the straightforwardly logical whilst still accommodating it (Runco, 1996: 5), which, ironically, in the above examples might result in more objectively logical action. This also suggests that subconscious processes resembling play are ever-present in human mentality, since otherwise we would not possess the psychological distancing required to perceive the indicative as indicative.

[37] This being an abstract and (at present) non-falsifiable theory of playfulness, it is not necessary, nor possible, to hypothesise the number of bifurcations required for playfulness to be instantiated. It is more helpful, and probably accurate, to say that there is a somewhat-flexible, context-dependent threshold dividing play and playfulness. Additionally, see 4.2.1–4.2.2 & 5.2.2 for how this relates to Gregory Bateson's theory of play, which might be improved by distinguishing between play and playfulness.

I adopt Ehrmann's (1968) position and accept the constructed nature of reality, which is to say that, as intimated above, I take reality to be a function or product of interactions; in order to discuss reality intelligibly, one must select, or delimit, a particular temporo-spatial area of description. Integrating an ecological view, I would say that reality manifests a complex interrelation between the objective and subjective, which forms an inseparable whole, and which is not limited to humans. Accordingly, I contend that, to the subject, the subjunctive is every bit as real as the indicative, with equal reality-constituting potential (realised relative to the extent to which it is engaged in), and, therefore, the generation of subjunctive potentiality involved in play and playfulness lends them the capacity to effect change in one's personal ecologies.[38] Indeed, the (internal) psychological distancing implicit in subjunctivity's layering of world-engagement provides the necessary perspective to recognise the indicative as indicative but to recognise also that alternatives are possible; without this internal distance, Groos' strictly indicative "blind instinct" (1898: *xx*) would reign. In other words, without the addition of the subjunctive, no perception of potentiality would be possible, rendering creativity impossible also. Whilst the foregoing is crucial both for my argument linking play(fulness) and creativity and that ludic practice can appreciably recalibrate environmental relations, I do not deem subjunctivity an exhaustive account of play(fulness).

I argue that playfulness can also be described as a transformative, multidimensional *affective atmosphere* (Anderson, 2009), which is indeterminate, yet lends certain positive qualities[39] to a neutral play-concept, and which results from the disposition to be playful.

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[38] Presuming that the subjunctive 'exists', it seems plausible that its very nature as subjunctive is implicated in the persistent, and, Ehrmann (1968) would say, erroneous, notion of a distinction between play and real life; i.e. because we can engage with the world both 'as is' and 'as if', this creates the impression that the two are functionally distinct when it comes to constituting subjective reality, with the indicative only as having that role and the subjunctive as constituting something else. This something else is variously described as a "play-world" (Huizinga, 1970: 30), "phantasy" (Freud, 1908: 421), and "make-believe" (Caillois, 1961: 9). This last term is telling because, for so long as it persists, the 'as if' of the subjunctive becomes a form of 'as is' for the subject. That is to say, it becomes part of their reality. An example of this common to all individuals is dream experience, yet this also occurs on social and global scales. Take, for instance: the way in which people prepare more carefully for a storm if it has a name (Eysenck, 2016), the notion of confidence in the trading of stocks and shares and the impact on people's livelihoods of decisions taken thereunder according to what traders think might happen, the objective and material differences arising from the unequal distribution of the concept 'money', and any action conducted in the name of religion. Such a capacity is also likely implicated in the inherent and fundamental role that metaphor plays in our engagement with the world, as described by Lakoff & Johnson ([1980] 2003).

[39] In advocating a neutral definition of play, I must stress that it is an abstract construct that would seldom, if ever, exist in reality. Furthermore, playfulness is by no means the only possible affective atmosphere that can

Accordingly, both playfulness and the ludic disposition presuppose, but are distinct from, play-activity: one can play without being playful, but one cannot instantiate playfulness without playing. Playfulness so often transforms play activity that conflation of the two is understandable, but I have attempted to show that it is possible (and, indeed, constructive) to separate them. I differentiate my technical usage by capitalising Playfulness.

Separating play and Playfulness allows, in principle, an objective definition of play to be constructed, though this is not necessary for my purposes. Moreover, I conceive of Playfulness and the ludic disposition as fundamentally subjective, relational and bound up with humour, rendering them impervious to objective definition.[40] I argue that it is the quality of Playfulness which chiefly carries the positive hedonic valence (i.e. positive affect) often attributed to play itself; Bateson, too, reserves "fun" for playful play (2015: R12). My usage of the word ludic is encapsulated by the phrase 'playful play'.

Following Droogers (2006: 81) and Sutton-Smith (1997: 147), the reflexivity inherent in the proposed conception of Playfulness implies awareness-of-self-within-process, which complements Reason's decentring-of-self (2017b: 46)[41] introduced in 1.4.2. With the concept of awareness-of-self-within-process, I intend to evoke the phenomenal experience of being performed by a system. One is simultaneously aware of oneself both as an agent whose actions shape the course of the system processes in which one is embedded and as an integrated element of that system whose processes shape one's actions. The experience, which arose during my perfilitation of all strands but most strongly in *Perplexpedition*, is more of acting on intuition than out of conscious deliberation; linguistic thought seems not

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be associated with play; negatively valenced atmospheres, with qualities such as frightening, can also arise within play. I must also be clear that the positive qualities associated with playfulness can arise from play independently of playfulness; in my conception, playfulness is the combination of metaplay and positive hedonic valence.

[40] See A2.1 for an illustration of this, focusing on the subjectivity of humour.

[41] For a stimulating theoretical position which informs my thinking in this area, see Langfur (2013), who argues that self-awareness originates in one's outward-focus, thus characterising this as an ecological process, since this would require mutual modification (i.e. bidirectional causation). For Langfur (2013), infants develop a sense of themselves as individuals when their primary caregiver reflects their prelinguistic gestures (such as a smile) back to them. Self-awareness in this context does not automatically entail that an individual possessing it will pass Gallup's 'mirror-test' (1970); therefore, this does not limit the phenomenon of Playfulness to only those species able to recognise their reflection. It is important to contrast my usage of reflexivity, self-within-process, and self-awareness with self-*consciousness*. Crucially, awareness-of-self-within-Playful-process does not entail any conscious control of that process. My research indicates that intuition and instinct more often drive the process, as I discuss in A3.3–A3.3.1. Indeed, inward-focus and attempts at conscious control often shatter ludic contexts. This project aims to develop outward-focus, as I discuss in Chapter 3, 4.3 & 6.4.2.

to be involved, which mirrors Einstein's account of the creative process (1954: 26). By invoking intuition, I mean to imply a sense of awareness that goes beyond that which may associate with instinct.

Both Reason's (2017b) concept and my own invoke a sense of reflexive awareness of oneself, but not in a way that is rational, nor of a self that is unitary; rather, they describe an affective experience of self-awareness that stems from and consists in a destabilisation of the notion of a unitary self. Reason's concept implies a positively affective experience of being *beside oneself* (2017b: 45), which necessarily requires that oneself be multifaceted (or at least duofaceted), since one experiences being in two places at once: observer and observed. My own concept of awareness-of-self-within-process also requires a multifaceted subjectivity, though mine stresses that the intrasubjectivity made possible by multifaceted subjectivity enables one to apprehend one's agency within systems and processes whilst one is being performed by them. (As I explore further in 5.4.1, intrasubjectivity is the interaction between elements of one's subjectivity.)

The reflexivity involved in Playfulness leads to another aspect of my distinction; I do not deem it possible to be absentmindedly Playful, yet it is perfectly possible to play absentmindedly.[42] On a related note, describing the ludic as a disposition imbues it with intentionality, meaning that one cannot be Playful by accident. We can see now that I find the descriptors in criterion [2] of Burghardt's (2010b) definition of play applicable instead to the Playful.

Malaby describes play itself as a disposition, rather than activity (2009: 205). Whilst I agree that, in adulthood at least, play is not confined to the categories of activity quoted above, and cannot be defined in opposition to work or the serious, in describing play as the enactment of Drooger's (2006) subjunctive capacity, I render it unequivocally active. According to its neutrality within my description, any activity can be augmented by play, whether or not it results in physical action. Some activities, like the arts and games, presuppose play. In turn, almost any activity augmented by play can be further augmented by Playfulness. Instances of violence, for example, while amenable to augmentation by my

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[42] For an example of this, observe someone (other than yourself) playing with their hair. I am not claiming that this activity will always be conducted absentmindedly, but rather that it often is (and that it is, therefore, possible to do so).

affect-neutral concept of play, are not amenable to further augmentation by Playfulness, since the latter entails positive affect. (Sadistic enjoyment of violence would not count, as social Playfulness manifests in a positive affective atmosphere [Anderson, 2009] that implicates all involved; if consensual, mutually enjoyed violence – such as sadomasochism – were deemed Playful by the participants, it would no longer qualify as violence, strictly speaking.)

Crucially, play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity resonates with both Reason's decentring-of-self (2017b: 46) and Kershaw's "performed by" phenomenon (2015: 115), since all imply a layering of subjectivity. As I explained above in relation to awareness-of-self-within-process, any awareness of decentring or being performed by ecologies requires a multifaceted self, the elements of which are able to apprehend and interact with one another; this is also the case with subjunctivity's bifurcated, parallel modes of world-engagement. I noted above that subjunctivity is necessary for moving beyond instinct to recognise the indicative as indicative; this has evolutionary implications, as I further explore in Chapter 4. I also argue that the intrasubjectivity involved in play(fulness) – the interplay between the subjunctive and indicative, for example – is particularly dynamic, owing to the high levels of spontaneity and flexibility required to perpetuate play(fulness), which is enduringly fragile (Huizinga, 1970: 40). Although the suggested evolutionary implications of play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity entail that the phenomenon has a certain universality, I contend that, in a human context, its dynamism and complexity render play(fulness) a powerful means of experiencing and exploring being performed by one's ecologies, especially when manifested through the intensified decentring of participatory performance (Reason, 2017b: 47).

I have presented a conception of play(fulness) that avoids important issues that I have identified with current theories. As I will argue in the case studies of Part II, avoiding these issues has enabled my conception of play(fulness) to better account for and analyse experiences of The Ludic Triangle. For instance, I find it problematic for definitions that claim to be objective to rely upon subjective criteria, such as enjoyment. Although I do not offer one, my play(fulness) formulation allows for an objective definition of play, as I argue that subjective factors like enjoyment attach to Playfulness.

We will see in Part II that the complexity of adult human play means that its analysis is better served by my approach than the others I have discussed, especially in an artistic context, and especially when enjoyment may be a delayed response (as I consider in 5.3.7) or ironically denied (as I suggest is the case with LionMan in *Perplexpedition #8*[43]). Since this is an art project, I am less interested in the strict categorisation of actions or phenomena than in the experience of their atmospheres and the implications that this might have, hence why I most often use the compound play(fulness). This is also why I characterise Playfulness as an affective atmosphere, which "[emanates] from but [exceeds] the assembling of bodies" and is simultaneously "determinate and indeterminate, present and absent, singular and vague" (Anderson, 2009: 80). Playfulness is therefore both objective, in that it can be perceived and felt by those not directly responsible for its creation, and subjective, in that it is indeterminate and therefore ultimately impervious to objective judgement. For this reason, I do not concern myself with attempting to convince the reader whether examples from my practice manifest Playfulness or not. In 5.3.3, I describe a moment from *Perplexpedition* that evidences the affective excess of the ongoing interaction affecting individuals who are not directly involved, but no amount of discussion could establish whether or not this moment constitutes Playfulness. Indeed, the interactors themselves may have differed in their judgements.

For me, play(fulness) does not take place in a separate 'play-world'; rather, it demonstrates the complexity and dynamism of the way in which a singular reality is actively constructed and layered with multiple modes of engagement, at least for those species that play. In Chapter 4, I will argue that this complexity troubles the notion of the objective-subjective dichotomy, as does the affective atmosphere aspect of play(fulness) discussed above. Throughout Part II, I will show that this commitment to a multi-layered, though singular, reality allows for both significant elucidation of the processes at work within The Ludic Triangle and for robust suggestions as to their philosophical importance.

The flexible structuring of reality implied by this conception of play signals a possible link to creativity, which is compounded by the implication of awareness-of-self-within-process and intentionality in the Playful. Furthermore, the positive hedonic valence of

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[43] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/dont-kick-lionman/. (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#8 [Don't] Kick LionMan).

Playfulness posited here suggests that the link may be motivational as well as functional. Before exploring the potential for such links, however, I set out what I mean by creativity, weaving possible links into the discussion as it develops.

2.5: Creativity

There is greater, but by no means total, agreement with regard to what constitutes creativity than there is regarding play. A standard definition of creativity is used throughout the literature, which Runco & Jaeger articulate as "originality and usefulness" (2012: 95), stressing that the standard definition results from long history and debate. Runco & Jaeger discern hints in works before 1900 that originality and usefulness would become the two criteria of creativity, but argue that Barron (1955)[44] and Stein (1953) were largely responsible for the definition's formulation and therefore deserve citation in contemporary writing on the subject. Stein defined a work as being creative if it was both "novel" and "accepted as…useful" (1953: 311). Therefore, Stein can be credited not only with the first formulation of the now standard definition, but also for framing creative products as the chief measure and object of study, as opposed to the process or person, and for implicating consensus in its definition, by asserting that usefulness must be "accepted…by a group" (ibid). Teresa Amabile observes that, by the 1980s, most definitions pertained to creative products (1983: 358), as does the standard definition today. Any link between play(fulness) and creativity, however, would pertain primarily to the creative process, which makes evidencing such a link more difficult, since no product may be immediately perceptible. Furthermore, the processes themselves may remain obscure even to the individual engaged in them. Amabile (1982) also foregrounded consensus.[45] Her consensual technique for assessing creativity relies upon an operational definition that runs as follows:

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[44] Barron's contribution was incomplete because he defined originality, yet stopped short of defining creativity (Runco & Jaeger, 2012: 94). For Barron, an original response is not only "uncommon" but also "adaptive to reality" (1955: 479).

[45] Amabile (1982) does cite Stein's definition, but does not explicitly refer to his having first highlighted the importance of consensus. For a note on Amabile's (1982, 1983) argument that judgements of creativity cannot be entirely objective and her conception of creative process as heuristic, see A2.2.

A product or response is creative to the extent that appropriate observers independently agree it is creative. Appropriate observers are those familiar with the domain in which the product was created or the response articulated. Thus, creativity can be regarded as the quality of products or responses judged to be creative by appropriate observers, and it can also be regarded as the process by which something so judged is produced. (ibid: 1001)

Even though Amabile (1982) permits the possibility of assessing a process as creative, this is possible only retrospectively once its products have been adjudged creative, so this technique is not of direct use here.

Runco & Jaeger note that consensus and appropriate observers constitute long-standing problems in creativity-assessment, since they entail an infinite regress: who judges the judges' appropriateness, and that of the judges' judges (Runco & Jaeger, 2012: 94)? Amabile follows Stein (1953) by adding the caveat that "the judgement of creativity is historically and culturally bound" (1982: 1011), i.e. notions of usefulness will vary between cultures and across time. Also, Stein distinguishes between "internal and external frames of reference" (1953: 312), which is particularly useful in the present context. Creativity that satisfies internal frames of reference is commonly called 'little c' (e.g. Craft, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) – or that which Runco (1996) terms 'personal' – creativity, since these need be novel and useful only to the individual; 'Big C' creativity must satisfy external frames of reference, since it is adjudged by others. However, there is inconsistent use of creativity-categories in the literature[46] and, furthermore, creativity-categorisation itself is problematic, since the fundamental processes are constant (Runco, 2014).

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[46] Craft uses 'little c' to describe creativity that "guides choices and route-finding in everyday life" (2000: 3) and that can have originality relative only to the individual but "must also have a wider originality" (ibid: 4), which is confusing. Craft also appears to use the term for outcomes which have been shared with a group, but not subjected to scrutiny by the wider field within which it has been generated, and also for unshared thoughts (ibid: 5). On the other hand, Beghetto & Kaufman assert that all 'little c' creativity must be judged by others (2007: 73). Hoff, following Craft (2000), describes 'little c' creativity as necessitating that the individual is not replicating something personally done previously or observed in others, but does not say whether the outcome must be judged by others (2013: 403). Boden uses her own typology of 'psychological creativity' for ideas which are new to the individual and 'historical creativity' for those which are new to the world (2004: 2). This would make the latter fairly synonymous with 'Big-C', since it must be open to judgement against all other ideas in history, but, as Boden talks specifically about ideas, which can remain private yet still be useful, it is unclear whether or how this might map onto other suggested creativity types. Kaufman & Beghetto (2007, 2009) broaden the conceptual framework of creativity beyond Big/little duality, which I discuss in 2.5.1. Again, there is inconsistency in their application of their own concepts. For example, they describe their concept of 'mini-c' creativity as relating to process but also refer to it in terms of products (such as a novel combination of

2.5.1: Processual Creativity

Seeing the prevailing dualist categorisation as restrictive, Beghetto & Kaufman developed the concept of "mini-c" creativity[47] to refer to "the novel and personally meaningful interpretation of experiences, actions, and events" (2007: 73). The introduction of 'mini-c' aims to facilitate greater clarity in research and discussion as well as purporting to bring welcome focus onto creative process (ibid: 73–74); however, I follow Runco (2014) in finding the impulse to categorisation problematic. Nonetheless, it is hoped that including 'mini-c' in this discussion will illuminate certain areas.

Beghetto & Kaufman assert that judgements associated with 'mini-c' are implicitly intrapersonal (2007: 73–74), which relates 'mini-c' to my notion of intrasubjectivity that I implicate in *Perplexpedition* video editing and solo Playfulness.[48] 'Mini-C' is expressly built upon (and, I suggest, derivative of) Runco's (1996) notion of 'personal creativity', which I find more conceptually rigorous and of more use to this project. Runco's (1996) concept is similarly process-oriented, describing creativity as "manifested in the intentions and motivation to transform the objective world into original interpretations, coupled with the ability to decide when this is useful and when it is not" (1996: 3–4).

A clear link obtains, I argue, between these processual descriptions of creativity and my conception of Playfulness-as-subjunctivity, i.e. coexisting modes of world-engagement, together with reflexivity and intentionality. A subjunctive perspective seems necessary for 'transformations' and 'original interpretations' to occur, whilst reflexivity and intentionality seem similarly necessary for making intrapersonal judgements. The notion of 'personal creativity' as manifested in motivation also aligns this concept with the ludic disposition. Indeed, the hypothesis that a ludic disposition is positively correlated with creativity (Bateson & Martin, 2013) has empirical support (Bateson & Nettle, 2014). The study in

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jazz riffs [Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007: 74]). Moreover, they describe 'mini-c' as being judged intrapersonally, yet also implicate it in the formal education process (ibid: 76–77), which proceeds by interpersonal judgement. In addition to the misleading nature of creativity categorisation (Runco, 2014: 131), which I also discuss in this blog post), it strikes me that part of the problem lies in the fact that creative products are defined as both physical objects and ideas. The difficulty then is delineating when a thought process becomes an idea, i.e. a product of thought, together with the implication that ideas are then somehow static. This strikes me as a problematic endeavour, and one which is not consonant with Gregory Bateson's ecology (see 4.2–4.3.2 & A4.1).

[47] I will hereafter drop the word 'creativity' from types which are described as having a size, such as 'mini-c'.
[48] See 5.4.1 for intrasubjectivity in my video editing.

question did use a divergent thinking task as a measure of creativity when, as previously mentioned, such tasks only test creative potential (Runco, 2008), not least because divergent thinking does not necessitate responses' usefulness. Nonetheless, if creativity and play(fulness) share similar operational characteristics,[49] it is likely that a propensity for one may promote the enaction of the other and vice versa, since the same developmental pathways and structures would be available to both.[50]

In evolutionary terms, play almost certainly predates creativity, since play is argued to drive behavioural novelty and cognitive development (Burghardt, 2014: 93), and since an organism must first produce novel behaviours before possibly judging their usefulness. This being so, it appears plausible that play could be an essential precursor for the evolution of creativity (Burghardt, 2010b: 17; Bateson, 2010: 45). Furthermore, as play(fulness) is associated with positive experience (although this is, in my view, often wrongly deemed inherent to play itself) and is, therefore, attractive and rewarding, it seems reasonable to suggest that any causal relation might travel from play(fulness) to creativity (though not necessarily directly). Bateson, too, argues that the positive hedonic valence of playfulness encourages behaviour which facilitates creativity (2015: R15).

2.5.2: Creativity & Development

Both Runco (1996) and Beghetto & Kaufman (2007, 2009) expressly associate their creativity theses with developmental concerns. Runco argues that creativity requires a complex of skills, combining those gained as one matures with those found early in childhood (1996: 3). This highlights another potential link between play(fulness) and creativity, since the key childhood component of creativity is uninhibited experience-transformation (ibid: 4), which

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[49] This is further evidenced by the fact that both play (Bateson, G., 2000: 15) and creativity (Runco, 1996: 5) have been argued to permit, or promote, operations that proceed according to their own logic, which is potentially incompatible with conventional logic, but which nonetheless interacts with it.

[50] I must stress that this in no way should be taken to imply that play(fulness) and creativity are inextricably linked, or can only be enacted simultaneously; each process can occur independently of the other. Nor should this be taken to imply that all play(fulness) forms a creative process or produces creative products. The flexibility and associated potential for novelty implicated in play(fulness) has no impact on the usefulness criterion of creativity. Play(fulness) may be one of many means by which novel ideas arise, which are then evaluated in respect of their usefulness so as to constitute creativity. That said, given its apparent deep evolutionary roots (Groos, 1898; Fagen, 1981; Smith, 1982; Burghardt, 1984, 2005, 2014; Bateson, 2010; etc.), perhaps playfulness is the main means, at least in humans.

is another way of describing subjunctivity. We now see the importance of the correlation between play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity and original, or alternative, interpretations that I described in 2.4 above. As my project developed, it became apparent that I should focus on engaging adult participants, since the greatest potential impact could be produced by reconnecting adults with this childlike aptitude, which points to the pedagogical aspect of this project.[51] Runco & Pina posit the need for such reconnection when they observe that adults "too often rely on routine, assumption, and experience", thus inhibiting personal creativity (2013: 380).

Beghetto & Kaufman describe 'mini-c' as the first step on the road to 'little-' and, in a tiny minority of cases, 'Big-C' (2007: 76). I do not see 'mini-c' as solely a developmental milestone that is left behind.[52] In agreement with Craft et al. (2013), I argue that 'mini-c' must be inherent in 'little-' and, in my view, 'Big-C' activity, since "novel and personally meaningful [interpretations]" (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007: 73) must be at work in any form of creativity. Craft et al.'s (2013) focus on primary education means that they limit their discussion to 'little-c'; however, 'little-' and 'Big-C' are differentiated only by the extent to which their novelty and usefulness are accepted, which reflects Stein's notion of the "distance" between the creative outcome and that which previously existed (1953: 311). Regardless of 'mini-c's' usefulness, it stands to reason that the development of creativity would begin here simply because one must first have an idea before one can express it; there is nothing to prevent something judged as novel and useful intrapersonally from also being interpersonally recognised as such, once expressed or made manifest. As Runco notes, his separation of the personal and social aspects of creativity is parsimonious (1996: 6), rather than due to any difference in kind between the two. This links back to my notion of Playfulness-overlap between individuals.[53] Just as people's subjective notions of Playfulness must overlap, since we can be Playful together, so people's intrapersonal judgements of novelty and usefulness must also, since social consensus on creative products is often achieved.

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[51] See Chapters 3&7 for more on this project's pedagogical aspect.
[52] This is the equivalent in creativity research of the error, described by Pellis et al. (2015), of play researchers deeming play confined to childhood.
[53] I discuss the notion of Playfulness-overlap in 1.3.1.1 & A2.1.

With personal creativity, Runco provides an alternative perspective on the restrictive notion of linear creativity-development by accounting for "both developmental continuities and discontinuities" (1996: 3): discretion requires maturity, experience, and formal logic, whilst the originality of one's interpretations depends upon a childlike unconventionality (ibid: 12–14). The notion of creativity-development as multidimensional, not unilinear, mirrors Sutton-Smith's (1966) criticism of Piaget's (1962) account of play's role within cognitive development. This multidimensionality also resonates with Burghardt's (2005, 2010b) tripartite process-classification system for play's functionality. Primary process is play behaviour which arises from "non-play factors such as…impulsivity and curiosity" without "intrinsic play motivational mechanisms" and possibly without any benefit (Burghardt, 2010b: 16). In humans, we could include 'duty' as a non-play factor and classify my earlier board game and S4 examples as primary process (from the reticent players' points of view), although Burghardt may still disagree.

Primary becomes secondary process when play assumes an important role in the maintenance of physiological, behavioural, and perceptual condition for a species and when intrinsic motivation becomes a factor (ibid). Although positive experience may result from primary or secondary play, my conception of Playfulness would be absent from both because neither admit of metaplay. This observation clarifies my earlier argument that the positive affect I attribute to Playfulness is not restricted to the ludic alone: play can be fun, but Playful play is fundamentally fun.

Tertiary play is that which has become significant, though not necessarily critical, for the attainment of cognitive, social, and physical skills and, thus, for the crossing of developmental thresholds (ibid). Although Burghardt's system implies linear phylogenetic and ontogenetic progression, the resonance with personal creativity lies in the fact that, even for animals (e.g. humans) whose play is mainly tertiary (Burghardt, 2014: 92), primary and secondary play may also occur (Burghardt, 2005: 119–120). This indicates developmental discontinuity as well as continuity, thus pointing to another structural similarity between play(fulness) and creativity.

Burghardt explicitly links tertiary play with creativity (2005: 119), yet any link must be indirect since play generates novelty without consideration of usefulness (Bateson, 2010: 45). Also, since even primary play produces behavioural variation (Burghardt, 2005: 119),

every play-process has the potential to facilitate creativity, providing that the individual possesses sufficient cognitive complexity to deploy discretion. Furthermore, Burghardt suggests that the development of play may have been a major driver of cognitive complexification (2010b: 17), which seems to render play(fulness) invaluable.[54] I develop and expand upon my arguments regarding play(fulness) and evolution in Chapter 4; however, it is sufficient at present to posit plausible links between play(fulness) and creativity. I argue that, whilst play(fulness) might not make a person more creative, in the same way that teaching creates conditions for learning to occur (Rogers, [2002] 2010: 53), play(fulness) creates conditions for creativity to occur. Yet, just as people can learn without formal education, people can be creative without being playful.

2.6: Conclusion – Play(fulness) & Creativity

To conclude, I outline and clarify what I perceive to be the potential links between play(fulness) and creativity. If play and, to a greater extent, Playfulness involve bifurcations of one's world-engagement from purely indicative into indicative and subjunctive, and the layering of these modes, then this necessarily reduces the immediate functionality of one's action in the present.[55] This is akin to the Groosian notion of incomplete instincts, where instincts are the entirely functional meshing of organism and environment in an inescapably indicative mode. Bateson, similarly, observes that play is unnecessary for the acquisition of life skills (2010: 45). However, the fact of play's evolution within the phylogenetic order at many independent points in time (Burghardt, 2005: 181–379; Pellis et al., 2015: 331–332) means that the benefits of play(ful)-subjunctivity must have outweighed the costs associated with diminished immediate functionality. One benefit that logically follows from such bifurcatory layering, or Piagetian figure-ground decontextualisation, is creative potential, since the distancing effect inherent in decontextualisation – the psychological distance between indicative and subjunctive perspectives – allows for original and potentially useful associations, applications, and behaviours to emerge. In fact, Runco

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[54] For more on play(fulness) and cognitive complexification, see 4.2.1–4.2.2.
[55] Indeed, modelling suggests that play would have been what is termed a spiteful behaviour when first it evolved, i.e. one which negatively impacts upon an organism's fitness, with adaptive benefits coming only later and indirectly (Auerbach, Kanarek & Burghardt, 2015: 5–6).

specifically highlights the ontogenetic importance of environmental conditions conducive to imaginative play, implicating them in the fulfilment of creative potential (2016: 98).

An important corollary of *play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity* is that play(fulness) actively generates potentiality. Play creates and maintains this potentiality, with or without recourse to reflexivity and intentionality. Playfulness then involves complexification and self-reflexive awareness of potentiality, suggesting that it provides an opportunity for (though is not itself involved in) evaluating the usefulness of a multiplicity of potentialities. When evaluation is made, we can say that creativity is at work. Stein saw creativity as facilitated by sensitivity to uncertainty, i.e. to the incomplete determinacy of an individual's relations with their environment, which results in a "lack of homeostasis" (1953: 312). We can align the indicative with the determinate in this formulation, its incompleteness revealing the need for subjunctivity. Paradoxically, subjunctive flexibility allows (mental) homeostasis to be maintained (Bateson, G., 2000: 507), which constitutes another surfacing of the theme of the balancing act given that homeostasis denotes a dynamic point of balance within a complex system. To operate in such flux and indeterminacy, Stein argues that creative individuals possess the "capacity to tolerate ambiguity", continuing to seek solutions despite lacking total comprehension (1953: 312). I maintain that ludic activity involves actively putting oneself in a state of potentiality, i.e. ambiguity, since subjunctivity exemplifies and heightens the inherent indeterminacy of one's environmental relations. It follows that projects such as mine, which facilitate ludic interactions, can develop individuals' tolerance of ambiguity and therefore can plausibly impact positively upon individuals' creative potential, although I make no claim regarding the realisation of that potential.

2.7: Postscript – Implications

I do not find the copyist epistemology for which Sutton-Smith (1966) criticised Piaget (1962) inherently problematic. Firstly, a non-copyist epistemology would entail the creation of knowledge *ex nihilo* somewhere along the line, which is unsatisfactory. Secondly, the

bringing together of existing elements in an original formation is sufficient for creativity, so long as it is appropriate or useful (Stein, 1953: 311). Thus, we can see that play(fulness) brings about creative potential through a complexification of one's engagement with the world. Complexification allows for emergence, which suggests that play(fulness) provides creative potential, not through magical acts of creation *ex nihilo*, but through facilitating novel formations which are synergistic (i.e. co-operative or complementary) in character and could become more than the sum of their parts (cf. Corning, 2012). In fact, this conception arguably positions play(fulness) as central to, and/or an expression of, what allows agents to consciously alter their environments, since an individual must be able to perceive subjunctively in order to conceive of possible alterations that could be made. Awareness-of-self-within-process, which I implicate in my notion of Playfulness, would then allow for more and more complex conceptions as well as intentional action in light of them. Creative potential has been deemed the "key defining characteristic of humanity" (Runco, 2016: 98). It could be that play(fulness) provides the evolutionary basis for its development.

The presence of a capacity does not entail the enactment of that capacity, however (Runco & Pina, 2013: 380). In the next chapter, taking education as an exemplary field, I argue that current socio-cultural and political trends inhibit play(fulness), which is likely to inhibit the fulfilment of people's creative potential. This is a particularly pressing issue, given that the importance of creativity to prosperity can only increase as job automation increases, led by artificial intelligence (Fenech, Elliston & Buston, 2017). Another key, interrelated argument is that the ability to tolerate, and act within, a state of ambiguity, which my project fosters, is of vital current importance. These claims represent two key lines of argument for the value and potential impact of this project.

Despite the current epoch being widely termed an "age of uncertainty" (Bauman, 2007; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007; Lee, 2001; Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons, 2001), the contemporary tendency towards ever-greater rationalisation and quantification, exemplified by education reform, is antithetical to the development of the subjunctive mode that I argue is fundamental to the ludic and, by association, to creativity. For all the criticisms that others and I have made, we learn from Groos, Huizinga, Caillois, Piaget, and Burghardt that the capacity for play runs so deep in our phylogenetic, ontogenetic, social, and cultural heritage that it is intrinsic to the fabric of our reality. It is to our detriment that

this is not sufficiently recognised at present; to rectify this situation and act accordingly could be crucial for our future progress and development. In the next chapter, I first describe the state of affairs that places inhibitory pressures on the development of play(fulness). I then set out the pedagogical principles, embodied by The Ludic Triangle, that not only facilitate play(fulness)'s propagation within this project, but could also do so within mainstream education if the overall system evolved to a configuration that is no longer inimical to play(fulness).

Chapter 3: Social & Personal Context – Ludic Pedagogy

3.1: Introduction

In Chapter 2, I developed my PaR-ready play(fulness) formulation, positioning play as of considerable importance to the development of creative potential and Playfulness as potentially enabling the realisation of creativity. With considerable job-automation fast approaching, resulting from developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI), the development of creativity is imperative, since creativity is beyond current AI capability (IBM, 2017).[1] Any inhibition of play(fulness), therefore, is a critical issue, especially within education. Performance practitioners' interventions within young people's education constitute an important area (cf. Nicholson, 2011), but are not the main focus of this chapter; I will throw into relief certain aspects and qualities, embodied by The Ludic Triangle, that are of benefit to general educational practice.

This chapter has twin purposes: to highlight this project's value and potential impact at a time characterised by ludic-inhibition and -institutionalisation and to respond to this situation by formulating the aforementioned aspects and qualities into a progressive model for education, which I term *ludic pedagogy* (LP). The former purpose represents the social context in which this project is situated and the latter evokes key aspects of my personal history from which my practice developed, although the two intertwine. Not only does my practice constitute a contribution to socially engaged live art, but its core attributes of fostering intrinsic motivation and increased tolerance of ambiguity together with its ontological orientation are all important pedagogical principles currently being squeezed

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[1] Although estimates vary greatly, either 35 or 10% respectively (for the UK), depending upon whether one assesses the future automation of entire jobs (Frey & Osborne, 2013) or individual tasks (Arntz, Gregory & Zierahn, 2016), it is generally accepted that a significant proportion of jobs are likely to be automated by the early 2030s. Researchers disagree on the possibility of creative computers (IBM, 2017); it remains the case, however, that the less routine a job is, the more difficult that job is to automate (Hawksworth et al., 2017). Therefore, the novelty involved in creativity, which play(fulness) generates, will become ever more valuable. Indeed, the Future Advocacy think-tank urges the UK government to "future-proof" the education system by adapting it to promote "creativity and interpersonal skills" (Fenech, Elliston & Buston, 2017: 2). Play(fulness) could be key to this; however, this chapter shows that education reform is taking a drastically different path.

out of the English education system. This situation becomes yet more pressing as automation advances. A *ludic pedagogy* (LP) is called for; in the second half of this chapter, I articulate LP's practical operation and methodological rationale. In the first half, I describe the current social context that, I argue, inhibits and institutionalises my conception of the ludic and therefore requires a response. Though not sufficient on their own, both The Ludic Triangle and the LP extracted from it represent valuable elements of such a response.

Despite a recent explosion of adult-play opportunities (Inner Child, 2016) and continued growth of the gaming industry (Ukie, 2016), I aim to show that certain socio-cultural and political trends of recent times inhibit play(fulness) together with the potential creativity and other benefits associated with it.[2] Though these are by no means presented as the only such trends, the three interrelated tendencies I shall discuss are the privileging of data,[3] culture of accountability, and drive for marketisation. I will weave their discussion together, as befits these trends' interrelatedness, marking their presence throughout England's education system. I use education as a social barometer because this is an area where the effects of these trends have been particularly keenly felt, but also because education is the institution which has the greatest role to play in the socialisation of citizens.[4] As Dewey observes, education is

> that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing [an individual] to share in the inherited resources of the [society], and to use his [sic] own powers for social ends. (1959: 22)

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[2] Given the close, but albeit indirect, links between play(fulness) and creativity established in Chapter 2, it is reasonable to conclude that situations which inhibit one are likely to inhibit the other. As such, during this chapter, when either term is mentioned it should be taken as implying also the other.
Although my play(fulness) formulation frames play as a common component within human life (see also Chapter 4), and therefore it is primarily Playfulness which is inhibited by these trends, I contend that play itself can be inhibited by them also. For this reason, and because this chapter is more contextual than technical, I mainly use the word play(fulness) throughout.

[3] Employing a usage widespread in education, I use the word "data" in this chapter as a shorthand for quantitative data.

[4] Education is also an area of which I have extensive experience and close personal links, having spent more than two-thirds of my life so far as a pupil and student, as well as practising education in various forms in my adult life. I have worked as: both a teaching and learning-support assistant in my old primary school and nursery, a youth drama teacher, an assistant to a lecturer in law (both under- and postgraduate), and now teach within the drama department at Kent, together with university outreach work to local secondary schools. Further, my mum has had a long career as a primary school teacher (also at my old primary school, although she began after I had gone to secondary school) and I have many friends who are or were teachers, including one who now works as an education journalist. In this chapter, I draw upon the anecdotal evidence of key individuals from my life who are intimately connected with education.

Therefore, the climate, culture, and atmosphere of a nation's education system have a profound effect on the future of its society. Through direct and indirect effects on learners, which intertwine in the intense focus on quantitative outcomes, the trends traced here filter, frame, and constitute resources inherited,[5] influencing what younger generations perceive their powers to be, what values they ascribe to their powers, and to what ends they might put them. In this way, the inhibition of play(fulness) within education via these trends is likely to inhibit its general future, increasing the importance of projects such as mine. Also, the trends discussed here necessarily reflect the society within which they operate; they constitute hallmarks. Marketisation and accountability reflect consumerist society (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005 and Murphy, 2011, respectively), and the primacy of data reflects the enduring dominance of the positivist knowledge paradigm (Reason, 2017a: 32; Nelson, 2013: 26; Breen & Darlaston-Jones, 2010; Kingsbury, 2002), both of which structure society in ways that inhibit the ludic.[6] Thus, play(fulness) is under pressure in both childhood and adulthood, yet offers particularly potent means with which to negotiate our present moment and our future.

Calling *LudicrousPilgrim*! The future of England's play(fulness) hangs in the balance; your country needs you!

3.1.1: An Uncertain World

Play(fulness) offers vital ways of developing resilience in a world of uncertainty where the indeterminacy (Stein, 1953: 312) that I noted in 2.6 is growing, perhaps exponentially, more acute. Uncertainty is arguably the defining characteristic of our times (Bauman, 2007; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007; Lee, 2001; Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons, 2001), which renders the ability to withstand a state of ambiguity an essential personal quality and the ability to flourish therein highly desirable. In this light, the ludic-ecological recalibration offered by

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[5] Quantification, accountability culture, and marketisation filter resources, in that they affect curricula (for example, arts subjects being excluded from the EBacc performance measure); frame resources, in that they provide the context in which education takes place; and constitute resources, in that they are epistemological, ethical, and ideological systems that reflect significant aspects of society in which young people are immersed.
[6] See A3.1 for a discussion of consumerism and positivism in this context.

my project gains greater significance beyond generating creative potential. Although uncertainty, and the need to equip younger generations to deal with it, is recognised by education-policy-makers (e.g. Morgan, 2016), in this chapter I argue that the system is increasingly being structured so as to preclude this possibility.

There are subjects within which ambiguity has limited direct use and precision has more value, such as engineering,[7] yet these are few. In any case, I am proposing general pedagogical attitudes, not plug-and-play teaching tools. It is also fair to say that certainty, i.e. the indicative, is of most use when teaching the basics of a subject or discipline. However, by the same token, uncertainty, i.e. the subjunctive, is invaluable when increasing the complexity of study, since this allows teachers to structure the 'what if' of possibility into their pedagogy in order to stretch students' thinking. In fact, one could describe one's entire educational trajectory, both within a discipline and in general, as requiring an ongoing increase in complexity if progress is to be made. As with creativity in the last chapter, I do not argue that play(fulness) provides the only means of structuring subjunctivity into pedagogy, but I present it as an effective means of doing so. Although my practice is primarily aimed at adult perficipants, this chapter aims to show that pedagogies which embody certain of its essential attributes would better serve current and future generations than pedagogies consonant with the present system.

3.2: Institutionalised Play(fulness)

Before turning to the inhibition of play(fulness) in the education system and society more widely, it is important to note that play is not absent from contemporary life in the UK; far from it. It is Playfulness which is primarily inhibited by these trends, rather than my neutral play-concept. This distinction is important since Playfulness' increased complexity associates with increased creative potential, as I explained in 2.6, with the corollary of increased ambiguity tolerance, not forgetting wellbeing derived from its inescapable

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[7] Even in engineering, it is impossible to eliminate uncertainty entirely and an awareness of uncertainty factors is crucial. In fact, quality design and manufacture is always a case of balancing the expense of maintaining low tolerances of "noise factors", such as reducing the potential number of faulty components, with the risks of product failure resulting from high tolerances (Huele & Engel, 2006: 380).

positive affect. Specificity is consequential here, since it could be argued that play(fulness) pervades modern culture (Ryan, 2015: 2; Combs, 1995: 77–79), which could be taken to suggest that it needs no facilitation. However, the distinctly heterogeneous nature of play means that the presence of certain play-forms in no way entails that a particular situation is conducive to forms across the play-spectrum. I argue that LudicrousPilgrim's kinds of play(fulness) are not prevalent, nor highly valued, within contemporary Anglo-American culture. As Omasta & Chappell observe, play is now often constructed and defined by commercial or institutional ideologies (2015b: 154).[8] This, I suggest, can serve to close out conditions for Playfulness and even contribute to a situation in which Playfulness is not seen as viable, appropriate, or desirable. A neutral play-concept more readily lends itself to being co-opted for extrinsic ends than does an inherently subjective, subversive, and unpredictable notion of Playfulness.

3.2.1: Gamification

A prime example of contemporary, commercially-oriented play is the increasingly popular activity of (video) gaming.[9] According to the UK Interactive Entertainment (Ukie),[10] 42% of the UK population aged 6–64 play video games (which is employed as an umbrella term covering virtual games on all platforms including PC, consoles, mobile devices, and social media). Ukie (2016) report that the UK video games industry was worth £4.19 billion in 2015 (an increase of 7.4% on the previous year), that games outsold both video and music

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[8] When I use the term "institution" henceforth, or others derived from it, I intend them to also include reference to commercial organisations unless another usage is made clear by the context.
Since this project sits within the institution of the academy, I am aware of the irony in my attempt to position it in opposition to institutionalised play(fulness). However, the core academic principles of rigour and criticism enable me to do so, as they ensure that the project is one of inquiry and not indoctrination or enculturation. Also, of course, if there is any defining ideology to this project it is a personal, and not an institutional, one. This project is predicated on the premise of subjective Playfulness-overlap between individuals. I am investigating my own subjectively-situated notion of Playfulness by bringing it into contact with that of others; this is a dialogic project in the Freirean (1972) sense. I note also that Freire's pedagogy resonates with my LP framework, hence the former's inclusion here.
[9] Theme parks are another good example of commercially co-opted play(fulness), as I discuss in this blog post.
[10] Ukie are the UK's trade body for the interactive entertainment industry, the chief component of which is comprised of games developers.

media in 2014, and that the games industry's 2014 digital sales outstripped those of video and music combined, a trend which seems set to continue.

Combs argues that, as increased wealth freed up time and money for leisure activities, commercial and institutional entities systematically co-opted and integrated play into all kinds of contexts, beginning in earnest in the early twentieth century (2000: 34–39). By mid-century, the advent of multimedia had catalysed this practice's proliferation (Combs, 1995: 78). Raessens also cites mid-twentieth-century as a turning point in cultural "ludification" (2006: 53), such that play(fulness) is now a cultural category ([2010] 2012: 6).[11] By 2008, gaming's popularity spawned the term 'gamification', referring to game design's incursions into non-game contexts (Deterding et al., 2011).

I stress that this ludification is structured largely according to commercial and institutional interests. One could argue that conceiving of culture as "*sub specie ludi*" (Huizinga, 1970: 23 – emphasis original) renders it inevitable that institutions will employ play-forms and -structures, since institutions are socio-cultural products themselves, which is a reasonable point. However, Huizinga's (1970) insight was to discern the organic generation of culture through play-forms, whereas this recent trend, as exemplified by the establishment of gamification, is for the intentional co-option of play-forms by institutions in order to pursue their own agendas (see A3.2).

Commercialised and institutionalised play(fulness) deserves attention because the actions of all agencies, personal and institutional, reflect what Freire terms their particular "thematic universe" (1972: 69), i.e. the way in which agencies perceive the world, since these themes inform the setting and pursuance of goals. I suggest that when play(fulness) is structured according to an institutional or commercial thematic universe, the intrinsic motivation that Burghardt (2005, 2010b) associates with secondary and tertiary process play

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[11] Raessens states that digital technologies promote cultural ludification "in the spirit of Huizinga's (1970) *homo ludens* [sic]" (2006: 53). This is a fundamental misinterpretation of Huizinga's thesis. As I explained in the previous chapter, Huizinga saw culture as presupposing play(fulness); as such, culture is always already 'ludified'. Huizinga even comments, in *Homo Ludens*' foreword, on his struggle to keep the work's subtitle (in its previous incarnation as a lecture) as reading *The Play Element of Culture* rather than '…in culture', since the former determines play as being generative of culture, and not simply one constituent part (1970: 17–18). However, this does not preclude the possibility of our species' evolutionarily-derived predisposition towards play(fulness) being exploited by commercial and institutional entities in order to pursue aims which benefit the organisation but are not necessarily of personal benefit to the individual or general benefit to the society (unlike creative potential and wellbeing that I associate with the play(fulness) of my project).

is exploited to achieve extrinsic goals favourable to the institution, such as loyalty and increased activity (Deterding et al., 2011). Gaver contends that this instrumentalisation displays a "singleminded, results-oriented, problem-fixated mindset…inherited from the workplace" (2007: 4). This should not be taken as evidence that institutions have recognised the falseness of, and are seeking to collapse, the work/play dichotomy, but rather that play-forms are being bastardised according to work values. Furthermore, Omasta & Chappell argue that the positive affect which often accompanies play (and I argue is constitutive of Playfulness) presents institutions with an effective and insidious way to manipulate people's outlooks (2015b: 153).

3.2.2: Ludi-Cultural Invasion

Given that all perspectives originate from within a subjective thematic universe, Freire delineates two means by which agencies can interact: cultural invasion and cultural synthesis. The former is the imposition of one worldview upon another, the latter is a mutual and responsive learning process between different worldviews (1972: 147). Inherent tensions between state and individual, or producer and consumer, for instance, render it unlikely that either the worldviews or goals of institutions and individuals will largely coincide. For example, under capitalism, commercial organisations prioritise profit above all else (Kay, 2013).[12] With this ever-present and overarching goal, companies' use of play(fulness) is likely to take the form of cultural invasion, with any learning on the companies' part solely focused on tailoring their practices to better attract, increase, and retain custom. This kind of learning arguably leads to what one might call cultural stagnation, whereby increasing responsivity and data availability arising from digital technologies allows companies to reflect back a calculated view of people's preferences and desires with ever greater accuracy, thereby reducing the potential for change.[13] Institutionalisation thus robs play(fulness) of its capacity to foster personal creativity by curtailing its ability to engender divergent thinking.

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[12] For more on capitalism and play, see A3.2.
[13] This can be seen in the trend for movie sequels and franchises. In 2014, seven of the top ten highest grossing films were sequels, compared with only one sequel twenty years previously (Garrahan, 2014).

Conversely, although the aesthetic character of this PaR springs from my personal ludic disposition, the approach employed is not one of imposition, but rather I position my perficipants as "co-authors of the action that [we jointly] perform upon the world … the object of [our] action [being] the reality to be transformed" (Freire, 1972: 147) through ludicality. I expressly frame the practice as presenting tactics for the discovery and/or development of perficipants' own notion of Playfulness, which is the opposite impulse to that of institutionalised play(fulness).[14] This practice and the pedagogy drawn from it both operate by cultural synthesis.

3.3: Adult Play(fulness)

I must also briefly mention the recent upsurge of interest in adult play(fulness), especially since this development could be argued to reduce the need for my project. The adult-play(fulness) trend is perhaps typified by the fact that 40% of adults who downloaded *Pokémon Go* in its first fortnight were over 25 (Chang, 2016), indicating an ageing playful population.[15] Although augmented reality games like *Pokémon Go* and *Ingress*[16] may encourage people to interact with their environment in a new way, I question the extent to which they result in closer connection with that environment, especially since the most meaningful action, from the player's point-of-view, takes place on their smartphone screen. One *Pokémon Go* player even caused outrage by attending to the game on her screen rather than to Beyoncé performing live only feet away (Loughrey, 2016). These games also serve institutional ends, with *Ingress* being described as not only an enormous Google promotion, but also a cunning means of populating Google Maps (Hatfield, 2014). As such these games form part of the impoverished play(fulness) this project opposes.

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[14] I am not implying that all people are the naïve, passive puppets of institutions, dancing to their dastardly tune; individual and subcultural differences entail that not all people will interact with the structures offered by institutions in predictable ways. However, I suggest that subversive users of institutionally-structured play(fulness) will likely be the minority, or else play-based products and systems would not present a viable and increasingly popular option for institutions that require predictable and productive interactions from users.

[15] The tracking company cited in Chang (2016) did not provide information on under 18s' downloads.

[16] For an interesting discussion of *Ingress*, see Hatfield (2014).

There have been a number of recent programmes for BBC Radio 4 on the subject of adult play(fulness), of which those by Oliver Burkeman and Mark Watson are notable. Both presenters critique these trends, though Burkeman more so than Watson. Burkeman tackles the current trend for 'fungineering' the workplace, with growing numbers of offices installing chillout rooms, slides, and ball-pools (Fungineers, 2016). As mentioned above, this leaves intact the work/play dichotomy, rather than seeking to collapse it, as does this project. If play(fulness) fosters fun construed as novelty rather than pleasure (Bogost, 2016; Johnson, 2017), fungineering simply defers the problem, which becomes how to find novel ways to interact with the office slide. I argue that it is much better to find novelty by incremental mutual modification, i.e. ludic ecology, than one-off material installations. Ludic ecology, fostered through LP, is ontologically oriented and outwardly-focused and thus more sustainable ("what affordances are there in this environment that would allow me to exist playfully within it?"). Fungineering is essentially consumerist and inwardly-focused ("I need some down-time, so I'll go to an environment that provides off-the-shelf playful experience"), limiting potential creativity through increased determinacy.

Watson, who introduces his programme by describing 2016 as 'the year of play', focuses on recreational play for adults, such as den-building,[17] laughter yoga, and an adults-only play-gym (Inner Child, 2016). Although I am in favour of greater regard for play(fulness), I share Bogost's (2016) distrust of both fungineering and reliance on structured activities seeking to recreate childhood. Our deep-rooted cultural association of play(fulness) with childhood (Pellis et al., 2015) entails that adult play(fulness) outside of established frameworks such as sport will almost inevitably generate childhood connections and thus nostalgia. However, according to Boym's nostalgia typology, organised adult-play activities tend to be *restorative*, "reconstructing emblems" of childhood, rather than *reflective*, which "cherishes shattered fragments" without idealising them (2001: 49). Whereas the practices that Watson presents largely involve uncritical, unreflexive escapism, mine seeks to open up a "multitude of potentialities, non-teleological possibilities of historic development" (ibid: 50). I have drawn on my own personal history but never in a paranoic

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[17] Of all the activities covered by Watson's programme, Anthony Schrag's den-building for adults is the closest to an idea that I explored when developing *Spinstallation*. However, whereas Schrag's session explicitly seeks to reclaim childhood (Corby Cube, 2017), my idea sought to produce movable den-like structures which resist straight-forward regression. Also, my CreepeeTeepee idea is far more ludicrous (see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-creepeeteepee/ or PML\Spinstallation Images\CreepeeTeepee Ideas Test).

attempt to rebuild an idealised homeland in the present, as does much contemporary adult-play(fulness); LP fosters ludic ecology as a means of reconciling oneself to the complexities and contingencies of present reality.

The preceding section aims to show that, although play(fulness) appears to enjoy an increasingly prominent place in contemporary Western culture, the forms of play(fulness) present are largely structured, defined, and controlled by corporate and institutional entities (or are otherwise worthy of criticism, as above). This robs play(fulness) of its autotelic nature by using its attractiveness as a means to manipulate behaviour for institutionally-determined ends, which are seldom synonymous with personal or social benefit. This chapter discusses the ramifications of, and my response to, a situation in which LudicrousPilgrim-style play(fulness) faces twin pressures. I have just described the first: the proliferation of institutionalised play-forms, which inevitably colour the general perception of what play(fulness) is, or should be. In the following section, I discuss the latter: socio-cultural and political trends which, I argue, directly or indirectly inhibit LudicrousPilgrim-style play(fulness).

3.4: Ludic-Inhibiting Pedagogy[18]

3.4.1: Political Background

There has been a marked change in rhetoric from ministers since 2010 that pertains to ludic inhibition in education. I do not claim that the education system, and the society which it reflects, was previously structured so as to promote play(fulness), but that it did not inhibit

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[18] A key method employed in my research for this chapter was a series of in-depth interviews with individuals personally known to me, who each have extensive experience of particular educational stages and contexts. My pedagogical sages are: my mum, Lesley, who retired at the end of the 2015-16 academic year from a career in early years and primary education; my friend, Alix, who taught English at secondary level, before becoming an educational journalist concentrating on further education (FE); and my acting tutor, Andrea, who provides a conservatoire perspective. As for mainstream higher education (HE), I draw on my own experience as an assistant lecturer and the process of becoming an associate fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA). I cite my pedagogical sages' contributions using their first names in order to differentiate them from other references and also because it feels weird to not do so, since I know them personally.

play(fulness) so severely. In 2007, the then Labour government published *The Children's Plan*, which espoused the view that education should "ensure all children secure the basics, while allowing flexibility to learn new skills and develop the social and emotional skills they need to succeed" (DCSF, 2007: 10). This broadly accords with Dewey's conception of education, in which "acquaintance with the past [is] translated into a potent instrumentality for dealing effectively with the future" ([1938] 1997: 23). The "basics" of *The Children's Plan* represent Dewey's "past", i.e. established patterns of knowledge, which lend themselves to being taught in teacher-centred fashion, whereas "flexibility", "skills", and social and emotional concerns reflect a future-oriented, student-centred outlook. There were even plans to replace Standard Aptitude Tests (SATs) at 11 and 14 with tests undertaken when learners were developmentally ready, rather than at these arbitrary ages (DCSF, 2007: 10). LP could readily mesh into such a system; it is the oppressiveness, punitiveness, and inflexibility of the current system that I oppose, rather than established patterns of knowledge per se.

Although I oppose narrow instrumentalism, I am necessarily in favour of Dewey's broad instrumentalism, since education is an inherently purposeful activity, and since he and I ascribe the same purpose to it; namely, fitness for the future. The pre-2010 government's overall system was by no means perfect (Children, Schools, and Families Committee, 2008); nonetheless, in comparison to the rigid, "back to basics" (Lesley, 2016) approach imposed by a succession of Conservative Education Secretaries, there existed a relatively balanced and dynamic approach to education pre-2010.[19]

The language employed by recent Conservative ministers is better suited to the society of 1850 than the 21st Century, and is reflected in their policy. They seek to "[liberate] individuals from ignorance" (Gove, 2014: [online]) through cultural invasion, imposing "(T)he body of academic knowledge" (Gibb, 2015: [online]) on students via a "more rigorous system" (Morgan, 2016: [online]), i.e. one devoid of flexibility. They display absolute derision for the "skills and dispositions" (Gibb, 2016: [online]), which I argue are

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[19] I make no apology for bringing party politics into this discussion, since party politics are a significant causal factor here.

imperative for an education system capable of addressing our present and our future. It is clear that play(fulness) is inhibited by such a system.

3.4.2: Tacitly Enforced Regression

Such a ludic-inhibitory system is regressive, I argue, because it tacitly enforces an outdated teacher-centred approach, which Freire terms "'banking'…education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only so far as receiving, filing, and storing the [teacher's] deposits" of knowledge (1972: 46). The scope of action afforded teachers and students within banking education does not extend to play(fulness); education is fundamentally social, and social play(fulness) is marked by cooperation and role-reversal (Bateson, P., 2015: R12). Both cooperation and role-reversal are embedded in Freire's non-hierarchical pedagogy, which erases distinctions between teachers and students (1972: 53), but both are inadmissible to the vertical teacher-student relationship demanded by teacher-centred approaches. The non-hierarchical nature of LP is exemplified by the equitable relationship I seek between myself and perficipants.[20]

Lesley recalls that when she began teaching in 1999, although SATs were already established and national comparisons between schools took place, "there was a lot less pressure on getting results, there was no real emphasis on data … I was allowed to teach the children in a way that I thought would be most stimulating to them rather than target driven and results driven". It is the combination of high-stakes accountability and deification of exam data that Lesley argues leads many teachers to unwillingly employ the quintessential banking-style, play(fulness)-inhibiting method: 'teaching to the test'. This is a colloquial, pejorative phrase referring to rigidly outcome-focused, workmanlike teaching, understood to have extremely limited educational value by teachers and education academics alike (Alix, 2016; Lesley, 2016; Hutchings, 2015; Volante, 2004; Popham, 2001).

The pressure resulting from targets and the fact that teachers' and schools' performance is measured almost exclusively by exam data (Béguin & Wood, 2015: 45) creates a stress-inducing environment hostile to play(fulness), since play(fulness) is the first

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[20] See the Case Study chapters (5, 6, 7) for how I have sought to establish an equitable relationship.

behaviour to disappear when individuals are under stress (Bateson, P., 2010: 43). Hutchings found that data and accountability trends are causing increased disaffection and a serious deterioration in pupils' mental health (2015: 5). Unsurprisingly, teachers also suffer in an environment that one practitioner describes as "educational death row" (Rogers, 2015: [online]). Coffield & Williamson similarly argue that fear currently drives change in England's marketised system (2011: 10–13).

I am not arguing that play(fulness) would be a panacea for the UK education system; I am arguing that my practice can participate in combating the (negatively) "affective atmosphere" (Anderson, 2009: 77) generated by such a system and also that qualities associated with play(fulness) are of pedagogical value. Neither am I arguing that education should be exam free and teachers unaccountable. What I do suggest, however, is that a system which incorporated data and accountability differently, and which recognised and developed teachers' expertise so as to permit a ludic approach, would likely achieve better results, since play(fulness) can be a "major source [of] variability and enhanced learning abilities" (Burghardt, 2014: 95).

3.4.3: Irrational Presuppositions

The presuppositions behind educational accountability culture are, I suggest, singular and bizarre. Cohen highlights the fact that both US and UK government policy simultaneously holds grossly overoptimistic beliefs in schools' effectivities and overly pessimistic assessments of state schools' performance (2011: 8). This irrational stance has led to a paradoxical social climate combining unbridled belief in potential (and realisable) improvement with extreme cynicism regarding practitioners' expertise (ibid: 9). Despite students' "will and capability to improve" (ibid: 190) being essential for success, teaching is unique among Cohen's 'human improver' professions[21] in that this fact is wilfully ignored. Cohen criticises the proposed solution for this – charter schools in the US and academies in

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[21] "Human improvement occupations" are a family of professions including teachers, social workers, and psychotherapists, which Cohen describes as seeking to effect positive change in the lives of other humans (2011: 4–5).

the UK – since it is based on the groundless notion that improvements in education can be effected through changes to organisation and leadership (ibid: 8).[22]

Currently, a dip in a school's performance risks compulsory 'academisation', which teachers understandably see as a threat (Rogers, 2015). As such, the academy project further contributes to a stress-inducing climate hostile to play(fulness). Academies set their own curricula, which means that they could theoretically implement programmes conducive to LP. However, they are also directly accountable to the Education Secretary, making them a key weapon in the government's attack on "quack theories about multiple intelligences [and] kinaesthetic learners" (Gove, 2014: [online]). Academies are thus structured in ways which inhibit LP, since different forms of learning and knowledge are central to LP's functioning.

3.4.4: Marketised Education

The mention of academies raises the issue of the third interrelated trend, marketisation, of which they are a potent tool. The rapid influx of business people into positions of power within the education system, with no requirement that they possess educational experience, means that education is being yet more tightly defined in terms of input-output and cost-benefit, both of which are antithetical to play(fulness) and, I contend, a progressive view of education more widely. As Cohen observes, an "unfortunately narrow and instrumental view of teaching" is embedded within the charter/academy schools model (2011: 194). Some academies do use their freedom to promote creative activity to a greater extent than the new National Curriculum allows, but this is always-already underpinned by a

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[22] Notably, Cohen positions uncertainty as inseparable from ambitious and progressive teaching (2011: 190). As well as providing evidence for the value of LP, Cohen is expressing the well-known paradox of progress. Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons take it to be uncontroversial when they state that the creation of knowledge, the very raison d'être of academia, always "[adds] fresh elements of uncertainty and instability" (2001: 2); the more we know, the more we know we don't know. For Cohen, this uncertainty necessitates that teachers possess qualities additional to their expertise, such as "hope, courage, and persistence" (2011: 190). I would add humour to Cohen's list of necessary supplements to expertise, which would render the cultivation of a ludic disposition still more valuable to teachers, on top of the benefits stemming from the ability to deal with uncertainty and unpredictability.

business ethos according to which clear and measurable outcomes are imperative, thus limiting the ludic potential of such activity.

The education-marketisation project is arguably most advanced within Higher Education (HE). This has gone beyond market creation and developed into the full-blown commercialisation of the HE sector.[23] A symptom of this commercialisation was the explicit positioning of students as consumers, not learners, in the HE White Paper of 2011. Just as commercialised academy schools inhibit play(fulness), so too does HE-marketisation. As well as implicitly relieving students of responsibility for their learning, which drastically reduces the potential learning that can take place (Cohen, 2011: 10), the commodification of HE erodes trust and reduces the likelihood of student risk-taking (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005: 275), both of which limit the possibility of play(fulness) within a commodified system.

Policy-driven inter-institutional competition and what Shore & Wright call a "peculiarly coercive and disabling model of accountability" (1999: 557) are effective means of creating atmospheres inimical to play(fulness). They exert twin pressures of increased stress (Hutchings, 2015: 5; Kinman & Wray, 2013: 5) and reduced opportunities for divergent, flexible approaches, owing to instrumentalisation and the inordinate importance placed on quantifiable outcomes (Hutchings, 2015: 46–52; Cohen, 2011: 194; Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009). As well as play(fulness) being divergent and flexible in nature, the benefits I associate with it, such as creative potential and tolerance of ambiguity, are difficult to crowbar into a spreadsheet. Nonetheless, these are qualities which signal LP's ontological orientation and map onto widely desired educational outcomes, as I discuss in the coming section.

Not all pedagogies implicitly inhibit play(fulness), nor are all blind to the pressing issues raised by the age of uncertainty in which we find ourselves. Broadly speaking, ontologically-oriented pedagogies are progressive in this regard. Moreover, each strand of The Ludic Triangle embodies LP's ontological orientation by affecting perficipants' modes of

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[23] Similar to the situation with schools, the marketisation of HE in England began in earnest with the Education Reform Act of 1988, which incorporated universities as autonomous from local authorities, followed by the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act, which then removed local authority control also for polytechnics, turning them into universities and considerably expanding the HE marketplace. Recently, however, this process has quickened considerably, changing not only the institutional structure of HE, but the very nature of HE pedagogy and rendering the university 'student experience' essentially transactional (Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005).

being. For example, perficipants may find themselves being somewhat out of character when calling "FuFu!" in search of a supposedly fictitious cat in *Perplexpedition #6*,[24] performing an utterly unimpressive stunt with total conviction (i.e. an Unstunt™) in *Wandercast Ep.2*,[25] or doing battle with the Balls of Hercules in *Spinstallation S2*.[26] Such an experience throws into relief perficipants' habitual modes of being, providing an opportunity for perficipants to reflect upon these habitual tendencies and perhaps choose to continue to explore novel modes of being and interaction, which is another way of describing *ecological recalibration*.

3.5: Introducing Ontological Pedagogy

Whilst Barnett deems both knowledge and skills necessary for an appropriately future-oriented pedagogy, their combination is insufficient to prepare students for a world that is intrinsically unknowable and unforeseeable, which he calls "supercomplex" (2009: 439).[27] He argues that HE must factor knowledge and skills into a pedagogy capable of effecting change in students' modes of being, suggesting that this may be achieved by developing curricula and pedagogies which create conditions for the "formation of epistemic…dispositions and qualities" (ibid: 438).[28] Students may thus enable themselves to accept the inherent uncertainty of a supercomplex world, and continue to productively

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[24] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/finding-fufu/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#6 Finding FuFu).

[25] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/headphone-adventure-playground/ (PML\Wandercast Episodes\Ep.2 Headphone Adventure Playground).

[26] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/master-of-disaster-hercules-balls/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S2\Master of Disaster – Balls of Hercules).

[27] Barnett describes our present historical moment as one in which "all significant matters have become inherently disputable" (2009: 439), rendering the world profoundly and irreconcilably uncertain. This points back to the paradox of progress, mentioned in relation to Cohen (2011) above (see footnote 22), and also to the need for a variety of epistemological and ontological responses to an age of uncertainty, of which I argue a ludic pedagogy is one.

[28] An example of an epistemic disposition is a "will to learn" and a quality with which this disposition could be manifested is "resilience" (2009: 433–434). Thus, a student might become resilient in their pursuit of learning (i.e. able to respond positively to challenges, setbacks, and criticism), then employ this personal attribute throughout their life. Recall that, early on in this chapter, I identified the potential for play(fulness) to develop individuals' resilience in an uncertain, i.e. supercomplex, world. This is a crucial strength of a ludic pedagogy, as I explore below. Other examples Barnett gives of dispositions are: "a will to engage; a preparedness to listen; a preparedness to explore, to hold oneself out to new experiences; [and] a determination to keep going forward" (ibid: 433). Qualities with which these could be enacted include: "courage…carefulness, integrity, self-discipline, restraint, respect for others, openness, generosity, [and] authenticity" (ibid: 434), the latter of which I return to below.

engage with it, through a process of epistemically-related personal change and by developing an awareness of their ongoing "process of becoming" (Freire, 1972: 56–57). I suggest that Playfulness' originality and reflexivity would enable students engaged in LP to become more adept at coming to know, and more knowing (Barnett, 2009: 432–433), as opposed to more knowledgeable, which would be of benefit in a rapidly shifting epistemic environment.

In targeting students' modes of being, Barnett (2012, 2009) is addressing Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion's (2009) main concern: that the system valorises having over being (cf. Fromm, [1976] 2013). These authors and I agree that an education system geared around acquiring knowledge and skills is becoming increasingly unable to tackle issues endemic to this historical juncture; furthermore, the ever-increasing rate of change indicates that, unless a different approach is taken, this disconnect will only grow. Such a fluid and uncertain world means that even skills such as critical thinking must be grounded on personal traits such as resilience, tenacity, and flexibility, all of which, I argue, can be fostered through play(fulness). Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion point out that a marketised education system even (perhaps unintentionally) inhibits the effective preparation of individuals for the contemporary workplace, since it does not develop students' ability to thrive in the face of rapid technological and social change (2009: 284). This echoes Hutchings' finding that universities and employers alike condemn the intense focus on outcomes in schools, since it stifles "independent, creative and divergent thinking [and the] ability to collaborate" (2015: 5). Again, these are all traits which play(fulness) promotes.

Our deep evolutionary and cultural connection with play(fulness)[29] means that they will occur within education in some instances regardless of inhibitory trends; some teachers (such as Lesley) may even actively structure them into their pedagogy in spite of current pressures. However, this is not generally the case. In her survey of 7,922 teachers, Hutchings found that

> 93 per cent of teachers agreed that: "The focus on academic targets means there
> are fewer opportunities for creative, investigative and practical activities" while only

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[29] Which I reveal and explore in Chapters 2&4.

16 per cent agreed that: "Pupils have ample opportunities for investigation/ exploration/ play." (2015: 47)

The tacit closing out of conditions for play(fulness) within education is made all the more concerning by the contemporaneous marginalisation of overtly creative subjects; these have a natural affinity with play(fulness), as the existence of links between creativity and play(fulness) demonstrates. The narrowing of the 2014 National Curriculum and the devaluing of the arts through their exclusion from the EBacc performance measure, coupled with a growing emphasis on what Michael Gove described as the "rigorous and scientific approach to learning" (2014: [online]) serve as potent indicators of the current trajectory of education policy. Play(fulness) is being structured out on a macro and micro level by direct and indirect means.

In the preceding section, I have sought to make clear that opportunities for play(fulness) under such a system are strongly militated against. To summarise my analysis of the situation, the interrelated pressures of data deification, "punitive" accountability (Hutchings, 2015: 4), and increasing marketisation are conspiring to both produce a "climate of fear" (The Secret Teacher, 2013: [online]) among teachers and incur their unwilling engagement in banking-style practice. I suggest that the above trio amount to principles which encapsulate an institutional ideal for the future of society, i.e. one where the evolution of play(fulness) is inhibited. Combined with the largely institutionalised nature of contemporary play(fulness), this shows that both LudicrousPilgrim and LP are sorely needed. Each instance of my practice introduces perficipants to principles which together constitute LP, as I outlined at the end of 3.4.4 above. In the next section, I abstract LP's principles and potential benefits in order to clarify them and by way of critical response to the socio-political situation that I have described in this chapter so far. A significant result of this situation is that the ludic, as conceived in Chapter 2, faces the twin pressures of inhibition and institutionalisation.

3.6: Ludic Pedagogy³⁰

LudicrousPilgrim has given me his principles of LP, which I here present in his favourite font.³¹ I then rigorously render each one in the language of academe and explain how they manifest in my perfilitation. In so doing, I also cite extant pedagogies that embody LP's principles.

3.6.1: Just Play Along

He's a sly old fox, our LudicrousPilgrim; some might mistake his Playful abandon as indicating a lack of substance, yet he is made of stern stuff and his depths are bottomless. Indeed, "(P)lay is the fool that might become king", as transpired in legend when the king died during the fool's festive rule (Sutton-Smith, 1997: 213). *Just Play Along* is similarly deceptive in its simplicity. These three words encapsulate many of LP's core qualities. They strike to the heart of the ludic disposition, which Suits describes as a willingness to do things "just because" they afford play(fulness) (1978: 41).

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[30] I note the parallels between LP and clown pedagogy. For example, Davison observes that it was from Gaulier's teachings that play was drawn into mainstream drama training (2013: 195), the latter of which forms a key influence on LP. Amsden describes the teaching at Gaulier's school as a "pedagogy of spectatorship" (2015: 2), which echoes LP's focus on social learning; however, LP is a 'pedagogy of participation', since it seeks to collapse distinctions between performer/audience and teacher/student that Gaulier's pedagogy implicitly upholds. Amsden also highlights the important role of ambiguity in clown pedagogy, citing as especially important the ambiguity between tradition and individuality (2015: 49). This is analogous to the tension between structure and freedom that runs throughout this project, though is more specific than the abstract tension that obtains here; tradition in play(fulness) largely consists in game forms, which this project and LP take little account of. Kendrick (2011) even terms Gaulier's teaching a ludic pedagogy, focusing on his use of games. LP would certainly admit of games; however, as with its instantiation through this project's practice, LP primarily seeks the informal propagation of a ludic disposition, so highly values play(fulness) of a pervasive, rhizomatic nature. I bracket out clown pedagogy from the main discussion here, since LP arises primarily from pedagogies of which I have had personal, practical experience. I have not received any clown training, so am unable to bring any clown-based practical knowings to bear on LP.

[31] I think it's his favourite because it winds some people up whom he thinks perhaps shouldn't take fonts so seriously. N.b. Only the main subsections form the principles themselves, hence the sub-sub-sections, which structure the discussion, are not in Comic Sans.

3.6.1.1: Safety First

In the context of LP, *Just Play Along* indicates an invitation to partake in a collective, dialogic endeavour, as I return to below. (I also explain how *Just Play Along* does not entail an absence of criticality.) It is nonetheless the case that, as in any pedagogical situation, the teacher has ultimate responsibility for planning and delivery, so must ensure a safe and supportive atmosphere, especially when students are being invited to enter into ambiguity.

This relates directly to my conservatoire acting training, where the aim is to become a professional performer through a process of personal transformation that is both physical (e.g. voice training) and emotional (e.g. character work) as well as cognitive (e.g. analysis of the script). Personal transformation is inherently risky, necessitating a fulsome embracing of ambiguity, since one *ipso facto* cannot foresee its outcome. A safe and supportive atmosphere in which to conduct conservatoire training, the practical strands of this project, and any implementation of LP is thus imperative. Andrea co-created this with us through weekly group-bonding sessions and frequent inter-student physical contact in the form of pair-warm-ups. In my practice, I seek to achieve this by establishing an equitable relationship between myself and perficipants; tactics that I have developed with the aim of achieving this constitute an important thread of know-how that runs throughout The Ludic Triangle. Sometimes this means partaking in the activity I ask of them, as with the production of *Wandercast Ep.2*,[32] or the ludic acclimatisation in *Spinstallation S4*;[33] at other times this means placing myself in a vulnerable position to match that of perficipants, and offering active encouragement, as with *Perplexpedition*.[34] My approach is an example of the

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[32] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/headphone-adventure-playground/ (PML\Wandercast Episodes\Ep.2 Headphone Adventure Playground) (you might want to navigate to somewhere around the middle of the podcast for an example of this) and Chapter 6.

[33] I discuss this in 7.6.

[34] In terms of a vulnerable position, I found after a few iterations that *Perplexpedition* works best when the perfilitator approaches a pair or group of potential perficipants, i.e. so that the perfilitator is outnumbered by perficipants by at least two-to-one. This seems to make perficipants feel more comfortable entering into the uncertainty of *Perplexpedition* (see Chapter 5).

kind of flattened hierarchy Freire proposes, in which teachers and students "become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow" (1972: 53).[35]

3.6.1.2: The Arboretum of Ambiguity[36]

The invitation to *Just Play Along* is an invitation into ambiguity, since the phrase implies engaging in something the exact nature of which is uncertain.[37] A fundamental and indispensable element of Andrea's acting pedagogy that resonates strongly with LP is the formation in her students of

> an appreciation of ambiguity- an allowance that two contradictory things can be
> true at the same time and an acceptance of hospitality to the idea that it isn't
> binary- that understanding and existence is not binary- it's not right/wrong…

Andrea's is not an intellectual position, but one born of embodied practice, in common with this project's PaR methodology. In both, the productive potential of ontological ambiguity is made palpable through lived experiences. In Andrea's case, these initially take the form of exercises, such as The Chair Exercise, in which a student, observed by their peers and tutor, puts a chair "where the chair needs to be".[38] In this project, this is achieved through interpretively flexible and open-ended performance structures; for instance, in

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[35] It is also worth noting that the use of the word 'performer' to impart the 'perf' prefix in the terms *perficipant* and *perfilitator* is reminiscent of Freire's notion of "teacher-student with students-teachers", in which "(T)he teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself [sic] taught in dialogue with the students, who in their turn while being taught also teach" (1972: 53). Of course, the fact that mine is a research project gives this link added resonance, since I am necessarily learning from my engagements with perficipants in order to reflexively develop my practice. Though my two terms have a common link, rather than being each other's mirror-image, it is hoped that, after finding their own notion of Playfulness via their perfication, perficipants may take on the role of perfilitator to others, thus propagating a ludic ecology in quasi-Freirean style.

[36] Since education is an inherently uncertain process (Cohen, 2011: 9–10), I suggest that LP's embracing of it is pedagogically sound; additionally, education devoid of uncertainty would require total (rational) knowledge and understanding of the future (and the present), which is logically impossible (Chomsky, 2014; Plotnitsky, 2002).

[37] This is merely how the phrase evokes the 'ambiguity training' aspect of LP. It does not mean that LP is opposed to explanations.

[38] See A3.3 – A3.3.1 for further description of The Chair Exercise and its significance.

Perplexpedition, an Unstunt[TM] is where perficipants perform an utterly unimpressive stunt with utter conviction.[39]

Ambiguity also plays a key role in Oliver Double's stand-up pedagogy, which I experienced in 2007–2008. This occurred longer ago, with less contact-time than my acting training, so is more difficult to analyse in detail.[40] However, one exercise in particular that I remember was Microphone Conversation, in which the task was simply to talk to an audience from behind a microphone. This sounds clear enough, but one enters a profound state of ambiguity when stepping onstage with nothing to say.

The notion of understanding not being binary, nor determinate, but being of greater complexity, resonates strongly with Langer et al.'s (1989) distinction between mindful and mindless behaviour. For Langer et al., mindless behaviour is "overdetermined by the past", relying on pre-existing or appropriated structures, whereas mindful behaviour "actively [forms] categories [and makes] distinctions – that is, [deals] with novelty" (ibid: 140). Mindless behaviour aligns with Freire's "banking" (1972: 46), or 'teacher-centred', pedagogy, as well as adults' tendency towards inflexible thinking (Runco & Pina, 2013: 380) that *LudicrousPilgrim* seeks to address.[41] Langer et al. (1989) propose what they call 'conditional teaching', in which information is presented as having a degree of uncertainty. Conditional teaching proceeds from the "assumption that what is generally regarded as a fact represents a probability statement rather than an absolute truth" (Langer et al., 1989: 141), so dovetails with LP in terms of both premises and practice.

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[39] For an example of an Unstunt[TM], see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-legendary-trio/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#10 The Legendary Trio). I contend that uncertainty is palpable in many instances throughout this *Perplexpedition*; for example, when I refuse to answer a perficipant's question directly (00:09), when the trio decide who will go first (00:57), and when Mark invents his name (02:05). However, even though he rehearses it (01:33 & 03:22), I maintain that Joseph achieves a profound level of ambiguity with his Unstunt[TM] (03:46), so much so that no one knows what is going on. I have refrained from editing Joseph's magisterial feat, so that the full force of its ambiguity may be felt unadulterated.

[40] I have been unable to interview Olly for this project, as he is my internal examiner. This precludes us from discussing my project in advance of the viva.

[41] For more on creativity and development, see 2.5.2.

Fig.8: Learning a novel way to travel, i.e. mindfully "[dealing] with novelty" (Langer et al., 1989: 140).

Compared with unconditional teaching, the conditional approach produced greater creative use of information (judged according to impartial consensus). Langer et al. also found teacher confidence to be a systematically interacting factor within conditional teaching. Confidence is imperative in conveying to students that uncertainty is inherent in the information presented and not attributable to the teacher (1989: 141). This accords precisely with my own experience when perfilitating. When, for whatever reason, my approach to perfilitating has lacked confidence, my levels and rates of success have been low and the aesthetic quality of the work has also been disappointing. Therefore, I determine confidence as being crucial also to LP's effectiveness. This requires that the expertise of teachers be valued and that any accountability processes are not punitive, as teachers currently perceive Ofsted[42] to be (Hutchings, 2015: 16), or entirely unnecessary, as Lacey (2016) argues is the case with the impending Teaching Excellence Framework in HE.

3.6.1.3: Play Together, Learn together, Be Authentic

Just Play Along also implies social activity, since one cannot play along alone; to play along implies another. Social learning is another fundamental facet of LP shared by Andrea's pedagogy. Like Andrea's, LP is outward-looking both in its non-individualistic, social learning aspect and its addressing the inherent uncertainty of the world. It is this combination, I argue, that gives LP the capacity to facilitate a move from students' personal experiences of ambiguity to awareness of how uncertainty manifests itself in the world.

The Chair Exercise[43] – i.e. putting a chair where the chair needs to be – is a characteristic example of social learning, in that every student is in a position to give and receive feedback, shaping each other's learning. This structuring also allows the comparing of, and interaction between, three distinct experiences of the same exercise (except for the first and last to undertake it): firstly, observation in the absence of direct, embodied experience; secondly, the direct, embodied experience itself; then, lastly, observation in light of that direct, embodied experience. This same structure recurs in the main task of

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[42] Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, a non-ministerial department of the UK government which is responsible for the inspection of schools.
[43] In case you missed the link above, see A3.3 for a detailed description of The Chair Exercise.

Spinstallations S2–4, whereby perficipants take turns as performer and observer/cameraperson to collaboratively create videos.[44] Students are thus able to effect a triangulated sense, rather than a rational understanding, of their experience. This dialogic social learning, I suggest, enables students to move from dealing with personal to global ambiguity.

Mercer proposes a social cognition approach to pedagogy, arguing that "intermental" activity, i.e. collective thinking, and "intramental" activity (2013: 149), i.e. individual cognition, mutually benefit one another (with intermental activity being of particular benefit to intramental activity). Although LP's epistemic play(fulness) could feasibly take place individually (indeed, as with this project, some exercises within LP might lend themselves to individual work), I suggest social-LP would be particularly effective. This way, students benefit from the "co-construction" of knowledge, which, Mercer argues, tends to be of greater complexity and effectiveness than individual constructions (ibid: 155). If play(fulness) generates creative potential, then collective play(fulness) is likely to enhance its generation.[45] Consequently, students' individual thinking could be "transformed" (ibid). Mercer highlights the dialogics of intermental activity, especially when structured so that individuals' reasoning is made explicit. This resonates with the making-explicit of impulses in The Chair Exercise, whereby the audience highlight the performer's intuitive impulses to place the chair authentically (which are often overruled by the performer's conscious rationality).[46] Thus, if opportunities for teasing out the intuitive, divergent, and associative processes within LP are afforded, then intermental ludic activity could enhance intramental ludic potential.

Andrea relates "focus on the other" to authenticity, the former being a central pillar of her pedagogy; this is indicative of her anti-individualistic approach and intuitive

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[44] The difference is that I encourage perficipants to collaborate in the production of videos, including providing voiceover, thereby seeking to erode the performer/audience distinction inherent to The Chair Exercise. Nonetheless, my attempt to further erode this distinction influenced the changes made to S5's main task. I analyse this part of *Spinstallation*'s evolution in 7.4–7.7.1. The evolving tasks themselves are in A7.2–A7.5.

[45] Think how joking with a close friend tends to produce greater comedic complexity than if one sits down and attempts to pen a comedic monologue (just imagine the writer's block if you've never tried it). Consider also how Stewart Lee designates his shows as works-in-progress for approximately six months, mining the intermental experience of their live performance throughout, until he deems them worthy of being termed a tour (Lee, 2016).

[46] This aspect of The Chair Exercise is explored specifically in A3.3.1.

awareness of social learning. In the example of The Chair Exercise, 'the other' is the chair; in

a duologue scene, 'the other' would be one's acting partner, for example. Barnett, too,

notes the often collective nature of authentic manifestations of epistemic dispositions

(2012: 71). Authenticity is a touchstone quality for both Barnett (2012, 2009) and Andrea.

Just as notions of truth are problematic for disciplines throughout academia, they are

problematic for Andrea's pedagogy. Truth commits one to a binary view of the world, which

Andrea criticised in 3.6.1.2. Authenticity, on the other hand, is indeterminate.[47] For Barnett

(2012: 71, 2009: 434) and Andrea, authenticity is an active mode of being that is bound up

with authorial ownership of what one is doing.

Although I agree that authenticity is an active mode of being, a qualification is

needed with regard to authorial ownership, as this implies an individualistic focus.

Authenticity arguably connotes presence, which is associated with mindfulness (Brown &

Ryan, 2003; Hanh, 1976). However, I prefer Bogost's "*worldfulness*" (2016: 224), which

returns in 4.3; I argue that authenticity and presence are achieved not by turning one's

attention inward, as with mindfulness, but outward, such that self-consciousness

disappears. Awareness, however, may remain, which connects back to my concept of

awareness-of-self-within-process that I developed in 2.4. My experience of being

performed by the structures of The Ludic Triangle, as I will discuss in Part II, was that of

focusing my attention outward and recognising that I was being carried along by the

evolving performance without ever losing sight of myself nor of my impact on the process.

As we will see in the case studies, although they do not always express it nor couch it in the

same language, some perficipants' performances and feedback suggests that they had

similar experiences. For example, one perficipant found that *Wandercast* seemed to

engender a dialogic process that prevented their own thoughts from dominating and a

number of *Spinstallation S3* perficipants reported being aware of their 'obedience' to the

process. The risky (Huizinga, 1970: 29) and unpredictable (Gordon & Esbjörn-Hargens, 2007:

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[47] There is a usage of authenticity, synonymous with genuine, which is deterministic, such as "is this an authentic Rothko?" However, here we are back to notions of truth, since the above question could be reformulated as "is it true that Rothko painted this?" Although even here there is a relational quality to the word, since it refers to an authorial relationship between Rothko and the work in question. Nonetheless, neither Andrea nor Barnett (2012, 2009) use the term authentic so as to demand a truth-statement. For them, and for me, the more pertinent and interesting question would be "was the painter painting authentically when s/he made this piece?" By contrast, the answer to this last question would depend on your point of view and cannot be conclusively determined.

206) nature of play(fulness) compels one to focus outward in order to respond spontaneously or else shatter the play(ful)-context. I suggest that Playfulness is only possible in the absence of self-consciousness, since the indicative appears to dominate within self-consciousness (e.g. "Oh, God, I'm so fat", or "I'm way too modest"), whereas my notion of Playfulness requires subjunctivity. Instead, Playfulness facilitates authentic presence through awareness-of-self-within-process. To achieve this, as with authentic acting, one must "unplug the [inner] CCTV" (Andrea, 2016), which is most effectively done by focusing outward and thus learning socially, or *ecologically*.

3.6.2: Be A Good Sport

LudicrousPilgrim is very much a man of the people, but he's not above appropriating a plummy phrase and putting it to his own uses like a linguistic Robin Hood. However, sometimes it is a bit difficult to understand exactly what he's getting at, which is probably because he's forever trying to raise one's tolerance of ambiguity. *Be A Good Sport* is a case in point, as it seems quite similar to *Just Play Along*. *Be A Good Sport* also pertains to LP's outward-focus, since one must relinquish self-consciousness in order to achieve it; a Good Sport is comfortable with looking ludicrous, yet does not make a show of it. A Good Sport plays along, for sure, but where *Just Play Along* focuses on LP activity, *Be A Good Sport* foregrounds its ontological aspects.

To survive and thrive in a world of supercomplexity, which is "already replete with manifold interpretations" (Barnett, 2009: 439) and is, therefore, irreconcilably indeterminate and ambiguous, one must be able to withstand and operate within a state of ambiguity (Barnett, 2012: 68).[48] Though the ambiguity may be epistemic in origin, it incurs a state of being and thus requires an ontologically oriented pedagogy; supercomplexity by its

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[48] Recall that the ability to operate within a state of ambiguity is also a capacity that Stein deems necessary for creativity (1953: 312).
Performance frameworks with sufficient ambiguity to remain open-ended (and thereby conduct a significant degree of perficipant agency into and through the process) are crucial to this. However, it is imperative that this is balanced with sufficient information, and delivered in such a way, so as to give perficipants the confidence to engage, whilst maximising ambiguity. For another example of this in action, see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/finding-fufu/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#6 Finding FuFu).

nature cannot be unravelled epistemologically. A ludic disposition is particularly effective at developing ambiguity-resilience, I argue, since my play(fulness) formulation is constituted by layered bifurcations of world-engagement, which produces (inherently uncertain) potentiality.[49]

I suggest that a ludic disposition is also highly valuable to pedagogy in general, since it arguably fosters the development of the other epistemic dispositions Barnett mentions, such as "a will to engage" (2009: 433 – see footnote 28). Given that a ludic disposition involves the ongoing creation of conditions for creativity and wellbeing through the discovery of novelty in the quotidian, LP (and this research overall) can be aligned with certain pedagogical aims of the ontogenetic 'Life-Span' school of developmental psychology. Namely, to enable individuals to maximise their range of possible lifelong development and support them in living life as desirably and effectively as possible (Baltes, Lindenberger & Staudinger, 1998: 1030). It is clear, then, that LP is an ontological pedagogy, such as those advocated by Barnett (2009, 2012), Dewey (1959), Freire (1972), and Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion (2009). As I have explained, I primarily draw the ontological orientation of LP from the personal transformation approach of my conservatoire training under Andrea's tutelage.

3.6.3: Life Is A Joke

Here, again, LudicrousPilgrim reveals himself to be a sharp-eyed linguistic magpie, this time thieving from my MDRAMA dissertation,[50] which was titled *Reality Is A Joke*. In it, I draw parallels between Schopenhauer's ([1958] 1966) incongruity theory of humour and the incongruity between sensory perceptions and objective reality,[51] concluding that

> Stand-Up Comedy can provide a forum whereby we witness…[and]…enjoy the
> innate ludicrousness of our world. Reality is a joke, and its expression through
> laughter is the meaning of life. (2008: 16)

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[49] I develop my play(fulness) formulation in 2.4, explain how play(fulness) generates potentiality in 2.6, and interrelations between play(fulness) and potentiality are further developed in Chapter 4, beginning at 4.3.
[50] This dissertation (available upon request) was the final assessment of my undergraduate master's programme at Kent, for which I studied stand-up comedy under Oliver Double, as noted in 3.6.1.2 above.
[51] See also Chapter 4 for further discussion of this potential incongruity.

I still subscribe to this view, yet now realise that play(fulness), as the forerunner of humour, allows for its broadening beyond humanity. Indeed, it is likely that human laughter evolved from mammalian social play (Graham & Burghardt, 2010: 407). Bateson sees play(fulness) and humour as deeply connected (1979: 116), a view which is empirically supported. For instance, Lynn Barnett's empirical work led her to define the ludic disposition as

> the predisposition to frame (or reframe) a situation in such a way as to provide oneself (and possibly others) with amusement, humor, and/or entertainment. (2007: 955)

This formulation thus echoes my own in the sense that Playfulness is characterised by positive hedonic valence. In LP, the ludic pedagogue instigates the situational framing, yet the ludic students must co-create the frame and all must willingly enter into it, which is where Suits' "just because" (1978: 41) comes into play. For the purposes of this discussion, I take humour and enjoyment together, since both possess positive hedonic valence.

3.6.3.1: Gimme Some Learnin'!

The aforementioned policies which reflect and drive ludic inhibition have been shown to diminish students' enjoyment of education by imposing the study of 'academic' subjects irrespective of students' interest, whilst, at the same time, inhibiting creative approaches to teaching (Hutchings, 2015: 40–44, 46–49).[52] Although direct causal links between enjoyment and learning cannot be conclusively established (Lumby, 2015: 252), just as with play(fulness) and creativity, this does not mean that the two are not associated. Indeed, enjoyment of education is closely associated with the intrinsic motivation to engage with and pursue it (Alix, 2016; Lesley, 2016). I suggest that enjoyment and other factors within Burghardt's second play-criterion (2010b: 17), which I associate with Playfulness,[53] are vital to the development of Barnett's (2009, 2012) epistemic dispositions and qualities, since, if one is to undergo personal transformation pursuant to lifelong learning, the process must

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[52] Ironically, these effects are felt most keenly by disadvantaged and low-attainment students (Hutchings, 2015: 38–43), which shows that the government's policies do not serve the aims of their "social justice" (Gibb, 2015, 2016: [online]) rhetoric.

[53] To revisit my analysis of Burghardt's (2010b) play-criteria and their relation to play(fulness), see 2.3–2.4.

hold some attraction.[54] Playful humour is deemed intrinsically motivating (Lieberman, 1977: 69–70), so plays a key role in this.

Fig.9: Laughing about a (big) cat.

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In addition to students likely getting "more things out of [play-based-pedagogy] than you could ever imagine", Lesley (2016) cites the crucial effect of this method as engendering intrinsic motivation to learn, which is bound up with the enjoyment students derive from experiential learning, often through role-play. Intrinsic motivation is of paramount importance if students are to develop epistemic dispositions and qualities (Deci & Ryan,

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[54] (Unless one is masochistic, but even then one would derive pleasure from one's displeasure, so would enjoy the process anyway.)
As per Chapter 2, LP promotes creative and enjoyable approaches to education, which are reported by children in both primary and secondary education (Hutchings, 2015: 5), as well as undergraduates (Blundson et al., 2003), as providing the most memorable, and therefore effective, learning environments. I suggest that a major, positive factor in the development of my own will to learn was the presence of drama as an inherently creative subject (and/or extracurricular activity) throughout my education.
[55] Just to be clear, I am not suggesting that this *Perplexpedition* constitutes a lesson, although the perficipants arguably learned something of the potential to interact ludically with strangers. I am arguing that playful humour, as illustrated here, constitutes an important means of developing intrinsic motivation in pedagogical situations.

1985), all of which is threatened by the dominance of extrinsic motivation in the current, outcome-focused system (Molesworth, Nixon & Scullion, 2009: 281–282).

White argues that play is a manifestation of what he terms "(E)ffectance motivation" (1959: 321), which is essentially synonymous with intrinsic motivation, referring to a desire to gain competency in one's environmental interactions (ibid: 297). Intrinsic motivation is one of Burghardt's (2005) five criteria for recognising play behaviour, yet White's (1959) theory suggests that the two may be more closely interrelated. Indeed, Lieberman argues that playfulness is "part of an intrinsic motivational force" (1977: 109). White's (1959) theory parallels Groos' (1898, 1901) play-theory, since both view play-behaviour as providing the central, motivational means by which many animals gain environmental competence and autonomy. For White, autonomy refers to organisms' capacity to transform the environment (1959: 324), which pertains to the original interpretations of Runco's (1996) personal creativity theory, as well as physical transformations. Thus, White's (1959) theory simultaneously: resonates with my suggestion in that play(fulness) may mark the evolutionary change allowing species to modify their environments; offers further links between play(fulness) and creativity, and also links play(fulness), intrinsic motivation, and learning. White's (1959) theory suggests that LP can establish epistemic dispositions and qualities through intrinsic motivation, helping to create competent and autonomous individuals.

Deci & Ryan (1985) further developed White's (1959) explicit association of his theory with learning, finding that intrinsic motivation flourishes in situations which foster the development of competency and autonomy, which, following White (1959), I suggest are also those that allow for play(fulness). This accords with Lesley's experience and shows LP to offer a virtuous circle: play(fulness) promotes competency and autonomy, which allows intrinsic motivation to flourish, which, in turn, leads to further development of competency and autonomy, thus increasing the likelihood of developing an ontological orientation towards ongoing learning. As for the effects of an outcome focused system, Lieberman cites studies which found that extrinsic rewards negatively impact intrinsic motivation (1977: 78). Though it remains contentious, this claim was substantiated through extensive meta-analysis later conducted by Deci, Koestner & Ryan (1999).

3.6.4: Play First, Ask Questions Later

This is arguably the least enigmatic of LudicrousPilgrim's principles; it playfully subverts mindless, militaristic attitudes[56] and sends itself up whilst addressing the potential criticism of a lack of criticality. This potential problem would appear to be courted also by Heathcote's assertion that optimal education, rather than inculcating the ability to discern what one's next steps should be, involves "[discovering] what one did do next" (1984: 70),[57] since the latter implies a lack of critical awareness during the activity itself. However, there is an implicit reflexivity in this act of discovery, which is a necessary condition for criticality, and Heathcote's phrase also evokes awareness-of-self-within-process. Heathcote was acutely aware of the need for criticality in education, constantly seeking means by which students might experience and reflect simultaneously in order to "understand their journey while being both the cause and medium of the work" (ibid: 106). As well as reflecting play(fulness)-as-bifurcation, this phenomenological duality is present in perficipants' experience of *Wandercast*; a common theme of my supervisors' feedback on Ep.3 was a sense of observing one's own behaviour as one enacts it, which, again, indicates awareness-of-self-within-process. Additionally, paralleling Mercer (2013: 155), Heathcote deems a major benefit of the inherently social nature of her work to be individuals' critical interaction with a "'widening' sphere of attitudes" (1984: 71), which could be said also to be at work in my *Spinstallation* workshops.

Criticality-facilitation could be said to involve "psychological distancing". Lieberman, following Singer (1968), deems psychological distancing a "prerequisite to a playful attitude to humour appreciation" (1977: 70), also suggesting its involvement in spontaneity (ibid: 86) and task- rather than ego-orientation (ibid: 130), further indicating LP's outward-focus.[58]

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[56] See also my discussion of my Captain Ludicrous persona in 7.5.1.

[57] This also resembles Bateson's adage that "(I)n the nature of the case, an explorer can never know what he is exploring until it has been explored" (2000: *xxiv*) and my notion of awareness-of-self-within-process.

[58] Psychological distancing has a long history in social and developmental psychology (Giesbrecht, Müller & Miller, 2010: 337). On the developmental side, this tends to refer to the opening of a mental gap between an agent and their spatio-temporal surroundings (ibid). In Piaget's ([1955] 1999) system, which I discussed in 2.2.4, the twin processes of assimilation and accommodation imply internal psychological distance as one oscillates between and coordinates them. On the social side, Trope & Liberman (2010) take psychological distance to be the degree of removal from oneself (in the dimensions of time, space, sociality, and hypotheticality) of objects or events that are not directly perceived. All of these have their usefulness here, though Trope & Liberman assert that psychological distancing is egocentric (ibid: 440), since the reference point is always the self, which is opposite to Lieberman's (1977) usage. I contend that a notion of the self

Lieberman's usage of psychological distancing evokes an opening, and creative exploitation, of distances between simultaneously experienced modes of world-engagement and thus resonates with both play-as-bifurcation and Playfulness' awareness-of-self-within-process. Lieberman describes a capacity of psychological distancing as enabling individuals to take their work seriously without taking themselves seriously, relating this to the facilitation of creative productivity (ibid: 99). Given the necessity of discretion within personal creativity (Runco, 1996), this would imply that psychological distancing, already implicated in play(fulness), may also facilitate criticality, as Lieberman herself appears to suggest (1977: 131).[59]

3.7: Conclusion

As I will demonstrate in Part II, LP is instantiated in the practice of this project within 4P artworks which engage adult perficipants. My practice has this focus because, not only are adults more likely to jump to judgement according to prior experience, rather than playfully constructing original interpretations (Runco & Pina, 2013: 380), but they also tend to believe that play(fulness) has no place in schooling (Hall & Abbott, 1991: 2). Furthermore, adults increasingly seek to regiment children's play (Bishop, 2013). It is only through adults' reappraisal of the importance of, and place for, play(fulness) that lasting change will occur. If adults come to value play(fulness) in their interactions with any and all environments (e.g. work, leisure, family, friends, etc.), this would facilitate its gaining credibility as a crucial element of pedagogy, as well as its establishment as an appropriate and desirable behavioural trait throughout one's lifetime. I have sought to show, in the second half of this chapter, that LP is founded on principles, and fosters qualities, which have value across one's lifespan (especially as job-automation increases): thriving in ambiguity, social learning, authenticity, a commitment to personal transformation, humour, intrinsic motivation to

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presupposes psychological distancing, since the latter seems a precondition for the reflexivity necessary to recognise oneself. I primarily refer to the intrapsychological distancing of subjunctivity.

[59] Interestingly, Runco cites the relevance of methods drawn from arts education in developing the evaluative skills fundamental to deciding whether an idea is creative (i.e. useful) or simply original, arguing that traditional methods for enhancing critical thinking are unsuitable for the exploration and evaluation of original ideas (2003: 322).

learn, and criticality. These principles can also aid the identification and promotion of existing LP practice.

However, in the first half of this chapter, I argued that the current trends for data, accountability, and marketisation have engendered an educational environment inimical to play(fulness). These would need to be reversed, or reconfigured so as to considerably reduce their negative effects, if LP is to flourish within the English education system. Furthermore, although play(fulness) might be making increasing incursions into contemporary culture, I argue that its widespread structuring, defining, and controlling by corporate and institutional entities leads to further pressure on LudicrousPilgrim-style play(fulness), particularly the subversive (yet highly valuable) Playfulness. I contend that the prevalence of institutionalised play-forms inevitably influences predominant notions of the nature of play(fulness). I further contend that institutionalised play(fulness) is impoverished in terms of creative potential, since these play-forms must produce predictable, i.e. unoriginal, behaviour for them to be viable tools for the pursuance of institutions' aims. There is play(fulness) around, just not the right kind.

Projects such as The University of Sheffield's MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), Exploring Play (2017), which also takes a lifespan approach and explores the importance of play(fulness) in everyday life, indicates that there is a current need for projects like this one. If the value of play(fulness) across the lifespan was widely recognised, there would be no need for Sheffield's course, nor my project. The fact that Exploring Play is convened by Professors of Education Elizabeth Wood and Jackie Marsh further indicates the need for play(fulness) in pedagogy. I do not imply that LP is unique; others also directly argue for the importance of playfulness in education (e.g. Fisher et al., 2010; Youell, 2008; Lieberman, 1977). Despite their advantages, neither my LP nor other ludic pedagogies – such as Lesley's, Andrea's, or Heathcote's – can guarantee Playfulness; as Youell (2008) argues, it cannot be directly taught. I therefore reformulate a point made in 2.5.2: in the same way that teaching creates conditions for learning to occur (Rogers, 2010: 53), LP creates conditions for Playfulness to occur.[60] When Playfulness does occur, I argue that learning of

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[60] In creating the conditions for Playfulness, one is necessarily creating a relaxed environment, since, as I mentioned, Playfulness disappears when individuals are under stress. Competitive games, then, are not good candidates for methods through which to implement LP, as competition almost always involves stress, even if one is adept at, and tends to enjoy, such games or sports (Georgopolous et al., 2011; Aubets & Segura, 1995).

greater complexity, depth, and value is possible. Furthermore, students will be behaving authentically and enjoying themselves too, flourishing in an inherently uncertain world whilst laughing in its ludicrous face. In order to deal with exponentially-increasing uncertainty and job-automation, this is not something that would be nice to do, it is necessary.

Perhaps LudicrousPilgrim and I should found a free school.

In this chapter, I have grounded this research, my conception of play(fulness), and, crucially, my practice in its social and personal context. I chose the English education system as a social exemplar because this is where the structural socio-political trends that I identify as simultaneously major symptoms and drivers of ludic inhibition (quantification, marketisation, and the accountability agenda) can be most visibly perceived. I chose to focus on education also because it is the civil process most clearly responsible for inducting younger generations into society and because I perceive my project to manifest significant and valuable pedagogical principles. I have highlighted the need for uninhibited and uninstitutionalised ludicality if future generations are to not only thrive in the age of uncertainty but find humour in it, while developing their creative potential and interpersonal skills in order to meet the challenges of increased job-automation. I have presented this project as offering practical and theoretical suggestions in this regard.

In the next chapter, I move from social to a broader scope of contextualisation, as I construct the conceptual framework within which LP, The Ludic Triangle, and this project as a whole operates. Where, in this chapter, I have argued for the importance of play(fulness) for us as a human society, in the next chapter I will argue for the importance of play(fulness) for us as one of Earth's ludic species. The backbone of this chapter has been my contextualisation of this project in terms of pedagogy. Teaching and learning is a ubiquitous practice and phenomenon not limited to formal education, the importance of which is not diminished by its being mundane. In the next chapter, I will argue that the similar mundaneity and possible ubiquitousness of play(fulness) takes on philosophical significance. This makes the potential for my practice to propagate play(fulness) all the more important.

Chapter 4: Conceptual Framework – Ludic Ecology

4.1: Introduction

This chapter broadens the writing's focus, applying my play(fulness) formulation from Chapter 2 and developing its ontogenetic importance, revealed through LP in Chapter 3, to establish play(fulness)'s philosophical implications, as illuminated through my practice, in addition to its potential phylogenetic associations. The conceptual framework both provides means with which readers can engage the project on a conceptual level and elucidates the project's Batesonian and Gibsonian wellsprings. It therefore points in two directions: inwards from outside and outwards from within. This chapter also lays the analytical ground for the case studies to come.

In order to deal with ludic interactions between people and environments, I outline my position on the nature, form, and structure of environmental interactions generally; i.e. what I take interactions between people and environments to be. As you may have guessed, I view them as fundamentally ecological. I thus take all interactions as environmental interactions and all actions as interactions, since all actions both take place within environments which partially determine them and also effect change within those environments. The change in the environment then affects the possibilities for future actions, and so on. Therefore, taking an ecological stance has far-reaching implications, as I hope to show.

As I expressed in the Thesis Roadmap at 1.6.4, this chapter is where I develop the notion of play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon. This argument has four main aspects, which are complexly interrelated and are therefore not neatly and sequentially separated within this chapter; it is more like a spaghetti dish than a lasagne, but with no less rich a sauce.[1] Firstly, I argue that play(fulness) is best viewed relationally – i.e. as a context

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[1] I understand that, strictly speaking, intertwined strands of spaghetti are complicated, rather than complex. For a perhaps more accurate simile: my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument is more like yesterday's curry than today's sashimi, though the ideas are no less fresh.

or pattern, something that is not localised but exists between things – and that doing so can help reveal reality's fundamental relationality. Secondly, the notion of play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity, developed in Chapter 2, exemplifies and reveals the extra-logical nature of our experience; in this regard, the inherent ludicrousness of The Ludic Triangle is especially effective. Thirdly, the inescapable unpredictability of play(fulness), which demands unceasing acts of rebalancing and negotiation from those involved, exemplifies the strictly holistic nature of the ecological systems that make up our world. Fourthly, I argue that by encouraging perficipants to attend to ludic affordances, which are extrinsically afunctional, my practice highlights the way in which we constantly pull from the multitude those affordances that we perceive as we actively co-constitute our experience; the remainder exist as potentiality. Throughout the chapter, the ambiguity and indeterminacy that, in Chapter 3, I argued is a fundamental characteristic of the human social world will take on still greater importance.

I maintain that the ecological perspective is one of great explicatory and practical worth: explicatory because it is valid at any level of description where living processes are involved, and practical because it has the potential to guide positive changes to humanity's actions at all scales from individual to global. The patterns of mutual modification between this project's practice and its conceptual framework reveal that their causal interrelations bear the formal hallmarks of an ecological system. In other words, in both this project and other ecologies, the causality of change between elements is bidirectional so that the system evolves *as a whole*, like grassy plains and horses evolving together as a holistic system (Bateson, 2000: 155). This at once demonstrates the suitability of an ecological conceptual framework for this project and, given the practical potential of the ecological viewpoint, suggests potential impact and value of this project beyond the performances themselves; namely, the positive recalibration of people's environmental interactions.

4.2: Batesonian Lens

The main conduit of this framework has its source in, and is shaped by, Bateson's work, though this should not imply a one-way transfer of influence; there is feedback and feedforward among all elements of the framework. In the present section, I briefly set out and contextualise some of Bateson's core ideas so that various theoretical tributaries, divergences, and confluences may be duly mapped out.[2]

I maintain that all life is always-already ecological in the sense that nothing in this world, neither cell nor being nor concept, exists in a vacuum. The task is to find the right level of description to perceive ecological relations between things and to employ a sufficiently flexible perspective capable of perceiving relations or resonances between levels. Bateson is useful on each of these fronts, both of which are crucial to the development of rigorous, non-reductive understandings of life's complexities, as is pursued here. In fact, one could characterise Bateson's approach as a multi-focal-micro-macroscope[3] in that it affords the simultaneous consideration of multiple levels, at widely disparate scales, thus facilitating investigation of "the pattern which connects" all living things (1979: 8). In this blog post, I argue that this perspectival flexibility is particularly useful for PaR projects, especially those which are philosophically-inflected, such as this one.

4.2.1: Play-as-Metacommunication

The levels of description, and complexity, most pertinent to this project are those which encompass the playful interaction of humans with their environment. Unsurprisingly, however, an anthropocentric stance is not tenable here. Not only since anthropocentrism

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[2] Given that Bateson was a truly interdisciplinary scientist, working on problems in "anthropology, psychology, evolutionary biology, and communication theory", as well as arguably developing an ecological philosophy in his efforts towards an all-encompassing (yet ultimately uncompleted) "trans-disciplinary synthesis" (Cashman, 2008: 45), it is unsurprising that there are many elements of his thought which are implicated in this project, but lie outside the scope of the main text of this chapter. See A4.1 for further information and discussion.
[3] Which sounds like something out of *Dexter's Lab*, doesn't it? Or perhaps one of Inspector Gadget's appendages. I know that LudicrousPilgrim never leaves the house without his multi-focal-micro-macroscope.

largely runs counter to ecological approaches,[4] but also since play is a pattern of behaviour which connects species as diverse as turtles, crocodiles, fish, wasps, spiders, and octopuses, as well as most mammals (Graham & Burghardt, 2010: 394–400); something I hinted towards in 2.2.1. Indeed, the wide distribution of play throughout phylogeny can be cited as evidence against the validity of anthropocentrism generally, the latter being construed as the view that our mental characteristics set our species above, and apart from, all else that lives. Such a view clearly opposes Bateson's notion of the pattern-which-connects and his "ecology of mind" (2000: *xxiii*), since these deem "the very nature of the macroscopic world [to be] that it exhibit mental characteristics" (ibid: 472).[5]

Bateson placed considerable focus on play, citing its importance as a connecting pattern, which further indicates the value of structuring his thinking into this framework and supports my argument for play(fulness)'s philosophical credentials. Bateson asserts that his investigation into the nature of play "cast light on the whole of biology", simultaneously demonstrating our connectedness with it (1979: 116), since it highlighted the paramount importance of hierarchical contexts in communication and demonstrated that humans are not alone in being able to entertain at least two levels simultaneously.[6] He refers to this phenomenon as *metacommunication* (2000: 177–193).[7] (These hierarchical contexts

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[4] I note that there are exceptions, such as the notion of the "noosphere" (Vernadsky, 1945: 5), which was jointly developed by Vladimir Vernadsky, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and Edouard Le Roy in the 1920s (Oldfield & Shaw, 2006: 149). The noosphere describes a mental realm which is the exclusive preserve of humanity. This view also posits that mentality has an atomistic nature, which is to say that human individuals are presumed to possess mental properties or potential. Like Bateson, I oppose this view, instead deeming mentality to be fundamentally and inescapably relational (2000: 472); one's mind consists in the total complex of relations one has with the world, although the very notion of individual minds is problematic, as I discuss in A4.3. See A4.3 also for a discussion of issues relating to 'mind' as a noun.

[5] In A4.3, I argue that this does not go far enough and that mental characteristics are exhibited at all scales.

[6] Bateson's play-theory implicitly characterises animals which play as enacting the capacity to categorise their actions, since, for Bateson, play entails the communication of context and thus the classification of actions taking place within that context (1979: 116). Whether or not animals propositionally know that they are classifying their actions might be related to Burghardt's (2005) concept of primary, secondary, and tertiary process play, discussed in 2.5.2. I suggest that primary process play is unlikely to be accompanied by explicit knowledge of context, but that secondary and tertiary process may well be, since by these stages play is argued to have assumed importance in the maintenance of the animal's behavioural and perceptual condition (Burghardt, 2010b: 16). I am using 'propositionally' here to refer to an aspect of the animal's awareness, or experience, of context rather than implying that such an animal might have linguistic capabilities.

[7] Bateson (1979: 116) tells us that he borrows the term metacommunication from Whorf's *Language, Thought, and Reality* (1956); however, it does not seem to appear in Whorf's selected writings. Though bracketing out the question of language's role in the development of modern human cognition, I see value in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which stresses the constitutive (and determining) role of language in our thinking and world-view. The theory is especially useful in its ability to reveal category errors (e.g. Whorf, 1956: 134–159). However,

Bateson aligns with Bertrand Russell's notion of logical types [ibid: 289], both of which are synonymous with 'level of description' [1979: 115]. For Bateson, hierarchy of context obtains in all forms of communication, such as in the contexts which govern the relationships of letter-to-word, word-to-phrase, phrase-to sentence, etc., as well as those governing the relationships of bone-to-finger, finger-to-hand, hand-to-arm, etc. [2000: 154].)

As Bateson observes, the very possibility of humanity's denotative linguistic communication requires the prior evolution of a complex of non-verbalised metalinguistic rules which establish relations between language (words and sentences, etc.) and the world of objects and events (2000: 180). This being so, and since metacommunication applies to all species that play socially, I make no distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic play(fulness).[8] From an ecological standpoint, all levels of living processes are communicational, i.e. characterised by information exchange. Bateson points out, as noted above, that "the mysterious and polymorphic relation between context and content obtains in both anatomy and linguistics", asserting that relations take primacy over relata when seeking insights into form and structure (ibid: 154), as this project does. If one can clarify the relations, it follows that the relata will appear newly illuminated, since insights into their interactional structuring will have emerged. As mentioned above, play is a pattern of behaviour, a (highly flexible) set of enacted relations between agent and environment. I argue that this positions play(fulness) as a useful exemplar of the primacy of relations over relata in the structuring of reality and thus renders play(fulness) capable of facilitating philosophical understanding.

Since this research proceeds by practice, experiential investigation is a major component, allowing me to map an area of the pattern from within by developing "'insider'…knowing" (Nelson, 2013: 37). A core argument delineated here is that through performing ludic patterns of relation we can come to know more about ourselves and our environments. As I shall discuss, play(fulness) involves a shift away from one's habitual perspective, affording the possibility of seeing "through [one's] eyes, not with them" (Blake,

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language is only of secondary concern here, which is not to ignore its far-reaching effects on one's world-engagements.

[8] Furthermore, in this blog post, I suggest that Whorf overemphasises the role of language in a way that obscures the significant generalisation that contexts are primarily non-linguistic.

rephrased in Bateson, 2000: *xxi*), thereby cultivating closer contact with, and greater presence in, the world.

There is a clear symmetry between Bateson's notion of play-as-metacommunication and my notion of play-as-layered-bifurcation-of-world-engagement, since each involve the parallel and synchronous (though not necessarily consciously differentiated) experiencing of at least two communicative levels.[9] Since Bateson sees communication and context as the fundament of all living processes, from sensation to evolution (2000: 282–283), he therefore deems the communicative complexification inherent in play to mark a crucial evolutionary step (ibid: 181). One could reasonably construe this step as an indication of increased cognitive potential; after all, "two descriptions are better than one" (Bateson, 1979: 137). Indeed, Burghardt posits that simple play behaviours may have been the essential precursor to humanity's ability to play with ideas independently of physical action, therefore providing a crucial evolutionary driver of our cognitive and emotional complexity (2010b: 17).[10]

4.2.1.1: Metacommunication in Reality-Construction

Recalling my argument in 2.4 that, to the subject, the subjunctive is every bit as real as the indicative, with equal reality-constituting potential, I extend this to claim that context and action-in-context also constitute reality with equivalence.[11] As Keith Johnstone observes:

> A very gentle smack that [Johnstone's three-year-old son] perceives as 'serious' will have him howling in agony. A hard 'play' slap may make him laugh. ([1979] 2015: 32)

In no way do I advocate the slapping of small children, but I have no reason to doubt the anecdote.[12] This can be seen also on a global scale. I am periodically struck by the

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[9] However, I argue that Bateson's definition of play as metacommunication is too narrow, as it does not fully account for certain examples of my practice (see 5.2.2).

[10] To be clear, I am not claiming that play unilaterally caused any increase, but suggest that cognitive complexity and play may mutually impact each other in an ecological, feedback-feedforward relationship.

[11] To reiterate, the nuance to this argument is that neither *inherently* has more impact on the constitution of reality than the other. This is the case for both subjunctive/indicative and context/action-in-context. In practice, the particularities of the circumstances will calibrate the ratio, subject to certain threshold conditions. For example, one can readily conceive of a situation in which the inordinate strength of a 'play' slap renders it no longer play.

[12] I say this notwithstanding the implicit, and problematic, play-seriousness binary that Johnstone implies.

ludicrousness of situations in which 'a loss of confidence' within financial markets can have far-reaching material effects (in terms of manufacturing output, for example). Although actions-in-context may have changed little in such circumstances, a drastic change of context has been perceived by the banking community, in which a threshold of risk has been crossed, resulting in total reclassification of those actions-in-context. Another recurring situation, which is no less real for its being hilarious, is when the markets are said to have been 'spooked', as if they were a nervous horse (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, [1980] 2003).

I take Bateson to be thinking along similar lines to the above discussion when, in typically enigmatic style, he observes that "the world partly becomes - comes to be - how it is imagined" (1979: 205). A highly significant corollary of this view is the interdependence and inseparability of ontology and epistemology.[13] For Bateson, human beings' perception-action cycles and concept-belief systems are mutually co-determining; concepts and beliefs influence perceptions and actions, which influence concepts and beliefs, and so on. We are, therefore, "bound within a net of epistemological and ontological premises which – regardless of ultimate truth or falsity – become partially self-validating" (2000: 314).[14]

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[13] The interdependence of ontology and epistemology links to both PaR, where the practitioner's being affects the production of knowledge (e.g. May, 2015; Freeman, 2010), and ontologically-oriented pedagogies, where a process of becoming is intertwined with a process of knowing (e.g. Barnett, R., 2012, 2009; Freire, 1972 – see also 3.5–3.6.2).

[14] As Bateson is referring specifically to humans here, these premises could be construed as linguistic. However, he also says that they are "commonly unconscious" (2000: 314), which opens the possibility that they need not be in order to be efficacious. They could be a form of know-how, not know-that. Of course, in humans, know-that and know-how often interact (a unitary concept of time might help one arrive punctually for one's viva, for example), but know-how, at least, appears to be able to be exercised independently of know-that (see May, 2015: 44–49). It is also possible that premises, or propositions, need not be linguistic to operate as such. For Bateson, only a tiny subset of ideas are linguistic. From a Batesonian perspective, premises, propositions, and ideas (or complexes of ideas) may be renderable linguistically by humans, though it does not follow that these things cannot also be apprehended and made use of by organisms in non-linguistic form. Indeed, for Einstein, even when engaged in highly complex productive thought, language must be "sought for laboriously" only after "associative play is sufficiently established" and thus reproducible (1954: 26). The act of linguistic rendering necessarily transforms ideas from one logical type to another, which sits at a level of greater abstraction, but this does not entail that members of each type could not be functionally analogous. On this view, language is not an articulation, but a translation of the world, whereas ideational play constitutes more direct contact. Just as a translation can make ideas intelligible to others, it can also obscure and distort meaning. Nonetheless, the evolution of language has facilitated a rapid acceleration in the rate of change to Bateson's epistem-ontological net of premises. The adoption of any invention becomes swiftly, irrevocably embedded therein because language entails that "(T)here is no barrier between immediate adaptation and pickling change into society" (Bateson, 1991: 184), of which the internet is the starkest contemporary example. Bateson blames linguistic consciousness for the present ecological crisis (2000: 446) because it incurs change too rapid for harmonious evolutionary adaptation. My view is that play(fulness) may be able to bring us to a more fundamental relationship with the world, the techniques for which linguistic consciousness can make expressible and hopefully pickle them into society before it's too late.

This resonates strongly with enactive cognition theory (which I employ when addressing intersubjectivity in 5.3). According to Noë, "(W)hat we perceive…is determined by what we are ready to do" (2004: 1), which is necessarily affected by both our physiology and perceptual capabilities, but also by our conceptual systems. For instance, when gazing longingly upon a horse, a French person might see a culinary opportunity, whereas an English person in jodhpurs might see a jolly good hack.[15] The essential upshot of this, for present purposes, is that the cultivation of a ludic disposition, through engagement with my practice, entails the world becoming a more ludic place. An example of my practice instigating this process is that *Wandercast Ep.3* led perficipants to perceive their environments in more imaginative (i.e. novel) ways and, crucially, in some instances this change began or persisted after the end of the podcast (see 6.4 – 6.5).

4.2.2: Enter the Paradox

The simultaneous experience of (at least) two modes, or levels, of world-engagement is a double-edged sword, though. The complexification of cognition undoubtedly has its benefits, the production of ludicrous PhDs amongst them, but it makes life quite confusing (literally and figuratively). Indeed, Bateson argues that the complexification inherent to play(fulness) engenders a paradox that defies classical logic by means of self-reference. As I expand upon below, certain communicative elements of play(fulness) bear the same structure as Epimenides' paradox. Epimenides was a Cretan who was credited with saying "all Cretans are liars"; if Epimenides is lying then he is telling the truth, and if he is telling the truth then he is lying; thus, a paradox is generated. The example that Bateson gives with regard to play is that "(T)he playful nip denotes the bite, but it does not denote what would be denoted by the bite" (2000: 180). The play(ful) nip possesses a metacommunicative element because it defines its own context as well as being action-in-context; it says "this is play(fulness)" and *is* play(ful)-action simultaneously.

Paradox arises due to the fact that the nip purports to be both the same as and different from the bite, causing conflict between different levels of abstraction, i.e. logical

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[15] No wonder the above horse was nervous.

types. It symbolises a bite on one level (the relation being similar to that between the word 'horse' and all actual horses; though horses actually exist, whereas the bites are hypothetical or historical), but the nip does not symbolise what a bite symbolises on another; roughly speaking, a nip symbolises affection, whereas a bite symbolises animosity.[16] In the non-symbolising case, the relative implications of the two actions indicate that they belong to different sets of the same logical type (they are both members of sets – nips and bites – existing at the same level of abstraction). Therefore, we can see that the play(ful) nip appears to be both denotative of the set known as 'bites' as well as being a member of a different set, thus cutting across logical types and generating paradox (Bateson, 2000: 180–190). This is structurally analogous to Russell's paradox regarding set theory: the set of all sets that do not contain themselves. If this set does not contain itself, then it is missing one set that it should contain; if it does contain itself, then it is no longer the set of all sets that do not contain themselves. The analogy obtains because a set that contains other sets is of a 'higher' logical type than its contents, just as the fact that the play(ful) nip denotes a set of actions known as 'bites' means that the play(ful) nip is of a 'higher' logical type than those bites that it denotes (as well as being a member of a set that exists at the same level, i.e. 'nips').

That play(ful) communication reveals logical types to be unfixed and mutable points to a significant generalisation. It shows that life, at least for those creatures who play, does not "conform to the logician's ideal", suggesting that the flexibility generated by this paradoxicality may be necessary for development. Indeed, Bateson argues that, were human thought always ideally logical, Russell could not possibly have formulated ideal logic (ibid: 180).[17] The inherent psychological distancing produced by play(fulness)-as-

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[16] Bateson characterises the nip-bite example as a "negative statement containing an implicit negative metastatement" (2000: 180), which does not seem correct to me. For the nip to denote the bite is a positive statement, i.e. "I, the nip, denote this class of actions, the bites". I argue that the situation is properly formulated as a positive statement containing an implicit negative metastatement, since I agree that what nips and bites imply is a meta-matter and that the relationship between them on this level is indeed negative. Seen this way, the nip is both positively and negatively metacommunicative simultaneously, since it positively communicates context ("this is play"), but, in so doing, denies the metacommunication of that which it denotes (the bite). Negative-positive simultaneity aligns this analysis of play with Kershaw's analysis of performance and ecology, since the latter analysis deems performance "ephemeral" yet "durable" (2007: 9).

[17] Bateson makes no further direct argument regarding this, but I suggest that it relates to the necessity of psychological distancing to rational thought, something which emerged from, or was co-opted by, play(fulness) long ago in evolutionary history. That is to say, one needs the subjunctive in order to see the indicative as indicative. Otherwise, all one has is "blind instinct" (Groos, 1898: *xx*).

metacommunication, or subjunctivity, supports Burghardt's argument, noted above, that play(fulness) provided perhaps the vital stepping stone from Groosian 'blind instinct' to rationality (Burghardt, 2010b: 17). Play(fulness) engenders paradoxes of abstraction without which

> the evolution of communication would be at an end. Life would then be an endless interchange of stylised messages, a game with rigid rules, unrelieved by change or humour. (Bateson, 2000: 193)[18]

The ludicrous act of jumping a bollard[19] is thus positioned as a profound philosophical exemplar, through which we may attend to this essential, extra-logical aspect of our conditions of experience,[20] whilst our capacity for rationality can potentially render it opaque and thus knowable. By embracing the ludicrous, we can apprehend, come to terms with, and more closely contact the paradoxical structures which fashion our experience of the world. I argue that play(fulness) generally, but ludic art in particular, has the capacity to reveal this fundamental structuring. In so doing, play(fulness) might help to puncture the

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[18] One might object that play(fulness) is merely correlated with evolutionarily productive paradoxes, rather than being a cause of them, or equally that, for paradoxes to have been possible, the requisite cognitive complexity must have pre-existed the generation of such paradoxes through play(fulness). In the first case, note that it is the metacommunication "this is play" which sparks or generates paradox, so, in this sense, it is causal. In the second case, it is not necessary for the success of my argument to claim that play(fulness) was solely responsible for developing cognitive complexity. As with my argument relating play(fulness) and creativity, it is enough to claim that play(fulness) may be an "especially intrinsically motivated system", which results in the development of cognition (Burghardt, 2010b: 16). The requisite *potential* for cognitive complexity must have predated its instantiation through play(fulness), yet this does not preclude the possibility that play(fulness) was the original actualisation of this potential. When dealing with ecologies and evolution, it is seldom possible to attribute unilateral cause and effect, since no part of such complex systems can exert unilateral control over the whole or any other part (Bateson, 2000: 315). Rather, I suggest that cognitive complexity and play(fulness) co-evolved, mutually affecting one another's development. Nonetheless, rational thought can be seen as depending upon structure derived from play(fulness); i.e. logical paradox. Rationality (or an intermediary stage) perhaps then lends stability to play(fulness)'s increased, yet unruly, cognitive complexity which, in turn, is available for play(fulness) to further complexify, and so on, oscillating between paradox and clarity, in an autocatalysing evolutionary ratchet-system.
[19] Of course, the communication involved in motor-play, which can be engaged in alone (e.g. jumping bollards), is different from that of social play (e.g. playful nips). However, play always presupposes something to be played with. It is impossible simply to play. Of someone playing alone, we might say that they were playing 'with themselves' (not in the rude way, although that might still be a valid example). Here, the metacommunication 'this is play' is self-reflexive rather than ostensive, but the message is not different in kind. Furthermore, in all cases of play(fulness) the players are playing, interacting, and communicating *with the world*. The character of the particular play(fulness) engaged in depends upon whether the sub-universe in which one plays implicates other agents or not. In lone Playfulness, I suggest that the self-reflexivity will become more marked and complex, instantiating *intrasubjectivity* (see 5.4.1).
[20] Recall that Runco (2007: 395–396, 1996: 5) deems creativity also to depend upon this paradoxical aspect of life, since creativity proceeds according to its own logic, which is potentially incompatible with the ideal, but which nonetheless interacts with it.

hubristic excesses resulting from increased cognitive complexity.[21] Chief among these excesses are anthropocentrism and environmental domination. I am in no way suggesting that humanity's cognitive evolution has been a force for ill, nor that it is teleological; after all, evolution is an ecological process over which we do not have control. Nonetheless, rationality, which is often considered to set humanity apart from, and above, other forms of life, is unequivocally logical and also bound up in our development of technology and efforts to control ecologies. These efforts, born of rationality, have arguably had an unbalancing effect on ecologies, leading to the ecological crises now facing us and our planet. Therefore, I argue that one of the most valuable capacities of play(fulness)'s paradoxicality is to help humanity "rethink and refeel our nature and destiny" (White, 1967: 1207) by recognising the limitations of rationality and placing more importance on the extra-logical. Doing so might enable us to effect a more balanced approach to the pursuit of progress and understanding. As noted above, I suggest that the aesthetic and affective qualities of ludic art, and participatory performance in particular, can play a central role in the realisation of this capacity.

Human play(fulness), which has developed the potential for very high levels of complexity, in conjunction with self-reflexive consciousness, facilitates apprehension of reality's structuring also by virtue of another paradoxical quality. Although couching it in different language, Bateson observes that in play(fulness) the subjunctive and indicative "are both equated and discriminated" (2000: 185). This reconciles my claim that the subjunctive is as real as the indicative, since both are equated, with the notion that play(fulness) allows for apprehension of its own structure (and, by extension, that of rational thought), since the two are also discriminated. By framing play(fulness) as art, as I do here, one can invite evaluation of humanity's condition, since, as Kant ([1790] 1987) argues, aesthetic appreciation implicitly involves judgement. I offer the framework of ludic ecology, which relies equally on the play(ful) and the rational, placing equal value on each, as an important device for the elucidation of this process of enlightenment-through-ludicrousness.

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[21] See A4.2 for clarification on how this does not imply the homogenisation and instrumentalisation of play(fulness).

Bateson, too, saw the power of art as not only knowledge-producing, but also as an essential counter-balance to rational thought. For him

> mere purposive rationality unaided by such phenomena as art, religion, dream…is necessarily pathogenic and destructive of life;…its virulence springs specifically from the circumstance that life depends upon interlocking circuits of contingency, while [rational] consciousness can only see such short arcs of such circuits as human purpose may direct. (2000: 146)

Art and the ludic are not luxuries, nor frivolous adjuncts to the already-complete life of human beings; they are fundamental to, and necessary for, humanity's healthy development. Recalling Bateson's point regarding the reifying effects of one's conceptions, I suggest that even a perceived decline in the value of art and play(fulness)[22] will likely embed pathological tendencies into our "process of becoming" (Freire, 1972: 56–57) at individual to global scales. Indeed, Wenner (2009) cites evidence suggesting that not only does play(fulness) confer developmental benefits, but its lack can lead to social maladjustments and criminal behaviour.

4.3: Play(fulness)-as-Philosophical-Phenomenon[23]

So far, I have mainly developed the first and second aspects of my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument; that is, the implications of play(fulness)'s relationality and extra-logical nature. I now move from considering ludic ecology as a means of apprehending certain conditions of human experience to its consideration as a means of more closely contacting the objective world through that experience. To do this, I interweave the third aspect of the philosophical argument outlined in the Roadmap and at the outset of this chapter: that the constant rebalancing demanded by play(fulness), as

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[22] As will almost certainly be produced when: arts funding is drastically reduced, arts subjects are excluded from schools' performance measures (as with the EBacc), play(fulness) is squeezed from schooling (Hutchings, 2015), and when positivist epistemologies dominate across academia and the wider social imagination (Nelson, 2013: 26; Breen & Darlaston-Jones, 2010; Kingsbury, 2002).

[23] This section further cements my argument in Chapter 3 that the ontological orientation encapsulated in a ludic pedagogy would be highly valuable and widely applicable outside of this project itself.

facilitated by my practice, exemplifies the ongoing shifts and adaptions we must make as we negotiate our ecologies.

Bogost positions play(fulness) as essential for avoiding the philosophically pathological stance of refusing, and not embracing, the world (2016: *xi*). Bogost's perspective on play(fulness) parallels the above discussion in that

> Play isn't our goal, but a tool to discover and appreciate the structures of all [that]…we encounter. (ibid: 12)

This could be construed as the instrumentalisation of play(fulness); yet, what Bogost means is that an effective and rewarding way of reconciling oneself with the ultimate indifference of the universe is to take a manageable chunk and play with it (ibid: 3–4).

However, I'm still uneasy about framing play(fulness) as a tool, since this implies unambiguous function, whereas I deem Playfulness to be essentially afunctional. Instead, I argue that play(fulness) can only become a means to an end if one treats it as an end in itself. I contend that play(fulness)'s extrinsic benefits can only be gained, or perhaps maximised, if one focuses solely on its intrinsic value.[24] In this way, play(fulness) resonates with Kershaw's reflections on the general nature of paradox (1990: 200); if one attempts to instrumentalise play(fulness) it becomes worthless, but if one plays without regard to potential extrinsic benefits they may then be forthcoming.[25] The way that Bogost's view and my own may be reconciled is by asserting the fundamentally relational nature of

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[24] A good example of this is the relation between play(fulness) and creativity explored in Chapter 2. For creativity, we need rational analysis in order to assess whether a novel idea is useful or not, but we need to suspend rationality so that we can stimulate the imagination through play. Thus, one of this project's mantras is: *Play First, Ask Questions Later*. For an analysis of the complex relationship between ends, means, and rules in games, see Suits (1978: 22–41).

[25] One could see the proliferation of paradox discussed here as chronically problematic, rendering any hope of understanding play(fulness), or indeed this project, ultimately futile. Alternatively, one could see paradox as an extensive pattern-which-connects, allowing the perception of commonality between, for example, the constitutive structuring of subjective experience (through paradoxes of logical typing) and the conditions of possibility of coming to know the objective world (by focusing on relations in order to come to know relata). The pattern-which-connects interpretation is not unreasonable, given that scientists generally agree that paradoxical wave-particle duality is woven into the fundamental fabric of the objective universe. One might object that the invocation of quantum mechanics does not hold at the macroscopic level; however, it is only the extremely short wavelengths of macroscopic entities that usually prevents their wave properties from being detected (Eisberg & Resnick, 1985: 59–60). Furthermore, recent experiments have produced observable wave-particle duality in macroscopic objects (e.g. Couder et al., 2010). Though developed independently, the notion of paradox-as-connecting-pattern parallels Kershaw's "paradology", which operates by revealing "paradoxical homologies" (2007: 18). As construed above, sensitivity to paradox can be seen to shed light not only on performance, ecology, and play(fulness) but also on fundamental questions of philosophy.

play(fulness): one must always play *with* something (see footnote 19). Thus, by making play(fulness) one's goal,[26] one necessarily opens oneself to the world, thereby manifesting "*worldfulness*" (Bogost, 2016: 224).[27]

Highlighting play(fulness)'s inescapably relational character indicates its strong resonance with ecological viewpoints. Echoing my point about puncturing hubris, Bogost argues that ludic worldfulness "cultivates humility", since it impels one to engage objects and environments on their own terms, as opposed to how one might wish them to be (2016: *xii*). This seems to go against my idea of play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity, since subjunctivity necessarily requires engagement in 'as if' alternatives; however, there is an important difference between wishing something to be other than it is and entertaining possibilities of what things could be like. It is akin to the difference between should and could. The former is prescriptive, whereas the latter invokes potentiality. When jumping a bollard, it is no use wishing it were shorter, but believing you can do it will almost certainly help.

4.3.1: A Clarificatory Pit-Stop

Another issue now requiring clarification if my argument is to hold is the idea that the world comes to be how it is both imagined and practically engaged with. Bogost parallels Bateson in arguing that the aspects of the world to which we attend, and the ways in which we do this, effect change in us (2016: 31). His stance is therefore also compatible with my argument regarding equivalence between subjunctive/indicative and context/action-in-context when it comes to constituting reality. For Bateson, Bogost, and myself, play(fulness) does not take place in a separate play-world, but collaborates in reality's construction.

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[26] This presents a significant challenge for my project, however, particularly in *Spinstallation*, since the paradox of obtaining play(fulness)'s extrinsic benefits is mirrored by the difficulty of instigating play(fulness) directly. Anyone who has been on a bad team-building course knows that an overt focus on fun is often no fun at all. The same is true of play(fulness). I have discovered (though this is no great discovery) that the metacommunicative "this is play" is rarely effective unless it is implicit. Making the intention for someone to "be playful" explicit is like telling someone to "be funny, NOW!" i.e. it is almost always self-defeating. This is especially troublesome in the context of a research project, where a lack of clarity or explicitness represents a flaw, indicating an absence of rigour, which could even contravene ethics regulations. The problem becomes how to facilitate play(fulness) without making one's intention too overt (and thus effectively rendering facilitation impossible), whilst also acting in accordance with research ethics. (See 7.6.1 for how I identified, and have sought to negotiate, this problem.)

[27] I return to the notion of worldfulness, and contrast it with mindfulness, in 6.4.2.

However, does this not imply a deterministic world in which one's pre-existing perspective dictates one's perception of the real nature of things? In attempting to deal with things on their own terms (through play), is one not doomed always to impose one's own, thus rendering the endeavour impossible?

I suggest we can answer no to both questions, since each presupposes unidirectional causation, which ecological viewpoints negate. Firstly, whilst Bateson's net, or web, of premises shapes one's developmental trajectory to a large extent, I do not posit their influence as total; the constitutive role of paradox and inherent uncertainty of the world entails that there is always the potential for unexpected change, leading to novel configurations of the system.[28]
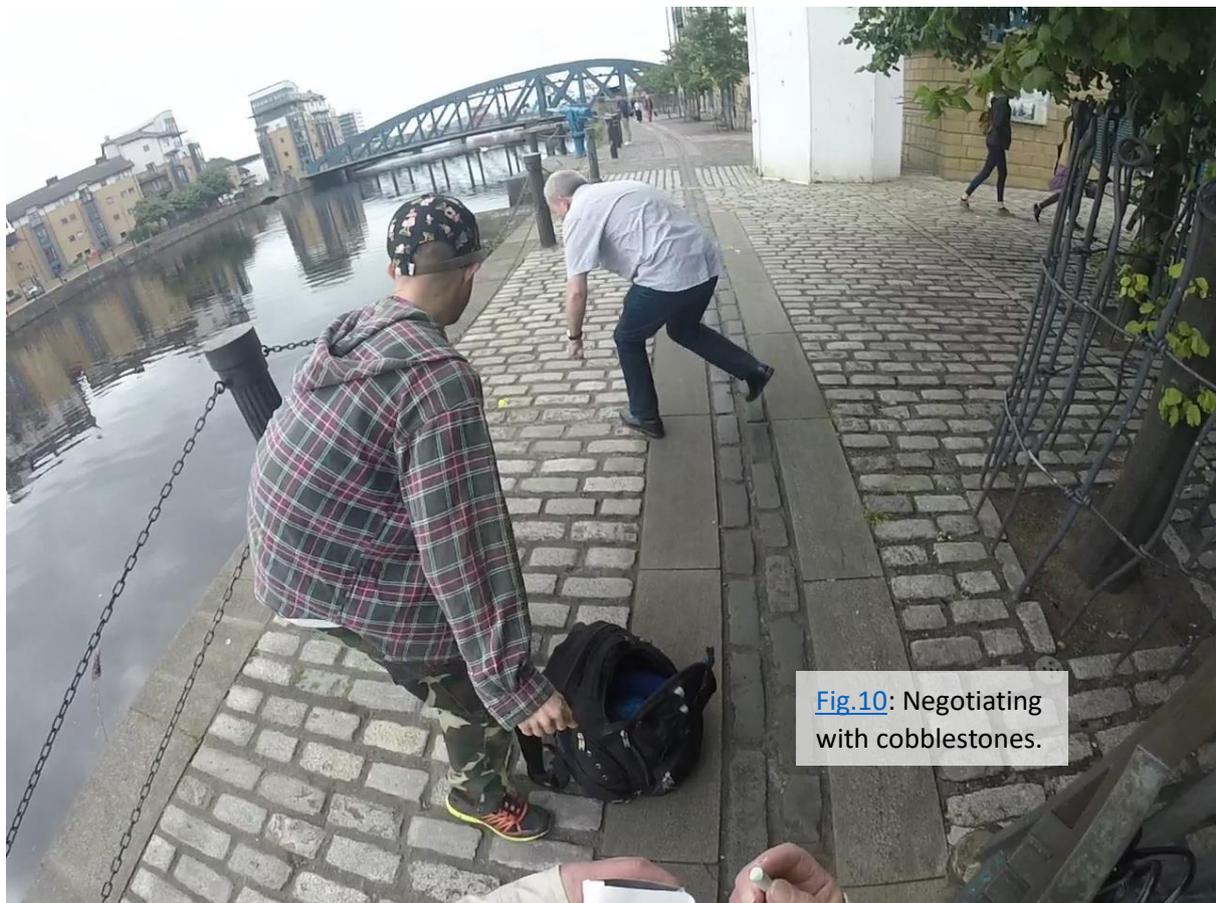
Fig.10: Negotiating with cobblestones.

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[28] Furthermore, the role of self-reflexivity is crucial to stress, because this provides at least the possibility of becoming aware of the web of premises (supposing they exist) otherwise Bateson would not have been able to describe them, just as he argued with respect to Russell and ideal logic. In addition, Kershaw argues that this revealing capacity of reflexivity sometimes enables pre-emptive error-correction (2007: 17), which would be jolly handy for a doctoral researcher, as well as in many other contexts, although it might take a bit of the fun out of things.

To answer the second, I would point out that the very notion of terms of engagement as belonging to either the thing engaged with or the agent doing the engaging is fundamentally misleading. Such a view presupposes that one component of a system, a person say, can unilaterally control the system as a whole, which is not logically possible, since to do so she would need to act on all parts of the system without being in any way connected to it. Terms of engagement are always negotiated.[29] I argue that the give-and-take of play(fulness) is a paradigmatic exemplification of this principle. For example, nothing *controls* the interaction between oneself, a bouncy ball, and cobblestones (see Fig.10 above).

Nonetheless, the partially self-validating ecology of the epistem-ontological web discussed above entails that initiating the development of a ludic disposition is very difficult in those individuals who have little predisposition to ludicality. This makes a project such as mine all the more important, though fraught with difficulty. I present a rigorously supported argument for the value of play(fulness) and make my practice as accessible as possible, as well as actively intervening in people's lives, which may help to engage those who have developed resistance to the ludic. Resistance may have developed due to perceived lack of personal ability or lack of value placed upon ludic activity. The possible scope of this project is limited, however, since the above also entails that self-selection occurs even in the intervention strand (*Perplexpedition*), as perfication will only take place if individuals already manifest a ludic disposition above a certain threshold. One of my chief tasks has been to develop performance structures which lower that threshold; I will discuss and appraise my tactics for doing this throughout Part II. By the same token, however, it is unreasonable to expect more from this project, as it cannot exert control over person-within-environment systems.

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[29] This is not to imply that the parties in any negotiation always have equal influence; I am not explaining away oppression. What I am saying is that there is always some degree of negotiation, though sometimes one component of a system may have influence grossly disproportionate to any other. This is how humanity has dominated the global ecosystem. However, to suppose that we have control over it is dangerous and erroneous. Though I do not draw explicitly upon it here, I note the resonance between this point of discussion and Foucault's analysis of power, which I argue is an ecological one: "It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands … Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation" (1980: 98).

There; a detour, perhaps, but necessary and (hopefully) helpful. Now, though, I return to positioning play(fulness) as a revelationary, relational *wunderkind*, skipping freely across the putative subjective-objective boundary and bringing us back steaming handfuls of knowledge.
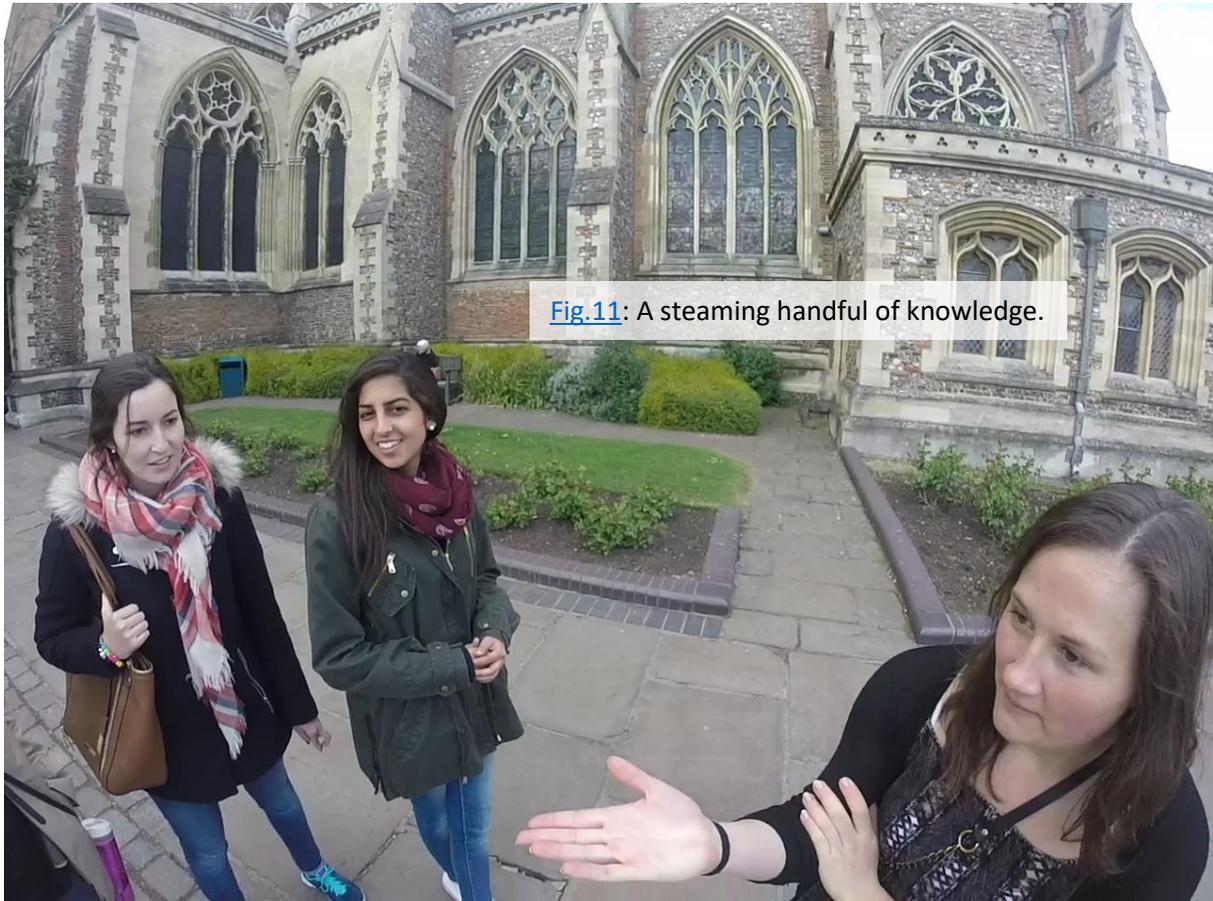
Fig.11: A steaming handful of knowledge.

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4.3.2: Coming to Know the World

Having woven together the first three aspects of my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument – relationality, the extra-logical, and constant in-the-moment adaption – I now set the groundwork for the fourth. I bring Bogost's (2016) notion of

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[30] This is a still from *Perplexpedition #5: Bouncy Time*, see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/bouncy-time/ (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#5 Bouncy Time). I am being Playful in characterising this as a 'steaming handful of knowledge', since it comprises both humourous and serious levels of meaning. I am not going to spell out the humourous levels, but the serious resides in the fact that this gesture both refers to the perficipants' pre-existing dance-ritual and is the catalyst for its manifestation in http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-big-show/ (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#5.5 The Big Show).

playgrounds into dialogue with Bateson's (2000) notion of *difference*, both of which are co-created by an agent in interaction with their environment, i.e. are pulled from potentiality into actuality. Then, from 4.4 onwards, I integrate into this discussion the major concept that I argue is interrelated with both *playgrounds* and *differences*, and which plays a significant part this project: Gibsonian (1986) affordances.

For Bogost, the development of a ludic disposition is manifested in one's continued attuning to the existence of playgrounds, i.e. "configurations of materials", both physical and conceptual, which are discovered and made real by attending to them, allowing us to "live amidst the world as it really is" (2016: 25–26). Playgrounds comprise the ludic potential of the world, which, for Bogost, is immanent and infinite (ibid: 235). Here, we can see that play(fulness) provides an active exemplification of the fundamental (Batesonian) way in which we come to know the world through our sensitivity to the differences[31] (i.e. relations) within and between things, which Bateson deems similarly immanent and infinite (1991: 202). Bogost's invocation of human agency in the making-manifest of playgrounds echoes Bateson's account of co-created difference: "We draw distinctions; that is, we pull them out" (1979: 97), and, as we shall see, resonates with Gibson's notion of economy in affordance-perception (1986: 134–135).

Despite the ecological perspective apparently implied by describing living amidst the world, Bogost does not fully appreciate the ecological nature of the picture he builds. For him, "the play is in the thing, not in us" (2016: 95); though I appreciate the anti-individualistic impulse behind this statement, I cannot agree. Play(fulness) is not in things, nor is it in us. Play(fulness) consists in relation, in flexible, dynamic, constantly evolving behavioural context.[32] The full importance of this will be explored shortly.

Although I largely bracket it out of the main text of this chapter, there is a problem for both authors here; namely, how we can ever come to know the objective world. The way that one deals with things as they really are through play(fulness), according to Bogost,

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[31] See A4.1 for further detail on the fundamental importance of the notion of difference for Bateson.
[32] Bogost does hint at the possibility of apprehending the holism of person-and-world through play(fulness) (2016: 58), and thus might agree with my thesis of ludic ecology, but nowhere does he develop this or integrate it into his argument.

is to "subordinate our agency to a larger system" (ibid: 92).[33] Given that Bogost's book is intended to be accessible to a general audience, it is unsurprising that he does not there tackle this most fundamental epistemological problem. Nonetheless, baldly asserting that we can come to know the true nature of things by submitting to them, or "[communing] with them" (ibid: 107), does not address the conditions of possibility of knowing anything about worldly things.

In Cashman's view, Bateson's inability to solve this problem – construed as "what connects the map and territory" – lies at the root of the latter's failure to achieve the grand synthesis he sought through his wide-ranging studies (2008: 46–49).[34] Bateson made much use of Korzybski's phrase "(A) map is not the territory it represents" ([1933] 1994: 58), expending considerable energy delineating the differences between processes described from a purely material (pleromic) point of view, which constitutes the territory, and from one which deals with (creatural) mental process, i.e. our perceptual maps of that territory. (See A4.1 for a summary and discussion of pleroma/creatura and difference, or Batesonian information.) Bateson's argument is essentially that differences which make a difference, on whatever level, to an organism become part of its map of the relevant territory (2000: 457–458).

Cashman criticises Bateson for instantiating a paradox by asserting that differences are simultaneously present in territorial space-time, yet abstract (i.e. without space-time existence). Though their abstract nature enables differences to participate in mental process, for Cashman, this implicitly disavows their territorial existence; differences exist on one's map, but one cannot be sure that they have their origin in real territory. Cashman argues that this difference-concept is self-contradictory, contributing to Bateson's inability to connect creatural experience to the pleromic world (2008: 47). However, in light of the

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[33] As I have argued above (and in A4.1), viewed ecologically, agency is never total. What play(fulness) does is bring this aspect of reality into focus, if we care to attend to it. Incorporating Bogost's view, we could say that play(fulness) involves a recalibration of relative influence within the system, such that one does not seek unobtainable control and thus one raises the possibility of more clearly apprehending the nature of the system(s) of which one is part. In social situations, such as rough-and-tumble play(fulness), this recalibration is especially flexible and dynamic, with rapid role-switching and shifting degrees of self-handicapping (Pellegrini, 1992), which further points to the creative potential produced by play(ful) behaviour.

[34] See A4.3–A4.3.1 for my suggestion as to how quantum theory could offer a resolution to Bateson's incomplete synthesis and in so doing dissolve the subjective-objective boundary.

picture of paradox as productive and progressive painted heretofore, I posit that this is not so problematic; indeed, it may be revealing and useful.

Respectable scientific notions such as wave-particle duality are both paradoxical and analogous to Bateson's notion of difference. For example, wave and particle models of an entity both describe reality with equivalence, yet the use of one strictly precludes the other within a particular situation; the models are linked by a probability interpretation of the wave-particle duality (Eisberg & Resnick, 1985: 63). The entity thus comprises potentiality and is therefore, in a sense, abstract, yet both waves and particles have space-time existence.

For our purposes here, resolving the question of whether one can ever directly know the objective world is less important than considering the implications of the fact that we can directly know, or experience, our relationship to the world and the relations between other things in it. In attuning ourselves to Bogost's playgrounds, it is the configurations (relations), rather than the materials (relata), to which we should attend, as these are what we co-create as we draw our distinctions and these are what feed back to us as we couple and interact with the system.

In attending more closely to relations, we come into closer contact with things themselves, since these are the anchor-points to which relations attach and our partners in the negotiation of terms. Indeed, relations are every bit as perceivable and real as relata (Chemero, 2003: 186). Whatever things are in themselves, we can know them as and through those of their relations to which we attend and the manner in which we negotiate terms. To attend and negotiate Playfully, I argue, is to simultaneously embrace the ambiguity that obtains from wave-particle duality up to human social systems[35] and, paradoxically, to more closely contact the world by taking a less hubristic, more realistic negotiating position. This last point returns to the potential ecological value of developing a ludic disposition, for which I argued in 4.2.2; embracing ambiguity goes hand in hand with recognising the limitations of rationality, for ambiguity evades rational determination.

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[35] See Barnett, 2012; Nowotny, Scott & Gibbons, 2001.

To illustrate: the cat in a game of Where's My Cat? is of little consequence – more important are the speedily-formed social bonds that allowed the sheer ludicrousness of five strangers calling "FuFu!" in St Albans' Abbey Orchard;

Fig.12: Where's My Cat?

the dance moves in The Big Show are neither here nor there – what counts is that I took part in a meaningful ritual that I never could have foreseen;

Fig.13: The Big Show.

and Mark's Everyday Adventure Playground is transformed by the sudden appearance of Bike Man and his attempts to appear cross.

Fig.14: Bike Man tries to look cross as Mark escapes.

The planning and perfilitation present in each of these occurrences set up a configuration that then took on a life of its own. In each instance, and throughout my practice, it is the structured yet ever-shifting and thoroughly uncontrollable configurations that both activate the aesthetic experiences of perficipants and dynamically embody the theoretical principles developed here. It is not the bollard but the vaulting of it that counts; not only the action itself, but the context and the synchronous, relational connection to the world which that action creates.

4.4: Affordances

As I mentioned at the end of 4.3.2, having prepared the ground, I now factor Gibson's (1986) concept of affordance into the play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument. I argue that, by drawing attention to ludic affordances, my practice both exemplifies the perceptual processes which connect us to the environment and enables

perficipants to apprehend their embeddedness in a world of vibrant relations. First, though, I discuss Gibson's (1986) concept and clarify my usage of it.

If we accept the "ontological reality of 'relative being', i.e. the causal autonomy of pure relations" (Hoffmeyer, 2008: 4), which a Batesonian perspective entails, it follows that we can come to know certain aspects of the *Ding-an-sich* through the relations it bears to other things, including ourselves. Indeed, this may be only way to know them, if one accepts a Kantian ([1781] 1922) frame of reference that deems material reality fundamentally unknowable, or (as I prefer) the quantum-theoretic view that deems it fundamentally indeterminate (Nadeau & Kafatos, 2001: 88–92).[36] Thus, though total knowledge of objective reality may be logically impossible (ibid: 93), human knowledge might nonetheless progress through "the growth of a web of interwoven complementary understandings of various aspects of the fullness of nature" (Stapp, 2009a: 72).[37]

Affordances are useful in bringing this endeavour into the context of everyday life, since affordances are not only the ever-present linkage between organism and environment (Gibson, [1979] 1986: 127), but are also fundamentally relational (in the formulation employed here:[38] Chemero, 2003). For example, it is no good asserting the breathability of air to a fish out of water (mudskippers notwithstanding). Affordances arguably depend upon Batesonian differences, or "elementary [ideas]" (2000: 315), for their existence, perception, and enaction;[39] affordances afford action (motor or otherwise – Rietveld &

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[36] See [A4.3](#)–A4.3.1 for ways in which quantum theory might profitably expand this discussion. This is not to oppose Gibson's ([1979] 1986) theory of direct perception. Gibson does not assert that *Ding-an-sich* are directly perceived in a way that would contradict Kant or quantum mechanics. For Gibson, relations are the fundamental perceivables of the world: "What counts is not the form as such, but the dimensions of variation of form" (1986: 150).

[37] This does not preclude the possibility that nature may be "ruled by some closed set of mathematical formulas", though current knowledge equally allows that nature in its fullness may transcend any such form (Stapp, 2009a: 70).

[38] Gibson's thinking on affordances developed considerably during the latter stages of his career, from more object-focused to more relational, with his definition moving from specificity to generality (Jones, 2003). This shift seems to bring Gibson's thinking closer to Bateson's, in that the latter's key notions of pattern-which-connects and difference-which-makes-a-difference are both relational and general. It is therefore tantalising to ponder, had Gibson written another book, whether his and Bateson's theses might have come yet closer together.

For more analysis of Gibson's evolving thought on affordances, see Jones (2003); for a consideration of four key debates, see Michaels (2003); for an affordance-derived theory of concepts, see Gorniak (2005); and for the direct implication of affordances in neuroscience, see Cisek (2007).

[39] Gibson does stress the importance of difference for his overall theory of visual perception, though not in an overtly Batesonian formulation (1986: 51).

Kiverstein, 2014) and difference, i.e. potential change, makes action possible. Indeed, Bateson apparently once defined change as "difference, plus a clock" (reported in Cashman, 2008: 50). Affordances also parallel differences in that both are simultaneously real and abstract and, in their respective frameworks, both are the "primary perceivables" (Chemero, 2003: 193). Both concepts support both one another and the notion that relations, not relata, are most fundamental in the play of reality. The relationality of play(fulness) therefore renders it an appropriate and effective means of revealing and contacting that reality.

However, even my project's emblematic affordance, the ludic vaultability of a bollard,[40] may remain unperceived to those lacking a ludic disposition, since affordance "(P)erception is economical" (Gibson, 1986: 135) and also influenced by the individual's epistem-ontological web. That is to say, we pull into actuality from potentiality those affordances to which we attend. The importance of the affordance-concept here is further revealed when the following passage is considered in light of the above discussion:

> An affordance cuts across the dichotomy of subjective–objective and helps us to understand its inadequacy. It is equally a fact of the environment and a fact of behaviour. It is both physical and psychical, yet neither. An affordance points both ways, to the environment and to the observer. (Gibson, 1986: 129)

Although some recent theorists argue that affordances are purely properties of the environment (e.g. Turvey, 1992), and despite Gibson's shifting stance (Jones, 2003), the above suggests that they should be considered as properties of animal-environment systems (Stoffregen, 2003). This holistic view also accords with a Batesonian perspective, since it prioritises relationship and interaction over independent properties. In fact, Bateson unsettles the very independence of properties, deeming them to be "differences [which] exist only in context, only in relationship" (1991: 190).

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[40] I recognise that the typical linguistic construction used when describing affordances (e.g. a tiny plastic lion affords a game of 'Where's My Cat?') implies that the affordance is a property of the object, which I deny. Here, I maintain the more parsimonious use of language afforded by this logical slippage, yet keep this caveat in mind.

Gibson originally described the in-the-moment antecedent to the perception of affordances as the perception of an object's "constant properties" (1966: 285).[41] Taking into account Bateson's view, we can see that constant properties are possible only if the relationship, i.e. context, remains constant. One could therefore describe affordances as persisting Batesonian patterns-which-connect organism and environment. Recalling Bogost's point that play(fulness) affords discovery and recognition of worldly structures (2016: 12), we can say that the structures, or patterns, recognised are those which connect us to the world. All affordances connect us to the world, but ludic affordances foreground this connectivity, since they are afunctional and thus an end in themselves, as argued in 4.3. Combining this with the ontological reality of relative being shows potentiality-rich, inherently afunctional play(fulness) to strongly exemplify and reveal the dynamic fabric of the world, thereby making Bogost's claim that we can come to know the world through play(fulness) more tenable.

4.4.1: Affordance and Context

Synthesising Chemero (2003) and Stoffregen (2003), I hold that affordances exist when there exists an organism whose ability matches a particular situational feature and so could perceive and enact the affordance.[42] As noted above, however, affordances' existence does not guarantee their perception. Distinguishing between the totality of affordances in any animal-environment system and those which are perceived is important (Stoffregen, 2003; Gibson, E. J., 2000). Stoffregen asserts that the totality comprises an "uncountably large" number and is thus functionally limitless (2003: 119), making it impossible to perceive all affordances at any given moment, paralleling the phenomenon of relation-selection discussed in 4.3.2.[43] Regarding ludic affordances, as mentioned in 1.4.3.1, I contend that

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[41] N.b. Gibson appears to have later inverted his original view, coming to see that relationships determine properties, rather than the other way round as expressed above. By 1979, he was of the view that "(A)n affordance is an invariant combination of variables", which takes perceptual priority over, and largely constitutes, an object's qualities (p.134).

[42] As Chemero points out, no organism need be in the vicinity of the situational feature to bring the affordance into existence (2003: 193–194).

[43] It is also worth pointing out that quantum theory's invocation of perception-as-co-creation (see A4.3) indicates that a full treatment of affordances from a quantum perspective would be valuable. However, to do so here would distract this thesis from its main purpose(s). N.b. I am not distinguishing between 'perceived' and 'real' affordances in the way that Donald A. Norman (2013) does. Norman approaches affordances from

people under-recognise both their ludic abilities and the ludic potential of their environments.

My practice aims to reveal or orchestrate ludic affordances, making them perceptible to perficants and encouraging these affordances' concurrent or subsequent enaction. This might hopefully foster ludic know-how through "attunement to [ludic] constraints", constraints being construed in the situation theory sense defined by Greeno as a "regularity involving situation types" (1994: 338–339).[44] (The regularity here would be of a highly generalised sort; namely that most situation types, i.e. environments or their elements, possess ludic potential.) Affordances are here revealed by invitation or instruction (e.g. "jump over that bollard") and are orchestrated when an object is imported into the perficant's environment then implicated in an instruction (e.g. "what could you do with this small rubber lion?"). There are also affordances which are enacted in perception (e.g. "what sea creature could that person be?"). Perficants' self-perceptions of ludic ability necessarily impact the likelihood of their enacting the ludic affordances revealed.[45] Every effort is made here to highlight the practicability of the affordances revealed, often through my perfilitation of similar or identical actions (see Fig.15 below).

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the point of view of design, so is interested in normative and functional interaction. My interest is the opposite. Norman asserts that some affordances are not perceivable (2013: 19). This is not permissible in my formulation. Affordances are necessarily enactable, which presupposes that they be also perceivable. This does not mean that affordances are always obvious. An affordance that is difficult to perceive might be perceived only in the moment of its enaction. Norman aligns perceived affordances with signifiers (ibid), whereas I align them with Bateson's idea of 'difference selection', i.e. the process by which differences come to make a difference (2000: 459).

[44] Recall that Bogost deems one's attuning to the existence of playgrounds to manifest one's ludic disposition, which is consistent with the situation theory formulation. Furthermore, he sees play, fun, and freedom as consisting in exploration of the "inherited or invented constraints" (2016: 153) which characterise playgrounds, explicitly linking constraint to creativity (ibid: 146–153). I note that Bogost largely uses constraint in its general usage, meaning limitations internal to a system, but also that this does resonate with situation theory, since Bogost's playgrounds are made up of multiple situations related by constraints (e.g. the many situations involved in maintaining a lawn – ibid: 14–17). This project further uses the implicit constraints of performance structures to foster play(fulness) and (indirectly) creativity.

[45] This is closely related to the earlier discussion of ludic disposition (see 4.3.1 above).

Fig.15: Performing the same action as perficipants (SkyGazing).

As intimated above, context plays a pivotal role here. Context may highlight or obscure certain affordances, effectively bringing them into or out of actuality from the perficipant's point of view. Context necessarily forms part of an individual's epistem-ontological web and therefore participates in a kind of 'filtering' of perceived affordances from the totality. Therefore, the creation of appropriate atmosphere[46] is crucial to this project. This is a delicate balance between cajoling people into playing along without tipping over into insufferable wackiness, or 'forced fun', whilst also preserving a degree of perficipant agency so that personal creativity may be fostered. Ambiguity is essential for the preservation of agency, and I have found humour invaluable in persuading people to play despite not knowing exactly what's going on. This cannot be planned in a manner divorced from practical experience; the balance between perfilitation and perficipation

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[46] This recalls Anderson's notion of "affective atmosphere" (2009: 77), which I integrate into my play(fulness) formulation in 2.4.

must be affectively negotiated and honed over subsequent iterations, whilst bearing in mind that no two iterations can be the same.

The importance of affordance context also connects to and supports my claim that context and action-in-context constitute reality with equivalence (see 4.2.1 above). In fact, Turner (2005) argues that affordance and context are synonymous. Turner does this by combining Ilyenkov's (1977) and Heidegger's ([1927] 1962) philosophies on the grounds that both thinkers' world-views centre on use, focusing particularly on how Ilyenkov's *significances* and Heidegger's *equipment* relate to affordances.

The seeming confusions in Turner (2005) notwithstanding, the article makes two important points. Firstly, Heidegger's thesis that one perceives the world as an "interconnected mesh" (ibid: 798) of equipment, i.e. usable things, emphasises that affordances, as with all ecological systems, cannot exist in isolation. This interconnectedness supports my claim that increased enaction of ludic affordances could have a networked effect on one's general disposition. Secondly, Ilyenkov's significances, which Turner aligns with complex affordances, come-to-be through "historically developing activities of communities of practice" (ibid: 796). I suggest that this extends to all affordances, if one recognises the synergy between learning and evolution (Bateson, 2000: 306–307).[47] Even the simplest affordances, such as air being breathable, came into being through the historically developing activity (evolution) of communities of practice (species) that could breathe air. No affordance exists without an organism that can enact it.

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[47] Epigenetics studies the links between environmental interaction and genetic evolution; its central thesis is that learned adaptive responses can be passed on to offspring. The term was coined by Waddington to refer to the "causal mechanisms" relating phenotype to genotype ([1942] 2012: 10). Waddington's concept of canalization is perhaps most pertinent here, which proposes that "the occurrence of an adaptive response to an environmental stimulus depends on the selection of a suitable genetically controlled reactivity in the organism … [so that the] … adaptive response can be fixed without waiting for the occurrence of a mutation" (1942: 565). That is to say, patterns of interaction with the environment can impact upon the activation and deactivation of certain genes, thus fixing an adaptive response that can then be passed to offspring. It would seem that epigenetics is crucial to the evolutionary history of play(fulness).
For a contemporary operational definition of epigenetics, see Berger et al. (2009); for a historical review of sometimes conflicting definitions, see Deans & Maggert (2015); and for an account of epigenetic epistemology, see Goldberg, Allis & Bernstein (2007). Though not mentioned by Bateson, epigenetics does seem to parallel his thinking that all capabilities for change to an organism must, at some logical level, be genetically determined (2000: 307).

Affordances thus pertain to "the collective…mind" (Turner, 2005: 794),[48] which accords with my Batesonian approach and prevents this argument slipping into individualism. This also indicates connection between affordance and the collective notion of context. For example, kicking a small rubber lion off your partner's face, while he lies prostrate, both enacts the lion's kickability-off-someone's-face-if-they-lie-prostrate and indicates a ludic context.

Fig.16: Lion kicked from man's face.

Whilst affordance may be operationally related to context, I cannot agree that they are one and the same, since it is possible that the above affordance could be enacted in a torture context. Turner (2005) equates affordance and context on the basis that both imply use, but does not fully account for proximal and tertiary goals. In the enaction of an

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[48] Turner uses the term "cultural" to describe this collectivity (2005: 797). Though Turner addresses only human affordances, I argue the foregoing is not to imply a nature-culture dualism, but to assert a nature-culture continuum by virtue of the fact that all species engage in persisting patterns-which-connect them to their environments.

affordance the proximal goal of engagement-in-action is always achieved,[49] yet the intended ends may be radically different. I suggest that ludic affordances entail a proximal goal that is also a tertiary goal.

I argue that, rather than being identical, there is a dialectical relationship between affordance and context. As outlined above, context acts to filter selected affordances from the totality. Conversely, since affordance-perception means meaning-apprehension (Chemero, 2003: 193–194; Gibson, 1986: 134), the perception of certain affordances will actualise particular contexts. For example, a mouse may or may not *know that* a rock is a rock in a way comparable to that of human knowledge; however, a mouse will know whether or not a particular rock offers an opportunity to hide from a pursuer (if the mouse is to live for any significant amount of time). Therefore, the affordances that exist within a particular mouse-rock system, when perceived, might actualise a 'hide' context in parallel with an 'avoid-being-killed' context and in place of a 'run-for-your-life' context. Similarly, perceiving the vaultability of a bollard might instantiate a ludic context in parallel with a 'walking-to-work' context and in place of a 'my-life-is-so-dull-and-shit' context. We can now see how affordances and contexts factor into my notion of play(fulness)-as-layered-bifurcation-of-world-engagement.

Affordance and context are similar in that both can exist as potentiality or be actualised and both reveal the falsehood of the objective-subjective dichotomy.[50] As I have just described, it is possible for both multiple contexts and affordances to be perceived simultaneously; indeed, in reality, I suggest that it is not possible for either contexts or affordances to exist in singular. A central claim of this project is that a ludic context can

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[49] Note that, in my usage, the enaction of an affordance does not entail the successful completion of an action. Following Chemero (2003), I contend that what is afforded is behaviour, but that there are always many factors that could entail the non-completion of an action. For example, one might slip, or a fly might hit one's eye at a crucial moment, and one might thus kick the person's face instead of the lion, yet the affordance remains. An affordance is not a *fait accompli*. For this reason, when referring to affordances, where possible, I refrain from using verbal nouns that imply action-completion, e.g. illumination, using instead the gerund form, e.g. illuminating; this also has the benefit of implying a dynamic process rather than a static state.

[50] In this, I am aligning context with Anderson's concept of affective atmospheres, which he describes as "spatially discharged affective qualities that are autonomous from the bodies that they emerge from, enable and perish with" (2009: 80). Like contexts, affordances, differences, and empty quantum states, affective atmospheres are real, in that they influence material change, yet they are immaterial.

coexist with most others and that ludic affordances can be perceived and enacted alongside those associated with other contexts.

4.5: Conclusion

Although Bateson's ecology-of-mind shows that our agency is always-already subordinated to a larger system, or rather participates in agentive interplay with it, Bogost is right to suggest that play(fulness) can help us come to know the world. By engaging in this behavioural pattern-which-connects such a variety of species, we can apprehend our embeddedness and give the lie to trumped-up anthropocentric fantasies of unilateral agency and overblown notions of the power of rationality. Kershaw suggests that performative engagements with our environment also reveal this paradoxical twinning of status that subjective agency in an ecological reality entails. Through performance, we can recognise ourselves as simultaneously environmental "commandant and supplicant" (2009a: 135) and perceive the way in which we are inescapably "performed by ecologies" (2015: 125). Together with the ludic negotiation of terms discussed in 4.3.1, this suggests that performative ludic-environmental interactions may effect a revelatory doubling.

The psychological distancing inherent to play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity now reveals itself as a connecting move; as I hope to have shown, by means of relational abstraction (in terms of difference, context, affordance, etc.) we can apprehend the commandant/supplicant paradox, recognise our ecological embeddedness, and puncture the hubris of unchecked rationality. Play(fulness) may have played a crucial role in complexifying cognition to the point where humans can contemplate the cosmos and our place in it, but we often maintain the belief that we are all commandant and no supplicant when it comes to our "human-dominated planet" (Vitousek et al., 1997: 494). It is apposite, then, that the ludic may now facilitate the puncturing of anthropocentric hubris and the effecting of closer contact with the world, becoming yet more potent when harnessed through performance. The paradoxes of both performance and play(fulness) foreground the folly of conceiving of ourselves (or anything else) as "[chunks] cut off and visualised as against the surrounding matrix" (Bateson, 2000: 466). Perhaps this might lead us to

recognise that, as Barron observes, "we are an ecology to ourselves … We are the design that designs us" (1995: 314); moreover, we are the environment: we are player and plaything.

For Bateson, such recognition has the capacity not only to recalibrate our environmental attitudes, but also to promote a state of wellbeing whilst doing so:

> A certain humility becomes appropriate, tempered by the dignity or joy of being part of something much bigger. A part—if you will—of God. (2000: 467–468)

This signals the return of the Batesonian 'sacred' introduced in 1.4.1, though its full integration must wait until the Conclusion. In Chapter 3, I argued that the world described on a human social level is irreconcilably indeterminate and ambiguous, presenting this project's ludic pedagogy as a valuable means of addressing this by developing perficipants' ability to survive and thrive in a state of ambiguity. In this chapter, I have radically extended this ambiguity, presenting a world in which abstract, relational entities such as context, difference, form, pattern, and affordance not only have ontological reality but also causal efficacy. As I argued with respect to play(fulness) in Chapter 2, relational entities lie not outside reality, but partake in it. For Bateson, the above ambiguities are not epistemic failings to be overcome, but are fundamental to the "sacred" structure of a living world (1987: 95–96, 162–166).

This recasts the relational subjunctivity of play(fulness) as a profound philosophical exemplar of the warp and weft of worldly fabric as well as the means by which we weave it. Through ludic communion we might more directly experience the ambiguous yet "indivisible wholeness" (Schäfer, 2008: 330) of our environment, "[rethinking] and [refeeling] our nature and destiny" (White, 1967: 1207) through recognition of the extreme paradox that constitutes subjective agency in a world of which one is a constituent part. LudicrousPilgrim evidently lives up to his name, as we can now see his good works as both a philosophical and spiritual endeavour. In following Bogost's (2016) advice and practising worldfulness by attending through performed play(fulness) to the relations things bear to other things,

including ourselves, we encounter not only the majesty of existence, but also its profound ludicrousness.[51]

Welcome to the Church of the Ludic, where irreverent reverence is gospel.

I have now contextualised the project in three different ways. I have situated it within the terrain of play studies literature, establishing what I mean by play(fulness), which I characterise as subjunctivity. I have situated it in its social context, setting out the inhibiting and institutionalising factors that necessitate this project's propagation of play(fulness), and explained the impact that my background in education and my conservatoire training have had on the genesis and development of the project. In this chapter, I have constructed the project's conceptual framework, which has extended the argumentation that established my conception of play(fulness) in Chapter 2 in order to develop my notion of *ludic ecology*. This extension has explored play(fulness)'s ontogenetic and phylogenetic importance, suggesting that play(fulness) may play a key role in cognitive complexification. This last point dovetails into my argument for play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon, which is another way of describing *ludic ecology*. I have argued that play(fulness)'s relationality, extra-logical nature, and its demands for constant rebalancing exemplify certain ways in which reality is structured, reveal the limitations of rationality, and foreground our ecological embeddedness. I have also argued that, by drawing attention to ludic affordances that do not directly perform extrinsic functions, my practice exemplifies the perceptual processes that participate in our active co-constitution of reality.

As expressed in the [Roadmap](#) in Chapter 1, Part I has set out the majority of this project's practice-based contributions, which I suggest could find valuable application beyond the fields of participatory and ecological performance. Play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity could be useful to play studies, ludic pedagogy could valuably contribute to education, and ludic ecology could form a worthwhile addition to ecological philosophy. In

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[51] In recognising majesty and ludicrousness through irreverent reverence, we can maintain the humility that Bateson posits in the above quote and that Whitehead observes when he reflects on "how shallow, puny, and imperfect are efforts to sound the depths in the nature of things" ([1926] 1978: *xiv*).

Part II, I devote a case study to each practical strand and swing the *both/and* balance in favour of PaR.[52] Each strand invites perficipants to instantiate ludic contexts in parallel with others, pulling ludic affordances from the multitude without significantly supressing those associated with other contexts. The self-reflexivity of play(fulness) discussed in 2.4 and 4.2.2 also allows perficipants' potential recognition of habitual affordance-filters derived from their epistem-ontological webs. Realised by LudicrousPilgrim, each strand also heightens metacommunication's extra-logical aspect by embracing the overtly ludicrous.

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[52] Before moving into the case studies, you might wish to read this blog post, in which I discuss the value and relevance of an ecological perspective to PaR.

Part II: The Ludic Triangle Case Studies

Introduction to Part II

Rather than write each case study to a formula, I have structured them so as to capitalise on the particular research strengths of each strand. *Perplexpedition* affords the richest documentation, capturing perficipation and perfilitation most fulsomely, so video analysis forms the central spine of Chapter 5. *Wandercast* sits in the most clearly delineated family of similar practices; also, *Wandercast*'s inherently remote perficipation afforded the engagement of large numbers of perficipants, enabling the gathering of considerable post-perficipation feedback. Therefore, Chapter 6 comprises a practice review together with in-depth analysis of perficipant feedback. *Spinstallation* involved the greatest degree of change across its iterations, which is why Chapter 7 is chiefly constituted by critical reflection on methodology. Rather than emphasising their differences, this approach emphasises the strands' cohesion as a multiperspectival, yet singularly focused, research inquiry which is more than the sum of its parts.

The strands also showcase both the diversity and unity of possible approaches to 4P perfilitation. *Perplexpedition* engendered a highly responsive, flexible mode. This includes the intuitive approaching of individuals who did not appear overtly playful, but I felt might engage; the subtle adjustments in perfilitation needed to effect their engagement; and the moment-to-moment flexibility needed to maintain the momentum of the event. *Wandercast* draws most overtly on my conservatoire acting training, since podcast perfilitation demands both significant attention to vocal technique and that an authentic-feeling interpersonal connection be created even without another person present.[1] *Spinstallation* perfilitation is arguably the most formal, with many iterations constituting a service provided to perficipants, but retains a need for flexibility, as perfilitation must mesh with the particular group dynamics in order to maximise perficipation. Its durational nature

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[1] The latter is similar to a 'one-shot' in screen acting, in which one performs *as if* one's out-of-shot acting partner is present even though there is no-one there.

allows time to negotiate this meshing, but larger perficipant groups entail more splitting of attention than in most *Perplexpeditions*. Unity obtains through all strands' use of direct-address and their being situated in the here-and-now, together with a consistent use of humour and ambiguous persona-fication, all of which are key aspects of popular performance (Double, 2017: 8).

As I explained when introducing my practical research methods, The Ludic Triangle, in 1.3.1, the three strands are also united in the structural sense of employing activities that, on the face of it, appear simple. However, in Chapter 4, I demonstrated that seemingly simple acts like vaulting a bollard in *Perplexpedition #3*, walking like a farmer in *Wandercast Ep.3*, and finding a novel way to travel in *Spinstallation S3* all instantiate and exemplify highly complex systems of relation. One way in which the unity of the Triangle is expressed is that, in each strand, the activities facilitate the co-creation of ludic affective atmospheres (Anderson, 2009) with perficipants. As I have argued in Part I, there are commonalities across ludic affective atmospheres no matter what performance modality activates them; for instance, they are always positively inflected and always immerse perficipants in ambiguity, thereby acclimatising perficipants to ambiguity and facilitating the development of creative potential. Although, as we will see, the modality of each strand affects the specific qualities of perficipants' play(fulness), which is also strongly affected by individual differences between perficipants. Nonetheless, all three strands enable perficipants to engage with familiar environments in ways that are sensory, imaginative, and innovative; all strands are homologous in the ways that they do this.

All three methods are also united by a balancing act that each strand demands of me as perfilitator. One of the most pressing, important, and consistent concerns I have had as a practitioner has been to balance the provision of information to perficipants, so that perficipants feel confident enough to engage in the risky business of play(fulness), against the need to preserve the ambiguity and open-endedness of the activity. A straight-forward and unambiguous practice would resemble the institutionalised play(fulness) that I criticised in Chapter 3 and would drastically limit both perficipants' agency and any creative potential developed. In *Perplexpedition*, avoiding this meant finding a way to approach potential perficipants without telling them exactly what was going to happen and led, over time, to the creation of the Ludic Menu, which contains a number of activities with names that offer

wide interpretative potential, such as *Attenborough for a Day*, and which I endeavoured to explain in as little detail as possible when answering perficipants' inevitable questions. In *Wandercast*, this mainly entailed finding a balance between the sections where I invite perficipants into ludic interactions with their environment (without fully detailing what perficipants might do) and sections where I allow perficipants to explore their responses to my invitations. In *Spinstallation*, the balance mainly manifests in my development of Ludic Tasks that form the last stage of the workshop and, as with the Ludic Menu, offer significant interpretative potential; for example, to "[interact] with an object, or an aspect or element of the environment in an unusual way" (S4).

As I also explained in 1.3.1, comparing the three strands in light of one another, and therefore comparatively evaluating each, is essential to answering the question of **how** to propagate ludic ecology through performance. Moreover, the balancing that characterises each strand, and therefore The Ludic Triangle overall, is a concrete example of the tension between structure and process that I argue is both fundamental to play(fulness) and enables this project to engage with Bateson's (1987) notion of a universal sacred. The contrasts and commonalities outlined in this Introduction to Part II have largely surfaced in hindsight as I have reflected upon the wholeness of The Ludic Triangle as well as on the angle that each strand provides. In the next three chapters, I look upon, and from, each angle individually.

Chapter 5: *Perplexpedition* Case Study

5.1: Introduction

This chapter focuses on the first of the three practical strands, *Perplexpedition*, which takes the form of a performance intervention into people's lives (in other words, LudicrousPilgrim accosts people in the street). This strand is first chronologically in that it was the first to be practically tested, but also first developmentally in that *Perplexpedition* has operated as the germination room for the project, where the first shoots emerged and grew into seedlings. As I noted in the Roadmap, at 1.6.1, this chapter transforms two important elements of the project's know-how into know-what: firstly, what tactics are likely to succeed in turning participants into perficipants and, secondly, what kind of approach best establishes aesthetic and affective continuity between the practice and its documentation. Both of these 'know-whats' have been influential in developing the project from an aesthetic as well as a pragmatic point of view. The first is essential for the practice to take place at all, so pertains directly to my role as perfilitator, which forms another prominent aspect of this chapter's analysis. The second indicates the fundamental and intrinsic importance of the role that documentation came to play within the project, which is why I term my documentation 'digital practice' and, owing also to the rich analytical potential of *Perplexpedition* video,[1] why I make close viewing of video this chapter's core mode of analysis.

I begin this chapter by addressing my initial perficipant creation technique. I then analyse the interactions that constitute *Perplexpedition*, and exist across all three strands, by integrating Fuchs & De Jaegher's (2009) *enactive intersubjectivity* into, and thereby expanding, Chapter 4's conceptual framework. The elements of my play(fulness)-as-

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[1] All videos referred to in this chapter are hosted in the *Perplexpedition* playlist on LudicrousPilgrim's YouTube channel here http://bit.ly/2qEslOw (PML\Perplexpedition Video). As intimated in the Introduction, digital-practice-as-documentation is integral to this project, which is especially so in this chapter. Engagement with the video content is necessary in order to fully appreciate my arguments. I include links to specific videos at the point of their inclusion.

philosophical-phenomenon argument that returns as this expansion takes place are both the notion that relations take primacy over relata and the strictly holistic nature of ecological systems; I argue that the irreducibility of the *Perplexpedition* ecology *performs* all involved. In the latter stages of the chapter, I address issues relating to practice research documentation and how the particularities of my approach address them, arguing that my *affective documentation* navigates a route between the differing positions of Piccini & Rye (2009) and Spatz (2015). I argue that this navigation establishes a novel position of my own, thereby demonstrating that my documentation practice contributes to knowledge. Again, as befits the ecological stance of this project, the elements of argument within this chapter are interwoven rather than strictly separated. When dealing directly with my practice, I often employ a conversational tone, so as to chime with the nature of *Perplexpedition*'s perfilitation.

> *Perplexpedition* is perplexing and it is an expedition.[2]

5.2: First Forays

According to the *Perplexpedition* page on my website:

> I go out and about and invite people to join me in doing playful (ludicrous) things like jumping over stuff, lying down and looking up, or running after brightly coloured bouncy balls. (LudicrousPilgrim, 2018: [online])

Let's see this in action.

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[2] I go on an expedition, i.e. I wander off somewhere, accost unwitting passers-by, and invite them to take part in some ludic (and ludicrous) activity. Quite understandably, people find this perplexing because it is a fairly unusual occurrence; the most common reason for being accosted in the street in the UK is a request for charitable giving. (This was amusingly subverted in South Africa when disabled comedian Laurence Clark was sat at a bus stop and someone put money in his sun hat [see Clark, 2012, *Charity Collection – Whole Sketch*], the difference being that Clark appears not to have approached anyone.) I have found that this common association has led to an instinctive negative reaction on the part of some potential participants, which has proved to be one of the major challenges in *Perplexpedition's* development. I am not saying that the British people are uncharitable by nature, but that in general there is a preference for charitable giving to be self-motivated and that many people associate unsolicited street interactions with being asked for money (which has a generally negative valence).

[Please watch **#1**[3] then pause and leave the video open in order to refer back to specific points]
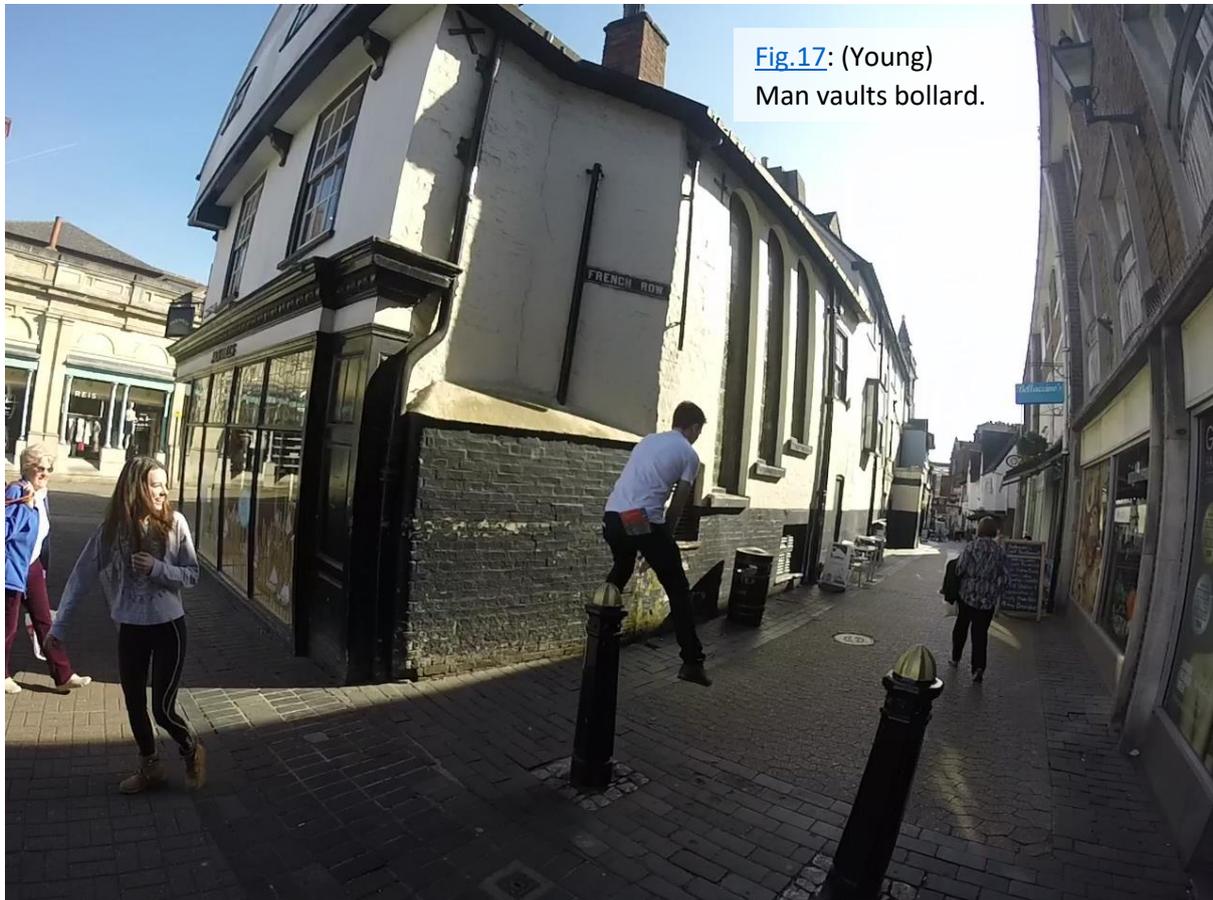
Fig.17: (Young) Man vaults bollard.

In this video, we see both LudicrousPilgrim's first successful solicitation of potential perficipants and my own first tentative steps towards the formation of my editing style.[4] Lavery (2005) argues that peripatetic performance offers an effective alternative to existing political performance paradigms through direct corporeal and affective engagement coupled with creative reappropriation of public space. I contend that these elements are present throughout each strand of this practice and are made visible in this chapter through

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[3] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/bollard-buddies-1/ (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#1 Bollard Buddies 1).

[4] I initially adopted this editing style mainly for my own amusement, engaging in a postmodern parody (Hutcheon, 1989) of the practice, i.e. sending it up whilst valorising it, showing that I was aware of all the stupid things I often do. As video editing is very time consuming, it was a way of keeping myself sane. I was pleasantly surprised when my supervisor, Nicola Shaughnessy, pointed out that my editing has affective and analytical value, terming it *affective documentation*.

video documentation. In #1, there is certainly direct corporeal and affective[5] engagement coupled with creative reappropriation of public space, since I'm pretty sure that those enormous bollards weren't installed for vaulting purposes. #1 also includes the first technique employed to create perficipants.

5.2.1: Initial Perficipant Creation Technique

A conversation between LudicrousPilgrim and the two perficipants begins the action, but this is actually their second conversation. The first conversation is referred to in the introductory titles (00:02) "I asked two people if they would like to be in a performance research film". Once the pair agreed, LudicrousPilgrim asked them to retrace their steps and approach (on seeing the thumbs-up signal [00:08]) as if we[6] had not met. This immediately places a frame around the interaction of the kind theorised by Goffman ([1974] 1986). Frame analysis posits that experience is organised according to frames, or schemata, which facilitate the interpretation of meaning and selection of appropriate actions (ibid: 21).[7] The pair implicitly and intuitively utilise a performance schema, performing versions of themselves who have not yet met LudicrousPilgrim, although in reality the pair are perfectly aware that they just have. I realised that this technique could have been signposted better in #1, so made sure to explicitly reference it in the #2 edit.

[To see how I did this, please watch **#2**[8] up to 00:10 (or watch the whole thing)]

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[5] Although I do not comment on this directly in the edit, there is a slight air of nervousness about the pair at the start (which is unsurprising because they do not yet know what they will be asked to do). The young woman relaxes when she discovers that the task is bollard-vaulting, something which she has done before; the young man remains nervous – apparently due to his (supposedly inflexible) trousers. However, all trace of nervousness is replaced by something more positive (could it be happiness?) when I reunite the young woman with her "five English pounds wrapped around two English pounds!"

[6] I refer to myself using personal pronouns or LudicrousPilgrim interchangeably. This is to highlight the fact that we are one and the same person, thus expressing an important element of popular performance that Double describes as the "(I)nterlacing of performer and role" (2017: 20–24).

[7] Another word for this might be 'context', which indicates resonances between Goffman's (1974) theory and Bateson's thinking (see 4.2.1 – 4.3.2). Indeed, Goffman makes extensive use of Bateson's work on play (Goffman, 1974: 40–82).

[8] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/bollard-buddies-2/ (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#2 Bollard Buddies 2).

Fig.18: Thumbs-up signal begins the performance.

this is their signal to approach

5.2.2: Play = Metacommunication?

As discussed in 4.2.1–4.2.2, Bateson describes play as defining and being defined by metacommunication: "(T)he playful nip denotes the bite, but it does not denote what would be denoted by the bite" (2000: 180). I agree that metacommunication signals play(fulness)'s evolutionary and philosophical importance; also, Bateson's definition may adequately explain playfighting and types of imaginative play. However, I am not convinced that it provides an exhaustive definition. In #1, all three interactors are under no illusions as to the fact that the unfolding event is play(ful), since each interactor is *Just Play*(ing) *Along*,[9] yet the actions engaged in denote exactly what is denoted by the actions which those actions denote. What is denoted by two young people performing themselves helping an idiot with

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[9] See 3.6.1 – 3.6.1.3 for a discussion of this element of my ludic pedagogy.

his PhD is the same as what two young people helping an idiot with his PhD denotes; namely, that they are lovely, open people. When the young man declares that they are having "a fun day" (00:18), he means exactly that. Furthermore, when we come to the interactors vaulting the bollard, all denoting goes out of the window entirely. Their actions do not denote vaulting a bollard, they simply are vaulting a bollard.[10] Still, this does not preclude the action from being play(ful).

By replaying our interaction we instantiate the frame 'this is performance' in parallel with 'this is play(fulness)'.[11] In fact, the dual framing of 'this is play(fulness)' and 'this is performance' always occurs within *Perplexpedition*, which significantly complexifies matters and is an example of the layering of context that I described at the end of 4.4.1; I take the concepts of 'frame' and 'context' to be broadly analagous. I argue that this complexification increases the degree to which this work reveals and exemplifies reality-constructing processes, thus heightening this philosophical aspect of play(fulness) and potentially fostering Bogost's "worldfulness" (2016: 218–224) by revealing worldly structure.[12]

Rather than being defined as, and by, metacommunication, I argue that interactions such as #1 take the form of a metalogue (on play[fulness]), which Bateson describes as that which addresses "a problematic subject" not only directly through its content, but also indirectly through the structure of the exchange (2000: 1). As suggested in 1.3.2, this writing, and the project overall, can be seen as a metalogue on play(fulness), which is undoubtedly a problematic subject given that it remains enigmatic despite extensive investigation (Sutton-Smith, 1997; Burghardt, 2005). This project resembles a metalogue since it has play(fulness) running through every aspect of its structure, from the practice to the writing.

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[10] One could argue that vaulting a bollard denotes what vaulting a bollard would denote without my imposition of the play frame because it would instantiate its own play frame, i.e. vaulting a bollard denotes play(fulness). However, it nonetheless does so without denoting another action, and thus remains problematic for Bateson's definition. For an example of a play(ful) simulation which denotes vaulting a bollard, see Freddie's jump in http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-family-vault/ (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#3 The Family Vault).

[11] 'This is performance' instantiates automatically when the perficipants repeat their actions in the knowledge that this should be done "as if we haven't met". 'This is play(fulness)', however, requires both subtlety of perfilitation and perfilitator confidence (see 3.6.1.2). I argue that performance-frames are more robust, and less likely to shatter, than play(fulness)-frames.

[12] See Chapter 4 for these aspects of the project.

5.3: Interactions – Enactive Intersubjectivity

In setting out how *Perplexpedition* creates perficipants, and sketching the ways in which its framings operate as this occurs, I have not only articulated an important element of this project's know-how, but also given a concrete example of how my practice problematises established play theory. In this section, I theorise the interactions that *Perplexpedition* instigates. An enactive approach is useful here. Enactive cognition meshes well with my Conceptual Framework, as it conceives of living things as constituting (and constituted by) interacting systems that engage in "structural coupling" (Varela, Thompson & Rosch, 1993: 151) with their environment, which includes each other. The notion of structure both indicates how interaction mutually modifies interactors over time and signals enactivism's usefulness in investigating the structure of performative ludic-environmental interactions.

Importantly, Varela, Thompson & Rosch foreground the role of a system's history in shaping its interaction dynamics (i.e. patterning) and its apprehension of meaning (ibid: 151–157). The former resonates both with Bateson's notion that "(I)t is the *context* which evolves" (2000: 155 – emphasis original), i.e. the relationships internal to the overall coupled system, and my argument that the level of individuals' predisposition to play(fulness) has a significant impact on this project.[13] The latter resonates with Bateson's core postulate that life operates according to "[differences] which [make] a difference" (2000: 315), i.e. those which have meaning relative to systems.[14]

To this dynamical systems approach of enaction theory was added a phenomenological aspect by Thompson (2007), which further increases its appropriateness here, since this project uses perficipant and perfilitator experiences of ludic interaction in order to shed light on the phenomena involved. I do not draw extensively on Thompson (2007), as the work aims to explain, or elucidate, consciousness, whereas this project adopts Bateson's broader concept of mind.[15] Instead, I use Fuchs & De Jaegher's (2009 – hereafter F&DJ) framework of *enactive intersubjectivity* to theorise the interactions generated. F&DJ,

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[13] In this blog post, I discuss how this insight of Bateson's facilitates a critique of Whorf's (1956) theory of language and cognition. See 4.3.1 for my argument regarding individuals' pre-existing ludic dispositions.
[14] See A4.1 for additional detail on Batesonian difference.
[15] However, I do endorse Thompson's (2007) aim of bringing scientific and philosophical inquiry into mutually beneficial cross-pollination, although I would add also artistic inquiry into the mix.

too, combine phenomenological and dynamical systems approaches, allowing interaction processes to be described in terms of coupled systems and also experientially. Although I cannot report the perficipants' experiences directly,[16] and although I necessarily have a different experience as a perfilitator, the fact that I am present within each interaction allows for an insider perspective (cf. Nelson, 2013).

[Please now watch **#3CSV**[17] (Case Study Version) and pause at (1)][18]

5.3.1: Mutual Incorporation & Participatory Sense-Making

Mutual incorporation is a central tenet of enactive intersubjectivity, belonging to the phenomenological half of the theory. For F&DJ, social interactions involve the decentring of each interactor's operative intentionality,[19] which means that each "body is…in an ambiguous state, fluctuating between the incorporated body of the other and [its] own embodied position" (2009: 474). This is a fluid and dynamic process which can ebb and flow in terms of the level of incorporation; if this level exceeds a certain threshold, then the interaction process itself, the in-between, can be said to become the source of operative

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[16] The impromptu nature of the intervention makes it unfeasible to collect self-report data, although I do collect such data in respect of *Wandercast* and *Spinstallation*. The triangulatory approach to practice in this PaR allows for different kinds of data to be gathered and so develop a multifaceted understanding of the nexus of performance, play(fulness), and ecology.

[17] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyIbAZn3HlQ (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#3 The Family Vault CASE STUDY VERSION).

[18] I refer to this in the edit as my "first playful commission" because this was the first, and so far only, time that perficipants had volunteered themselves and asked to join in with the project. #1-3 all took place on the same afternoon. The family that you see in #3 had been sat outside a café just along the narrow pedestrian street from the oversized bollards and had evidently been watching proceedings with interest. (You can occasionally see a blackboard with some chairs behind it in #1 and #2, which is the café where the family are sat. See Fig.18.) I had noticed that they, especially the dad, were looking over at what was going on, but I was unsure as to whether they were slightly annoyed at the ludic behaviour (although the participants and I had been making no more noise than normal conversation). I was thinking of moving on when the dad caught my eye and made a gesture that seemed to say "I'm just going inside…" (presumably to pay) "…then I'll be over". I returned a gesture that said "OK", whilst thinking I must have misread what he meant. But no! A couple of minutes later he brought his youngest son over to join in. I had a flash of inspiration to offer the son the opportunity to wear the GoPro and become the first participant to document their own performance (although I did not use those words at the time).

[19] Operative intentionality is a term borrowed from Merleau-Ponty, who adopted it from Husserl. It refers to the prereflective connection between body and environment that arises from the inseparability of perception and action (Merleau-Ponty, [1945] 2012: 139–140).

intentionality as the bodies' fluctuations become mutually incorporated (ibid: 476).[20] Incorporation resonates strongly with Kershaw's (2015) notion of being performed by ecologies, as both highlight the contingent and distributed nature of agency; moreover, as noted in my Introduction, Reason (2017b) argues that arts-participation phenomenally both decentres and intensifies,[21] suggesting that participatory performance may often exceed F&DJ's threshold. *Perplexpedition*, I argue, demonstrates that ludic-participatory performance's unpredictability affords particularly dynamic, immediate, and intense instances of incorporation.[22]

Not that synergy has taken place by (1), but we can see that I am not in control of the interaction. I am not operating from a detached perspective, employing representations to make sense of and act within this situation, as cognitivism would have us believe; events are moving too fast for that to be possible.[23] I did not offer the idea of the warm up for Freddie;[24] this is the dad's idea but I run with it, although this is not to infer any conscious action on my part. One of the most valuable aspects of enactive intersubjectivity is that it provides a rigorous and detailed framework with which to analyse how interactions take on a life of their own, hence its being incorporated into my conceptual framework.

On the dynamical systems side of the theory, enactive intersubjectivity builds upon earlier work by De Jaegher & Di Paolo (2007) on *participatory sense-making*, which frames

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[20] Note the parallel with Bateson's argument that no part of a system, nor any one system in a coupling, can unilaterally control any other (see 4.3.1, A4.1, and Bateson, 2000: 315).

[21] See 1.2.3 & 1.4.2 respectively for intensification and decentring.

[22] I am not arguing that *Perplexpedition* is a superior form of performance, only that it offers particular qualities of decentring experience and that it roots these in environments without prior performance associations. Reason's (2017b) example is of a community choir, which would arguably produce more sustained decentring experiences facilitated by the stability of musical structure. However, I suggest that one is unlikely to experience decentring for the entire duration of even one song, owing to the ebb and flow of incorporation, as Reason himself notes (ibid: 45). Furthermore, there is likely to be a considerable period before any experience of decentring, since being unsure of the words, for example, is almost certain to preclude its occurrence. Whilst ebb and flow of incorporation undoubtedly occurs in *Perplexpedition* also, and whilst some iterations will involve higher levels than others, *Perplexpedition*'s simplicity entails that mutual incorporation can arise rapidly and play(fulness)'s unpredictability necessitates significant dynamism from all involved. To reiterate: not better, but different (and equally valuable).

[23] An advocate of cognitivist theories of intersubjectivity, such as simulation theory (which holds that we use first-person models to create third-person simulations of others' mental states), might retort that representational processes can take place in the subpersonal sphere, thereby arguing that one need not be aware of them in order to make use of them. However, as Gallagher (2007) observes, this is an illegitimate move because simulations are personal-level concepts; they presuppose a person who is doing the simulating.

[24] He says his name at 00:40, in case you were wondering how I knew. Also, so as to allay any fears that I may have breached research ethics by asking his name, I point out that Freddie retains his anonymity more than the rest of his family by virtue of the fact that you never see his cheeky little face.

the issue central to social cognition[25] (i.e. the mental processes that facilitate and arise from interaction) as "how meaning is generated and transformed in the interplay between the unfolding interaction process and the individuals engaged in it" (2007: 485). It is clear that by (1), the generation of meaning within the interaction has been achieved in participatory fashion, as opposed to any one interactor bringing preconceived notions to bear upon it. Whilst the activity was my pre-formulated idea, which I framed as having gravity by calling it Freddie's "big moment" (00:25), it suddenly becomes a gymnastic extravaganza with the addition of a warm-up.
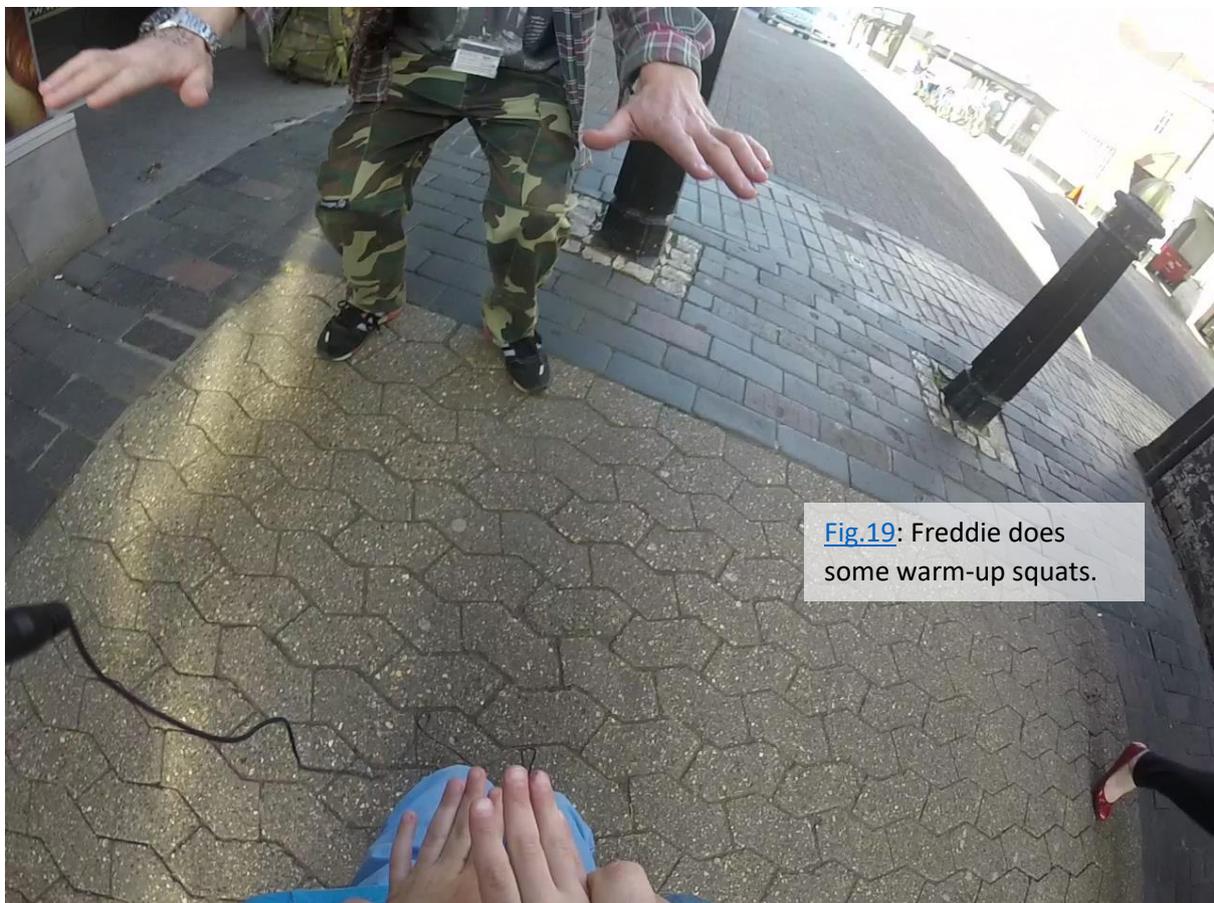
Fig.19: Freddie does some warm-up squats.

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[25] See 3.6.1.3 for how social cognition is implicated in ludic pedagogy.

5.3.2: Play World vs. Real World

This is what Huizinga would describe as "stepping out of 'real' life into a temporary sphere of activity" (1970: 26). I argued in Chapter 2, however, that this view is not tenable, since there is (and can be) only one reality. I argue that this project instantiates play(fulness) that complexifies reality by bifurcating and layering perficipants' world-engagement such that the subjunctive (i.e. a team of gymnasts) synchronously co-exists with the indicative (i.e. a family on a day out). They are not really a team of gymnasts, but they are really pretending that they are, and both constitute reality with equivalence in that moment.[26]

According to what Wittgenstein terms "noticing an aspect"[27] ([1953] 1967: 193), I argue that their experience of that particular environment is likely changed in a way which modestly enriches it in a pleasurable, positive way. Wittgenstein first characterised the phenomenon thus: "I contemplate a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I *see* that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience 'noticing an aspect'" (ibid – emphasis original). In similar fashion, the experience of *Perplexpedition* hopefully leads perficipants to see ludic affordances that previously went unnoticed, yet were always really there. When perficipants enact a ludic affordance, as suggested in 1.4.2, this manifests a "minimalist unit of performing" (Kershaw, 2015: 131), which participates in potential recalibration of their environmental relations. As noted in 4.4.1, affordances cannot exist in isolation (Turner, 2005: 798), which indicates that the events of *Perplexpedition* involve a web of affordances and minimalist units.

I further argue that this aspect need not primarily relate to motor-action (cf. Rietveld & Kiverstein, 2014), which means that it might not result in overt behaviour, and, in a group situation, a perficipant need not play a 'lead role' in the *Perplexpedition* for possible recalibration to occur. Participation in the structure and experience of *Perplexpedition* may be enough to colour future experiences of that environment, and possibly bollards in general, with a ludic tint.[28] Although it is a vexed notion (Dinishak, 2013), 'noticing an

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[26] See 2.4 for more on my equivalence argument.

[27] This is the phenomenon that informs Wittgenstein's famous use of the duck-rabbit drawing (1967: 194). The same image can be seen as a duck or a rabbit; the image itself does not change when one's perception of what it represents changes, shifting from one animal to the other.

[28] For evidence as to the plausibility of my practice colouring future experiences, see 6.4 – 6.5. *Wandercast* is the strand where it has been possible to gather post-perficipation self-report data.

aspect' offers a useful exemplification of world-engagement bifurcation. The indicative, i.e. the unchanged face or the functional environment, remains intact, yet the subjunctive, i.e. the face's likeness or the environment's ludic potential, now co-exists with it. Bollards both are and are not gymnastic apparatus.

[Please continue **#3CSV**, pausing at (2)]

Fig.20: Freddie gets a new name.

Here the mum becomes actively involved, adding to the play(fulness) of the performance being co-created by offering the moniker "Ready Freddie" for her youngest. This has the ring of a family nickname for Freddie, but this does not detract from the spontaneously co-created nature of the event, nor its play(fulness); repetition is a commonly recognised component of play (e.g. Burghardt, 2010b: 15; Goffman, 1974: 42). The introduction of a (probably) pre-existing play(ful) motif arguably grounds the experience in a historical

framework that might make this *Perplexpedition* more memorable for the family. F&DJ make clear that enactive intersubjectivity does not imply any break with interactors' dispositions and developmental histories. Interactors bring all this with them into the interaction, which is influenced by the interplay between their histories as well as novel, in-the-moment developments, the accretion of which constitute the history of the particular interaction, which also becomes a factor the longer the interaction is sustained (2009: 471, 476–477).

5.3.3: Coordinated With & Coordinated To

Fig.21: Siblings perpetuate the play(fulness).

dad's got all the great ideas!

Although the other two children are not directly involved at this stage, they are attentive to what is going on and so can be said to be perpetuating the play(fulness), even if they are not currently co-creating it. I suggest that this is a concrete example of play(fulness)-as-affective-atmosphere, as I outlined in 2.4. Here we see the "singular [quality]" of

play(fulness) "[emanating] from but exceeding the assembling" (Anderson, 2009: 80) of Freddie, his mum, dad, and myself – i.e. the individuals who have become directly involved in the interaction so far – and affecting also Freddie's two siblings. (To clarify, for me, most fundamental is not the individuals assembled per se but the evolving relations that constitute this assembling.) When we see them briefly (00:30), Freddie's sister is laughing and his older brother is recording the event on his phone. Both are clearly engaged in the event. Instead of being *coordinated with* the other interactors, as occurs in full mutual incorporation, the other two children, or certainly the daughter, can be said to be *coordinated to* the ongoing interaction. In dynamical systems terms, this is where one (or more) coupled system(s) is guided by the actions of one (or more) other system(s) in the coupling (F&DJ, 2009: 472–474). A common example would be a lone individual watching a football match on television. The football game system guides the action of the viewer system, leading to the viewer system making impulsive movements which imitate or anticipate those of the players and perhaps shouting at the screen. The viewer is *coordinated to* the football game because all effects are unidirectional; the viewer's action makes no direct impact upon the football game.[29]

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[29] The viewer does make an indirect effect on the game, however, especially if they have paid a subscription to a media company in order to view the match, as this has an effect on the wider ecology of the sport. I limit the unidirectionality to which I refer only to the level of description which includes the television image and the viewer. As I argued in Chapter 4, all systems (apart from the universe, or perhaps multiverse) are subsystems and are ultimately contingent in some way.

5.3.4: Popular Performance & Participatory Sense-Making 2

[Please continue **#3CSV**, pausing at (3)]

: LudicrousPilgrim makes a bad joke.

that is a poor joke right there
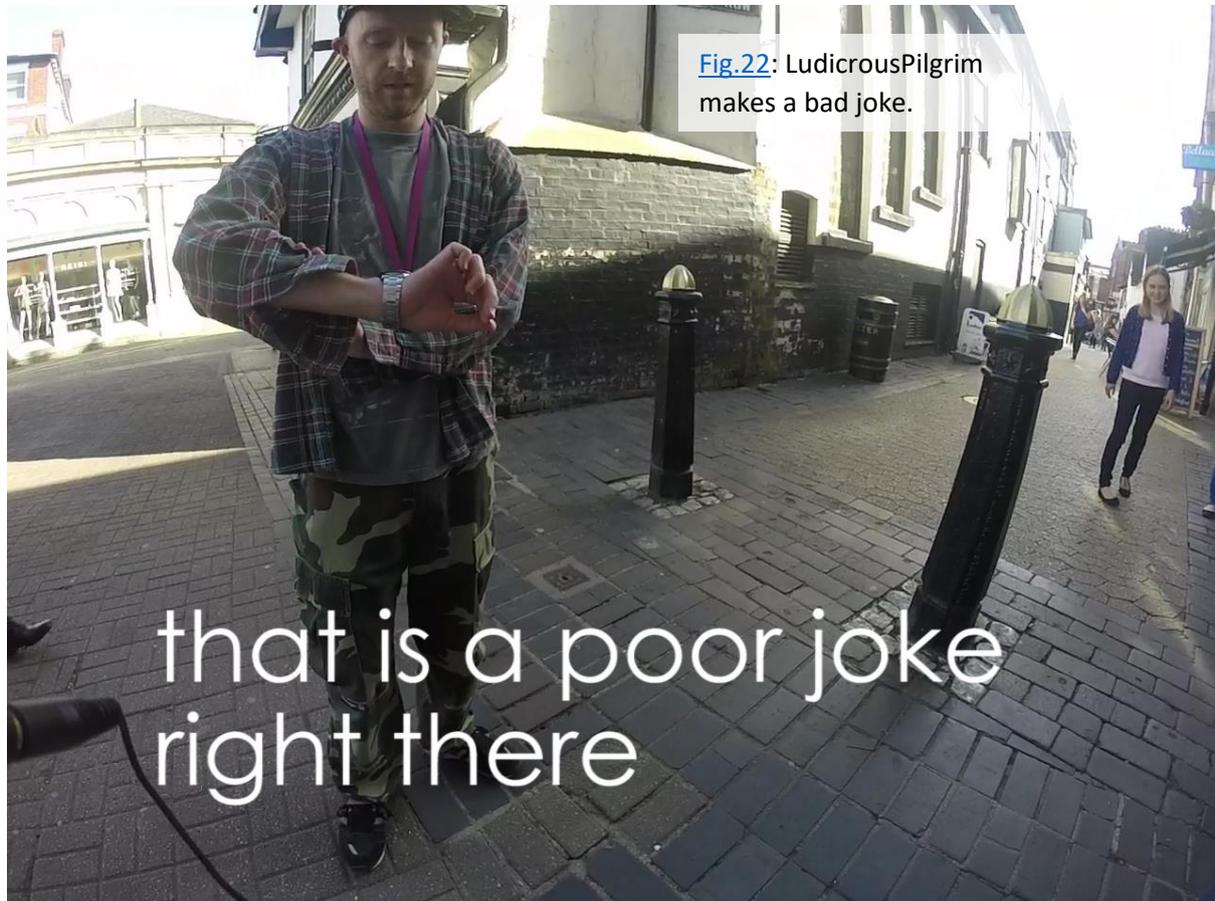
I make an appalling joke, inferring that Freddie is actually a diminutive adult who should be in the office, but one very much in keeping with the 'popular' pillar of my performance methodology. Rather than my stand-up comedy training, this kind of approach owes more to my experience as a children's entertainer;[30] this followed my stand-up training chronologically, however, so was undoubtedly influenced by it. This is not the place for an in-depth discussion of the ethics of children's entertainment, but my joke is a characteristic example of the kind of uncomplicated humour often aimed at young children.

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[30] I worked for an events company that also specialised in parties for the children of the super-rich. Highlights included: playing a talking camel for an Aladdin panto season in a Canary Wharf investment bank, almost dying of heat exhaustion in a gorilla costume at a party for the child of a Russian oligarch at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, and giving a taxi tour of London sites of Harry-Potter-interest as a C-list Hogwarts wizard.

This is also another clear example of participatory sense-making. It would not be accurate to attribute development of the play(fulness) to any one interactor. I argue that this exemplifies our ecological embeddedness, discussed in Chapter 4, by instantiating a heightened decentring situation which reveals the interactors' always-already-contingent agency. This is also an example of what Haraway calls "*sym-poiesis*", or "making-together" (2015: 260).[31] Sym-poiesis stresses the vital implication of the environment in human acts of creativity, so meshes well with my ecological framework. The dad perpetuates the idea that his son is actually an office worker by saying that he has "just popped out for a coffee" (01:25). Here we see the environment's direct implication in the performance's ongoing co-creation because this is exactly what the family were doing prior to engaging in *Perplexpedition*![32]

Haraway sees sym-poiesis as an almost inherently ludic act, arguing that playing together "makes possible futures out of joyful but dangerous presents" (2015: 260), which evokes play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity, i.e. perceiving possibilities, and simultaneously alludes to its pedagogical positioning.[33] Both subjunctivity and metacommunication are clearly at work here, since the dad and I see Freddie simultaneously as both child and office-worker and since we instantiate logical paradox; just as the play(ful) nip is not the bite, the ludic admonishment of an errant office-worker-child is not a matter for ACAS. This demonstrates how ludic-environmental interactions exemplify these fundamental reality-structuring processes, as argued in Chapter 4.

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[31] Haraway attributes the term's coining to Dempster (1998).

[32] Of course, a coffee shop is a human construction, yet interacts with and depends upon the wider natural world of coffee plants and cows etc., so instantiates our dependence upon the more-than-human world which Haraway addresses (2015: 260). Furthermore, had that coffee shop not have been there, and had the family not frequented it, I maintain that it is less likely that the dad would have implicated popping out for a coffee in the performance.

[33] The notion of a dangerous present arguably echoes the idea that the present is uncertain, since uncertainty increases risk. See Chapter 3 for a discussion of how ludic pedagogy addresses this situation.

5.3.5: Enactive Intersubjectivity 2

[Please continue **#3CSV**, pausing at (4)][34]

Fig.23: The dad completes my sentence.

well saved, dad

The unpredictability of in-the-moment developments, which must be responded to, and the interactor plasticity demanded by the fact that no-one can exert unilateral control increase interactional skill as the process evolves. This promotes the development of "implicit relational knowing" (F&DJ, 2009: 471), which I argue is in evidence by (4). When I realise that by referring to the older brother's imminent "attempt" (01:56) I leave open the possibility that he might not succeed,[35] I aim to make amends immediately but do not

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[34] I am aware that I have decided which are the important sections of this video and sped up those which I deem to be of little consequence. As such, this cannot be regarded as an objective rendering of the event. I will address issues pertaining to the documentary status of these videos shortly, but suffice to say that an objective rendering was not my intention, neither do I deem such a thing to be possible.

[35] Which, of course, he might not. This is could be considered a paradigm example of the riskiness of play which Huizinga refers to as "uncertainty, chanciness; a striving to decide the issue and so end it" (1970: 29).

complete my sentence before the dad pipes up with "success" (02:01) and saves the day. Completing my sentence is a clear example of enactive intersubjectivity, I argue; mutual incorporation and participatory sense-making must both be in operation for this to occur. We can also see my developing editing style as I refer to my mistake with the on-screen title "oops" (01:57).

5.3.6: Popular Performance 2

[Please recommence **#3CSV**, pausing at (5)]

Fig.24: LudicrousPilgrim asks Freddie if his dad should have a go.

Fig.24 shows another classic tactic from children's entertainment. If you ask children whether their parents should become involved, it is very likely they will answer

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However, it is a major role of the perfilitator to support perficipants in their risky endeavours and one of the most important ways of doing that is to show complete confidence in them (see also 3.6.1.2).

affirmatively. Notice that Freddie responds largely with gesture and physical contact yet it is perfectly clear what his intentions are. Also, children tend to greatly enjoy seeing their parents take part in play(ful) activity. Indeed, we hear a gleeful laugh from Freddie in anticipation of his dad's feat (02:39).

5.3.7: Perficipant Change & Gymnastic Gymkhana

[Please continue **#3CSV**, pausing at (6)]

Fig.25: The dad has a tech rehearsal.
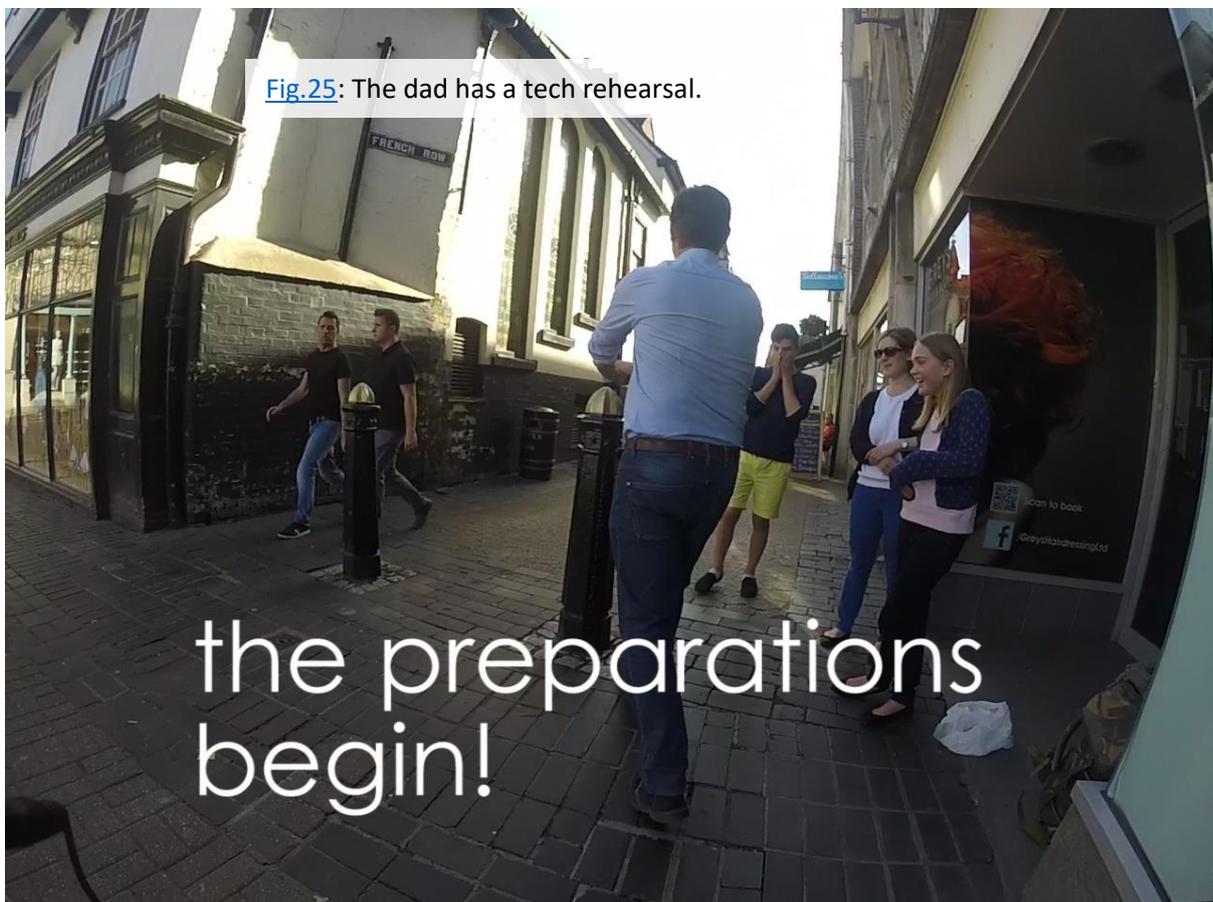
Here, as with his elder son before him, we see the dad about to do something he would clearly not normally do; he even says that the prospect is "horrendous" (02:47). I argue that both have been performed into personal change by the process of the interaction. F&DJ describe this process as "entering into uncharted terrain, not just spatially but temporally, personally and affectively as well" (2009: 476); we may make assumptions about an

interaction, but its trajectory, outcomes, and effects remain fundamentally uncertain.[36] The elder son appeared apprehensive before vaulting the bollard, backing right up against the wall of the shop, which I pick up on ironically in the titles: "look! He looks so up for it" (01:48). However, he is pleased as punch after his bollard-vaulting experience (02:15). It may be that the risks involved in the play(ful) activities of my project lead to more enjoyment in hindsight than in the moment of their enaction. I do not see this as a problem; it could even be considered a strength, since it means that the affective experience continues to have an impact beyond the bounds of the performance.

The question remains, however: will the dad vault the bollard?

[Please recommence **#3CSV** and watch to the end]

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[36] I argue that the uncertainty of interactions is heightened in play(fulness) and that this has pedagogical value (see Chapter 3). I also note, in 2.3, that this episode unsettles scientific notions of play, since the dad appears to enjoy his overall performance despite his use of the word "horrendous"; objective adjudications on subjective notions such as 'pleasure' seem problematic in such contexts.

Fig.26: An abortive attempt.

A late development of the ludicrous performance co-created through this interaction comes when the dad makes his initial approach, only to back away at the last minute. As he does so he says "refusal" (03:01), adding a further playful twist to proceedings by now referring to himself as a horse. The gymnastic extravaganza has become a gymkhana!

5.3.8: Incorporation of the Environment

F&DJ also use the language of incorporation to describe interactions with one's physical environment (2009: 472–473). According to this phenomenological description, one's lived body extends to incorporate that with which one is interacting, whether it be a person with whom one is conversing (mutual incorporation) or an object or construct in the physical environment such as a bollard. However, F&DJ stress that, in an interaction such as vaulting a bollard, all environmental elements implicated in the interaction must be incorporated into what they, following Viktor Weizsäcker (1940), call the "sensorimotor gestalt cycle"

(2009: 473). When the dad incorporates only the bollard, he is unable to vault it, causing his equine refusal. Yet, when he incorporates his approach, the bollard, his leap, and onward trajectory he (just about) manages it.[37]

Fig.27: Dad vaults bollard.

I must be clear that incorporation does not imply any recourse to representationalism. I hold that one does not construct representations of one's interactions; interactions are lived. Incorporation is a function of one's ecological relations with one's surroundings, be they with physical objects or other agents (F&DJ, 2009: 473). One both changes and is changed by the interactions that one has with one's environment.

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[37] This is not to say that any and every attempt which incorporates all the relevant aspects of the agent-environment interaction will be successful. The sensorimotor gestalt cycle implicitly involves the agent's physical body and its movement capabilities (F&DJ, 2009: 473). It is entirely possible that an agent will have an over-inflated sense of their own physical capabilities or underestimate the distances involved and so will fail to vault the bollard (or whatever the interaction may be). This is an error of judgement, however, as opposed to a failure to fully incorporate all relevant aspects of the agent-environment relation.

Change occurs in both directions, to agent and environment, but often the change will be more marked in one direction. For example, one might injure oneself as one vaults a bollard,[38] or one might knock the bollard over. This project facilitates interactions, the enactment of which involve the ludic recalibration of one's environmental relationships.

I have shown that the interactions that constitute *Perplexpedition* bear out my notion of play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity, as the interactors engage the world subjunctively and indicatively simultaneously; for instance, by being and not being gymnasts (5.3.2). Play(fulness)-as-affective-atmosphere is also in evidence when the ongoing play(fulness) affects the elder son and daughter without either of them contributing directly to the developing interaction (5.3.3). I have discussed my role as perfilitator; for example, how it has been influenced by my experience of children's entertainment (5.3.4 & 5.3.6), which evidences the effect of personal history on the project's development, as discussed in Chapter 3. Throughout, my focus has been on the interactions and relations that make up *Perplexpedition*, so as to show that profound patterns-which-connect, such as play(fulness), are best thought of and investigated relationally, as this allows for insights into the fundamentals at play in such phenomena. A key fundamental revealed and foregrounded by the *Perplexpedition* side of The Ludic Triangle has been the strictly holistic and performative nature of ecological systems in that they are irreducible to their parts and *perform* those who co-constitute them.

5.4: Practical Processes

Having analysed the interactions facilitated by *Perplexpedition*, I shift my analytical focus onto the documentation itself and my editing style, which we see develop from #1–3, and how this teases out the various processes at work as well as introducing another ludic dimension to the practice. I first outline the critical importance of documentation processes to *Perplexpedition*, and by extension to The Triangle as a whole; documentation has been developed as part of the practice from the outset rather than as an afterthought. I then

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[38] Fingers crossed that doesn't ever happen during *Perplexpedition*(!), although I do have a first aid kit.

sketch some issues common to practice research in general, introduce Piccini & Rye's (2009) position, and outline my response to it, as embodied by *Perplexpedition* documentation. After this, in subsections 5.4.4 – 5.4.6.1, I undertake a close viewing analysis of *Perplexpedition #10: The Legendary Trio* in order to explore in detail the particularities of my approach, focusing on how this approach both constitutes and facilitates analysis, particularly with regard to the balancing acts and managed ambiguity that I discussed in the Introduction to Part II. I end the chapter by introducing Spatz's (2015) position, contrasting it with Piccini & Rye's (2009), and explaining how my approach navigates to a novel position that is of value to the field of practice research.

The straight-forward, factual introductions that we see in *Perplexpedition #1&2* are replaced in #3 by one which still imparts the requisite information for viewers to make sense of the video, but in more ludic fashion; I refer to my "first playful commission" (00:02) and describe "entering into unknown playful territory" (00:08). This slightly ambiguous and idiosyncratic approach quickly became a hallmark of the video documentation, reflecting my approach to *Perplexpedition's* perfilitation. As we shall shortly see, managed ambiguity serves to balance the provision of information to perficipants with the preservation of their agency within the interaction.

5.4.1: Introducing Intrasubjectivity

The creation of videos is structurally fundamental to *Perplexpedition*, offering far more than the documentation requisite for PaR, and even aiding perficipant recruitment.[39] The video

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[39] The video camera is a difficult issue to tackle. If I say "excuse me, would you like to take part in some performance research I'm doing?" without mentioning the camera and they agree, then I say "would it be ok for me to film it?" there is a significant chance that people will think I have been underhand and am trying to coerce them, which may cause them to withdraw consent. This is the approach I took on 13/04/15 (the day before #1–3 were created) and it was not successful. Although approaching people with the camera already rolling would adhere to research ethics, since participants would be recorded giving (or withholding) consent, this would contravene my ethics as a performer and is unlikely to be productive. I have found people to be most amenable when being totally up-front, saying "excuse me, would you like to take part in a performance research film I'm making?" Although it is completely unfeasible to isolate whether I frame *Perplexpedition* as the making of a film from the outset as an independent variable, the camera does appear to lend some

editing process, a practice in its own right which forms *Perplexpedition's* tertiary stage,[40] has allowed me to explore my role as perfilitator and to deploy my own *intrasubjectivity*,[41] as I comment on my own performance as well as those of perficipants. I define intrasubjectivity as interaction between various subjective modes or viewpoints within the individual, which manifests here as dialectic interplay between my affective and cognitive engagement in the moment of interaction with perficipants and that of my later interaction with the raw footage. This dialectic interplay teases out interaction-processes at work within the performances and provokes the emergence of an additional ludic dimension.

The practice of adopting and blurring multiple subjective viewpoints is exemplified by my "interlacing" (Double, 2017: 22) the personae of LudicrousPilgrim and the Editor, each of whom can act both playfully and in a matter-of-fact manner, depending on the circumstances. This notion of intrasubjectivity is also reflected throughout the project in the multiple roles that I play: practitioner, researcher, and myself (who-or-what-ever that is). Furthermore, I deem intrasubjectivity necessary for lone Playfulness, i.e. playing with oneself, since the cognitive complexity of Playfulness requires interplay between multiple 'selves', or facets of oneself, as I discussed in 2.4. The processes and products of this

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credibility to the practice. People seem to feel that because there will be an end product (i.e. a film), as opposed to the fleeting ephemera of live performance, there is more reason to engage in totally afunctional, ludicrous activity.

[40] I mean this in a number of ways. The planning and preparatory work, including the associated literature-based research, form *Perplexpedition's* primary processes. The live practice is the strand's secondary stage. The editing process is tertiary in the sense that raw footage requires work to turn it into a film; I film one continuous take which cannot capture the beginning of the interaction (see footnote 40), so the footage requires a certain degree of contextualisation at the very least. It is also tertiary in the sense that the editing renders the practice accessible to those not present in the moment of its enaction. In a way it packages the practice for consumption by translating my subjective experience of the interaction into a medium which allows it to be engaged with by others, thus rendering it accessible. In a closely related sense, the editing is tertiary because it allows for the dissemination of the practice and its tactics. A tertiary aim of the project overall is the wider development of a ludic ecology, which the edited video facilitates.

[41] This concept draws on Mercer's notion of "intramental activity", which refers to individual cognition, as opposed to the "intermental activity" that occurs in social interaction (2013: 148 – see also 3.6.1.3). Also at play here is Herman, Kempen, & van Loon's concept of the *dialogic self*, in which the self is not unitary and rationalistic but constructed from a "multiplicity of dialogically interacting selves" and thus in constant flux (1992: 23). (The concept of the dialogic self is a development of Bakhtin's conceptual frameworks.) Whilst I am bracketing out a full discussion of the nature of the self, the notion of the self as dialogical and "social, with the other not outside but in the self-structure" (ibid), meshes neatly with both enactive intersubjectivity, since the latter entails the co-determining of the self by the other (F&DJ, 2009: 477), and my Bateson-inspired ecological approach, since this views the individual mind as a dynamic subsystem of a the universal Mind which is "immanent in the total interconnected social system and planetary ecology" (2000: 467). Our conception of self could perhaps be regarded as operating like a centre of gravity (cf. Dennett, 2003). Intrasubjectivity also raises the possibility of amusing oneself, which would not be possible if the self were unitary and therefore incapable of interacting with itself.

documentation together drive the project forward whilst simultaneously affording both detailed analysis, as seen throughout this chapter, and dissemination of the PaR to audiences within the academy as well as far beyond via online platforms.

5.4.2: Problematics of Documentation

Before diving back into the videos, a note on the rationale behind them and the inherent problematics of PaR documentation. The live practice of this strand is accessible only to those lucky enough to be spontaneously accosted by LudicrousPilgrim; any prior knowledge of the project will irrevocably bias the interaction, so it cannot be done to order. Additionally, as I suggested in the section above, interaction does not involve the individualistic formation and manipulation of detached representations. As F&DJ emphasise, "(W)ho each is within the interaction is already affected by the other" (2009: 476), since they form parts of the same system. Because these points are fundamental to the operation of *Perplexpedition*, any quasi-objective observation of the live practice cannot offer a full understanding of it. *Perplexpedition* is not a spectacle to be observed, it is an experience to be lived.

However, this presents an interesting yet common difficulty when it comes to the inescapable requirement for the documentation and archivability of PaR. How to access the inaccessible? Out of this difficulty comes one of this project's epistemic contributions: the addition of a novel position and practice to the debate on PaR documentation. By making documentation integral and internal to the practice, I argue that I produce documents which satisfy many needs: academic, artistic, and disseminatory. Rather than chasing the impossibility of an objective document, I make observable my intrasubjective dialogue, thereby opening up my experience of the event for debate.

The problematics of PaR documentation, especially in performance, are so common as to be almost endemic, leading to Nelson's observation that "(B)y an informal consensus in the UK, ephemeral practice in the context of PaR PhD [sic] must be experienced live by the examiners" (2013: 105), thereby supposedly mitigating the problem. In *Perplexpedition's* case, this problem would appear intractable following my assertion that

this strand cannot be experienced live by anyone with prior knowledge of the project, which an examiner necessarily has. In light of this, and bearing in mind Reason's assertion that no documentation of performance can deliver "completeness, neutrality, and accuracy" (2003: 87), I have embraced my subjective perspective. *Perplexpedition* videos are intended to stand as artworks in their own right, combining documentation and analysis with ironic parody whilst embodying coherent visual and ludic(rousPilgrim) aesthetics.

[In order to appreciate the difference made by the editing process, please now watch **#10 UNCUT**[42] then **#10**[43] and compare the two][44]

5.4.3: Aesthetic and Narrative Continuity

Although above I present these videos as artworks in their own right, I want to contest Piccini & Rye's dictum that PaR documentation, specifically video, "must operate according to its own aesthetic and narrative logic. In short, it must be approached as a separate art work" (2009: 46). As I have already explained, the creation of these videos marks the tertiary stage for each episode of *Perplexpedition* (see footnote 41), yet there is no discontinuity between them and the rest of the practice; the fact that I frame the live

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[42] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBhDhbbBvWo (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#10 The Legendary Trio UNCUT).

[43] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-legendary-trio/ (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#10 The Legendary Trio).

[44] After Episode 4, I realised that the titles of the videos were a little unwieldy for an internet audience, so I replaced "Episode" in the title with "#", standing for 'number'. This facilitated the move, following #5, whereby I began to give each episode an actual name. Thus, #5.5 is called *The Big Show*, which will make sense if you watch #5 followed by #5.5 (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#5 Bouncy Time … #5.5 The Big Show). The method of naming is similar to that of sitcom episodes, providing an opportunity to add another layer of ludic aesthetic to the work. Originally, I left the titles as they were, i.e. not uniform, so as to preserve the quality of what Freeman terms *pentimento* in my PaR, which refers to previous versions of a painting becoming perceptible as the paint more recently applied becomes translucent over time (2010: *xii*). Since process is every bit as important as product in PaR, perhaps more so, I find Freeman's application of *pentimento* a valuable one, in which "half-thoughts and potential changes of mind [are] exposed rather than edited out" (ibid – see 7.1 for more discussion of *pentimento*). However, I subsequently decided to retrospectively change all the video titles to make them uniform. The reason for this is to make keeping track of, and engaging with, the video content as straight-forward as possible for readers of this chapter.
I am aware that, strictly speaking, this footage is not quite uncut, since it features titles which top and tail it and is also a selection, i.e. an edit, of a longer piece of footage. There is a sense in which I could not help myself adding the playful titles at the beginning and end, but I also think it is important for the project to possess a coherent aesthetic, since it has one foot in the art world, as I shall discuss.

practice as the making of a "performance research film" attests to this (see). I agree with May's suggestion, following Borgdorff (2012), that "PaR takes place at the intersection of the art world and the academy" (2015: 62) and thus assert the necessity for the work to speak to both.

Consideration of the art world influenced the decision to create each video, and the project as a whole, according to specific aesthetics. Visually, this is the use of the Century Gothic font across all digital and print media,[45] with all text in monochrome. Conceptually, the project's aesthetic is my alter-ego LudicrousPilgrim, whose presence is felt from each practical strand to their documentation, and from the website to this writing.[46] The videos, therefore, do not 'operate according to their own aesthetic'. There are additional layers, but they all exhibit the same essential aesthetic. Similarly, the narrative I tell through the videos operates according to the same logic as that of my engagement in the moment; the live event's ludic, affective 'narrative' is teased out of the raw footage through editing. It is precisely my unabashed adoption of a subjective attitude to documentation that enables me to produce a "repeatable and reproducible trace" (Piccini & Rye, 2009: 49) which, though necessarily different, is an honest portrayal that retains the character of the original.

I am aware that my project is unusual, though I am not claiming unique, in that there is no performer/audience distinction. Further, the wearing of a head-mounted GoPro camera would not be suitable for every instance of PaR. Yet, I argue that the principle of seeking ways to integrate documentation into the making of the work whilst preserving aesthetic and narrative continuity with it can yield the 'repeatable and reproducible trace' which Piccini & Rye deem the false promise of PaR documentation.

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[45] You may have noticed that this visual aesthetic (i.e. Century Gothic) extends to the headings, but not the main body, of this writing. This is because Century Gothic can become tiring to read for extensive periods of time. Although the website font is also not Century Gothic, it was actually the website font which inspired my choice of Century Gothic for the rest of the project, as it is as close as I could get to the website font (which came set with the 'theme' that I purchased and which I do not have the expertise to change).

[46] Admittedly, in this writing the tension between aesthetic play(fulness) and academic acceptability often swings towards the latter; however, it is primarily this writing which secures the project's academic footing, so I propose that this weighting is justified.

5.4.4: Analysis

Another function of the videos, as previously mentioned, is analysis of the interaction. The editing process is simultaneously an analytical process, which, in turn, affords further analysis. I now explore how the editing process teases out the performance qualities and affective experiences of both perficipants and perfilitator, as well as passing judgement on the execution of my role.

[Please now watch **#10CSV**,<mark>47</mark> pausing at (1)]

5.4.4.1: Balancing Act

Fig.28: Female perficipant asks a question.

<mark>47</mark> See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUdF17TPdHM (PML\Perplexpedition Videos\#10 The Legendary Trio CASE STUDY VERSION).

The female perficipant asks a reasonable question relating to the practicalities of the activity, yet I answer via half a sentence, a thumbs up, and a subconscious shake of the head. As the Editor points out (00:31), this is something I did not notice until having viewed this section of footage many, many times. The Editor was not intentionally seeking the subconscious processes of my perfilitation. He picked it up because I endeavour to remain constantly alive to the potential of the footage while editing, using the interplay between my affective and cognitive engagement in the moment and my similar engagement in the editing process to conduct a close viewing that is simultaneously ludic, artistic, and analytical. In both cases, I characterise this as awareness-of-self-within-process, an attribute of Playfulness (see 2.4).

This interplay produces a kind of diachronic, intrasubjective participatory sense-making. In other words, I interact with myself across time in order to better understand the interaction of which I was part. I do my best not to actively seek play(fulness), nor to consciously analyse, instead allowing the aforementioned interplay to produce impulses to interact with the footage and following these when they arise. In this instance, I replay my response to the perficipant's question to recreate the double-take I did during editing as I realised the multi-modal, yet inchoate, nature of my response.

In this, I appear to have embodied the balancing act between giving sufficient information that the perficipant feels confident enough to take the plunge, and leaving the outcome open enough to preserve their agency and, therefore, creativity as a performer. Too little information and the risk, inherent in both play (Huizinga, 1970: 29) and live performance (Bailes, 2011: 98), appears too great. Too much information and the performance is predetermined to such an extent that the perficipant is robbed of almost all creativity. This balance must be struck with regard to the content as well as the practicalities of the performance. Although I prefer not to characterise this project's performances as games, the above resonates with Suits' argument regarding the necessity of sensitive balancing between tightness and laxity in games' rules (1978: 30), and also with Bateson's "sacred" relationship between structure and process (1987: 64).

5.4.4.2: Ludic Naïvety

[Please continue **#10CSV**, pausing at (2)]

Fig.29: The Editor feigns ignorance.
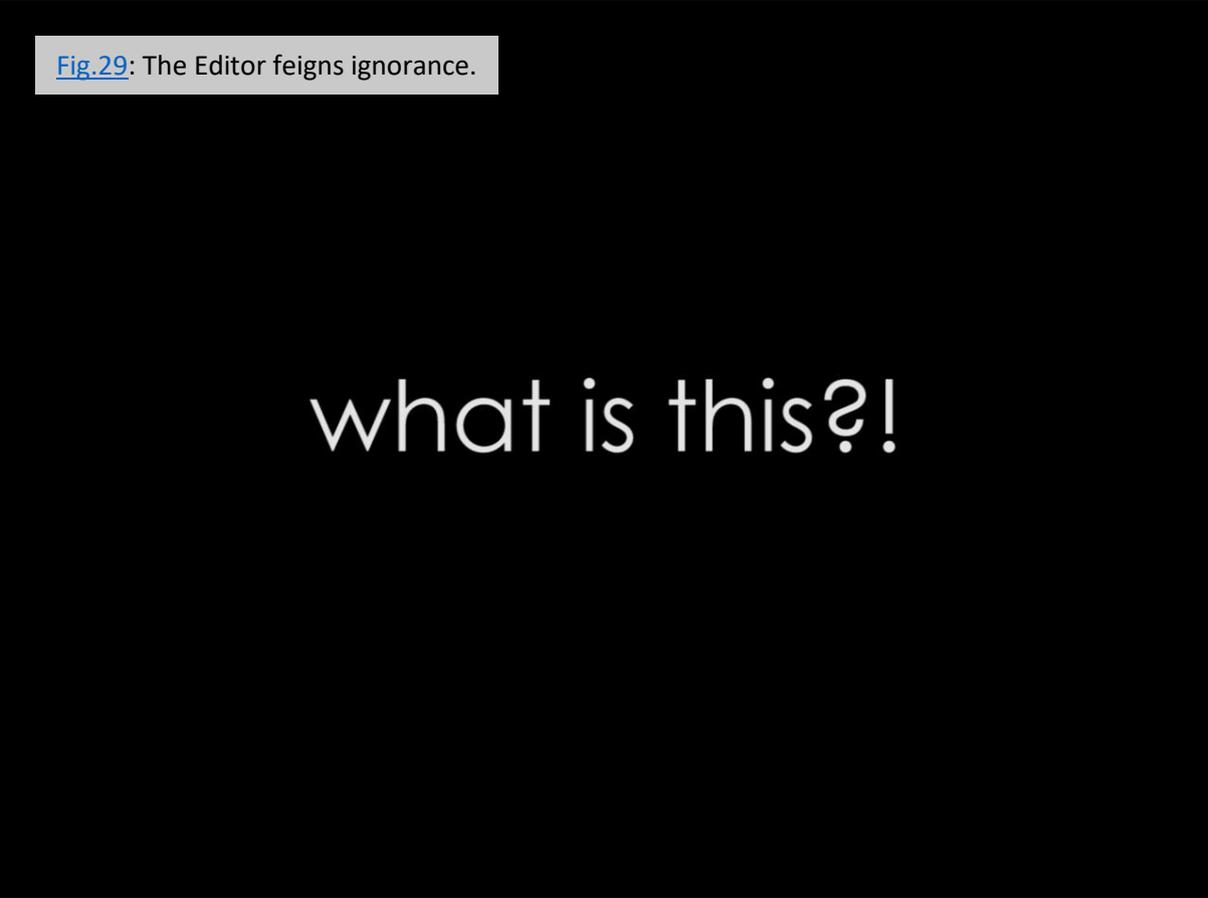
what is this?!

Here I am playing on the intrasubjective quality of being both in the video and commenting upon it 'from outside' to adopt a naïve perspective similar to that of a first-time viewer. This perspective is obviously a playful conceit; the Editor is feigning surprise that two of the perficipants have made their choices from The Ludic Menu[48] because I/he know(s) that this

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[48] The Ludic Menu was developed with feedback in mind from two performances of the same research presentation (see A5.1 for the menu itself). The presentation featured a showing of #3 (featured in 5.3–5.3.8 above) and was given to the Applied and Social Theatre working group at the TaPRA 2015 conference and to colleagues at the University of Kent that October. On both occasions, the potentially exclusive nature of the activity within #3 (jumping over a bollard) was discussed with regard to my desire to engage as wide a range of people as possible. Although other iterations of *Perplexpedition* and both other practical strands of the project involve less strenuous activity, I took this feedback as an impetus and opportunity to develop *Perplexpedition* further. I developed The Ludic Menu through a combination of reflection upon my experiences of the practice so far, drawing together tactics which had worked well in the past, and 'field testing' new ideas. These field

occurred before I began recording. I could have imparted the missing information in matter-of-fact terms, but I want the viewer to actively engage with the videos, and use the managed ambiguity of the naïve perspective to pursue this. Managed ambiguity, as I mentioned earlier, is also central to the balancing of information versus agency.

5.4.4.3: Ludicrous (editing) Speed[49]

Another means by which I seek to actively engage the viewer and create a semblance of the live practice's participatory nature is through the editing speed. All titles are timed at the speed of ordinary conversation so that considerable attention is required to read them before the video moves on. There is also a sense in which the experience of watching video is more passive than that of reading text, so the switching between stark, white-on-black titles, high-definition video, and titles over the video aims to ensure that passivity cannot set in. For example, in one 12-second section we will shortly see (from 01:05 to 01:17) there are four video edits (with one clip slowed down by 50%), two full-screen titles, and four over-video titles, leading to a dense visual experience which, I argue, demands a high level of engagement.[50]

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tests produced a number of episodes; however, I have chosen #10 for inclusion here because it features three dishes within one episode and both manifests and facilitates a significant amount of analysis.

The Menu offers a range of ludic activities designed to cater for differing tendencies between individuals. Moreover, the element of choice allows for increased perficipant agency. Once developed, I had the opportunity to travel to Chester and so tested out The Menu in alien territory. Hitherto, I had always performed *Perplexpedition* in locations familiar to me: St Albans, Canterbury, and North-East London. As you can see from #10, it was successful. Interestingly, three of the above four locations are cathedral cities. However, I do not intend to attempt falsifiable hypotheses with regard to the ludic nature of cathedral cities because it is not possible (or certainly unfeasible within the context of this project) to isolate the presence of a cathedral as an independent variable when it comes to ludic behaviour in a particular urban location.

[49] If you haven't seen the film *Spaceballs* (1987), you are unlikely to get this reference. You should definitely watch it if you haven't, it's a great film. You can see the bit I'm referring to here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygE01sOhzz0.

[50] I argue that the participatory aspect of *Perplexpedition* videos contributes to a productive problematisation of McLuhan's ([1964] 1994) hot/cold media theory (see A5.2).

5.4.4.4: Ludicrous Slow-mo & Affective Atmospheres

[Please now recommence **#10CSV**, pausing at (3)]

who's it gonna be?

For highlighting particularly important moments and viewing them in detail, the ability offered by editing software to slow down action is very useful. When I ask the group "who would like to go… first?" (01:08), my utterance is an indirect speech act in broadly the way that John Searle defines the concept, i.e. there is a duality of meaning (1975: 59–60). In asking the question, I am also (indirectly) giving an instruction. A totally direct way of progressing the interaction would have been to say "(N)ow one of you must enact your choice from The Menu; volunteer, or I will choose", but this approach would not have been in keeping with the ludic nature of the interaction (unless, perhaps, I put on a silly voice).

Nonetheless, the inference from my question is clear and instantly changes the situation's *affective atmosphere*, which Anderson describes as "spatially discharged

affective qualities that are autonomous from the bodies that they emerge from, enable and perish with" (2009: 80). By 'autonomous', as we saw in 5.3.3 above, Anderson means that atmospheres "exceed that from which they emanate" (ibid), i.e. atmospheres can be perceived and felt by those not directly involved in their co-constitution. I argue this is true of the shift in affective atmosphere at this point in the video. My utterance crystallises the situation, the shift becoming perceptible, if not palpable, to viewers as well as interactors. For Anderson, "(A)tmospheres are a kind of indeterminate affective 'excess' through which intensive space–times can be created" (ibid). I contend that the affective excess triggered by my question does indeed create intensity.[51]

The shift from ludic to apprehensive – or, rather, the layering of the two – is perceptible in the way that the body language and facial expression of each perficipant changes at almost exactly the same time. To foreground this further, I matched the point at which the footage slows as accurately as possible to the point at which I perceived this shift. Drawing also on my affective memory of the event, I feel I was able to achieve sufficient accuracy. The concept of affective atmospheres allows for the communication[52] of a semblance of perficipants' affective experiences via the medium of digital practice, which further supports my argument that my documentary methods can afford access to the inaccessible through multi-modal continuity with the live practice.

5.4.6: Productive Mistakes & Perficipant Creation Technique 2

[Please recommence **#10CSV**, pausing at (4)]

With the consecutive titles "oh dear, Mr. Pilgrim", "poor form", "you mustn't forget the anonymity device!" I am alluding to a 'mistake' that LudicrousPilgrim made in not informing the perficipants at the outset that they should adopt a pseudonym. Throughout the videos, I consistently comment upon my perfilitation in ironic and parodic fashion, undercutting any

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[51] For an atmospheric shift of perhaps yet greater intensity, see the intervention of BikeMan in Mark's Everyday Adventure Playground (02:46 – 03:32).
[52] To be understood in the constructivist sense, rather than as the transmission of information.

status I may be perceived to have by virtue of being *Perplexpedition*'s author and chief architect.[53] Perficipants' adoption of another identity not only accords with research ethics,[54] but operates in similar fashion to the tactic of asking perficipants to retrace their steps that we saw in #1&2, in that it implicitly frames the interaction as a performance. I put the word 'mistake' in inverted commas because, in the fundamentally unpredictable flow of the interaction (F&DJ, 2009: 476), the 'misplacement' of this information leads to a unique piece of ludic performance between the female perficipant and myself, which would almost certainly not have happened had LudicrousPilgrim given the information as the interaction began.

This points to a significant attraction of this kind of work for the professional practitioner: what I call the "beauty and risk" of 4P street interventions. Their indeterminacy and unpredictability mean that perficipant and perfilitator participate in the "emergence and transformation of intentions, affects and understandings" (F&DJ, 2009: 482), which can lead to some memorable moments as well as highlighting how one's agency is always-already embedded in ecological contingency. Perhaps I've built it up too much now, but let's take a look:

[Please recommence watching **#10CSV**, pausing at (5)]

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[53] I may be the chief architect, but each episode of *Perplexpedition* is built collectively between myself and perficipants. We are the happy navvies of our own ludic experience.

[54] Notwithstanding the fact that the perficipants' faces are visible and clearly recognisable in the video…
At one point during the ethical application procedure it was suggested that I pixelate out perficipants' faces. Luckily, I was able to make a satisfactory case for not doing this, grounded on the fact that I would not be filming anyone without their consent, that perficipants would be provided with the project's website address, and that they would be informed that the website contains the Participant Information, including their right to withdraw. Although I was tempted to, I did not make the point that my video documentation would essentially be null and void, in terms of both immediate and archival value, were perficipants' faces to be pixelated, since any analysis of the work's affective aspects would be severely impoverished. Bolt & Vincs argue that resistance to university ethics procedures persists in the PaR community, with this attitude being attributable primarily to supervisors (2015: 1304–1305). Whilst my experience has been quite the opposite, and while I am a strong advocate of robust ethical oversight in all research, I can understand the resistance given my experience of applying for ethical approval. I suggest that extensive dialogue and mutual learning is necessary to produce ethics procedures which appropriately address the requirements of PaR projects.

5.4.6.1: The Product of the Mistake & Balancing Act 2

Fig.31: David Attenborough character improvisation.

So, LudicrousPilgrim's 'mistake' leads directly into this piece of character improvisation between himself and David Attenborough. This interaction is an example of a second balancing act to be negotiated, which is ever-present when perfilitating but by no means unique to my practice: to move things forward whilst preserving perficipants' agency. If the interaction drags or the energy dips then the experience is likely to become awkward and the confidence of both perficipants and perfilitator(s) is likely to wane, so forward momentum is key. On the other hand, if the perfilitator(s) keeps too tight a grip on the interaction's development then the agency of perficipants is significantly reduced, which limits the event's value as a participatory artwork, as well as shifting the interaction away from mutual and towards unidirectional incorporation. This tension also resonates with Suits' point about keeping balanced the tightness and laxity of game-rules (1978: 30). Both these balancing acts – the one outlined earlier relating to the imparting of information, and this one concerned with momentum and energy within the interaction – are constitutive of

my notion of perfilitation. In each case, both sides are necessary for an effective and valuable instance of *Perplexpedition*, yet neither can be allowed to dominate.

I think I do reasonably well here. I instigate the improvisation,[55] which I highlight with the title "(T)ime to get into character" (01:54), and the perficipant immediately responds as David Attenborough. I comment positively on her admirable performance reflexes: "straight in without missing a beat" (02:00). This kind of seamless, overlapping interaction, from the perficipant reminding me that she is David Attenborough, to me thanking the David-perficipant for his/her attendance, and David responding, is another example of mutual incorporation, participatory sense-making, and the interaction process itself becoming the source of intentionality for those involved. Each of us is decentred and performed by the structure. Once the improvisation has gathered momentum, I then manage to shut up[56] (with the exception of a supportive exclamation of "exactly!" [02:07]) and David comes out with "a beautiful bit of Attenborough-based satire" (02:11), as adjudged by the Editor.

5.5: Further Documentation Issues

As I mentioned at the beginning of 5.4 above, I now introduce Spatz's (2015) position on PaR documentation and contrast it with Piccini & Rye's (2009), discussed earlier, so as to establish the originality of my own approach, which negotiates a path between the two. My approach bears some resemblance to Spatz's 'dense linear video' documentation technique for PaR.[57] Both require attentive viewing and, in the way that academic articles often benefit from being re-read, both benefit from being re-viewed, since in both cases the

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[55] I do this by performing the indeterminate role of a person who has, by some unknown means and for some unknown reason, succeeded in getting David Attenborough to give a commentary on the flora and fauna of central Chester. It is imperative that a perfilitator both performs alongside the perficipants and facilitates the overall interaction (hence the name perfilitator). By inhabiting the performance myself, as opposed to giving direct instructions from outside such as "now you need to get into character as David Attenborough; what would David Attenborough do in this situation?", I encourage the perficipant to perform without thinking about what they are doing, thereby minimising the attendant possibility of the perficipant becoming self-conscious.

[56] Which is by far the most noteworthy element of this exchange, I'm sure you'll agree.

[57] You can see an example of Spatz's dense linear video here: https://vimeo.com/139318307, so as to compare and contrast the two approaches.

density makes it likely that the re-viewer will notice aspects or elements of the video that escaped her on first viewing. As previously noted, however, unlike Spatz's media works, my videos are not designed as standalone academic documents, but rather as artworks in their own right.

[Please now recommence **#10CSV** and watch until the end, noticing anything you see this time that you did not catch when watching **#10**[58]]

5.5.1: Problematics of Documentation 2

Spatz also opposes the anti-documentation position I critiqued with regard to Piccini & Rye earlier. For Spatz, the "repeatable and reproducible trace" (Piccini & Rye, 2009: 49), or "stable, transmissible [document]" (Spatz, 2015: 235) in his words, is fundamental for securing PaR's full acceptance within academia. This, Spatz argues, is because interaction with archival material is constitutive of academic knowledge production (ibid: 236).[59] In the brave new world of the PaRchive, it is online databases, such as YouTube, that he sees as offering the greatest potential (ibid: 245); the exact arena to which my videos have been tailored and uploaded. In addition to providing faster access to a much larger repertoire of material than a DVD, online platforms allow for far easier navigation backwards and forwards through a video, which facilitates re-viewing and jumping to specific sections in dense video documents such as mine.

It is a truism that no form of documentation, not being the event itself, can ever encompass PaR in its entirety. Furthermore, as Spatz points out, the impossibility of total capture applies to all practices;[60] therefore, "(T)o exalt certain practices as 'fleeing'

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[58] **#10CSV** and **#10** are identical from this point onwards. The only difference between the earlier portion of the videos is that **#10CSV** has numbered gaps to facilitate pausing at the appropriate moment.

[59] Although, Spatz does also note that scholarship is not purely archival, since education (and I would add conferences etc. to this) depends upon embodied encounters (2015: 236), and since education is essential for the maintenance and progress of scholarship. However, the rise of online-only courses in some disciplines is challenging this (though thankfully not in drama and performance!).

[60] It is also the case that traditional academic study is a practice (Candlin, 2000) which its documentation, i.e. articles, chapters, and monographs, cannot fully capture. This has become abundantly clear to me whilst

judgement" by asserting their irreconcilable ephemerality "is to take an unacceptably dismissive stance to practice in general" (2015: 234). Rather than focusing on that which evades documentation, by producing archivable multimedia documents Spatz sees in PaR an opportunity to "[radically transform] academia…through an extension of the logic of scholarly epistemology itself" (ibid: 235). This extension would be achieved by applying peer review and citation protocols to these multimedia documents.

As Spatz acknowledges (ibid: 226–234), this brings him into conflict with many stances on PaR, including Kershaw's notion that PaR's "dislocation of established knowledge is positively foundational" (2009b: 4). For Spatz, knowledge produced by PaR is located primarily in transmissible new technique, all else being of secondary concern (2015: 233). Whilst I agree with his critique of the exaltation of ephemerality and his advocation of multimedia, I find Spatz's stance dogmatic overall. Spatz critiques Nelson's (2013) approach for being "epistemologically limited" (2015: 229), yet I deem Spatz's the more limited.[61] In defining PaR in terms of new technique, Spatz renders the term overly narrow. For example, Nelson argues that John Irving's PaR into Mozart's music through playing the Hass clavichord produced insights into the music's nature (2013: 10), yet arguably no new technique was created.[62]

Spatz's position seats PaR firmly within the academy, whereas I place my project at the intersection of academia and the art world, as previously discussed. Therefore, as I hope to have shown, my work challenges the notion that performance implicitly evades documentation, striking a balance between Piccini & Rye's standalone artwork model and that of Spatz's standalone academic document, and thus broaches new ground. My videos preserve the ludic aesthetic of the performance whilst taking an analytical stance, which facilitates the full-blown analysis of this complementary writing. Thus, I present these

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producing this writing, since it is not possible to include all the research one does, nor articulate every thought one has relating to the research, within the finished product.

It is also the case that the notion of total capture of traditional academic study through writing is predicated on a computational linguistic paradigm, which this project's ecological stance denies. As Bateson observes, "no mere words exist" (2000: 13), by which he means that words are not inert, unambiguous symbols, but are mutable, context-dependent communicative media through which meaning is negotiated.

[61] Spatz means limited in terms of epistemic value, rather than scope (he accuses Nelson's approach to PaR of being too broad – 2015: 232), but I suggest that the two usages are related here. For me, one of PaR's most valuable aspects is the variety of epistemic forms it can produce.

[62] It is perfectly possible that Irving's PaR may lead to new technique for playing Mozart's music on other instruments, yet this would be an *application*, not an *output*, of Irving's research.

videos, with their considerable archival value, as a significant contribution to the debate on PaR.

5.6: Conclusion

In this chapter I have articulated two elements of this project's know-how, both of which are particularly important given *Perplexpedition*'s place as the chonological and developmental origin of The Ludic Triangle. Firstly, I discussed the initial tactics I devised for turning potential participants into perficipants (5.2.1 – 5.2.2), later explaining how this developed (5.4.6). This first tactic, the simple act of reapproaching LudicrousPilgrim as if having not met him, instantiates perficipants' subjunctivity, since they remain indicitavely themselves and perform a subjunctive version of themselves simultaneously; both modes co-constitute the reality of the situation. Crucially, by articulating this know-how I concretely demonstrated that my practice reveals the incompleteness of Bateson's (2000) definition of play as metacommunication. The second element of know-how relates to the integration of documentation into *Perplexpedition's* structure. I treated this requirement not as a "secondary, logistical question, but as an essential part of [my] academic [and artistic] epistemology" (to playfully bastardise Spatz, 2015: 242). For this reason, I characterise *Perplexpedition* videos as digital practice.

I have also analysed the interactions that constitute *Perplexpedition*, applying F&DJ's (2009) concept of *enactive intersubjectivity* in order to interpret the underlying mechanisms at work and integrate this analysis into my ludic-ecological conceptual framework. I have mentioned subjunctivity above; moreover, in section 5.3.3, I argued that *Perplexpedition* evidences play(fulness)-as-affective-atmosphere, by demonstrating the affective excess of the interaction. Throughout the chapter, I have reflected on my role as perfilitator. In sections 5.3.4 & 5.3.6, I discussed the influence of my personal history on my perfilitation, developing a theme from Chapter 3.

In the latter half of this chapter, I focused on documentation explicitly. I discussed issues common to practice research documentation, such as archivability and the relation between live practice and its documentation. I positioned *Perplexpedition* in relation to,

and contradistinction with, both Piccini & Rye's (2009) and Spatz's (2015) positions, describing my approach as a novel and valuable third way between the former's standalone artwork model and the latter's model of a standalone academic document. Also in the latter half, I demonstrated how the editing process employs a kind of organic analysis of the practical and affective processes at work in *Perplexpedition*, explaining that this organic analysis largely comes about through my exploitation of *intrasubjectivity*. The editing teases out the two key balancing acts of information vs ambiguity (5.4.4.1) and maintaining momentum of the interaction vs letting perficipants lead (5.4.6.1), both of which are important factors in my role as perfilitator. The editing also explores my (playful) relationship to the viewer (5.4.4.2) and reveals shifts in the affective atmosphere (Anderson, 2009) of the interaction (5.4.4.4). Furthermore, the video documentation used throughout has supported Lavery's (2005) claim that peripatetic performance provides corporeal and affective engagement, whilst affording the creative reappropriation of public space.

I have focused on the relations between the things involved in *Perplexpedition* (affective atmospheres, aesthetic continuity, ludic naïvety, etc.) rather than the things themselves (people, cameras, bollards, etc.). Through this, I have endeavoured to show that *Perplexpedition* constitutes a strictly holistic ecological system, which is necessarily irreducible to its parts, impervious to unliateral control, and which exemplifies these properties that are common to all ecological systems. Consequently, I argue that *Perplexpedition*, and The Triangle as a whole, affords perficipants' apprehension of the way in which they are always-already "performed by" (Kershaw, 2015: 115) their ecologies, since the unpredictability of play(fulness) demands a heightened form of the rebalancing and negotiation that ecological existence constantly requires. (I developed this element of my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument in 4.3.1.) This apprehension is primarily affective, rather than rational, but nonetheless makes possible a recalibration of perficipants' personal ecologies, owing to the attraction of play(fulness)'s positive affective inflection. In the next chapter, I will explore how *Wandercast*'s remote perfilitation potentially extends these effectivities of peripatetic performance far beyond the reach of a single perfilitator and will explore the implications for perceptual processes in particular.

Chapter 6: *Wandercast* Case Study[1]

6.1: Introduction

> *Wandercast is rollin'*
>
> *And everybody's flowin'*
>
> *We're goin' on a wander*
>
> *To check out over yonder*

So begins *Wandercast*, my (un)imaginatively titled podcast that invites listeners to take it on a wander. This podcast series is the second of the three practical strands to my PaR and the subject of this case study. *Wandercast* employs the portability and aural intimacy of the podcast form to invite perficipants into ludic interactions with an environment of their choosing at a time convenient to them. The singular experience of the performances is hypothesised to (however modestly) recalibrate perficipants' relationship with that environment in the moment and beyond, hopefully contributing to the development of a ludic disposition that might lead perficipants to apply those insights also to other environments. The podcast is here harnessed simultaneously as both a mode of participatory performance and a knowledge-producing research tool. As perficipants experience *Wandercast* in my absence, I employed an online feedback questionnaire to gather responses abstracted from perficipants' embodied knowledge. These responses feed into my analysis of *Wandercast*'s practical and aesthetic aspects.

The element of know-how that I articulate as know-what in this chapter is how to create a sense that I, the perfilitator, am present with the perficipant in the moment of their *Wandercast* performance despite my being physically absent at the time. This feeling of co-

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[1] Before reading this chapter, I invite you to undertake a *Wandercast* (or more than one) for yourself, as there are significant aspects of any fundamentally embodied, kinetic experience which cannot be put into words. You will find more details and download information here http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/wandercast-2/ (PML\Wandercast Episodes).
N.b. I employ a largely formal tone in this chapter so as to echo the remote nature of *Wandercast* perfilitation.

presence is incredibly important, as we will see, because it generates a sense of interactivity for perficipants. Recalling my argument, developed in Chapters 2 and 4, that the subjunctive and indicative co-constitute reality with equivalence, it follows that *Wandercast* is indeed interactive to a certain extent despite the temporo-spatial remoteness of the perficipant-perfilitator relationship.

In Chapter 4, I argued that my Ludic Triangle of practice invites perficipants to attend to ludic affordances, which are extrinsically afunctional, and that doing so foregrounds the way in which we perceive any and all affordances by pulling them from the incalculable multitude. (This is structurally similar, or homologous, to my argument in Chapter 5 above relating to the strictly holistic nature of ecological systems; in both cases, I am arguing that the particularities of The Triangle exemplify – and thereby afford apprehension of – ecological universals.) As I noted in the Roadmap, at 1.6.4, this element of my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument parallels the phenomenological thesis that perception is the active co-constitution of the world. Phenomenologically, one's senses reach out to the world and the world beckons forth one's senses. Of my three practical strands, *Wandercast* pursues and evidences this element of my philosophical argument most clearly, so I further integrate phenomenology into my conceptual framework in this chapter in order to demonstrate the perceptual implications of my practice.

Each episode focuses on a particular modality of ludic environmental interaction. After an introductory first episode (Ep.1), which seeks to establish the podcast's aesthetic, its format, and detail its rules of engagement,[2] the second, *Headphone Adventure Playground* (Ep.2), targets physical play,[3] and the third, *Attenborough's Imaginarium* (Ep.3), foregrounds ludic imagination.[4] A fourth, seeking to instigate social ludicality, would have

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[2] Ep.1 is largely improvised, featuring a main, field-recorded monologue and often self-deprecating, studio-recorded interjections over pre-recorded soundscapes (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/welcome-to-the-world-of-wandercast/ or PML\Wandercast Episodes\Ep.1 Welcome to the World of Wandercast).

[3] *Headphone Adventure Playground* is more or less self-explanatory. I guide perficipants through various tactics for ludic environmental interaction whilst conducting those same tactics myself and recording my endeavours. The tactics have ludicrous names such as 'The Kerb-Hop' and 'The Swing-King'. Ep.2 is also largely improvised in the field, with non-soundscaped interjections from me 'in the studio', which give extra information and context. Sections of field recording with no monologue give perficipants time to try out the tactics (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/headphone-adventure-playground/ or PML\Wandercast Episodes\Ep.2 Headphone Adventure Playground).

[4] In *Attenborough's Imaginarium*, I accompany perficipants on a journey through three environments within David Attenborough's imagination, inviting imaginative and physical interaction between: perficipants, the sonic environment (created through soundscape), and the environment through which perficipants wander.

been next in the series, had time permitted. The form of the podcast combines elements of popular performance, such as direct address and jokey delivery, with others common to radio drama, such as realistic soundscape and representational sound-effects, rendering these in such a way as to invite active participation. Each episode creates a sonic environment and performance structure that seeks to instantiate rooted placelessness by dislocating perficipants' habitual affordance-filters and performing perficipants into novel relationships with their present environments.

Wandercast requires movement through, and invites interaction with, an environment; *Wandercast* remains inchoate without this dynamic physical engagement. As I shall discuss, this puts the work in dialogue with Cazeaux's argument that "'calling for completion' [is] a vital component of artistic expression", of which sonically manifested work is an "exemplary form" (2005: 157–158). Created by one man (me), using only a handheld digital voice recorder and a laptop, *Wandercast* could further be seen as an expression of the democratisation of media production, though this is far from an unproblematic notion, as I briefly address below.

I present a multi-layered account of this developing podcast series, beginning by positioning *Wandercast* within a field of similar work. I include a brief practice review in this chapter because *Wandercast* is the one strand of the three for which there is the semblance of something that one might call a 'field' and also because the three works discussed have each contributed to *Wandercast*'s development. After the practice review, I frame *Wandercast* theoretically. The theoretical framing extends that of Chapter 4, incorporating phenomenology and performance studies elements with an aural focus. Once the theoretical framing has been sketched, I position *Wandercast* as a model that manifests the themes discussed during the theoretical framing. I do this by demonstrating how the themes are reflected in listener feedback. Throughout, the discussion will address the challenges, opportunities, and potential impact associated with the *Wandercast* project.

Ep.3 is more scripted and recorded entirely in the studio, using pre-recorded soundscapes and sound-effects to create a more theatrical experience appropriate to stimulating the imagination (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/attenboroughs-imaginarium/ or PML\Wandercast Episodes\Ep.3 Attenborough's Imaginarium).

6.2: The Practical Terrain

As digital technologies have made recording and editing sound more practicable and, latterly, more affordable, increased numbers of artists from theatre, performance, and visual-arts backgrounds have begun making audio-works, with the internet presenting a means of making this work globally accessible. *Wandercast* is an example of a subset of audio-works that invite or demand the listener's interaction with their surroundings; I term these Performative-Audio-Works (PAWs).[5]

Though this is an issue that I will not explore in detail here, it is pertinent to point out that whilst I, as a funded doctoral researcher, have the means and inclination to produce free podcast content, the free-to-download aspect of the form presents a significant barrier to its adoption by freelance artists.[6] This undoubtedly troubles simple notions of the podcast as an agent of media democratisation. Being neither (supposedly) emancipated "prosumer[s]" (Toffler, 1980: 11), nor corporate entities which host and profit from user-generated cultural artefacts (nor necessarily wishing to closely associate with corporations), artists can find it doubly difficult to negotiate the social media ecology/economy.[7]

PAWs are characterised by doubling, as they necessitate a double performance in order to fully exist. The first performance consists in the act of their creation and the second in their activation when someone enacts tactics or instructions present in the work,

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[5] Although it does not form part of this project, I note the existence of performative visual works. Examples include: Circumstance's *My Voice Untethered* (2014 – see circumstance, n.d.), in which perficipants experience the city both through walking its streets and through video of opera singers shot in those same streets displayed on tablets; Rimini Protokoll's *Situation Rooms* (2013-2016 – see Rimini Protokoll, 2017), which uses a similar technique of tablet-displayed video, but which conveys a complex, interwoven narrative, and which is experienced in the film set used to produce the video; and Rocio von Jungenfeld's practice of participatory, peripatetic projections, in which perficipants use portable projectors to interact with the environment via projected visuals (see von Jungenfeld, 2016). von Jungenfeld's practice is most similar to my own in the sense that it prioritises direct engagement with the environment, whereas the other two works mentioned require perficipants' attention to be focused on the tablet screen. Indeed, von Jungenfeld characterises the combination of digital screens and headphones as "[fostering] *cocoon*-like engagement" (2016: *iii* – emphasis original).

[6] I propose that an investigation into factors limiting the uptake of the podcast form by participatory performance artists would make a valuable research project.

[7] For a discussion of the oppositional forces at work in digital media ecologies, see Jenkins & Deuze (2008); for a view on the implications of social media for professional artists, see Manovich (2009); and for an analysis of prosumer capitalism, see Ritzer & Jurgenson (2010).

or otherwise physically engages with it. To achieve this second performance, and come to completion, it is not sufficient that such works merely be listened to, as we shall see. PAWs' perfilitator and perficipant performances are almost always asynchronous.[8] My vocal and physical perfilitation necessarily precedes that of perficipants, since I must collate and edit the various sound files into a *Wandercast* before there is something in which to perficipate. Nonetheless, perficipant feedback shows that the phenomenal experience tends to be one of co-presence with the perfilitator.

The variety of styles and approaches evident across PAWs is considerable, though many implicate walking as a mode of environmental interaction. This can be seen in the event Sound Walk Sunday, which seeks to "globally celebrate" PAWs that involve walking (Museum of Walking, n.d.: [online]).[9] Here, I briefly sketch the relations that three selected pieces bear to *Wandercast*, each of which prompted significant discoveries during the series' development. I also include a selection of notable examples in A6.1 (details of any pieces mentioned can be found there).

6.2.1: *Linked* (2003 – present)

Linked, by Graeme Miller, though not a podcast, is certainly a broadcast. Audio is broadcast from a series of analogue radio transmitters along a route through north-east London to a portable radio receiver borrowed by the walker or "witness", as Miller terms his perficipants (2005: 162). In *Linked*, perficipants are witnesses to the upheaval visited upon the communities of Hackney and Wanstead in the name of progress.

Linked was created in response to the changes wrought by the construction of the M11 link road, which involved the compulsory purchase and demolition of 400 homes. It was through perficipating in *Linked* that I first perceived the potential of PAWs to recalibrate

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[8] An exception to this is Duncan Speakman's *Sounds From Above The Ground* (2007, 2008), in which Speakman places himself in the same space as, yet at a distance from, his perficipants. He uses a laptop in his backpack to instantaneously remix his vocal perfilitation as it is transmitted to perficipants' headphones via radio (see Myers, 2011a and LU Arts, n.d.).
[9] Although PAWs that implicate walking have a much longer history, which is not tied to the internet, the inaugural Sound Walk Sunday took place on the 27th of August, 2017. *Wandercast* was one of the featured works; you can see the full collection here http://www.museumofwalking.org.uk/events/sound-walk-sunday/.

individuals' relationships with their environment; in this case, by animating multiple histories and instantiating them in the present, producing an eerie overlay of a past in which the neighbourhood was complete, without the roaring chasm of the motorway.

On the face of it, *Linked* does not appear particularly playful, thus limiting its parallels with *Wandercast*; indeed, Miller has said that the idea was "fuelled by revenge" (2005: 162). However, as a perficipant, I perceived a sense of Playfulness in both the stories constituting the work and the relationship which it prompted between myself and the environment en route. When I asked Miller whether he recognised this aspect of *Linked*,[10] he agreed, describing it as like a climbing frame onto which people interweave their own narratives as they play upon and interact with it. Conceiving of a PAW as a climbing frame strongly resonated with my aims in producing *Wandercast*, becoming somewhat of a guiding principle as I sought to establish its methodology. The idea even influenced the title of Ep.2: *Headphone Adventure Playground*.

6.2.2: *Wondermart* (2009)

Since I am interested in perficipants' discovery of ludic affordances in any environment, as opposed to *Linked*'s "moments of the past [that] haunt the present" of a very particular place (Linked, n.d.: [online]), I came to realise that an instruction-based production was most suited to the task. This is also the technique employed by Silvia Mercuriali & Matt Rudkin in *Wondermart*, in which perficipant duos undertake surreptitious tasks in order to rediscover the banal bizarreness of the supermarket environment.

Wondermart is described as "autoteatro", which Ant Hampton, who developed the form along with Mercuriali, describes as "mechanisms for self-generating performance" (2010: [online]). Though less lyrical, I use the term PAWs, as I maintain that 'theatre' is often a misleading association in this context. Furthermore, Hampton's term is problematic in that autoteatro performances are not really self-generating. In my doubled conception of PAWs, the performance to which Hampton refers comes second, having been generated by

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[10] This was at a ResCen Research Seminar at the University of Middlesex, 3rd February 2015. Miller presented on the life of *Linked* since 2003.

the first performance (by the perfilitator[s]; in *Wondermart*'s case, Mercuriali & Rudkin). Hampton argues that the artist's bodily *absence* is what makes autoteatro self-generating (ibid), yet I would counter that the artist is *present* through their perfilitation, without which perficipation could not occur. Instead, I characterise autoteatro, and PAWs generally, as being co-created. Nonetheless, Hampton's focus on perficipation supports my assertion that PAWs do not exist without it.

Another key aspect of autoteatro is its covertness. *Wondermart* explicitly frames perficipants' activity as clandestine; at the outset, one is instructed to "make sure you don't stand out" and "act natural". Although this approach provoked in me an experience of furtiveness and decreased presence, I do not imply that *Wondermart* is intended, nor bound, to engender such feelings in its perficipants; if one posits the co-created nature of PAWs, one cannot deem that a piece is determined by the qualities of its audio. Nonetheless, the character and content of the perfilitation necessarily influences the subsequent perficipation to a considerable extent. Paradoxically, rather than opening out my perception beyond the normative, *Wondermart* seemed to narrow it, entailing a lesser degree of presence than I usually feel while shopping.

The potential for ludic instructions to close down perceptions is something that I have therefore paid particular attention to when developing *Wandercast*, aiming always to open perceptions in order to engender a perceptual shift that allows ludic affordances to appear alongside the normative and functional. Encouraging perficipants' enaction of ludic affordances has proved more difficult, however, as such enactments often go against social norms. In contrast to my *Wondermart* experience, this research as a whole seeks structures that enable perficipants to find the confidence to interact overtly Playfully with their environment without feeling furtive or self-conscious. As I explain in 6.4–6.4.5, feedback suggests that *Wandercast* has achieved significant, though not total, success in this regard.

6.2.3: *Guide to Getting Lost* (2010 – present)

My decision to utilise the podcast form within my PaR was partly motivated by a desire to make the project accessible to as wide a range of people as possible. This aim also

influenced my choice to develop PAWs which are site-non-specific, which is to say that a perficipant should be able to fulsomely engage with *Wandercast*, and potentially experience rooted placelessness, anywhere. A piece with similar site-non-specificity is Jennie Savage's *Guide to Getting Lost* (*GTGL*).

Savage invites perficipants to walk a familiar environment and to get lost in it, seeing the place anew as the familiar is overlaid with a "fictional sonic landscape" (Savage n.d.: [online]) knitted together from field recordings made in many countries. This work too is instructional; Savage directs perficipants to turn left or right, replicating the route she followed in the moment of recording. In this sense, there is a ludic character to *GTGL* as one makes essentially arbitrary twists and turns.

The major drawback with the *GTGL* format is that the environment often will not afford turning left or right when that instruction is given. When this happens, one finds oneself either having to ignore the instruction, or, like me, attempt to hold in mind the last instruction (and sometimes multiple instructions) for some time before being able to execute them. Naturally, both outcomes limit a perficipant's potential engagement with the work and thus its effectiveness.

GTGL thereby revealed the utmost importance of open, widely applicable instructions with broad interpretative potential when designing site-non-specific PAWs. In fact, I aim for *Wandercast* to be perceived as involving invitations, rather than instructions. A further discovery from my experience of *GTGL* was the crucial nature of technical considerations when producing a PAW. There were many instances in *GTGL* where I simply could not hear Savage's voice and consequently may have missed certain instructions. *Wandercast* perficipation also occurs outside, so may have to compete with significant background noise. Therefore, I have endeavoured to ensure that both the technical aspects of my perfilitation (articulation, pace of speech, tone of voice, etc.) and my manipulation of the requisite technology (digital voice recorder and audio editing programs) are acquitted so as to minimise the possibility of inaudible content.

The aesthetic form of *GTGL* has been influential also. Envisaging the environments through which Savage was moving resulted in the overlay of, and juxtaposition between, imagined and physical environments. This provided an intriguing affective experience,

which I have sought to explore further. Investigating the potential of aural overlay and juxtaposition (present also in *Linked*) became an important aspect of *Wandercast*'s methodology. However, as I address in 6.4.3, perficipant feedback brought to my attention the fact that the mental imaging which I experienced during both *GTGL* and *Linked* does not represent a universal capacity.

To summarise, the PAWs discussed above have, jointly and severally, had a considerable impact on the ongoing development of the *Wandercast* series and the research generally. Key discoveries have been that: *Linked* broadened my horizons in terms of contexts where Playfulness can be found and established the idea of creating structures which are sufficiently open and indeterminate; *Wondermart* revealed the potential for PAWs to reduce perficipant presence; and *GTGL* demonstrated the necessity of devising invitations that, as far as possible, do not depend upon specific environmental affordances.

Having now situated *Wandercast* within the terrain of related work, I move to place it within a framework of relevant theory, drawing particularly on Cazeaux's (2005) phenomenology and the performance studies perspectives of Home-Cook (2015) and Myers (2011a). I will argue that both aurality and play(fulness) exemplify certain perceptual processes and therefore that *Wandercast* increases the potential for exemplification by combining the perception-exemplifying capacities of play(fulness) and aurality. An important outcome of multiplying the potential for exemplification, I argue, is that it could lead to increased potential ecological recalibration, as I have already argued that the particularities of exemplification, arising from my practice, have implications for ecological universals (see 5.6). I will also argue that, in addition to making myself present in perficipants' performances, *Wandercast* makes perficipants more present within their environments, which appears to be related to a common theme within the feedback that describes *Wandercast* as having therapeutic effects (and affects).

6.3: Theoretical Framing

6.3.1: Batesonian Lens

Of particular importance here is Bateson's assertion that cybernetic, or informational, systems must be considered in strongly holistic terms, which came to the fore in the last chapter. Consequently, this view does not admit of unilateral control; that is, no part of a system can unilaterally control the system nor any other part (2000: 315).[11] The same also holds for coupled systems, such as two interacting individuals, which, for Bateson, create a single, two-person system (ibid: 267). I suggest that there are fairly striking parallels between ecological systems as strictly holistic and my notion of PAWs as entities co-created by perfilitator(s) and perficipant(s) that remain inchoate without perfilitator-perficipant interaction. One could even say that PAWs exemplify this ecological principle.

Though the performances of perfilitators and perficipants constitute complex systems in their own right, it is only in their coupling that a PAW can potentially achieve completion. This is not to suggest, however, that it is an easy or frictionless process. As the above examples and *Wandercast* feedback demonstrate, there are many factors which can lead to only partial (or potentially zero) meshing between perfilitator and perficipant systems. These factors could originate from either side, but will only be realised in interaction. For example, formal, conceptual, aesthetic, or technical aspects of a work's perfilitation can limit system-meshing, as can individual differences in perficipants, as well as things such as disposition and mood. It is possible that my limited meshing with the perfilitation system of *Wondermart* could have been influenced by my mood (not that I was aware of a mood unconducive to perfication at the time).

6.3.2: Ecological Performative-Behavioural Therapy

In 1.4.2, I discussed how Kershaw's notion of being "performed by" (2015: 115) certain performance structures could be characterised as performative-behavioural therapy for

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[11] See Chapter 4 and A4.1 for an expansion on this theme.

contemporary "performative societies" (2007: 11). Indeed, though this was not my specific intention, perficipant feedback indicates a therapeutic aspect to *Wandercast*. Owing to its global reach and extensive accessibility, podcast-format PAWs present a potentially useful contribution to this general situation. I am not a lay-perficipant, since I am both a trained performer and performance researcher. However, it remains the case that each of the PAWs described above, as well as my own experiences of both perfilitating and perficipating in *Wandercast*, have catalysed a recalibration of my relationship with the environments in which those experiences took place. This recalibration can be described as effecting a new meshing between self and environment systems, such that new modes of perceiving, performing, and being can obtain. As their feedback demonstrates, many *Wandercast* perficipants had similar experiences.

6.3.3: Play(fulness) & Creativity

Regarding *Wandercast*'s potential beneficial impact, and that of this project as a whole, the capacity of play(fulness) to aid creativity-development is of particular importance. The phenomenon of seeing environments in a new light relates to my notion of play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity; i.e. seeing the world as it is and as it could be at the same time and thus generating creative potential. My play(fulness)-concept also resonates strongly with the notion of aural-environmental overlay and juxtaposition, which, as discussed above, has become central to the development of *Wandercast*, arising from my engagement with *Linked*, *GTGL*, and also Platform's *And While London Burns* (see A6.1).

The original interpretations of Runco's (1996) personal creativity are significant when dealing with an aural artform which seeks to produce dynamic, though fundamentally non-material, engagement, since personal creativity does not require that anything be produced; intentions and motivation are sufficient. The products, too, are readily achievable, as they are non-material interpretations. It is also significant that one can draw a robust link between Runco's personal creativity, play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity, and PAWs' capacity to re-illuminate environments, since all involve seeing the world as it could be.

To reiterate, I do not claim that there is a causal relationship between play(fulness) and creativity, but that the two are correlated. By engaging in play(ful) behaviour, I argue, one creates conditions conducive to creativity. I further argue that playful participatory performative podcasts, such as *Wandercast*, offer effective opportunities for this, since the requisite conditions already reside in potential form within the audio, waiting for activation by a perficipant. I am not attempting to supplant spontaneously occurring play(fulness), but to promote and propagate it through arts practice. The theoretical elements of my research highlight and elucidate the value of play(fulness), whilst its practical elements provide relatively stable and repeatable, though dynamic, opportunities to engage in ludic environmental interaction in situations where normative or functional behaviour patterns may dominate. *Wandercast*, and my PaR as a whole, is expressly framed as non-prescriptive; it is an invitation for perficipants to discover their own notion of play(fulness), a ludic trampette if you like.

6.3.4: Phenomenological Lens

According to Cazeaux's 'calling for completion' thesis, PAWs may provide a particularly effective artistic form for fostering personal creativity, since Cazeaux positions the incompleteness of perfilitation in PAWs as a "highly significant aesthetic property" (2005: 158) that strongly invites original interpretations of the objective world through the coupling of perficipation and perfilitation systems.

Cazeaux (2005) phenomenologically counters the negative claim that radio drama is an incomplete medium, drawing primarily on Merleau-Ponty to positively reformulate said claim. The negative claim asserts that, due to its representational, narrative-driven nature, which lacks visual images, radio drama suffers from an absence of the visual sensory modality. This criticism, of course, applies similarly to *Wandercast*, the works discussed above, and podcasts as a whole. Although the extent to which individual PAWs and podcasts are representational and/or narrative-driven will vary greatly, all are open to the charge of lacking the visual modality. Cazeaux counters this position by refuting the

"orthodox, empiricist conception of the senses" as "discrete channels" (2005: 160).[12] He takes a phenomenological stance, according to which the senses are interdependent elements of the holistic way in which our consciousness opens onto and grasps the world. In this view, our synaesthetic sensory experience and the world co-constitute one another, since one's sensory capacities determine the aspects of the world that may be experienced (ibid), which reflects the ecological perspective taken here.

For Cazeaux, though it is possible to distinguish between the senses, this is only so because of their commonality as "interlocking and corresponding world-openings", which "[beckon]" toward both one another and the world, jointly creating the conditions for perception through individual modalities (2005: 163). Thus, PAWs' aural perfilitation systems should not be seen as negatively incomplete, but rather as valuable exemplars of perceptual process, since they invite, or beckon forth, interaction between numerous modalities in the perficipant, including visual and kinaesthetic. Furthermore, Cazeaux argues that aurally-manifested art possesses greater potential for exemplification than visually-focused forms because of sound's ambiguous, quasi-autonomous ontology:

> Whereas sight is comparatively 'transparent' in giving us reality, sound hangs or
> endures as a transformation between subject and object and, as such, is the region
> of sensory experience we can turn to in order to appreciate the invitational
> relationship in which we stand to the world. (ibid: 173)[13]

6.3.5: Sound, Phenomenology & Performance

Phenomenologically, the designation of something as art requires that the work reveals or exemplifies the "cognitive, world-organising processes" just described, which allows artworks to express meanings above and beyond those of presentation and representation (Cazeaux, 2005: 164). Theatre does this, according to Home-Cook, since it is a "place where the playfulness of perception is phenomenally presenced by and in the attentional enactments of its participants" (2015: 8). Characterising perception as inherently playful is

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[12] For a more lyrical account of the mingling of the senses, see Serres (2008).
[13] Though not mentioned by Cazeaux (2005), this links also to the "centering" and "unifying" nature of sound, as described by Ong ([1982] 2002: 69–72).

of especial interest here, since it suggests that the ludic focus of *Wandercast* opens up another exemplary register in addition to its aural orientation, implying a layering of exemplification, as discussed in Chapter 4.[14] In 4.3, I noted Bogost's argument that play(fulness) is "a tool to discover and appreciate the structures of all [that]…we encounter" (2016: 12). From Home-Cook's (2015) perspective, play(fulness) also reveals the processes through which these encounters are made possible; taking also Cazeaux's (2005) view, ludic aurality exemplifies perception twice over.

Home-Cook (2015) attributes play(fulness) to perception from a phenomenological position similar to Cazeaux's and also focuses on aurality, but in staged theatre. This presencing of perception's posited play(fulness) occurs through the interplay between the senses and the phenomenal elements of the artwork, as well as within each of these two groups, during one's active constitution of experience. Whilst I agree with Home-Cook's analysis with regard to theatre, it strikes me that PAWs generally, and *Wandercast* in particular, reveal and exemplify this process especially clearly, since they do so within environments not designated as arenas of aesthetic experience and also invite a greater degree of active engagement than does staged theatre. When I ask perficipants to slalom through environmental objects, as if they're on *Ski Sunday*, in Ep.2 and to imagine any people or animals in their vicinity as under-sea creatures in Ep.3, *Wandercast* instantiates a complex web of invitational relations. As Home-Cook observes,

> To be in sound is not to be straightforwardly, spherically and passively 'immersed',
> but rather consists of an ongoing, dynamic and intersensorial bodily engagement
> with the affordances of a given environment. (2015: 3)

Crucially, PAWs invite perficipants to physically enact the affordances of their immediate environment in a way that far outstrips the invitational structures of staged theatre. Furthermore, PAWs usually take place in environments where modes of behaviour not associated with aesthetic experience are likely to dominate. Whereas staged theatre could be described as a laboratory for aural-perceptual investigation, PAWs take this endeavour into the wild. This may reinforce any potential impact on perficipants, since the

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[14] In Chapter 4, I argue that play(fulness) reveals our cognitive architecture, exemplifies the impossibility of total ecological control mentioned above, and also exemplifies the way in which we come to know the world through relations both internal to and between things.

work's expressiveness is rooted in a quotidian environment, thus signalling more clearly the universality of the processes exemplified.[15]

6.3.6: Presence, PAWs & Audiowalks

Home-Cook's notion of presencing also re-raises the issue of perfilitator presence in PAWs. As Myers observes in relation to audiowalks, and as I noted in relation to autoteatro, it is not appropriate to characterise perfilitators as absent in such works (2011a: 76). Myers argues that the bodily presence of the speaker may be "conjured within the imagination of the listener" (ibid), such that intersubjective contact is effected between the two, which resonates with my notion of system coupling. Though it can be, this conjuring need not be visual, since the term contact implies an affective, even tactile, phenomenon. This conjured contact feeds into the work's web of invitational relations aurally, kinaesthetically, and perhaps visually in the mind's eye of the perficipant.

For Myers, PAWs in audiowalk format, of which *Wandercast* is an example, possess a particularly potent expressiveness, since the practice of perambulation whilst engaging with an aural perfilitation system instantiates direct and dynamic kinetic connectivity which "interanimates and shapes landscapes" for the perficipant (ibid: 79), revealing with particular clarity the way in which perception opens onto the world. In an age when many people navigate the world whilst magnetised to the visual interface of their smartphone and/or encased in "solitary experience in the shrunken and isolated space" of their personal collection of audio (ibid: 79–80),[16] audiowalks aim to use the medium of sound to open perficipants out into their environments. This positions *Wandercast* as an effective means of developing Bogost's "*worldfulness*" (2016: 224 – emphasis original), introduced in 4.3. In audiowalks, as Myers observes, "self, body and landscape are shaped and enmeshed through voicing and listening bodies in motion" (2011a: 80); the perfilitator is presenced in the experience of the perficipant and the perficipant is presenced in their environment.

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[15] For the avoidance of doubt, and reiterating a point made in Chapter 2, I reject the drawing of a distinction between any event and 'real life', since reality encompasses all events. Therefore, I do not describe *Wandercast* as taking place in the real world, whilst staged theatre takes place somehow outside of it.
[16] Ironically, this could include 'traditional' podcasts, as well as music mp3s or streaming services. On the subject of visual interfaces, see also footnote 5, where I acknowledge performative visual works.

Recalling Home-Cook's argument that being 'in sound' is dynamic engagement with affordances, *Wandercast* takes Myers' enmeshing process further by both drawing attention to ludic affordances, thus revealing them, and directly inviting the enaction of these affordances, leading to active, mutual shaping of perficipant and environment. The perficipant is shaped by ontological change resulting from being performed by the *Wandercast* system and the environment is shaped as a result of perficipant action upon it. In so doing, *Wandercast* doubly reveals and exemplifies the perception-action cycles by which self and world are co-constituted through both its calling for completion and its ludic orientation (since perception itself is deemed playful [Home-Cook 2015: 7–11]).

In 1.4.2, I aligned the enaction of ludic affordances with Kershaw's "minimalist [units] of performing" (2015: 131), which suggests that this mutual shaping can recalibrate a perficipant's relationship to their environment and thus help develop a ludic disposition. The enaction of affordances through performance also provides the possibility for personally creative original interpretations to be made manifest. For Sally Banes & Andre Lepecki "any body in a performance situation…is an inexhaustible inventor of sensorial-perceptual potentials and becomings" ([2007] 2012: 4). Within staged theatre, the realising in overt action of these potentials is usually restricted to performers. Within PAWs, the possibility of creativity-in-action is extended also to the 'audience'. As discussed above in relation to the meshing of ecological systems, this is not to suggest that PAWs can render perficipants creative, only that they create the conditions for the generation, and possible realisation, of creative potential. Recall that, from an ecological perspective, no part of a system can unilaterally control any other.

I have now framed *Wandercast* theoretically by integrating phenomenological and performance studies perspectives on aurality into my ecological conceptual framework. I have argued that the ludic aurality of *Wandercast* doubles its exemplificatory potential in respect of perception-action cycles because the overt ludicality of *Wandercast* exemplifies the existing exemplification and play(fulness) of aurality itself. An important outcome of this multiplication of exemplification, I argue, is that *Wandercast* can enable perficipants to be more present than usual, since exemplifying perception-action cycles helps to open perficipants out into their environments. I have also argued that *Wandercast*'s site-non-specific design and demands for dynamic environmental interaction on the part of the

perficipant increase opportunities for developing creative potential. It is easy for

perficipants to embed *Wandercast* performances within their quotidian routines, which

facilitates the application of potential discoveries, and *Wandercast*'s intrinsically active

nature increases the likelihood of original interpretations being manifested through action.

I now move to tease out how perficipant feedback reflects the themes that make up the

titles of the above subsections, also delineating when reality approaches the ideal of what

PAWs can achieve and when meshing between perfilitator and perficipant systems

approaches zero. I address the themes in the above order, treating some together as they

overlap.

6.4: *Wandercast* Perficipant Feedback[17]

Many more perficipants fed back on Ep.3 than either other episode, since Ep.3 was included

as an independent performance task in a first-year core module within the Drama & Theatre

Studies BA at the University of Kent, where I teach. As argued in 4.3.1, all perficipants have

dispositions that affect the degree to which they engage with PAWs; in the first-years' case,

perceiving *Wandercast* as 'work' may well have negatively affected their engagement,

making it less likely that they would attain Suits' "just because" ludic disposition (1978:

41).[18]

My hunch regarding the effect on first-years of perceiving *Wandercast* as work is

supported by the fact that I conducted a session using Ep.3 with Year 10 students at a

University of Kent summer school in July 2017, though not in an official research capacity.

Although a summer school connotes work, the session was less formal than a typical GCSE

lesson, so the Year 10s are unlikely to have framed *Wandercast* in the same way as the

undergraduates. The Year 10s' spoken reflections indicated that even those who initially

exhibited resistance to perficipation ended up getting something useful from the

experience. However, it is possible that they may have reflected more negatively in an

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[17] Full responses to all *Wandercast* feedback questionnaires can be accessed through A6.2.

[18] It is also worth mentioning that the relative foci of the episodes (Ep.3's focus being imagination), entails
that, overall, more feedback addresses themes pertaining to imaginative than to physical interaction, yet this
does not mean that *Wandercast* as a whole bears this orientation.

anonymous feedback form. It is also possible that those undergraduates who provided negative feedback got something useful from Ep.3. A further possibility is that those undergraduates who provided positive feedback hoped that doing so might somehow benefit them within the module (notwithstanding the fact that the feedback was anonymous). Overall, feedback suggests that *Wandercast* is affective and effective at both exemplifying perceptual process and promoting rooted placelessness.

6.4.1: System Coupling

System coupling in Ep.2 seems to have been influenced by both the employment of direct address, a hallmark of popular performance (Double, 2017: 8), and the fact that I engaged in the same actions as perficipants 'simultaneously':

> the fact that I believe [the perfilitator] was doing the moves as he spoke facilitate
> doing it more as you feel like it's a shared experience and it teaches you to be a bit
> more carefree.

Intertwined with this is the concept of presencing, since these perficipants appear to have felt that I was somehow with them. One even commented that I "did not have a physical form [yet] appeared as a presence". The fact that I was undergoing a similar experience was important:

> The sense that the narrator was also learning at the same time mimicked the
> thought process I had at some key moments - such as encountering other people -
> where it kept me from returning too much to my own thoughts. It also created a
> feedback process which was surprising given that there is no actual way to ask
> questions in the moment.

This notion of a 'feedback process' is particularly interesting, since it is not possible to have feedback without contact, which Myers (2011a) relates to presencing. Coupling is also evident in the above quote in the way that the perficipant felt no longer in complete control of their thought process, indicating that they were decentred and performed by Ep.2. This reflects both the ecological destabilising of the concept of control and also Bogost's conceptualisation of play as the "[subordination of] agency to a larger system" (2016: 92).

We might say that ludic-ecological performance exemplifies the way in which all interaction involves the integration of systems' relative agencies.[19]

Coupling was almost zero for some Ep.3 perficipants, who found my energetic and expressive tone (used in support of the podcast's imagination-orientation) "pretentious and patronising":

It's very hard to relate and enjoy something like this when you feel like you are being spoken to like a child.

Another perficipant commented that "it's very hard to relate to something that you dislike". These perficipants' dispositions toward the work may have been negatively influenced by being required to experience it as part of a module, indicating the impact of perficipant attitudes on the degree of coupling possible. However, their feedback highlights an inescapable limitation of Playfulness-perfilitation: no perfilitator's sense of Playfulness can overlap with those of all perficipants. It is a useful lesson to learn that Playful-podcast-perfilitation can be perceived as patronising, since the lack of face-to-face interaction means that one's insider experience cannot reveal this. I also sought critical feedback from peers on a work-in-progress, none of whom found Ep.3 patronising.

6.4.2: Performative-Behavioural Therapy

A common thread throughout feedback on all episodes characterises them as calming or meditative. Words such as "relaxed", "happy", "calm", "soothing", and "chilled" appear numerous times in perficipants' descriptions. Many perficipants note that the work reduced their stress-levels. Some perficipants specifically likened the experience to meditation, one describing Ep.3 as "reminiscent of mindfulness techniques", with another saying that Ep.2 made them "feel quite Zen". This, again, ties in with the notion of being more present in one's environment through performance and also through play(fulness), indicating the manifestation of rooted placelessness.[20]

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[19] For more on ecological agency, see 4.3.1.
[20] See 6.3.5 – 6.3.6 above.

The association of this project with mindfulness has been posited independently many times over the course of its development, both by those who have engaged with its practice and those to whom I have presented academic papers. Thich Nhat Hanh defines mindfulness as "keeping one's consciousness alive to the present reality" (1976: 11), which resonates with perficipants who "concentrated on the immediacy of the surroundings" (Ep.2), or for whom their environment "became more visible" (Ep.3). In seeking an operational definition of mindfulness, Bishop et al. argue that the practice is characterised by "openness and acceptance of experience". Nonetheless, the means by which this is achieved is "self-focused attention" (2004: 236); I find this problematic, since it promotes individualism and acts to obscure the invitational nature of perception.

Like Bogost, *Wandercast* instead seeks a "commitment to *worldfulness*", which turns one's attention outward, rather than inward (2016: 224 – emphasis original).[21] However, it is not always successful in this, as many Ep.3 perficipants reported that the experience largely took place 'within' their minds. As I have expressed, many subtleties pertaining to perfilitation and perficipation can lead to the lived experience feeling inwardly or outwardly oriented. Each orientation has value phenomenologically, since both subject and world are interdependent. However, I suggest that within contemporary consumer-culture, consumption being a profound and pervasive metaphor of inwardness, it is necessary to seek to foster outwardness in order to rebalance perspectives.

6.4.3: Personal Creativity

A significant number of perficipants explicitly characterised their experience as 'creative', one going so far as to say that they were in a "state of heightened creativity for some time afterwards" (Ep.3). Perficipants' self-reports, however, do not necessarily comply with accepted definitions. The play(fulness) of perficipation is more closely associated with original interpretations than with evaluation of their extrinsic usefulness (Bateson, P., 2010: 45). Nonetheless, one Ep.3 perficipant wrote that they would use *Wandercast* as a means of generating a creative frame of mind before embarking on a creative task such as writing,

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[21] See also 3.6.1.3 to see how this relates to ludic pedagogy.

thus expressing a usefulness-evaluation not of the original interpretations themselves, but of the mental state arising from perfication. Notwithstanding that "intrinsic and…instrumental impacts of arts participation are fundamentally interwoven" (Reason, 2017b: 47), usefulness is a problematic notion in art (and play) contexts, since it often overshadows vital, subjective elements such as ecological recalibration. It is also worth remembering that "(H)uman well-being is a justifiable end in itself" (Bateson, P., 2015: R16), which is strongly associated with both play (Lester & Russell, 2008) and art-engagement (Mowlah et al., 2014), as well as evidenced by the responses in the previous subsection.

The original interpretations of seeing one's environment 'in a new way' recur across Eps 1–3, with one perficipant even noting that a familiar environment became "(T)o some extent, a place where I had never walked before" (Ep.1). The focus on imagination in Ep.3 lends itself to visualisation, such as when "clouds became coral", which constitutes an imaginative overlay of the visible world beckoned into being by the aural overlay of the podcast. *Wandercast* evidently also facilitates these original interpretations manifesting in action, as when (for this same perficipant) "buildings became rocks to hide behind" (Ep.3).

However, not all perficipants could engage with the mental imaging aspect of Ep.3. One perficipant, who remarked that they do not experience any mental imagery, otherwise known as aphantasia, likened their engagement with Ep.3 to "someone with no sense of taste [sampling] Heston Blumental's [sic] tasting menu". Regretful of not having considered this possibility, I subsequently included a link at the bottom of the Ep.3 webpage to a website dedicated to supporting the aphantasia community, especially in case any perficipant's experience of Ep.3 leads them to consider their own mental imaging capacity. It is possible that some of those perficipants who did not mesh particularly fulsomely with Ep.3 found it unengaging as a result of mental imaging that is less vivid than average.

There is debate over whether aphantasia might be due to congenital, psychogenic, or multiple factors (see de Vito & Bartolomeo, 2016; Zeman, Dewar & Della Sala, 2016, 2015). What is most important here, however, is that a perficipant's capacity in any modality will determine the extent to which their aural experience can beckon toward that modality. Just as aphantasiacs may not find artworks which foreground mental imaging particularly engaging, those with above-average imaging capacity may find that they provide a particularly rich phenomenal experience.

6.4.4: Exemplification of Perception

The vividness of some perficipants' imagistic experiences, however, shows that *Wandercast* has considerable phenomenologically expressive potential. Even after the podcast, one perficipant "could see monkeys jumping from car to car", leading to the apprehension of meaning beyond the representational:

> For every person that walked past, I found myself wondering what they were
> thinking, or imagining, and what it'd be like to get into their head too. (Ep.3)

This kind of behavioural change continuing, or even beginning to occur, after *Wandercast* was over indicates that the work has considerable potential to recalibrate perficipants' relationships with their environment.

Earlier, I argued that PAWs' explicit or implicit invitations to interact with one's surroundings extend Cazeaux's (2005) notion that audio has a particular propensity to exemplify perception's invitational structure. This is borne out by perficipant testimony:

> Every little sound *invited* me to explore that immense world it possess [sic]. I
> submerged myself into the nature seeing different birds in the farm and aquatic
> creatures under the sea. (Ep.3 – emphasis my own)

The first sentence here evokes the work's phenomenological artistic expressiveness – i.e. the generation of meaning that exceeds presentation and representation – which arises from the complexity of *Wandercast*'s invitational relations.

Perficipants often described sound as drawing them into their surroundings, making them more "aware of sounds in real life, blurring what sounds came from the podcast and what came from the real world" (Ep.1). The use of different sonic elements seems to have been particularly effective:

> the change of audio environment through the use of voice, and ambient sound
> made it easier to engage with the imaginary landscape of the real world. (Ep.2)

Again, this last phrase suggests apprehension of meaning that overreaches the content of the work, pointing toward the perficipant's construction of reality.

Perficipants reported experiencing change to the global character of their perception, for instance inhabiting "a more child-like perspective", leading to the rather intense experience of having been "swooped into a fairy tale" (Ep.3). It is also important that these responses pertain to a question regarding change that occurred or persisted after the event. These changes in global perception necessarily throw into relief one's default mode, i.e. habitual affordance-filters: "it…made me more aware of my surroundings where usually it's like I have blinders[22] on and I am not really paying attention to anything" (Ep.3). I suggest that this increased awareness also indicates the revealing of perceptual processes through the work. Additionally, perficipants often reported increased intensity of experience across all sensory registers, which supports the synaesthetic phenomenological thesis.

6.4.5: Active Engagement

Active engagement in terms of overt play(ful)-behaviour was, somewhat unsurprisingly, limited by perficipants' concerns about being observed by non-perficipants. This project seeks to contribute towards a shift in social attitudes which places greater value upon play(fulness), thus making its public display among adults less unusual. However, the project's limited scope and reach entail that any impact on social attitudes at large is necessarily negligible. Notwithstanding this, the recent upsurge of interest in adult play, as discussed in 3.3, indicates that a cultural shift may be beginning.

The majority of perficipants reported greater imaginative than physical interaction with their environment, though this is almost certainly because more perficipants have fed back on Ep.3 than Eps 1&2. Nevertheless, imaginative interaction constitutes the enactment of ludic affordances. It is also possible that the structure of Eps 1–3, which invites solo listening, contributed to perficipants' reticence for overt play(fulness) exceeding social norms; group perficipation may mitigate concerns about being observed. Though not an example of a podcast, this was certainly my experience of *Remote London* (see A6.1).

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[22] I think this perficipant means 'blinkers', but it amuses (and slightly horrifies) me to think that they actually wander around as if wearing some apparatus that blinds them to the world. 'Blinders' sounds as if spikes might be involved, but I guess a blindfold would do the trick.

Curiously, however, many perficipants' testimonies indicate a feeling of empowerment arising from their private experience:

> I enjoyed the fact that people were walking past me not knowing that I was in a
> world of my own. It was also interesting knowing I was the only one doing this type
> of thing and no one had any idea of what I was imagining them as/how I was looking
> at my surroundings. (Ep.3)

Although this perficipant describes being in a world of their own, the latter part of the quote clearly indicates that they were connected to their surroundings. As well as empowerment, for some, a reassuring feeling of partnership was engendered: "I felt not alone it was as if 'Wandercast' was really with me in the experience" (Ep.3). This resonates strongly with the notion of perfilitator presence explored above. As I mentioned, presencing cuts both ways; one perficipant experienced being "transported by sound to your playgrounds" (Ep.2). Though, of course, in reality they manoeuvred themselves through their own co-constituted playgrounds, the sound participating in the revealing and exemplification of perception-action processes.

One perficipant put their feeling of immersion, implicit in the experience of transportation, down to

> the ambiance [sic] sounds that were playing throughout, as it sort of tricked your
> mind into thinking you were in a different place and that this was the way you
> should be responding to it. (Ep.3)

Here, the use of the word 'responding' indicates their active engagement. As the podcast progressed, another perficipant even felt as though non-perficipants could also hear the *Wandercast* soundscape, which became "a normal thing", commonly shared. This is a clear example of the aural environment extending out into the objective world.

6.5: Conclusion

I began this chapter by reviewing key related practices that have influenced *Wandercast*'s development. I described how Miller's *Linked* disabused me of previous limitations to my thinking in terms of contexts where Playfulness can be found. *Linked* also introduced me to the necessity of creating open and indeterminate structures so as not to inhibit perficipants' agency and associated generation of creative potential. *Wondermart* gave me first-hand experience of what it feels like for one's presence to be diminished by a PAW, thereby impressing upon me the importance of avoiding this. However, *Wondermart* also introduced me to the instructional approach to structuring a PAW. GTGL demonstrated that, as well as negatively impacting perficipant agency, PAWs that depend upon specific environmental affordances are also likely to diminish perficipant presence, which reinforced my decision to employ site-non-specificity that I made following my *Linked* performance.

Through the processes of *Wandercast*'s evolution, I developed, and/or deployed existing, know-how associated with the creation of PAWs that create a sense of co-presence between perficipant and perfilitator. However, perficipant feedback indicates that individual differences always significantly affect the level of possible meshing between perficipant and perfilitator systems. Tactics I employed include direct address (in this, I combined popular performance techniques with those drawn from my conservatoire training in radio drama), jokey delivery (drawing on my experience of children's entertainment and stand-up comedy), and performing the same actions in the moment of recording as those that I invite perficipants to perform as they listen (and wander).

After the practice review, I then expanded this project's conceptual framework by further integrating phenomenology. This enabled me to develop the element of my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument that positions play(fulness) as an exemplar of the way in which we actively co-constitute reality through perception. By producing *Wandercasts* that focus on particular modalities of play(fulness), such as physical and imaginative play, I have created structures which further intensify the 'pulling out', i.e. filtering, of affordances. As I argued in Chapter 4, this filtering is an intrinsic part of affordance perception; *Wandercast*'s focus on singular affordance modalities more strongly exemplifies this process, which my practice already heightens through its focus on

(extrinsically afuntional) ludic affordances. Although this categorisation of affordances is arguably an artificial move, as I suggest in the next chapter, it has allowed *Wandercast* to investigate ludic affordances and perceptual exemplification with particular clarity. This claim is borne out by perficipant feedback, which comprised the latter section of this chapter, and which evidenced perficipants' increased awareness of physical and imaginative ludic affordances and of their processes of perception.

I argue that what I am terming performative audio works, some of which form a subset of podcasts, exploit and increase the exemplificatory potential of sound by inviting dynamic interaction between perficipant and environment that extends and complexifies the web of connections inherently established by listening. Home-Cook asserts that

> Whilst the listener resides *in* the medium of sound, equally this medium must be attended, explored and travelled through. (2015: 169 – emphasis original)

Whilst this can be achieved with the minimum of physical movement in the case of staged theatre or traditional podcasts, PAWs require more robust environmental interaction. Whether this leads to bizarre, furtive acts in a supermarket during *Wondermart*, "[hopping] on and off some tiny speed bumps" and "swinging on every lamp post" during *Wandercast* (Ep.2), or simply taking a left turn during *GTGL*, the interaction involved is decidedly more kinetic. For Home-Cook, "(I)n 'paying attention', whether in the theatre or the world at large, we must…'grasp', and this act of grasping requires effort" (2015: 3). Clearly, though PAWs involve, and can reveal, this attentional grasping, they also make concrete movement demands, thus requiring additional effort. With additional effort, I argue, additional value can be generated, enabling the podcast to perform listeners into recalibration of their personal ecology. In other words, performative podcasts offer performative-behavioural therapy for performative societies.

If "when we listen, we *shape* meaning: in attending sounds, we set sounds in play" (ibid: 169 – emphasis original), then when we simultaneously set ourselves in motion and physically interact with the world, I suggest that we tether this meaning-shaping more closely to our corporeality, which may make its outcomes more durable. Furthermore, though the impact of engaging with one *Wandercast* is necessarily modest, the embedding

of the experience within 'the world at large' enables meaningful outcomes to directly impact perficipants' view of their environment after the event:

> The colours and objects seemed to jump out at me, I felt more in tune and aware. I started thinking about what things could be rather than what they actually were. (Ep.3)

Such outcomes clearly exhibit the novelty-generation necessary for personal creativity, and indicate the potential development of worldfulness. Although most perficipants reported such phenomena occurring only for a modest period, the fact that this effect began or persisted post-*Wandercast* again demonstrates the potential recalibration of perficipant-environment relationships.

Wandercast's recalibration towards worldfulness arguably has ontological implications. By decentring and performing perficipants into states of increased presence, *Wandercast* helps perficipants recognise that they are "in and toward the world" (Merleau-Ponty, [1945] 2012: *lxxiv*), thus revealing their ecological embeddedness. It is reasonable to posit that further engagement with *Wandercasts*, or similar work, would result in further, perhaps longer-lasting, recalibration. Upon retracing their steps once Ep.3 was over, one perficipant had the "fascinating" experience of "changing my walk as I came back through my farm" and went on to

> wonder whether from now on this particular spot in this field will always be underwater for me?

In characterising listening as fundamentally playful, Home-Cook (2015) implicitly states that all PAWs, and all podcasts, involve aural play. Not all will exemplify and presence this process equally, however. *Wandercast* binds the perceptually exemplary "play of listening" (ibid: 168) to complex, manifestly playful environmental interaction, such that play(fulness) across multiple modalities occurs, thus multiplying the potential for perceptual exemplification and ecological recalibration. The above perficipant experienced increased propensity for play(fulness) and altered perception pertaining even to their own ontology, the latter of which arguably increases the likelihood and potential extent of recalibration, as

the perficipant's being is directly implicated. Post-*Wandercast*, they were "still playing", feeling "smaller than normal".

Given their aesthetic value, PAWs present a rich vein of research potential, the surface of which has barely been scratched. I contend that participatory performance mediated through podcasts has considerable potential in many areas. In this endeavour, I suggest that ecological and phenomenological lenses will be invaluable, hence my integrating the two here. PAWs' portability, global reach, and embeddedness within Web 2.0 frameworks means that they have the capacity to artistically and actively address issues of global significance such as the ecological crisis. Furthermore, as *Wondermart* demonstrates, the ubiquity of headphone-wearing in contemporary metropolitan society means that the podcast medium provides an opportunity for the incursion of art into almost any sphere of life without arousing suspicion. Normative patterns of behaviour may thus be disrupted from inside and ecological recalibration achieved. However, a major issue requiring further research and innovation is how to assuage listener-performers' self-consciousness. In the next chapter, I discuss how I explored the potential for *Spinstallation*, the performance workshop, to both assuage perficipants' self-consciousness and offer tactics for living life as art without the mediation of headphones. I was unable, during this research, to explore the potential of the PAW format to specifically instigate group play(fulness). However, *Spinstallation*, the subject of the next case study, does just that.

PAWs effect coupling between perfilitation, perficipation, and environment, as well as exploiting both performativity and the sonic medium to exemplify the invitational nature of perception. As Banes & Lepecki observe, "transmissibility of the senses is one of performance's most powerful performatives" (2012: 4). Why not give *Wandercast* a try and you too might "[befriend] an elephant and [flirt] with a mermaid" (or merman – Ep.3).

Chapter 7: *Spinstallation* Case Study

7.1: Introduction

This chapter addresses the third and final strand to my PaR: the workshop. I chart *Spinstallation*'s development primarily through critical reflection on its methodology; I describe, compare, and contrast each of *Spinstallation*'s six iterations to date, beginning with S-Zero and tackling each in turn, chronologically. This chronological treatment of *Spinstallation*'s iterations provides the structure for the main body of this chapter, which is topped and tailed by a consideration of *Spinstallation*'s relationship to the installtion. Although this was not my original intention, as I will discuss, *Spinstallation*'s evolution brought this strand to operate within an official initiative at the University of Kent: the Researcher Development Programme, run by the Graduate School. Therefore, as noted in the Roadmap, at 1.6.7, a key element of the know-how articulated in this chapter relates to the negotiation between the expectations and requirements of the various stakeholders in such a situation, whilst maintaining the integrity of the practice. This issue is of vital importance if 4P practitioners are to successfully make a living, since working alongside, and/or collaborating with, institutions and organisations currently forms a major part of many practitioners' work, especially under the current funding system.

I address the key themes, challenges, and discoveries of each iteration, citing perficipant feedback throughout. As mentioned in 1.3.1, *Spinstallation* is the most overtly pedagogical strand. My experience and development of *Spinstallation* both informs and is informed by my development of ludic pedagogy (LP); this chapter thus articulates PaR into LP's workings. *Spinstallation* has proved practically and theoretically difficult, hence my articulating the necessary negotiations and focusing on methodology in this chapter. Nonetheless, these difficulties have provided learning opportunities, as I shall discuss. Also, feedback suggests that at least some perficipant learning took place during each iteration. As intimated in the Roadmap, at 1.6.7, and in the conclusion to Chapter 6 above, the social learning aspect of LP raises the potential for perficipant self-consciousness to inhibit

play(fulness). Considerations of research validity have led me to seek *Spinstallation* perficipant groups comprised of individuals who are unlikely to have had extensive previous experience of interacting ludically with each other, otherwise any ludicality observed could not reasonably be attributed to *Spinstallation* itself. Owing to perficipants' anticipated unfamiliarity, I considered that self-consciousness would likely be an important issue to address; therefore, I ensured that I reflected upon perficipant self-consciousness at each workshop and responded accordingly as the strand developed. In this chapter, I articulate the know-how I employed, and/or developed, to combat self-consciousness, which includes techniques drawn from drama, popular performance, and visual art. I first consider *Spinstallation*'s relationship to the art installation before discussing each iteration in turn, then end by revisiting the topic of the installation.

7.1.1: *Spinstallation* – an Installation

Spinstallation is so called because it originated in an idea to put a spin on the installation. In collaboration with traditional skills practitioners and with participation from outreach groups, I wanted to create a series of interactive installations from materials found in or native to the particular environment, the first of which was to be a woodland. The installations were to provide affordances for multisensory ludic behaviour (the key senses being kinaesthetic, tactile, visual, and auditory) and to engage creatively and playfully with historical practices of the location. Although this idea was not realised in full,[23] *Spinstallation*'s trajectory of development began in this direction and has maintained engagement with the notion of the art installation throughout,[24] a topic I shall revisit once that trajectory has been plotted.

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[23] For an early ideas-tests, see PML\ Spinstallation Video\Woodland Xylophone and http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-creepeeteepee/ (PML\Spinstallation Images\CreepeeTeepee Ideas Test).
[24] Though the name *Spinstallation* impelled me to frequently consider the relationship of this strand to the notion of an installation, this was not necessarily a driving force in its development. As will hopefully become clear, *Spinstallation* developed along a trajectory which sought to strike an ever finer balance between the overall aims of this project and the requirements of the particular setting. It is only in analysis that *Spinstallation*'s ever-present engagement with the installation has been fully teased out.
One reason that *Spinstallation* moved away from my initial plans was that the idea of playfully engaging with historical practices of the location feeds into a more traditional 'site-specific' paradigm, whereas my research moved towards rooted placelessness.

As Claire Bishop (2005) observes, the distinction between the installation of art and installation art has been ambiguous since the term's inception in the 1960s. Bishop characterises the former as being where individual pieces take precedence over their installation, whereas the latter conceives of the space and its contents as an irreducible artistic whole. In both cases, installation implies an aspiration to increase the viewer's awareness of how the space is configured and the responses that this elicits. However, installation art "addresses the viewer directly as a literal presence in the space … [presupposing] an embodied viewer" whose every sense is intended to be heightened (Bishop, 2005: 6). This insistence on the viewer's corporeal engagement with the work has, Bishop argues, led installation art to be framed as participatory.[25] *Spinstallation* puts a spin on this, in a sense, because perficipants not only participate through experience but actively generate the work. As I shall explore in relation to later iterations, one could even say that they become the installation itself. I am also mindful of, and playfully embrace, the possibility that the shifting relationship *Spinstallation* bears to notions of the installation exemplifies the way in which the many and various applications of the term installation serve to "almost preclude it from having any meaning" (ibid).

Although *Spinstallation* has been particularly troublesome, it is for this reason perhaps where Freeman's (2010) notion of PaR *pentimento* is most in evidence within this project. *Pentimento* is a term drawn from fine art discourse, meaning the revealing of a painting's previous drafts as the uppermost layer of paint – "the finished article" – becomes transparent over time (Freeman, 2010: *xii*). Freeman relates this to the processual character and continuous revision at the heart of PaR, which lays bare all inchoate ideas and roads left untravelled, an idea which chimes also with the subjectivity-embracing models of both Nelson (2013) and Trimingham (2002).[26] In fact, it was only latterly that I saw through

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[25] Therefore, installation art has a similar genealogy to my performance methodology (4P). A parallel and intertwined history, shared by both installation and 4P, is that of site-responsivity. Both of these histories can arguably be traced back through happenings, minimalist sculpture, Situationist psychogeography, surrealism, and Dada, to the Futurists, who signified the first modern effort to take artistic practice away from institutions and out into the (urban) environment (Goldberg, 2001: 16).

[26] Much like the way in which installation art demands a subjective approach to its critique (Bishop, 2005: 10–11), PaR is a largely subjective endeavour. This is reflected in Nelson's "'insider'…knowing" (2013: 37) and Trimingham's "'hermeneutic-interpretative' spiral" (2002: 56). In terms of *pentimento*, parallels are also apparent between Freeman's notion and Cathy Turner's (2004) conception of the layering aspect of site-specific performance as "palimpsest", which refers to a writing surface on which a series of texts have been inscribed, effaced, and overwritten but on which traces of the previous writings can still be seen.

recent layers and realised that what I had taken to be an organised version of *Perplexpedition* is actually more appropriately categorised as the first iteration of *Spinstallation*: S-Zero. It is to *Spinstallation*'s developmental trajectory that I now turn, beginning with the aforementioned '*Spinstallation* in disguise'.

7.2: S-ZERO – Penryn Playfulness

This session took place as part of *Where to? Steps Towards the Future of Walking Arts*, a symposium held at the University of Falmouth on the 16th of April, 2015. I was invited to conduct a ludic walk during the lunch break. As mentioned above, I devised what I conceived of as a showcase of *Perplexpedition* tactics, which were chosen (or invented during preparatory on-site play) for their capacity to instigate the enaction of primarily physical ludic affordances.[27] However, since symposium attendees signed up in advance and had the opportunity to read prior information contained in my abstract, the event essentially became a workshop. It is also the case that, while *Perplexpedition* developed into a choice-based event with the devising of the Ludic Menu, *Spinstallation* developed into a task-based event, as will become evident.

For pragmatic and contextual reasons, S-Zero became a task-based follow-my-leader-type session,[28] exploring ludic affordances around the uppermost entrance to the Exchange building where the symposium took place. Unlike later iterations, there were no preliminary activities. However, I did sketch a rough plan for the gathered perficipants before embarking on our journey, signalling its ludic nature through a developing persona that would become Captain Ludicrous.[29] Since people had physically signed up on the day and since the event took place in an educational establishment, I used the sign-up sheet as a register, which I (playfully) called out as if we were at secondary school (before commencing video-recording).

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[27] This was in no small part because *Perplexpedition* was the only strand that I had tested practically at the time.

[28] I knew that my time-slot was very short, at only 20 minutes (due to sessions overrunning, this was reduced to 15mins on the day); I also knew that my perficipants would be expecting a walk.

[29] For a breakdown of the S-Zero tasks, see A7.0.

The key discovery from S-Zero relates to the social aspect of the work. Having framed the session as *Perplexpedition*, my initial reflections were that the intimacy of interaction between myself and the perficipants was less than in my initial *Perplexpedition* pieces. However, this is almost inevitable; the greater the number of perficipants, the less contact a lone perfilitator can make with individuals during the same period. Relatedly, one's vocal delivery necessarily changes when addressing a large group outdoors, especially if the group are moving through the space; I found myself employing a declamatory tone and increased volume in order to be heard and understood. It is also the case that the structure of a workshop formalises the relationship between perfilitator and perficipant, making equivalence between the two harder to achieve than within the risky, messy, and unpredictable structure of a *Perplexpedition* intervention. This is not to say that a formalised, perfilitator-as-playmaster relationship stifles perficipant play necessarily, but it does seem that the subtle, shifting affectivities which characterise my notion of Playfulness are more difficult to establish between perfilitator and perficipant(s) in such a situation.

What was surprising were the internal dynamics that spontaneously formed within the perficipant group. The interplay between perficipants was such that once I had set up the task-based scenario it took on a life of its own, again exemplifying ecological embeddedness. For example, perficipants spontaneously sought to help one another leap across the concrete chasm (06:46).[30] I experienced similar decentring to that which Kershaw describes: "As if one were in an event created by somebody else, being *performed by something else*" (2015: 115 – emphasis original), despite the fact that Kershaw and I were the creators of our respective performance pieces.

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[30] Please see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/penryn-playfulness/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S-ZERO Penryn Playfulness).

: Ludic helpfulness.

Given that social play[31] makes up a significant proportion, if not the majority, of human play, I shouldn't have been surprised that many perficipants began establishing simple group games, such as bouncing balls to each other during The Rubber Biscuit Barrel (09:04).

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[31] By 'social play', I am referring to all play that involves more than one person, be that having a laugh with a friend or the activities of a Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game such as *World of Warcraft*. (Interestingly, one perficipant commented that their S-Zero experience was reminiscent of a computer game; they enjoyed "levelling up" as they gained confidence to do more challenging things, further commenting that it was like augmenting reality without the use of technology.) Since humanity is a social species (Dunbar, 1998), it is a point of fact that a significant proportion of human play will be social, just as with any other context of activity. Indeed, within the empirical literature, sociability is posited as a core component of playfulness (when playfulness is construed as a psychological construct – e.g. Proyer & Jehle, 2013; Barnett, L., 2007).

Although I was interested from the outset in the social aspect of the work, the solo nature of doctorates makes it difficult to envisage what might happen when moving from solo-devising-play to social-performance-play. Admittedly, my planning and preconceptions of S-Zero were coloured by my solo perspective, which is something that I sought to address in future work. Much like a stand-up comedian, a *Spinstallation* (or *Perplexpedition*) perfilitator "[gains] precious little from…rehearsal" (Allen, 2002: 35), which is one reason why this project constitutes PaR; the above discoveries can only be made in the *doing* of the performances themselves that thus become both research process and output.

As I have expressed in this section and the introduction, S-Zero was not planned as a *Spinstallation* at all, hence my retrospectively naming it S-*Zero*. This indicates the non-linearity of my research process, which I have noted throughout this writing. The first *Spinstallation* that I conceived of as such from its inception (S1), as I discuss below, was designed for families and exhibits a decidedly different atmosphere to S-Zero, which is unsurprising given the non-linearity of the relationship between S-Zero and S1.

Nonetheless, their task-based structure indicates their commonality, as well as the similarities owing to the 4P methodology that is immanent to every instance of the practice; for example, both S-Zero and S1 involve movement through the environment (the Peripatetic pillar of 4P).

7.3: S1 – Mini Worlds

This iteration explicitly sought to investigate social aspects of play(fulness); specifically the potential for intergenerational learning[32] provided by ludic interactions within families.[33] S1 took place in the RSPB nature reserve at Rough Common, just outside Canterbury, on the 22nd of August, 2015. Captain Ludicrous, assisted by Lieutenant Crumps (my lovely, helpful sister), inducted the assembled civilians into LudiCo. This was accomplished by each civilian devising an explorer name for themselves, thereby implicitly engaging their subjunctivity and entering a performance frame by conceiving of themselves as someone else; this technique was used in every later iteration. LudiCo then set off in search of Twiglets: spiritual guardians of the woodland who look mysteriously like twigs.[34] Once acquainted with the Twiglets, LudiCo sought out the creatures' homesteads, thoroughly sprucing them up and upgrading them where necessary.[35]

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[32] This research focus for S1 was influenced by the work of Cambridge Curiosity & Imagination, a Cambridge-based organisation for the development of creative pedagogy, who seek to have children and families lead their explorations (see Cambridge C & I, n.d.:[online]).

[33] I chose not to specify age ranges in the hope of maximising uptake of places, instead describing the workshop as "fun for all the family" and framing it in terms of potential intergenerational learning by stating that "your children and grandchildren might teach you a thing or two!" (For the flyer used to seek S1 perficiants, see A7.1.) Since this is primarily not an empirical project and does not possess isolatable variables, I argue that it is quite permissible to frame an event in terms of my research interests. By informing adults that they might learn from their children or grandchildren during the workshop, I aimed to informally signal that all attendees were to fully participate; this was not to be an afternoon's free childcare.

[34] Twiglets often disintegrate themselves when taking on twig-form, so LudiCo's first task was to find the various body parts of the Twiglets and tie them together with string.

[35] Please see the video of LudiCo's exploits here http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-realm-of-the-twiglets (PML\Spinstallation Video\S1 The Realm of the Twiglets).
You can read Captain Ludicrous' report and see photographic evidence of Twiglets here
http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-realm-of-the-twiglets-report/ (PML\Spinstallation Images\S1 Mini Worlds).

Fig.34: Installation of Twiglet bandstand and soup station.

Whereas S-Zero had a wilfully self-selecting group of perficiants, drawn from a community of individuals with an existing interest in peripatetic arts practice, I wanted S1 perficiants to be drawn from as wide a variety of communities and socioeconomic backgrounds as possible. Another aim was thus to explore the possibility that ludic 4P might facilitate dialogue between individuals from groups which tend to have little contact with one another, potentially increasing understanding. A somewhat utopian aim, perhaps, but grounded in the paradox that play(fulness) is both disruptive (Sutton-Smith, 1997: 148) and socialising (Huizinga, [1938] 1970).

7.3.1: S1 – Ludic Disruption & Socialisation

Though I disagree both with his assertion that playfulness can exist independently of play and that mundanity and play constitute different realities, as expressed in 2.4, my view and Handelman's resonate with regard to play(fulness)'s disruptiveness. For Handelman, the

"presence of playfulness disrupts the most routine of expectations … [injecting] speedy uncertainty into the most expected of social practices" (2001: 11,504). In my view, no social practices are devoid of uncertainty – even the most expected (cf. Fuchs & De Jaegher, 2009: 476).[36] What play(fulness) does, I argue, is specifically play upon this uncertainty, exemplifying and intensifying it. As I argued in 4.3.2 & 4.5, ludic-ecological performance reveals uncertainty as an extensive Batesonian pattern-which-connects.

It is this exemplification and intensification of uncertainty that "makes play perhaps the most fruitful of contexts of socialization" (Handelman, 2001: 11,504), as I intimated in 3.6.1.3. The uncertainty of play(fulness), as I noted in 1.1, also positions the phenomenon as an arena in which Berardi's "conjunction" between organisms occurs, since the indeterminacy generates a "provisional and precarious syntony" in which meaning and understanding are negotiated (2014: 18). Another aspect that plays into play(fulness)'s propensity for socialisation, for myself and Handelman, is that "(T)he playful is full of the impulse to perceive and feel in ways other than those offered by the immediacy of a given reality" (2001: 11,504), though I would replace 'a given reality' with 'the indicative'; this ontological change further demonstrates the link that I perceive between play(fulness) and Berardi's empathetic and socialising *conjunction* (2014: 18). Handelman also parallels an argument from Chapter 4 by explicitly associating the aforementioned impulse, and play(fulness)'s metacommunicative aspects, with cognitive complexification. Cognitive complexification and socialisation likely go hand in hand, since each will increase the other's capacity. Indeed, the social brain hypothesis posits that primates' large brains reflect the complexity of their social systems (Dunbar, 1998: 178), suggesting an ecological relationship between cognitive and social complexification.

Unfortunately, S1 shed little light on *Spinstallation*'s potential relationship to either intergenerational- or inter-community-learning. Despite hand-delivering over 500 leaflets to households which appeared to occupy a large spread of the socioeconomic spectrum, all the families that signed up to S1 turned out to be acquainted. This was because one of the

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[36] One can argue this point from a dynamical systems/phenomenology perspective (Fuchs & De Jaegher, 2009), or by citing the intractability of the epistemological aspect of the 'other minds problem' (Hyslop, 2016). As discussed in A4.4–A4.4.1, I argue that, strictly speaking, it is erroneous to assert the existence of individual minds at all. Therefore, the problem of other minds would be dissolved, yet the problem of 'my mind' would take its place, so the uncertainty would remain. However, the problem of my mind is not one that I will tackle here.

parents to whom I had given a leaflet at a municipal play-area had posted an image of it on her online group for fellow home-schooling parents. All S1 perficipants were associated with this online group and therefore had existing social connections prior to the event, which effectively denied the possibility of generating fresh lines of inter-community dialogue.[37] Furthermore, either negligible intergenerational learning took place, or my feedback questionnaire was not able to elicit testimony regarding this issue.

7.3.2: S1 – Perficipant Feedback[38]

All respondents indicated that the level of their interactions with other perficipants (not part of their family or group) was moderate or high. This suggests a possibility for inter-community dialogue; however, any effect attributable to the workshop is questionable due to the pre-existence of relationships between perficipants. Six respondents felt that there was no difference between how they behaved during S1 and how they would normally behave in the woods (i.e. scoring one); the other three indicated moderate or maximum difference (scoring two, three, five). It is difficult to see much possibility for intergenerational learning if no difference in behaviour has been perceived, as was the case with the majority of respondents.[39] However, such potential appears to have been significantly present for some. I also directly asked whether perficipants felt they had learnt

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[37] However, it is likely that existing bonds were strengthened by the communal experience and diversified by the novel patterns of behaviour involved in S1. The fact that all were associated with the group does not entail that all individual perficipants knew each other. Therefore, it is also likely that S1 also facilitated the formation of new bonds within the group, just not between groups (since, for the purposes of this analysis, all S1 perficipants formed part of the same group).

[38] All Likert scales possessed five points. This is the case across all *Spinstallation* feedback questionnaires. Full responses to all S1, S2, S4 & S5 feedback questionnaires can be accessed through A7.7 (PML\Spinstallation Feedback Questionnaire Responses). In S1, there were 18 participants (seven adults, one 9yr old, one 8yr old, two 7yr olds, two 5yr olds, one 4yr old, one 3yr old, and two under 2yrs old) and nine feedback respondents. I asked the parent-perficipants to fill in feedback both on their own behalf and that of their children; three of the 'respondents' cover the adult-observed responses of multiple children. Although this is not ideal, it was a pragmatic decision taken to maximise the scope and depth of the feedback received, taking into account the inappropriateness of asking young children to fill in a questionnaire. As it was, some parents elicited and recorded responses from their children, though this was not something that I directly requested.

[39] My hypothesis was not that anyone might learn anything in particular, but that insights might arise from multiple generations perficipating together. I hypothesised that S1's non-hierarchical structure might allow children to take a lead in activities and for parents to behave in novel ways, thus affording bidirectional intergenerational learning. This is not to be construed as an instrumental aim, but rather as an investigation into whether a positive association could be demonstrated. Sadly, it couldn't; although this does not mean that ludic-participatory performance and intergenerational learning are not positively associated.

anything about or from their child(ren), parent(s), or guardian(s) during the workshop. This only received one useful response which was still rather vague. One parent said that they had learnt "a lot" and that it would only be fully realised as they reflected on the workshop over the coming weeks. Though not exactly conclusive, this perficipant does at least anticipate effects persisting beyond the workshop.

One thing I learnt from S1, which strongly shaped *Spinstallation*'s developmental trajectory, was the difficulty of contacting and gathering perficipants for pre-planned practice as a lone perfilitator, which is in contrast to a spontaneous intervention such as *Perplexpedition*. There are difficulties with engaging perficipants in spontaneous practice, as I noted in Chapter 5 (see, in particular, footnote 40) and 4.3.1, yet spontaneous practice nonetheless benefits from a fairly ready supply of potential perficipants for any perfilitator operating in an area of relatively dense population. Therefore, a change in approach to *Spinstallation*-perficipant recruitment was required for S2, which was to have significant effects on the characteristics of this strand going forward.

7.4: S2 – Playfulness & Creativity

The disappointment of S1 led me to pursue a more pragmatic and manageable approach to future *Spinstallations*; namely by engaging with organisations and institutions that have existing initiatives into which *Spinstallation* could be integrated. This would allow me to gain access to groups of potential perficipants whom it would be more difficult for me to contact on my own. Although, this created its own challenges, as I shall discuss. The choice to collaborate with organisations/institutions entailed tightening the perficipant focus from as wide as possible, as in S1, back to a particular community,[40] as in S-Zero; indeed, S-Zero was itself situated within the institutional context of an arts-academic conference. I had initially been reluctant to site any practical explorations on university campuses if possible,[41] my experience being that social norms tend to be more flexible and ludic affordances more

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[40] I am referring to community here based on a single variable. For example, in S-Zero the community was comprised of people interested and/or engaged in walking arts practice. Within any one such community there will be members of various other communities depending upon where one draws the boundary lines.
[41] In the case of S-Zero I had no such choice, since the duration of the lunch break in the symposium prevented travelling any significant distance from the Exchange building.

readily enacted in such spaces. I considered that my practice would face a greater challenge – and therefore would possess greater research validity – if conducted elsewhere. However, it was put to me that I might propose a ludic workshop to the Graduate School, since academics in general could do with opportunities for play(fulness).[42]

I had originally described my arena of research as 'everyday environments', and now considered what these might be. I concluded that a simple, logical definition, similar to Relph's (1976: 132) and useful for communication with non-specialists, might be those environments which one regularly inhabits during the patterns of activity that comprise one's work and social life.[43] Accordingly, I began instead referring to 'environments (that) people inhabit'. This being so, and particularly since postgraduates tend to have a more workmanlike relationship with university and its spaces, I considered that a workshop which sought to foster a ludic disposition in postgraduates would be a worthwhile research endeavour. S2 took place at Kent on the 24th of May, 2016.

My main challenge in devising S2 was how to maintain the integrity of the project, i.e. its argument against the instrumentalisation of play(fulness), whilst creating a workshop that both the Graduate School and postgraduates would perceive as being of benefit. The way that I sought to address this seemingly intractable problem was to frame the workshop's potential benefit in terms of the indirect relationship between play(fulness) and creativity, as established in Chapter 2. In so doing, and by stressing that only creative *potential* might be forthcoming, I hoped I might avoid the instrumentalisation of play(fulness) to which this project is diametrically opposed.

Furthermore, S2 needed to be designed for both its perficipants and its environmental setting. This had been the case with S-Zero and S1, S1 having been designed

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[42] This suggestion was made by Iain MacKenzie of the School of Politics and International Relations at Kent during one of his Critical Methods workshops. Iain envisaged a ludic workshop taking place within the Graduate School's Advanced Training programme, as do his Critical Methods sessions, which researchers of all levels of experience and institutional affiliation (and unaffiliated individuals) are able to attend. Unfortunately, I was unable to gain entry to the Advanced Training programme as a facilitator.

[43] A more abstract, inverse definition, pertinent to this project as viewed from a theoretical perspective, is de Certeau's (1984) notion of space constituted through practice; i.e. that patterns of activity shape the environments in which they occur. I note also that the environment shapes one's activities; for example, open plan offices leading to self-monitoring (Bogost, 2016: 99). Therefore, I argue that the relationship is an ecological one. A central argument here is that a ludic disposition will shape spatial practices, which thus shape perficipants' space(s), which thus shapes perficipants' spatial practices, in what I term a ludic ecology.

to be accessible to all ages and tailored to a woodland environment, and S-Zero having been designed for artist-academics and tailored to an academic (physical) environment. S2 needed to cater to all postgraduates and be tailored to both the physical and conceptual academic environment. And what says 'generalised academic rigour' better than a presentation with PowerPoint? Nothing: so I wrote one, primarily drawing on Chapter 2, thus theoretically grounding the workshop's methods.[44] I stated within the presentation that neither was the workshop intended to *make* participants playful, nor would doing so *make* anyone creative, and explicitly framed the workshop as presenting invitations for participants to seek out their own notion of Playfulness. I further expressed that this was a *longitudinal* endeavour which might develop creative *potential*. Nonetheless, one participant left S2 approximately half-way-through because, for them, the workshop was "not productive enough".[45] *Sigh*.

7.4.1: S2 – Ludic Action Research

The main discovery from S2 related to a potential additional framing for perficipants as research collaborators, which arose from discussion with one S2 perficipant immediately after the event. I developed S2's main task to be one of collaborative video production partly because video-documenting S-Zero's and S1's large-groups with only one camera had proved difficult, but also in the hope of fostering greater interaction between perficipants. The main task occurred in the workshop's latter stages, following preliminary tasks intended to get perficipants' ludic juices flowing, as outlined below.

After the presentation, perficipants were inducted into LudiCo by way of adopting a new identity, as in S1. Next, there was a short wordplay session in which perficipants renamed elements of their work environment, conceptual and/or material, and explored

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[44] In hindsight, it was overly detailed and technical, although it did also feature performance elements such as a vignette where I attempted to explain my distinction between play and Playfulness by first anthropomorphising a pencil (play) then imbuing it with self-awareness (Playfulness). I'm not sure anyone fully got it, though. I sought to develop the presentation's performance elements in future iterations.
[45] I was a little taken aback and more than a little annoyed by this at the time (not that I let on of course; I am a professional after all), but, looking back, it is quite ironic. It also demonstrated that I needed to work harder still in order to clearly frame the workshop for all perficipants, which I sought to do in later Graduate School workshops. On the other hand, it demonstrates that no level of clarity can ever ensure people's full understanding.

the potential for seeing elements of their research from a new angle by generating related neologisms. We then created totemic figures which would be used in the main task.[46]

Fig.35: Captain Ludicrous' S2 Totemic Figure.

The aim was for the act of creation to forge an affective bond between perficipant and figure, then for perficipants' interaction with the environment through the figure to ease perficipants into public play(fulness). To warm up physically, we engaged in a short, ludic follow-my-leader around the building, each perficipant taking a turn to lead the group in ludic interaction with the space. (There was a lot of jumping about, twirling, and rolling along walls, etc.)

Then came the main event. In small groups of two or three, perficipants explored ludic affordances within the area surrounding the Graduate School building by completing and recording three Playfulness Tasks each. One Task requested that perficipants engage the environment through their totemic figure, while the other two required ludic interaction

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[46] This developed from a method I devised during a residential creative workshop with John Fox and Sue Gill, formerly of Welfare State and now of Dead Good Guides, which took place at the couple's residence from the 18th – 21st May, 2015.

as themselves. The Tasks either foregrounded physical play(fulness), imaginative play(fulness), or a combination and were designed so as to provide enough interpretative flexibility that personal creativity would not be inhibited.[47] Once the tasks were completed, all perficipants reconvened and transferred their videos to me so that we could partake in a plenary-style work-sharing. Four (of ten) perficipants also agreed both to contribute their videos to the project and for them to be published;[48] I address the ethical issues surrounding this below.

Fig.36: Red Chief Hopelessly Late – *The Climb*.

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[47] The S2 Tasks can be found in A7.2.

[48] You can view them here http://bit.ly/2qpyMIn (PML\Spinstallation Video\S2 Playfulness & Creativity). Captain Ludicrous has chosen the following as the best work for each task. Task 1: Red Chief Hopelessly Late, *The Climb*, which engages both with the physical environment of the Graduate School and the conceptual environment of the university. Task 2: Cosmic Chaos, *The Bins*, which shows the adoption of a persona; also, when you think all options have been exhausted, Cosmic Chaos makes another discovery in the moment. Task 3: Master of Disaster, *Balls of Hercules*, which shows good commitment and development of action from Master of Disaster, good commentary from The Angry Zen, and good collaboration between the two. Captain Ludicrous awards the accolade of Star Recruit to Master of Disaster, in recognition also of her work in *The Fruits of Wisdom*.

Fig.37: Cosmic Chaos – *The Bins*.

Fig.38: Master of Disaster – *Balls of Hercules*.

My interest in having perficipants document their own work was pragmatic in two senses. Firstly, in response to Nelson's suggestion to build documentation into the PaR[49] and, secondly, as an efficient means of gathering the most comprehensive documentation. I

[49] As mentioned in 1.2.4, this suggestion was made during personal dialogue with Nelson as part of a seminar he held at Kent on the 20th of November, 2014.

would not have been able to document all perficipants' work myself without setting up some kind of queueing system, which would have unhelpfully formalised the process, arguably made the experience boring, and potentially added to perficipant anxiety. This last point indicates a crucial methodological reason: I was keen to see what perficipants would get up to in my absence, hopefully lessening any feeling of their actions being judged. However, I recognise that the very act of filming necessarily affects people's interactions.

As noted above, it was only in speaking to an anthropology-PhD-perficipant after S2 that I discovered the main task had a form somewhat analogous to participatory action research (PAR). This collaborative method sees participants actively contribute to a reflective research programme, the practical outcomes of which are integrated into their lives (McIntyre, 2007). The main difference between my methodology and PAR is that perficipants have no direct role in the planning of the research process, though it is hoped that some might help to disseminate the research through continued ludic environmental interaction. There is crossover here too with ethnography, since both *Spinstallation* and *Perplexpedition* fundamentally involve "social contact with agents" and the project as a whole seeks to investigate and document "the irreducibility of human experience" (Willis & Trondman, 2000: 5). However, the association with PAR is perhaps stronger, since this project goes beyond ethnographic observation; perficipants' active contributions directly shape the research trajectory, as this chapter hopefully demonstrates. The early stages of S2–S5 could be considered perficipant-researcher training before perficipants undertake their own PaR during the main task.

7.4.2: S2 – Ethical Difficulties

As S2 had dual status both as part of the Graduate School researcher development programme and as research itself,[50] I wanted to balance the need for informed consent with free and open engagement in the workshop. Crucially, I did not want to dissuade any potential perficipants from signing up due to the mistaken belief that they would be subjects in an experiment. Irrespective of any association with PAR, all strands of this

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[50] This is without taking into account *Spinstallation*'s status as participatory performance and philosophical phenomenon (see Chapter 4 for the latter).

project seek to establish as equitable a relationship as possible between perfilitator and perficpant(s), since this is characteristic of play(fulness) (Pellegrini, 1992). For the above reasons, I brought Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms to the workshop, and informed perficpants that it also constituted research at the outset, but did not request consent for the inclusion of perficpants' videos in the project until after their creation. This meant that perficpants could then opt-in to joining the project proper by contributing their videos, their previous participation in the workshop not having provided any research data with which they could be identified.

However, this approach was unsatisfactory and (in hindsight, understandably) led to an uncomfortable atmosphere, but one which thankfully did not persist so as to spoil the workshop. Though I arguably should have anticipated the uncomfortable "affective atmosphere" (Anderson, 2009: 80), this is another example of PaR in action, since the affective experience in the moment rendered my mistake palpable and thus guided my amendments to my future ethics process more effectively than cognitive planning could have done. In later iterations of *Spinstallation*, I ensured that both the workshop's status as PaR and the opt-in mechanism were made clear in advance. This meant that perficpants could still fully perficipate irrespective of their decision, but also had prior knowledge of the contribution option.

I maintain that this negotiates the dual status of a Graduate School *Spinstallation* effectively; however, my concerns regarding misconceptions of its research nature may have been borne out. Attendee numbers dropped from ten to three for the next Graduate School *Spinstallation* (S4), although I was informed that workshop attendance for the Development Programme generally was poor at that time, so *Spinstallation*'s research-status cannot be isolated as a cause. Notwithstanding this, the drop in attendance might indicate that arts-PaR is not yet sufficiently well-understood within the wider academic community for its largely cooperative and beneficent nature to be recognised as distinguishing it from other methodologies in which participants tend to be structurally subordinated to the research, as with most quantitative studies.[51]

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[51] By subordinated I do not mean to imply that quantitative studies tend to be in any way unethical, I am merely observing that participants in such studies do not often have an active role, their function being to provide data for analysis. PaR on the other hand, if it engages participants, tends to place them in a more

7.4.3: S2 – Perficipant Feedback

Despite my mishandling of the ethics procedure, S2 received much positive feedback. S2 scored four-and-above on enjoyment and active engagement with all perficipants. Only one perficipant scored themselves less-than-four on the fullness of their engagement with the immediate environment, which indicates that S2 was highly successful in terms of this project's overall aim to facilitate ludic environmental interaction. Only two perficipants scored themselves less-than-four for the extent of their interaction with fellow perficipants, which indicates that S2 was also successful in fostering social play(fulness), with the concomitant possibility that perficipants may have learnt from one another, particularly in the main task. Especially pleasingly, all perficipants indicated that their behaviour differed during the workshop to how they would normally behave in that environment, with seven perficipants scoring themselves three or four (five being 'completely different'). Though I recognise the limited reliability of self-reported data, this strongly suggests that S2 achieved significant impact within the workshop time-frame, and that all perficipants were performed by S2 to some degree. Longitudinal research beyond the scope of this project would be necessary in order to see if engagement in a series of *Spinstallation* workshops might achieve long-lasting effects.

Four perficipants reported that they particularly enjoyed, and would continue to use, the tactic of renaming things that we had explored in the wordplay activity.[52] In 2.3, I suggested that linguistic play might be the most common form among adults; indeed, semantic-category-play is deemed pervasive to everyday spoken discourse (Carter, 2015: *xxi*). However, linguistic play does not entail the invention of words, the latter being a common phenomenon in children but less prevalent in adults (Snotrils and Jumpolines, 2016). Adults are more likely to possess a vocabulary sufficient to express themselves, whereas children often invent words as they grasp for expressive means.[53] The practice of

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active role as regards the research, since PaR is reflexive (Nelson, 2013; Barrett, 2007; Bolt, 2007) and responsive (Trimingham, 2002) by nature. Furthermore, if one accepts the intrinsic value of engagement in arts practice and its association with wellbeing (as does the Office for National Statistics – see Randall, Corp & Self, 2014), it follows that participation in a PaR project is likely to benefit the participant in some way.
[52] See 7.4.1 above for a brief description of the wordplay session.
[53] This is not to imply that adults do not invent words. Although social media is associated both with a new stage of linguistic creativity (Carter, 2015: *xxii* – fittingly, 'Web 2.0' is purported to be the one-millionth English word – Global Language Monitor, 2016) and with younger generations, adults are nonetheless more likely to

generating novel, personally meaningful words irrespective of whether accepted terms exist thus reconnects perficipants with developmental discontinuity, a crucial factor in creativity (Runco, 1996: 3).

Prior to this research, I had often reflected on the enjoyment and strengthening of social bonds that lexical inventiveness offers. Yet, I had not fully explored its capacity, as one perficipant noted, to provide "a different perspective on things". Neither had I theorised renaming practice. Freire argues that "(T)o exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming" (1972: 61). By renaming something in one's work environment its capacity to be a problem is potentially reduced, giving one a sense of control over it. At the very least, it will help to maintain the cognitive flexibility needed for personal creativity.

One perficipant reported being "more at ease with myself and less overthinking things [sic] than what I usually do". This supports my argument that play(fulness) promotes authenticity by increasing one's sense of presence.[54] Another anticipated that the unselfconsciousness they found during S2 would continue: "I feel it make me feel less stress more free [sic] about my behaviour with others". I suggest that not only the characteristics of play(fulness), but also the skills of the perfilitator are key in this. I was able to create a "friendly and non-judgemental atmosphere", which undoubtedly helped with the above. The structure and framing of the workshop also "provided a platform to explore creativity and playfulness with justification". This is crucial, as it indicates that S2 was effective in pursuing one of my underlying aims: to give people the licence to be ludicrous. This justification was also anticipated to persist, as the same perficipant felt they would be "more open to actively and practically exploring things from different perspectives" in future. One perficipant even reported that they would try the main task with their son "who like [sic] to be perfect and needs loosening up", signalling the value of playful

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be responsible for the majority of the roughly 1,000 words (Bodle, 2016) that enter English dictionaries each year. This is because words only tend to enter dictionaries once they are in widespread usage and, given social dynamics, 'widespread' is more likely to focus on older generations.

[54] See: 3.6.1.3 & A3.3.1 for play(fulness)'s relationship to authenticity and intuition, 4.3 – 4.5 for how it can effect closer contact with the world, 5.3.1 – 5.3.8 for the importance of in-the-moment incorporation of one's environment in play(fulness), and 6.3.5 – 6.5 for perficipant testimony relating to a feeling of increased presence.

flexibility not only for potential creativity, but also for emotional wellbeing. Finally, it was suggested that Captain Ludicrous "should come to every department and make an intervention", which suggests that he might have a future career in institutional consultancy.[55]

In S1, I employed art-making – i.e. reassembling Twiglets from fallen twigs – as a structural device to progress the workshop. It made sense within the context of the workshop to first find and reassemble the Twiglets, to get to know them as it were, before then seeking out their homesteads to give these a makeover. In S2, by contrast, the intended function of the art-making – i.e. perficipants' creation of a personal Totemic Figure – was to help ease participants out of more traditionally academic frames of mind and into play(fulness) for its own sake. In S2 (and all subsequent iterations), the tactic of Totemic Figure creation provides an opportunity for participants to interact ludically with their environment initially by animating their totemic figure, rather than directly interacting as themselves. The reasoning behind this is to hopefully mitigate against potential nervousness or self-consciousness associated with being silly/playful simply for its own sake, especially when in the company of strangers. I had encountered and reflected critically upon the value of creating lo-fi, yet personally meangingful, art pieces during a residential workshop with John Fox and Sue Gill, previously of Welfare State International, at the couple's home in Morecambe Bay. (As I mentioned in 1.3.1, this workshop was also instrumental in my development of the concept of *rooted placelessness*.) Of all the elements of know-how related to easing perficipants into play(fulness) and mitigating against potential self-consciousness, such as the wordplay session and follow-my-leader, the Totemic Figure is both the most original and seemed the most universally effective (alongside the induction into LudiCo itself, which perficipants achieve by choosing a LudiCo name for themselves). Therefore, as S3 was to be one-third of the length of a Graduate School *Spinstallation*, these were the two key tactics that I chose to keep, as I discuss below.

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[55] This, hopefully, is not a joke.

7.5: S3 – Ludic Stance

This iteration formed part of a one-day 'no paper conference', entitled *The Ludic Stance*, held in Prague on the 17th of September, 2016. The event was co-hosted by Kent Sjöström of Malmö Theatre Academy, Lund University and Alice Koubová of the Institute of Philosophy, Czech Academy of Sciences, which indicates its interdisciplinary take on performance and play(fulness). It took an 'artistic research' approach, a phrase commonly used in Nordic countries that can be considered broadly analogous to PaR in the UK (Arlander, 2013). As such, practical workshops and demonstrations were extensively reflected upon, provocations and presentations took on a largely dialogic form, the day's activities oscillated between practical and theoretical considerations to the extent that cross-pollination arguably occurred, and significant effort was put into tracing links between the day's various sessions throughout.

All attendees, bar one, contributed a session and participated in each other's.[56] All attendees also necessarily had an interest in the ludic and the majority had a background involving performance of some kind. Therefore, similarly to S-Zero, and arguably to a significantly greater extent, S3's perficipants can be considered 'initiated'. Whereas S-Zero perficipants were likely to be familiar with notions of contemporary performance, S3 perficipants were also familiar with (perhaps conflicting) notions of the ludic. This meant that an equitable perficipant-perfilitator relationship was easy to establish, flowing from the intrinsically collegiate, collaborative atmosphere engendered by the event's structure and approach taken by the hosts. However, aspects of *Spinstallation* relating to authority and rules came to the fore in perficipant feedback, as I shall discuss. The overtly artistic nature of the event and the fact that its perficipants were initiated also produced discussions that enabled my reflections on aesthetics and methodology to achieve greater depth than had those following previous *Spinstallations*.

The structure of S3 was a contracted form of S2, owing to S3's time-frame being 1hr rather than S2's 3hrs. Perficipants were inducted into LudiCo by adopting ludic personas, before creating totemic figures and then undertaking the main task. This took the same

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[56] The one non-contributor acted as an outside eye and did take part in discussion.

core structure as S2, but responded to the multiple modes of transport in the immediate area by implicating travelling in the first two Tasks.[57] I also sought to facilitate more multi-modally play(ful) work by asking the cameraperson to provide soundtrack or commentary for Tasks one and two.[58]

Fig.39: The Barking Dog – *Nose Trail*.

Fig.40: Phaida – *So this is the World*.

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[57] Within metres of the event's location there is a tram hub, main road, railway, and a park criss-crossed by footpaths. This part of Prague also sat beneath a flight-path of the city's airport. By implicating travelling in the Tasks, I tailored S3 to its environment.

[58] See A7.3. Though it increased S3's responsiveness to the immediate environment, in hindsight the implication of travelling may have been restrictive, as will be discussed in relation to perficipant feedback. All perficipants opted to contribute their videos, which you can see here http://bit.ly/2p4Ju7o (PML\Spinstallation Video\S3 Ludic Stance).

Captain Ludicrous had a very tough time choosing suggested viewing from this squadron's work, owing to the number and high quality of submissions. After much deliberation, he offers the following. Task 1: The Barking Dog, *Nose Trail*, in which perficipant and figure break contact in a surprising way. Task 2: Phaida, *So this is the World*, in which Phaida playfully interacts with the more-than-human world and FiFi provides good commentary. Task 3: Rizzie, *The Valley of the Cigarettes*, in which Rizzie employs good visual composition and creates a commentary with the quality of a contemporary myth. Captain Ludicrous found it impossible to choose a Star Recruit from this squadron; they are all stars.

I was confident that initiated perficipants would benefit most from the more 'advanced play(fulness)' of S2's latter stages, which turned out to be a good call. My perfilitation also took on an entirely unplanned theatricality, as I subconsciously responded to the nature of the group and the space. (*The Ludic Stance* took place in a performance studio within Studio ALTA, a performing arts hub.) I was truly being performed by S3's ecology.

7.5.1: S3 – Perficipant Feedback[59]

One of the major discoveries arising from S3 related to my Captain Ludicrous persona, which, as intimated above, became rendered more theatrically than in previous iterations. One perficipant commented that my perfilitation engendered "ludic obedience", further commenting that "the captain claims a lot of power, taking on a military structure". This was also commented upon by other perficipants. The words 'power' and 'military structure' might imply an authoritarian approach to perfilitation on my part, yet the phrase 'ludic

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[59] Though not a point of perficipant feedback, it is notable that ambiguity became the recurrent theme of the conference, being found in and discussed in relation to almost every contribution. This suggests that ambiguity might be a core component of the ludic, as I argued in Chapters 3&4.
The nature of the event precluded the filling out of feedback questionnaires, yet the in-built and informal feedback procedures provided sufficient information.

obedience' indicates otherwise, as it implies subversion. Indeed, from conversations with perficipants after S3, it was clear that the militaristic aspect of my perfilitation had a distinctly satirical or ironic quality to it.

I was not consciously aware of the inherently satirical nature of Captain Ludicrous, as I had embodied this quality of his many years previously; my knowledge was tacit. Captain Ludicrous has his origin in Private Sexy, the persona in which I performed the raffle during *Bertie Wills' Vaudeville*, a variety show I devised, produced, performed in, and hosted from 2012–2013. I had appropriated this militaristic persona because it plays against my casting-type to the point of becoming ludicrous. I am not physically intimidating, to put it mildly. Both in *Bertie Wills' Vaudeville* and *Spinstallation*, this then allows for postmodern ironic parody (Hutcheon, 1989: 101); the militaristic persona is functional in that it facilitates the orienting and shaping of group activity, but I subvert its authority, sending up the inherent frailties and ludicrousness of the militaristic persona itself. Perficipants commented that the contrast between my personality before S3 and the Captain Ludicrous persona immediately gave the metacommunicative signal "this is play", and also that his perceived power made (at least some) perficipants feel safe, i.e. gave them the confidence to enter into risky play(fulness).

The notion of safety within structure, as facilitated by my adoption of a militaristic persona, relates to the need for structure (i.e. constraints or rules) in order to play (Bogost, 2016) and to act creatively (ibid: 146–153; cf. Novitz, 1999). Although perficipants' personal exploration of the "irreducible quality of pure playfulness" (Huizinga, 1970: 25–26) is *Spinstallation*'s intention, since I also argue that play(fulness) is a Batesonian pattern-which-connects, I do not deem it possible to exercise this quality entirely independently of any structure. Furthermore, a workshop devoid of structure would be a very bad workshop.[60] As posited by a perficipant, this inevitably raises the question of "when are the rules the right ones?" and how to make them "balanced"? As noted above, *Spinstallation* Tasks are intended to allow for interpretation, providing a framework for play(fulness) and potential

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[60] N.b. This discussion of structure is strictly relative to the level of description in question; ultimately, there is always structure. To assert otherwise is essentially synonymous with arguing for the possibility of something existing outside of real life, for example a play-world, so that one may compare the two; this I denied in Chapter 2. As Garvey observes, all play(fulness) necessarily occurs within "a system of relevances and coherences" (in Sutton-Smith, 1979b: 279).

creativity. As structures to be played, they could also be considered games (although I largely prefer not to term them as such). Suits describes the necessity of careful rule-balancing in games, which I mentioned in 5.4.4.1:

> As looseness is increased to the point of utter laxity the game simply falls apart …
> And if a line is drawn very tightly indeed the game is squeezed out of existence.
> (1978: 30)

Though Suits (1978) is describing games which can be won, both his games and my Tasks seek to maximise play(fulness); however, this was not, and realistically cannot be, always achieved. One perficipant found that the tasks occupied "too much headspace" to the point of "killing play and getting stuck", yet recognised that what they initially perceived as "failure can be a source of knowing". This is an important point within the context of PaR, as when disappointment arising from S1's perceived shortcomings radically changed the direction of *Spinstallation*'s development. It is also important within the context of play(fulness), as it is when play(fulness) breaks down that one perceives most keenly the different character that it lends to one's world-engagement; such moments of change are when contrast is most perceptible. Nonetheless, the quality and variety of play(fulness) captured by S3 perficipants indicates that these Tasks are fairly well-balanced.

One might conclude that groups of non-arts academics and other generally more reticent groups might need tightly structured tasks, whereas artists and arts academics might benefit from a freer rein. Then again, many S3 perficipants found the tasks liberating, especially when combined with "the 'freedom' gained from the totem". One idea behind the totemic figures is to mitigate against self-consciousness by allowing perficipants to channel their subjectivity through an object exterior to themselves, but with which they have a strong affective bond, since the object is of their own making. This certainly seems to have been the case with S3 perficipants. One reported feeling "self-consciousness of 'we're going to have fun and be wacky'", but found that "the totem offer [sic] a nice alibi … A gateway" through which to playfully engage the world. Another saw the "figure as symbol of my creative inner child". One even felt that their subjectivity "migrated to my totemic figure" because "people in the world outside stared at me and when I talked to them as myself they stared at my figure". As argued in Chapter 4, rather than alienation, I suggest

that these ludic decentrings-of-self effect closer contact between perficipant and world by exemplifying the way that perficipants are always-already performed by their ecologies.

Having reflected on S2 and S3, we can now see how balancing acts of various types, operating at various levels of description, are recurrently emerging within this chapter's analysis of *Spinstallation* just as balancing acts have emerged within the previous two case studies. I argue that the balancing act, otherwise known as the negotiation of terms, constitutes a structural homology between, or pattern-which-connects, numerous elements and levels of description of this project. The negotiation of the research ethics procedure and the balancing of its requirements against those of both the practice's integrity and the expectations of perficipants was the major challenge that revealed itself in S2. In S3, the negotiation between and balancing of rules (i.e. Tasks) and play arose as the central challenge within the practice. This was one of the first, and most important, surfacings of the tension between structure and process, which I introduced in 1.3.1, came to discover is fundamental to play(fulness) itself, and which became central to my conceptual framework in the form of negotiation of terms (see 4.3.1 – 4.3.2). I expressed in the Roadmap, at 1.6.1, and again in the Introduction to Part II that these case studies provide more PaR than practice-based-research. This is evidenced here by the emphasis placed on the know-how of balancing Tasks' structure and their play(ful) process and the fact that this discovery occurred in the practice itself and was revealed by critical reflection thereon. The *both/and* conception is made manifest in the way that this knowledge fuelled the development of play(fulness) and ludic ecology theory which it is possible to articulate and understand without reference to the originating practical discovery but which also influenced later iterations of *Spinstallation*, particularly the construction of its Tasks.

I argue that the wider homological discovery offers significant insight into the nature of play(fulness) and its philosophical significance. As I noted in Part II's introduction, the tension between structure and process provides a pattern-which-connects play(fulness) and Bateson's (1987) naturalised notion of a universal sacred, thereby revealing this project and Bateson's to be productively interconnected. The way that play(fulness) highlights the tension positions play(fulness) as an exemplar and the Ludic Triangle as a tripartite "model" (Bateson & Bateson, 1987: 37) for the tension's investigation. The tracing of the balancing/negotiation/structure-process-tension pattern throughout this project is an

example of my own multi-focal-micro-macroscope in action, as described in 4.2. In the next section, I discuss how the tension between structure and process emerges from S4 in a similar guise to that of S3, i.e. as a tension between tasks and unstructured play(fulness). As I argued above, in my view (following Bateson, 1987), it is not possible for play(fulness), or indeed anything, to exist in absolute independence from all and any structure.

7.6: S4 – Playfulness, Creativity & Imagination

In recognition of the significant role that imagination plays in *Spinstallation*'s main task, I added it to the title of S4, which took place in the Kent Graduate School on the 13th of February, 2017. As mentioned above, only three perficipants attended S4, which was unfortunate, but allowed for more individualised perfilitation. S4 included a discussion of perficipants' reasons for attending and their existing notions of playfulness, as I hoped that this might allow me to better frame the workshop and thus avoid perficipants leaving. Some keywords that arose were: teasing, authentic, fun – enjoyment, funny, interaction, and personal choice, all of which relate in some way to my own notion of Playfulness, lending support to my argument for Playfulness-overlap.[61]

S4 also included new sections designed to acclimatise perficipants to being silly in front of each other. This consisted of interacting with the room in some way by pairing an action with a noise[62] and three brief tasks that each addressed one of Johnstone's 'impediments to spontaneity': psychotic thought, obscenity, and unoriginality (2015: 82–88). The aim of this was to develop perficipants' flexibility of thought before the main task.[63]

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[61] See 1.3.1.1 for my description of Playfulness-overlap and A2.1 for an expansion on this theme.
[62] For example, placing both palms on the table, simultaneously kicking one's feet into the air, and exclaiming "Wuablaaar!"
[63] The S4 Tasks were identical to those of S2. However, the framing was slightly different, drawing on theoretical discoveries of the intervening period, streamlined for simplicity, and with the extra suggestion of completing the Tasks whilst journeying to and from perficipants' departments in an attempt to persuade perficipants to travel further afield. See A7.4. All three perficipants contributed their videos, which you can see here http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-2-squadron/ (PML\Spinstallation Videos\S4 Playfulness, Creativity & Imagination).
Captain Ludicrous' suggested viewing is as follows. Task 1: Spidy, *Mother Mission*, in which Spidy not only makes use of the ludic affordances of the material environment, but also of his figure. Task 2: Sendbad,

Fig.42: Spidy – *Mother Mission*.

Fig.43: Sendbad – *Sanctitree*.

Sanctitree, in which Sendbad creates a rather dramatic atmosphere. Task 3: Bearry, *Pedestrian Race*, in which Bearry's enthusiasm to follow the race to its conclusion is sadly cut short. I have asked Captain Ludicrous not to divulge his choice for Star Recruit, since this would entail revealing the identity of a perficipant referred to later, which I cannot do for ethical reasons (see footnote 47).

: Bearry – *Pedestrian Race*.

The only other change was that the follow-my-leader section was replaced with Ludic Acclimatisation, an outdoors introduction to perceiving and enacting ludic affordances, such as swinging around a pole or imagining that the university is at the bottom of the sea.

7.6.1: S4 – Perficipant Feedback

The main discovery here was that, for these perficipants, the proposition of a Playfulness Task was almost self-defeating; their play(fulness) felt inauthentic.[64] At the time, this feedback appeared rather concerning.[65] In being open about my intentions, was I doomed always to fail? Recalling my distinction between play and Playfulness, however, only Playfulness is inhibited when play(fulness) feels engineered, since play does not have to be

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[64] See also 4.3 footnote 27. The idea of a Playfulness Task was conceived of as being a joke; play(fulness) is fundamentally afunctional (see Chapter 2), so the idea of a Playfulness Task is inherently ludicrous. Though the word afunctional did not appear in the S4 presentation, I did make the above point, noting that play involves "doing novel things without regard to whether they may be justified by a specified payoff" (Bateson, P., 2010: 45). However, the S4 perficipants appear not to have got the joke…

[65] Feedback relating to other aspects was more reassuring, however. One perficipant described as S4 as "a co-workshop that the researcher and participants can work together to create new [sic] playful environment". This shows that I was successful in creating an equitable relationship between perfilitator and perficipants.

voluntary.[66] Although the perceived inhibition of Playfulness is a limitation of S4, this has research value, factoring into my characterisation of Playfulness as an *affective atmosphere* (Anderson, 2009), which entails that Playfulness-facilitation can only occur indirectly. The performance structures and perficipant-group-dynamics may have conspired to limit possibilities for Playfulness in S4, but play occurred nonetheless. Playfulness-as-affective-atmosphere also resonates with Youell's observation that "playfulness is a state of mind and, as such, cannot be taught or learned", as contrasted with play activity (2008: 124). Any practitioner who seeks to perfilitate Playfulness can only structure playable activities, co-construct a play-context with perficipants, and seek to engender an atmosphere conducive to the emergence of Playfulness. You can take a horse to water, but you can't make it Playful.[67]

As discussed in 4.3.1, ludic dispositions are inherently difficult to propagate in others. For Suits, it boils down to doing things "just because", characterising gameplay as the "voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles" (1978: 41).[68] One perficipant suggested that "playing without the goal" would improve *Spinstallation*; possibly feeling that their ludic disposition had developed to the point at which any externally imposed structure would repress it, or perhaps simply wishing to explore completely freely an impulse to ludicality that S4 had catalysed. Be this as it may, as discussed above, I argue that they would inevitably impose their own structure whatever the play(ful) activity.[69] The

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[66] See 2.3–2.4. This relates also to the inhibition that some S3 perficipants felt (see 7.5.1 above). One can identify pairings of perficipants for whom the overall perficipant-perficipant-Task-environment system was not one conducive to Playfulness; for example, Boletus & Amelie (see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/boletus-and-amelie/ or PML\Spinstallation Video\S3 Ludic Stance\Boletus & Amelie). Others, however, such as FiFi & Phaida and Rizzie & Kacke readily meshed with the same Task-environment system so as to produce examples of Playfulness (see http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/fifi-and-phaida/ [PML\Spinstallation Video\S3 Ludic Stance\FiFi & Phaida] and http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/rizzie-and-kacke/ [PML\Spinstallation Video\S3 Ludic Stance\Rizzie & Kacke]). This demonstrates the ecological principle that no one part of a system can unilaterally control any other (see 4.3.1 & A4.1); i.e. no Task or other performance structure will facilitate Playfulness in all systems.

[67] This echoes my argument, in Chapter 3, that ludic pedagogy only *creates conditions* for Playfulness to occur and also my sentiments in the S4 presentation that the workshop cannot make perficipants playful.

[68] In football, for example, players must get the ball into the goal without the use of their arms. There is no logical reason for this impediment other than structuring the players' activities so as to bring the game into being; the logic is strictly internal. *Spinstallation* tasks have no such impediments, yet demand the same 'just because' attitude. For further discussion of the ludic disposition, see 4.3.1–4.3.2.

[69] Furthermore, I suggest that this perficipant was most present in their play(fulness) of the three S4 attendees and created the best quality work. I therefore argue that the tasks did not significantly impede this perficipant's play(fulness). For ethical reasons, I cannot identify which perficipant this is, but have a look at the videos here - http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-2-squadron/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S4 Playfulness, Creativity & Imagination) - and see if you can guess.

Task sheet explicitly describes the Tasks as "structures for you to creatively explore", subscribing to Bogost's notion of freedom as the capacity to "explore the implications of inherited or invented constraints". However, S4 perficipants may have instead perceived the Tasks as "chains of limitation" (Bogost, 2016: 153).

It is certainly problematic that my Playfulness Tasks were perceived to inhibit Playfulness, much like my experience of *Wondermart* wherein I felt that the work narrowed my environmental perceptions rather than opening them beyond the normative.[70] I recognise that non-directed play is deemed most ontogenetically beneficial (Bishop, R., 2013; Wenner, 2009; Panksepp, 2008), so could be considered the most valuable generally; however, this project specifically explores the potential for 4P to facilitate play(fulness). As such, (documentable) performance structures are fundamentally necessary. Additionally, individual differences and unpredictable group dynamics entail that no practice can be universally and perennially successful. Low attendance may have had an impact here; it is possible that low numbers increase self-consciousness.

I also note that the ultimate goal of the workshop is not to make ludic videos, but to spark interest in interweaving play(fulness) into perficipants' daily practices. Just as the perceived failure of the S3 perficipant can be a source of knowing, so too can the S4 perficipants' frustration at the tasks' constraints be a spur to autonomously integrating the ludic into their quotidian. The fact that these perficipants felt frustration indicates that they either already possessed or had developed a positive inclination towards the ludic. Nonetheless, it was disappointing that they found the Tasks difficult to engage with. It struck me that in no other strand was the project's aim of facilitating play(fulness) made so explicit to perficipants and that this explicitness might be counter-productive.[71] Therefore, I decided to rename future Graduate School *Spinstallations* Creativity & Imagination and rename the main task Video-Documented Ludicrous Investigations, playing upon the academic context and parallels with collaborative research, yet partially obscuring the project's central aim. I also reframed the Tasks themselves as Suggested Studies, so that more confident members of LudiCo could devise their own should they wish.

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[70] See my discussion of *Wondermart*, 6.2.2, for more on these unintended consequences.
[71] I also address the notion of play(fulness) and explicitness in 4.3 footnote 27.

As noted at the beginning of this section, I made changes to the content of the previous Graduate School *Spinstallation* (S2) with the intention of making S4 more successful in managing both perficipants' expectations (by discussing notions of play[fulness]) and self-consciousness (by trialling new easing-into-play[fulness] tactics). While it is true that none of the three perficipants left, which could indicate better management of expectations, it could also be that with so few perficipants they all stayed because it would have been too embarrassing to leave. The first interpretation is more likely, however, given that one perficipant described S4 as a "co-workshop" in which "researcher and participants…work together". A key point of learning from the mixed fortunes of S4 was that no amount of planning and reflexive development can outweigh the dynamics of the situation on the day; for instance, if only three perficipants attend. This is another example of the strictly holistic nature of ecological systems and the impossibility of unilateral control therein, which is a central theme of this project as a whole. As I discuss in the next section, this theme made its presence felt with even greater intensity in S5.

7.7: S5 – Creativity & Imagination (Ludic Exam)

Spinstallation is the only strand in which my examiners could experience face-to-face perfilitation, since (as noted in 5.4.2) prior knowledge of the project precluded them from a *Perplexpedition* intervention and since *Wandercast* perfication is inherently remote. On paper, S5 was a carbon-copy of S4; in reality, it was anything but. This boisterous *Spinstallation* took place in the Graduate School on the 19th of June, 2017. I attribute its boisterousness in part to the fact that two of my supervisors and a fellow-drama-PhD were in attendance, all of whom seemed keen to be as supportive (i.e. as playful) as possible, thus contributing boisterous unpredictability.[72] The weather was also extremely hot;[73] I felt a little delirious, so perficipants may have been similarly affected.

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[72] It is also noteworthy that five-out-of-nine perficipants had a background in performance (two examiners, two supervisors, and one PhD candidate), of which at least three had comedic performance experience (one examiner, one supervisor, and one PhD candidate). This arguably raised the average baseline play(fulness) of the group.

[73] It was approximately 33˚C and very humid.

Importantly, S5 appeared approximately on par with S3 in terms of overall play(fulness), so was successful in this regard. S5 also took on a life of its own in similar fashion to S-Zero and S3, although perhaps to an even greater extent. All attendees were performed by the unique system comprising S5's activities, my perfilitation, other perficpants, and atmospheric conditions, creating another example of "*sym-poiesis*" (Haraway, 2015: 260), as discussed in 5.3.4. This produced behaviours which highlight further parallels between these phenomena and Reason's *unselfing*, or "self-forgetting" (2017b: 45).[74] For example, I imagine it is quite unusual during a PaR exam for an examiner to tell a candidate's supervisor to "fuck off – I'm going to kill you now!" (even in jest).[75]

7.7.1: S5 – Perficipant Feedback

One participant arrived about half-way through and left soon after; just like the perficpant who left S2,[76] they struggled to see how totemic figures and ludic Tasks would *directly benefit* their research. *Double-sigh*. Although this was disappointing, it is important to note that this perficpant missed my contextualising presentation, in which *Spinstallation*'s claimed benefits are explicitly framed as deferred, potential, and only to be obtained by integrating play(fulness) into one's quotidian practice.[77] However, perhaps I could have done more to integrate this perficpant into the group.

For other perficpants, I successfully engendered a play(ful) atmosphere "from the offset", which was deemed effective in getting their "creative juices flowing". Another

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[74] For more on parallels between Kershaw's "performed by" (2015: 115) and Reason's "unselfing" (2017b: 46), see 1.4.2; for parallels between these and Fuchs & De Jaegher's (2009) enactive intersubjectivity, see Chapter 5. See Chapter 4 & A4.1 for more on the always-contingent nature of agency in ecological systems.

[75] I should point out that this exchange was carried out through the two perficpants' Totemic Figures, although the boundaries appear to have become blurred. See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-c-unit/ (Calamitous Life-Support - PML\Spinstallation Video\S5 Creativity & Imagination\C Unit\Calamitous Life-Support). Another perficpant commented on "how funny or stupid it might seem to do all the activities in this workshop but you do get carried away", which also seems to have been the case in the above video. In fact, 'getting carried away' arguably represents a common-parlance synonym for being decentred and performed by ecology.

[76] See 7.4 above for the context in which the first leaver left.

[77] Furthermore, this participant emailed the next day to explain that they were under considerable pressure and "felt guilty" taking part in something that appeared frivolous when they had "work to do", which indicates the power of the work/play dichotomy and the pervasive perception of play(fulness) as being frivolous. They also acknowledged that their missing the beginning led to them not being "'in' the concept".

described the atmosphere as "lovely" and "very inclusive". However, I felt that the technical

aspects of my perfilitation could have been improved. One factor in this was an examiner's

delayed arrival, which entailed my beginning the workshop on the back foot and not fully

regaining composure.[78] For instance, "sometimes the pace could have been picked up".

Responding to S5's developing exuberance, I allowed the room to become messier than

previous workshops, or, as my external examiner Kershaw put it, the *room allowed me* to

become messier than I had been previously.[79] One effect of this was that I neglected

important pieces of practical information such as modelling the Suggested Studies.[80] Then

again, this could have made the Suggested Studies seem restrictive, which is what I wanted

to avoid following S4.

In making the Tasks more interpretively open, they inevitably became less

immediately intelligible, as the rule-balance tipped towards laxity.[81] In the comparatively

fevered atmosphere I perhaps did not explain the Tasks as clearly as I had previously and

also was a little thrown when I realised that one group had set off before I had a chance to

lead the Ludic Acclimatisation![82] Indeed, my supervisors commented that my examiners

reported feeling perplexed. Nevertheless, this indicates that S5 successfully engendered a

state of ambiguity. Though ambiguity has emerged as essential for my practice, this is a

stark example of the importance of written articulation in PaR.[83] The ambiguity appears not

to have significantly detracted from S5's perceived effectiveness, since it was described as

"fun and informative". My chief roles as perfilitator are to facilitate perficipants'

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[78] There were issues with an examiner's train. Participating in discussions about this prevented me from arriving at the Graduate School building with sufficient time to fully set up, liaise with Graduate School staff, and gather my thoughts before the commencement of the workshop. Whilst the other perficipants and I awaited my examiner's arrival, I added in an extra Bag-of-Tricks Playtime session, which gave this activity a foregrounded role, making for an informal but chaotic start to the workshop and also contributing to the disordered nature of the room. I mention the above not as an excuse, but because these are factors which contributed to the overall character of the event and my perfilitation of it. Indeed, my external examiner Kershaw suggests, and I agree, that I added the extra Bag-of-Tricks – with all the implications for chaos and disorder that this brought – as a function of being performed by the ecology of the evolving S5 environment.

[79] In this I was aided/hampered by the fans, which were intended to cool the room, but which also played havoc with my printed workshop plan and other paperwork.

[80] See A7.5 for the S5 main task.

[81] See also 7.5.1 above for further discussion regarding the balancing of structure and process.

[82] See 7.6 above for a description of the Ludic Acclimatisation.

[83] As Nelson notes (2013: 27), the status of practice *as* research is seldom self-evident. This is particularly observable in this project, owing to the central role of ambiguity. This also signals the difficulty of framing *Spinstallation* for different audiences, as noted in 7.4 above; the two perficipants that left may have felt similarly perplexed.

performativity and play(fulness), giving them the licence and confidence to engage on each front. I took a light-touch approach as S5 developed because both were taking care of themselves, whereas S2 perficipants, for example, required more encouragement. Furthermore, the heightened ambiguity afforded significant levels of agency and potential creativity to perficipants, who produced the most original work since S3.<mark>84</mark>

Fig.45: M Unit – *Budget Meeting*.
A withering critique of university administrative practices.

<mark>84</mark> The images and their captions below capture a sense of this originality. You can see the full collection from each group here: See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-j-unit/, http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-m-unit/, and http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-c-unit/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S5 Creativity & Imagination).
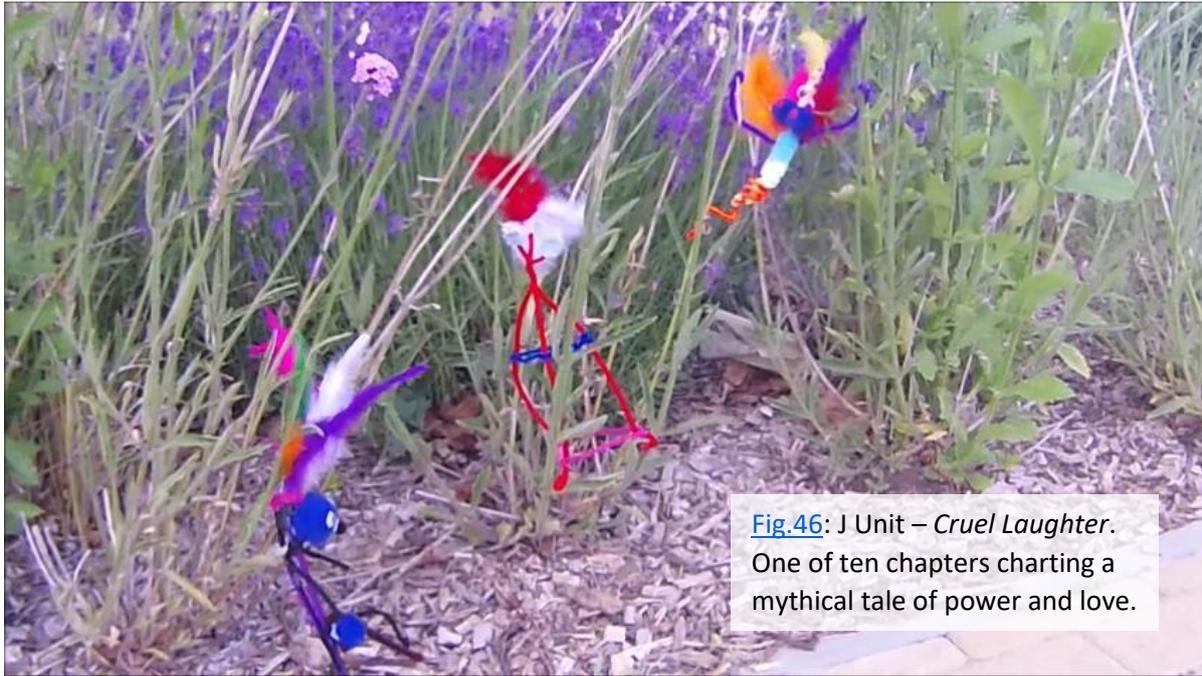
Fig.46: J Unit – *Cruel Laughter*. One of ten chapters charting a mythical tale of power and love.

Fig.47: C Unit – *The Final Adventure*. El Jefe (of J Unit) comes to the aid of MDMA and Crap-Pot (of C Unit), but sadly leaves Captain Camembert stranded.

S5 was also the most social, collaborative, and imaginative *Spinstallation*, which I attribute to the boisterousness-factors noted above and also the foregrounded role of Bag-of-Tricks Playtime, in which perficipants were encouraged to interact. (I added an extra Bag-of-Tricks Playtime whilst the group awaited my examiner, meaning that this section occurred twice and thus significantly coloured the overall character of S5 – see footnote 56.) The objects in the Bag-of-Tricks included a significant proportion of human and dinosaur

figures, which were intended to accustom perficipants to channelling their subjectivity through an object in advance of making totemic figures. This appears to have worked (perhaps a little too) well, as the vast majority of videos produced depict pretend play involving perficipants' figures.[85] This is no bad thing, however, since pretend play in childhood is particularly strongly associated with adult creativity (Russ, 2016), so, like the wordplay section, Bag-of-Tricks Playtime and totemic figures can also reconnect perficipants with childlike playforms crucial to the development of creative potential.[86]

7.7.2: S5 – Expert Perficipant Feedback

As well as being performance-initiates, the supervisor- and drama-PhD-perficipants can be considered 'expert', since they also have significant knowledge and experience of my project. One noted that there was little differentiation between my Robbie Wilson and Captain Ludicrous personas, which also appeared to be hinted at by an examiner during S5. This relates to the Popular pillar of 4P, where a performer's identity often remains visible within all personas (Double, 2017: 21). Whilst I had aimed to perfilitate this aspect with greater sophistication, the unclear delineation of personas is intended to highlight that all are one-and-the-same person and, crucially, to maintain perficipants' performer-status, preventing them from becoming spectators of 'The Captain Ludicrous Show'.

An expert perficipant also commented that S5 seemed to work against its seminar room location, wondering why I did not choose a more overtly ludic space; however, this would have increased the conceptual distance between S5 and perficipants' work environments, possibly limiting S5's effectiveness. I made efforts to explore the room's ludic affordances, such as incorporating its furniture into the sound-and-action warm-up,[87] but appreciate that this could be developed.[88] They further noted that, given my project's

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[85] I include myself in this, as I participated in S5's main task, so as to make up the numbers. See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-c-unit/, http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-m-unit/, and http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-j-unit/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S5 Creativity & Imagination).

[86] See also my comments on the wordplay section in 7.4.3 above.

[87] For a brief description of this, see 7.6 above.

[88] For example, in S-Zero I conducted an affordance-seeking expedition around the Exchange building during this workshop's devising stage, so could undertake a similar process within the Graduate Studies Training Room and all future *Spinstallation* locations where possible.

aim to unearth ludic affordances, it was almost contradictory to use toys for Bag-of-Tricks Playtime.⁸⁹ These were not the only objects, however, as I also provided paper cups, pens, string, and ribbon, none of which are characteristically ludic. My aim was to subvert the overt affordances of the toys by highlighting their ludicrous aspects (tiny plastic dinosaurs in a re-sealable packet, for example) and to use them as a 'ludic warm-up', both to attune perficipants to the ludic affordances of putatively non-ludic objects and encourage perficipants to explore the group's social-ludic affordances. Of significance here is that Graduate School *Spinstallations* are open to all Kent postgraduates, so the workshops are designed to cater for wide variations in self-perceived ludic ability. Notwithstanding this, it would be interesting to explore the effect of solely using putatively non-ludic objects in Bag-of-Tricks Playtime.

Bag-of-Tricks Playtime also aims to accustom perficipants to playing for playing's sake and attune them to structures, i.e. "inherited or invented constraints" (Bogost, 2016: 153). This is intended to put perficipants in a suitable frame-of-mind to engage with the wordplay task and main task. Considering the popularity (again) of the wordplay task and the play(fulness) exhibited during the main task,⁹⁰ perficipants seem to have found appropriate frames-of-mind. Numerous perficipants commented that wordplay helped them to "view things in a different way", "make trickier things less scary", and that they "will definitely apply" these discoveries.

I could have kept a tighter hand on the tiller of good ship *Spinstallation*, and had intended to do so, yet tightening my grip would have lessened perficipants' agency and potential creativity. In being performed by a more chaotic ecology than in other *Spinstallations*, a higher level of ambiguity was generated, which led to high levels of play(fulness). However, the fact that the groups of which I was not part focused all their videos on the antics of their totemic figures suggests a level of performance-conservatism;

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⁸⁹ I am aware that Bag-of-Tricks Playtime could be construed as fungineering, which I criticised in 3.3. However, whereas fungineering aims to *make* a workplace fun, *Spinstallation* introduces perficipants to tactics for cultivating a ludic disposition; fungineering addresses the material, *Spinstallation* addresses the ontological.
⁹⁰ I will not analyse the videos here, since this chapter's focus is methodological; however, I contend that success in the main task consists in the various qualities of play(fulness) on display across the three groups. As seen in Figs 45–47: J Unit produced an entire character-driven, rollicking narrative comprised of ten episodes - http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/ludico-kent-3-squadron-j-unit/. M Unit produced a sketch that plays upon university administrative practices - http://bit.ly/2gOfrNL. C Unit produced an episode that instigates play(fulness) between groups - http://bit.ly/2xSkAZs.

perficants did not put themselves centre-stage. More clarity and guidance from myself may have encouraged perficants to emerge from behind their totems. In future, it would be interesting to retain the free-flowing ambiguity of S5 followed by a second, shorter workshop that consolidates perficants' play(fulness) by introducing a more challenging structure.

As throughout this chapter, S5's challenges afforded useful learning opportunities in respect both of know-how and theoretical concerns intertwined. In addition to the needs and expectations of the Graduate School, postgraduate perficants, and myself as both practitioner and researcher, S5 demanded that I consider and balance also those of my supervisors and examiners. The presence of these last two groups should not have necessitated any considerations different to those of previous Graduate School *Spinstallations*, since, in theory, both supervisors and examiners are completely impartial, and therefore will engage with the work as it is intended without any alterations. However, my project shows this to be an unattainable ideal both because of its destabilising of the objective-subjective dichotomy and the related notion that all those present partially co-constitute the ecological system of the performance that itself performs everyone involved. In this way, my conceptual framework, developed mainly in Chapters 2 & 4 and extended through Chapters 5 & 6, elucidates even the practicalities of performance practice research itself and its examination. Moreover, even if examiners and supervisors were able to engage with a performance entirely objectively, their presence will always siginifcantly alter the character of the experience from the perspective of the perfilitator, which would, in turn, effect change in the system as a whole. The fact that, as noted above, my examiners reported feeling perplexed indicates that I did not effectively balance, or manage, their needs and expectations. On the other hand, the number of ticks and affirmative comments from Kershaw on the S5 section (7.7 – 7.7.2) of the version of this written document on which I was examined indicates that we largely agree in our analysis, so perhaps orchestrating the unexpected is no bad thing.[91]

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[91] On reflection, 'orchestrating the unexpected' is not a bad description of what my practice does. The phrase also has a pleasing paradoxicality to it.

Of all *Spinstallations*, S5 is perhaps the starkest example of this project's finding that although a perfilitator necessarily affects the balance between structure and process, by both devising the structure and playing a major role in the generation of a performance's affective atmosphere, that balance can only be calibrated in the evolving moment of performance. This calibration of the balance determines the tension of that particular performance, which, of course, can be recalibrated as the performance evolves. In my experience, however, the most affecting 4P performances tend to develop a particular tension early on, which tends not to become significantly recalibrated, as S5 shows. This point attests simultaneously, and perhaps paradoxically, both to the difficulty of significantly recalibrating personal ecologies and to the potential for doing so by entering into inherently unpredictable 4P performances that take on a life of their own. I recognised the difficulty of effecting recalibration in 4.3.1 and discussed this in relation to 'system meshing' in *Wandercast* in 6.3.1 and 6.4.1. The potential for my practice to effect successful recalibration was demonstrated by instances of feedback such as a perficipant's feeling that a location within their performance of *Wandercast Ep.3* might now "always be underwater" for them. I suggest that successful recalibration is dependent upon approaching play(fulness) as an end in itself, a point which is embodied by the LP principles of Just Play Along (3.6.1) and Play First, Ask Questions Later (3.6.4), and which also pertains to play(fulness)'s philosophical ramifications, since I contend that this approach helps to foster Bogost's "*worldfulness*" (2016: 224 – see 4.3).

The structure of S5 in no way seemed to inhibit any perficipant's play(ful) process, save for the slight conservativeness indicated by perficipants' reliance on their Totemic Figures, which suggests that I had learned how to find a good balance in this respect by this point in the practice's development. The know-how I had developed with regard to assuaging perficipants' potential self-consciousness was demonstrably effective, although, as noted at the start of this section, the higher-than-average proportion in S5 of perficipants with performance experience undoubtedly affected the balance also, so I cannot take too much credit.

7.8: Conclusion

The significant changes implemented with each *Spinstallation* testify to the difficulties of negotiating its terrain. Throughout, I have been wrestling with the underlying problem of how to construct a workshop that seeks to facilitate play(fulness) and demonstrate its value without instrumentalising it or presenting it as a skill.[92] In a family (S1), arts (S3), or arts-academic setting (S-Zero), this is challenging, yet the licence for a theatrical or contemporary performance aesthetic allows for an appropriately conducive atmosphere. In an undifferentiated academic environment, however, such as a Graduate School Researcher Development Workshop, it is very difficult to find the right pitch and balance.

Each *Spinstallation* involved compromise, highlighting this issue as ever-present within workshop-based play(fulness) perfilitation. Furthermore, the Graduate School *Spinstallations* (S2, S4, S5) embodied the ludic inhibition of higher education that I discussed in Chapter 3. I felt implicit pressure to foreground *Spinstallation*'s extrinsic benefits (which are difficult to foreground because they are potential and deferred), yet two perficipants still withdrew because they could not perceive sufficient tangible benefit. I feel that I have had some success in negotiating this terrain, but *Spinstallation* constitutes evidence that it will take more than one PhD to combat ludic inhibition.

I have endeavoured to present to perficipants a careful, nuanced (implicit) framing of *Spinstallation* as an example of ludic pedagogy, i.e. as ontologically oriented,[93] though not always entirely successfully. Such an endeavour might be better served by a pair or series of workshops to allow for the nuances to be more fully explored and understood, which could constitute a future research project. That said, some of the work produced within S2, S4 and S5 demonstrates that not all the subtleties of a complex approach such as *Spinstallation* need to be unambiguously understood in order for it to produce quality outcomes. Furthermore, it is reasonable to conclude that, as predominantly non-arts postgraduates,[94]

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[92] See A4.2 for further discussion of play(fulness) as not being a skill, but a mode of being.

[93] See Chapter 3 for a full discussion of ludic pedagogy.

[94] Only one out of 13 perficipants across S2 and S4 came from the School of Arts. It is also possible that postgraduates are too heterogeneous a group to be considered a community as such. However, this would mean that my aim of inter-community dialogue in S1 was actually more fully achieved in S2 and S4. Judging from the names on the registers, the Graduate School *Spinstallations* certainly attracted perficipants from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, which is indicative of the Kent postgraduate population.

S2 and S4 perficipants on average likely began from a lower baseline of playfulness, or at least were less accustomed to engaging with performance structures. As with all strands of this practice, however, perficipants self-select, thus indicating interest in, though not necessarily aptitude for, the ludic. Nonetheless, I argue that *Spinstallation* has proved effective with a widely varied group of perficipants across S-Zero–S5, and thus supports my aim to develop accessible and attractive practice.

It could also be argued that I compromised the integrity of *Spinstallation* by becoming a paid employee of the Graduate School – a corporate stooge, perhaps. It is certainly true that S2, S4, and S5 had a different structure and atmosphere to other iterations, partly owing to the fact that I felt pressure to conform to traditional epistemic paradigms in order to have my proposal accepted. Once accepted, I had an ethical, professional, and artistic duty to ensure that perficipants did not feel like my playthings. This led one perficipant to comment that S2 was "like a normal Grad. School workshop" and that "it started in quite a formal way". I suggest that this constitutes compromise, but not compromise of integrity, since the value of this project rests in part on its being applicable, replicable, and having a potential life beyond this PhD. For that to happen, perfilitators will have to be able to earn a living, which will often entail negotiating a compromise between institutional expectations and the practice's aims. Following an argument from Chapter 4, this practice will always be a subsystem; any subversion of, or changes within, the larger system must be carefully weighted so as not to cause so great a perturbation that the practice is terminated. Furthermore, I acted on the above feedback, beginning S4 and S5 in a more relaxed fashion and making the presentation more informal. The particularity of each *Spinstallation* indicates my commitment to tailoring each iteration to its setting and perficipants, whilst *Spinstallation*'s developmental trajectory indicates the reflexive nature of this PaR as a whole.

I began this chapter by considering *Spinstallation*'s relationship to the art installation; I will close this chapter by revisiting the subject of the installation in the next section. Before that, I review what I have learnt from *Spinstallation*. S-Zero revealed the intrinsic social learning aspect of the practice, which influenced my development of LP in Chapter 3. S1 taught me that the difficulties of perficipant recruitment, at least in a PhD context, make situating *Spinstallation* within institutional initiatives a practicable

proposition despite the challenges of stakeholder expectations. In S2 I discovered that *Spinstallation* operates like participant-action-research, that balancing stakeholder expectations against the practice's integrity was becoming a major challenge, and discovered the power of Totemic Figures to ease perficipants into performative play(fulness). The balancing of tasks (i.e. structure) against play(ful) process emerged from S3 to become another crucial concern, thereby raising the prospect of structure-process-tension as a pattern-which-connects multiple elements and levels of this project. In S4, the issue of ecological systems' strictly holistic nature reasserted itself, as I was reminded that no amount of planning can outweigh the impact of system dynamics on the day. This last point was highlighted more starkly still in S5, which provided one of the most intense experiences of being *performed by* a system as occurred anywhere in the project. S5 also showed how my conceptual framework can elucidate matters relating to processes of practice research itself, such as its examination.

In summation, the chronological treatment of the *Spinstallations* has allowed the discussion and analysis relating to the key elements of know-how mentioned in this chapter's introduction to evolve from a focus on practical considerations to one which strikes to the heart of this project and its conceptual framework. For example, at the end of 7.5.1, I explained how my practical balancing acts as perfilitator in S2 and S3 both revealed and elucidated the tension between structure and process that emerged as a central concern of this project. These conceptual considerations then revealed insights into practical matters, as with my discussion at the end of the previous subsection of issues relating to my supervisors' and examiners' presence in S5, thus demonstrating the mutual elucidation of practice and theory that is a hallmark of effective practice research.

7.8.1: Installation Revisited

From an overly ambitious initial idea including turning a woodland glade into a front room, which nonetheless clearly accords with Bishop's (2005) definition of installation art discussed earlier, *Spinstallation* began disguised as *Perplexpedition*. In S-Zero, the area around the Exchange building became an interactive installation, with perficipants exploring ludic affordances revealed by Captain Ludicrous. The S-Zero area could be considered a

'found installation', in the manner of a Duchamp readymade, yet whereas readymades are installed in a gallery to be appreciated as art, the S-Zero environment becomes an installation only in interaction with perficipants. Paralleling my discussion of affordances,[95] the S-Zero installation is a property of the perficipant-environment system.

S1 took a very small-scale, covert approach to the installation. The Mini-Worlds and the woodland in which they were created undoubtedly formed a "singular totality" (Bishop, 2005: 6), and thus an installation, since they constituted the homes and social spaces of the Twiglets who guard the entire woodland. As the Twiglets themselves are small when in twig-form, any spaces created or augmented for them must also be mini. Combine this with the fact that the perficipants worked with all-natural materials and the result is an installation difficult to spot despite its proximity to the path. However, were any passers-by to discover it, then they too could become perficipants by populating the installation with Twiglets of their own.

Iterations S2–S5 built upon the notion of the found installation existing only in interaction.[96] Here, perficipants' totemic figures enter into the work, and non-perficipant inhabitants are directly implicated through perficipants' commentaries on their activities, paralleling the way that un-spun installations incorporate other visitors (Bishop, 2005: 11). S2, S4, and S5 also include the totality of the academic environment, in its material, social, and conceptual elements, or at least that of postgraduates at Kent. As installations invoke reflexivity by heightening awareness of the responses they elicit (ibid: 6), so *Spinstallation* involves "seeing the environment in different ways" (S2); not only the physical environment, but the conceptual environment also, via the popular renaming exercise. This also indicates that perficipants' habitual affordance-filters may have been thrown into relief. S3 included the social environment of Prague, especially the large queue to enter the exhibition centre opposite Studio ALTA.[97] I mentioned in this chapter's introduction that perficipants become

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[95] My main discussion of affordances occurs at 4.4.
[96] The technique of (inchoately) capturing the experience on video resonates with Wolfgang Tillmans' practice of presenting ephemeral installations through photography; he has described a central thrust of his work to be "translating the three dimensional world into two dimensional pictures" (in Tate, 2017: [online]).
[97] See *Environmental Adjustment*, in which Rabbit has to close her third eye because the world is too big, before inspecting a young person, and *Refugee Solidarity*, in which Pupik describes an impromptu demonstration regarding the refugee crisis (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/pupik-and-rabbit/ or PML\Spinstallation Videos\S3 Ludic Stance\Pupik & Rabbit).

the installation itself; they are the active ingredient. Without perficipants, *Spinstallation* cannot exist, whereas installations arguably exist independently of viewers, notwithstanding the fact that installations are experientially focused (ibid: 8).

In a sense, each strand of this project's practice transforms the world into an installation in and through interaction, since each is designed to shift and expand perception-action cycles beyond the normative and functional whilst heightening awareness of this process and of oneself within it. This parallels Bishop's characterisation of installation art as structuring particular kinds of heightened experience for the viewer (ibid: 6–10). According to Bishop's typology, this project renders the world a phenomenological installation. This project conceives of play(fulness) as philosophy in action (to borrow Barrett's [2007: 1] phrase) and of life as art. In the modern era, the latter impulse can be traced back to Marinetti's words: "the time will come when life will no longer be a simple matter of bread and labour…but a work of art" (in Goldberg, 2001: 30); perhaps that time has come.

I have now contextualised and conceptualised the project, and reported on each of its strands. The final chapter seeks to construct a hub which draws together this project's many threads, creating a vantage-point from which to view the full extent of its web-like structure.

Part III: Consolidation

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1: Play Us Out

This project has introduced and developed the 4P methodology, The Ludic Triangle of practice, and LudicrousPilgrim in order to explore the interrelations between performance, play(fulness), and ecology. As well as validating my hunch that ludic participatory performance can positively recalibrate personal ecologies, this exploration has illuminated the structure of the interactions involved, indicating that ludic ecology has philosophical significance. By highlighting ludic affordances, this project has enabled perficipants to more closely contact their surroundings, "seeing them for the first time again" (*Wandercast Ep.3*). Furthermore, I have shown that manifesting Playfulness in one's daily routines – strategies for which my practice offers – will likely increase one's wellbeing and creative potential.

In addition to summarising my methods and outcomes, in this chapter I will revisit and reintegrate a number of aspects that motivate and/or underpin this project, so as to consolidate both the project's position within the multi-level terrain upon which I have situated it and also the claims I have made arising from my findings. As outlined in the Roadmap, at 1.6.8, I begin by reflecting upon the project's origins in the context of how the project developed. Next, I explain the impact on the project's epistemology of the emergence and increasing importance of relationality and ambiguity, or potentiality, within the project. This then facilitates my discussion of certain paradoxes and limitations intrinsic to the Triangle as a whole, before I move to consider the pros and cons of each strand in turn, while considering also the relationship each bears to key elements of my play(fulness) formulation and conceptual framework. This section also elucidates how each strand pertains *both* to the PaR *and* practice-based-research aspects of the project. Next, I review the epistemic contributions I argue that this project offers, as I outlined in 1.2, and detail how the contributions arise from my practical, methodological, and conceptual findings. Following this, I recount key points of know-how pertaining to The Ludic Triangle and

expand upon the chief insider insight that I have derived from conducting this project: Ludic Ambiguity. I then point to some areas in which my practice could be valuably applied and set out some potential avenues for future research. Finally, I consolidate my claim that this project has the potential to effect positive recalibration of personal ecologies.

During early stages I adopted Huizinga's "irreducible quality of pure playfulness" (1970: 25–26) to describe my principal research focus. Huizinga's phrase highlights the abstract, quicksilver nature of this inquiry's central concern. This also factors into the project's value and distinctiveness, since Playfulness is less frequently studied than play (when the two are distinguished), as well as play(fulness) not having been studied in the wild through PaR heretofore.[1] Investigating an abstract phenomenon through concrete, practical means tested my skills both as an artist and researcher, leading me to develop performance structures that prioritise form over content. I acknowledge the influence of practices variously termed walking (Mock, 2009; Walking Artists Network, 2018), pedestrian (Darby, 2013; Lavery, 2009), and ambulatory performance (Myers, 2011b; Smith, 2009a).[2] However, these practices tend to engage with notions of place as a meaningful construct,[3] whereas my practice manifests *rooted placelessness*, so as to afford both site-non-specificity and the illuminating of (abstract) play(fulness).

I have also explored the social contexts in which to situate the work. This revealed inhibition and institutionalisation of the ludic, despite play(fulness)'s apparently prominent social role, and showed my practice to embody broadly applicable pedagogical principles. Interplay between practical and textual research across all areas facilitated this project's destabilisation of the PaR/practice-based-research distinction. The processes which

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[1] To the best of my knowledge, that is.

[2] For practice reviews pertaining to the three strands, see A5.3, 6.2, and A7.6.

[3] I recognise that the above performance forms are considered as having emerged from those termed 'site-specific' but that they have also been integral in the radical rethinking of those forms and the site-specific project more generally. Wilkie implicates peripatetic practices in a wider move from an investigation into the nature and meaning of one particular site to seeking answers to wider questions arising from the constitution of site (2008: 100–102). I also note that this rethinking has, in recent times, led to greater concern for the environment and a move away from its anthropocentric (ab)use as little more than a backdrop (Darby, 2013; Pearson, 2010; Wilkie, 2008), which is in part why the above practices sparked my interest. I contend that the difference largely lies in my foregrounding of the ludic above concerns regarding site.

I say this notwithstanding the fact that I discuss place in relation to *Wandercast* (see Chapter 6), since said discussion pertains to perceptual processes that apply anywhere, rather than associative ones particular to individual places, as is often the case with the aforementioned practices (see A5.3–A5.3.5, 6.2–6.2.3 & A7.6–A7.6.1).

emerged from this interplay between "doing-thinking" (Nelson, 2013: 19) and conceptual thinking led to theory-generation as well as feeding back into the doing-thinking of the practice, though these should not be considered strictly separate. In this chapter, I assess the project's limitations, its contributions, and its possible future directions, before closing by interweaving certain key motifs. First, however, in light of ambiguity's emergence as a major theme, I further unpick the epistemology introduced in 1.5.

8.2: Epistemology

This writing seeks to articulate the ways in which this project produces knowledge, although the central role of ambiguity positions the most valuable knowledge associated with this project as what Barnett terms "Mode 3", which is "knowing-in-and-with-uncertainty" (2012: 69). As uncertainty is an ontological condition (ibid), which is therefore predominantly felt, these knowings are best engaged with through this project's practice. To recognise and appreciate the significance of these knowings, however, one needs to engage with the writing, though even both together cannot render Mode 3 knowings in their fullness; one must discover such knowings for oneself. Knowings such as these are liminal, relational, constituted by potentiality, and thus resonate strongly with Bateson's (1987) epistemology. For example, my notion of play(fulness) is a subjective one; Chapter 2 can set the scene, but you must step onstage yourself to discover phenomenally whether it holds true for you. By playing this project – allowing experiences and associations arising from its practical and other modes of inquiry to interact with one another whilst holding open a state of ambiguity – its implications can be most fully apprehended.

I can now appraise the practical inquiry as a whole, and each strand individually, in light of the language-based inquiry that this document represents. In the next section, I also explore some of the aforementioned associations as I see them. However, it is only if you, the reader, allow yourself to be performed by *Wandercasts*, or perhaps find your own performative ludic-environmental interactions inspired by my affective documentation, that this project might truly "blush before you and release its secrets" (Bogost, 2016: 90), i.e. its full significance.

8.3: Practical Pros & Cons

One of this project's vital practical paradoxes is that performance structures simultaneously constrain and liberate "the irreducible quality of pure playfulness" (Huizinga, 1970: 25–26). Structure is always necessary to bring play(fulness) into being, yet inherently inhibits certain manifestations of play(fulness). At the end of 7.7.2, I described my approach within institutional *Spinstallations*, somewhat paradoxically, as 'orchestrating the unexpected'; in a wider context, one could describe the effectivities of structure within The Ludic Triangle as a whole as '*orchestrating spontaneity*'. I contend that the paradoxical statement *orchestrating spontaneity* evokes effectively the paradoxical situation of ludic liberation through structural constraint. Bogost argues that freedom itself consists in the "opportunity to explore the implications of inherited or invented constraints", which he argues are fundamental to creativity (2016: 146–153), resonating with Novitz's (1999) creativity theory. The role of any facilitator is to present structures that create conditions favourable to desired outcomes, encouraging participants to engage whilst preserving their autonomy.

The strand within which perficipants have had most autonomy has been *Perplexpedition*, which has produced some very surprising performances, such as the Shake-a-Shake Funk dance in #5.5[4] and a rubber lion being kicked from a man's face in #8.[5] This unpredictability, and the fact that I am always physically present for *Perplexpedition*, has played a large part in making this strand the most rewarding to perfilitate.

Another inescapable limitation of this project is my Playfulness itself. In my view, objective Playfulness cannot exist, so I can only use my own; however, this entails that my practice will not mesh with all perficipants, as evidenced by the negative responses of some *Wandercast* perficipants.

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[4] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/the-big-show/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#5.5 The Big Show).
[5] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/dont-kick-lionman/ (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#8 [Don't] Kick LionMan).

8.3.1: Perplexpedition

In 2.4, I argued that Playfulness predominantly associates with the positive affect commonly attributed to play. A key associate of positive affect, which some deem representative (e.g. Demaree et al., 2004), is amusement. As well as bemusement, amusement constitutes the overwhelming response to *Perplexpedition*, particularly later iterations.

Fig.48: Amused perficipants.

While proof is not possible here, as I explained in 1.4.3.1 and 1.5, this suggests that *Perplexpedition* generates Playfulness, achieving its primary practical aim. It is possible that my own experience of positive affect led me to perceive non-existent positive affect in perficipants; however, the collective nature of affective atmospheres (Anderson, 2009: 78–79) makes it more likely that the feeling was shared. *Perplexpedition* videos allow the reader to draw their own conclusions. I do not claim that perficipant-affect is necessarily positive throughout or profound; I claim that, on balance, it is positively valenced and that

observable amusement indicates Playfulness. *Perplexpedition* is also particularly fertile from a practice-based perspective. It instigated the development of *play(fulness)*, revealed the importance of ludic ambiguity, and was thus instrumental in establishing the project's inquiry into play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon.

Perplexpedition's fleetingness and spontaneity are both a strength and a weakness. These qualities have engendered arguably some of the most Playful encounters between perficipants and perfilitator, which is made more noteworthy since *Perplexpedition* involves the most risk and therefore evidences high levels of trust between all involved. This trust could have been influenced by *Perplexpedition* being framed as PhD research, lending the work a certain credibility. Nonetheless, the dynamic negotiation of Playfulness within these brief encounters can be considered an example of Kershaw's "ecosociality", whereby interactors offer one another mutual support in order to survive and thrive within a risky yet exhilarating situation (2015: 118). *Perplexpedition* therefore offers a model for recalibrating people's relationship with the social environment in our 'age of uncertainty' (Bauman, 2007).

However, the brevity and one-off nature of live *Perplexpedition* performances means that any directly attributable changes will be negligible. For this reason, I developed *Perplexpedition* with dissemination of its tactics in mind from the outset via the tertiary, digital element of the strand that preserves its Playfulness and makes its tactics available to a global audience. This project as a whole is limited in that the modest extent of individual perficipants' engagement is unlikely to produce significant change, yet I claim the likelihood of such change in the event of more time and more practitioners being devoted to its perfilitation, or its digital practice going viral.

8.3.2: Wandercast

Wandercast's main drawback is the absence of face-to-face perfilitation, which renders impossible any in-the-moment adjustments aimed at increasing perficipation-perfilitation meshing, with the associated risk of limited engagement.[6] However, *Wandercast*'s

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[6] For an instance of limited engagement, see 6.4.1.

inflexibility lends it valuable archival stability. Furthermore, remote perfilitation vastly increases *Wandercast*'s potential reach and minimises potential perfilitator coercion;[7] perficipants can engage on their own terms and can simply turn me off! Then again, this does limit its potential to nudge perficipants beyond their comfort-zone. Furthermore, although the internet makes it *possible* for anyone with a connection to access *Wandercast*, the volume of online content makes it difficult to establish an audience, especially when other matters take precedence over digital-networking/marketing, as is the case here. Although I publicised *Wandercast* among potentially interested groups such as the Walking Artists Network, I nonetheless needed to engage undergraduates in order to secure a significant number of perficipants and feedback questionnaire respondents. As I discuss in 6.4–6.4.1, placing *Wandercast* within a module may have coloured (positively or negatively) undergraduates' perception of it. However, the fact that *Wandercast* was accepted into the module further demonstrates my practice's pedagogical utility.

On the practice-based front, the perfilitator's physical absence and the largely solo nature of *Wandercast Eps 1-3* afford illumination of play(fulness)'s effects on perception. *Wandercast*'s aural perfilitation and significant duration also affords (relatively) clear foregrounding of particular ludic affordance-types (e.g. physical), as well as facilitating investigations of considerable depth, so perhaps addresses this aspect of my research most strongly.

8.3.3: Spinstallation

A key lesson from *Spinstallation*, evident throughout Chapter 7, is the issue of compromise when seeking to perfilitate play(fulness) through workshops. S-Zero and S3 required compromise on duration, S1 involved an unknowing compromise on the diversity of the group, and the Graduate School *Spinstallations* required compromise in terms of framing. The fact that the Graduate School perficipants who left *Spinstallations* both cited a lack of instrumental benefit indicates the difficulty of articulating the value of such work in these

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[7] Notwithstanding the fact that *Wandercast Ep.3* was integrated into a first-year undergraduate module, meaning that, for the majority of Ep.3 perficipants, it was mandatory! This is a factor relating to the PhD context, i.e. the need to gather sufficient data, rather than *Wandercast* itself.

settings. Although I was clear in the workshop that any extrinsic benefit is potential and deferred, I did foreground such benefit by placing the words 'creativity' and 'imagination' in the workshops' titles. That said, the vast majority of Graduate School perficipants reported finding *Spinstallation* both enjoyable and useful.[8]

One of *Spinstallation*'s major strengths is its inclusion of elements which foreground physical, social, and conceptual ludic affordances within one event, such as Sound & Action, the main task, and Neologism Time in S5. The Graduate School *Spinstallations* were also the only elements of the project to overtly address conceptual play(fulness) in relation to a work environment, since Neologism Time is specifically tailored to play(fulness) within academic work. My supervisors commented that this strand did not seem to investigate ludic affordances with the same clarity as the mono-focused *Wandercasts*. I accept this, since the multiplicity of foci within *Spinstallation* could be construed as a less differentiated approach to ludic affordances. Nonetheless, this highlights the need to appraise the strands as a whole as well as individually; I devised multiple strands in order to employ a range of focal approaches. It could also be argued that, in contrast to *Wandercast*, *Spinstallation*'s reduced separation of particular affordance 'channels' presents a truer picture of how affordances operate in general.[9]

The above subsections demonstrate the complementarity of my multiperspectival research methodology. The limitations of any one strand are often offset by the strengths of another, such that the project overall possesses significant validity and comprehensiveness. For instance, the breadth of *Spinstallation* is complemented by *Wandercast*'s tightness of focus, *Wandercast*'s remoteness is complemented by the high-intensity of *Perplexpedition*, and *Perplexpedition*'s looseness of structure is complemented by *Spinstallation*'s comparatively more ordered framework.[10] Furthermore, all three strands have been

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[8] As these are self-reports, and since there was no cost attached to perficipation, this again should be taken as an indication of plausibility, rather than hard evidence of enjoyment and usefulness.

[9] As Turner argues (2005: 798), affordances cannot exist in isolation. It is also notable that S-Zero, S3, and S5 in particular showed considerable exploration of social-ludic affordances, which are less commonly considered and thus may not have featured prominently in my supervisor's analysis. Although social affordances are not absent from the literature (e.g. Loveland, 1991; Valenti & Gold, 1991), the tendency has been to understand affordances in terms of motor-action (Rietveld & Kiverstein, 2014).

[10] As I signalled in the Introduction (1.2.1) and intimated above (8.2), all three strands are loosely structured in general terms in order to maximise perficipant agency and creative potential.

absolutely integral to my establishing this project's contributions to knowledge that I again set out in the coming section, this time discussing them in light of the project as a totality.

8.4: Contributions

I suggested in the Introduction that this project makes several epistemic contributions pertaining to practical, theoretical, and methodological issues within PaR, ecological performance, and play-studies. I am now in a position to outline how these have manifested, taking them in their original order.

8.4.1: Practical Methodology & Models

I have developed and refined The Ludic Triangle, my models for 4P, by exploring how to facilitate ludic-environmental interactions, the potential benefit of which I have demonstrated in Chapters 2–4. I noted in the Introduction that the strands constitute novel means of studying human play(fulness) in the wild, as I hope to have shown within the Case Studies. As I intimated in 1.4.2, the strands contribute to the field of ecological performance theoretically by synthesising Kershaw's (2015) principle of minimalist units of performance with ludic affordances and practically by creating structures which apply this principle to quotidian situations. *Wandercast* feedback suggests that sustained enaction of ludic affordances does recalibrate people's relations to a variety of environments and that such change can last beyond the performance.[11]

This presents the plausibility of 4P structures facilitating beneficial ecological change, which I described as performative-behavioural therapy for "performative societies" (Kershaw, 2007: 11). By foregrounding performance's inherent play(fulness) and integrating this into the quotidian, this project suggests that we can compound the positive effects of both play(fulness) and performance. For example, the ambiguity of play(fulness) can help build resilience in an uncertain world by building up one's ambiguity-tolerance; when

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[11] See 6.4.1–6.5. Further research is necessary to see if longer lasting change occurs from more engagement with the performances.

coupled with the heightened experience of participatory performance, which each strand provides in different ways, this lends the process an energy and effectivity that is particular to arts practice (Reason, 2017b: 47).

8.4.2: Both PaR and Practice-Based-Research

As I explained in 1.2.2, my research methodology, which I characterise as *both* PaR *and* practice-based-research, proposes a dynamic conception of, and approach to, research involving arts practice, in which cross-pollination between each aspect creates an indivisible whole with expanded epistemic reach. The *both/and* approach emerged from the investigative space created by my focus on play(fulness), which is abstract and relational yet real, and thus resonates with Batesonian "difference" (2000: 457–458) and affordances (Chemero, 2003: 186). Studying the inconcrete through concrete, practical means began to draw theory from the practice, as my strands revealed themselves as Batesonian investigative "[models]" (1978: 37). Interplay between practical and conceptual knowledge then led to my ludic ecology framework outlined below. Although these processes may have produced an example of practice research that is comprised of more theory, or "know-that" (Nelson, 2013: 37), than most, in 1.6.1 I argued that this is an example of the heterogeneity of practice research. I also justified my approach by likening my practice to riding a bike and my conceptual argumentation to a technical, motivational, and philosophical understanding of bike riding; none of these are in conflict, I argue – each can enhance the other.

Furthermore, within this project, the various aspects of the research have driven development in each other. For example, the theme of ludic ambiguity, which first emerged during early *Perplexpeditions* (practice-as), influenced the development of ludic pedagogy (practice-based), which influenced the developing practice. This was an organic, nonlinear process that revealed itself in hindsight and therefore cannot be plotted with absolute certainty. However, a key development was the unlocking of my felt-experience of *Perplexpedition* by Fuchs & De Jaegher's (2009) *enactive intersubjectivity*, which revealed ludic-social interactions to intensify the decentring-of-self, and thus the ontological ambiguity, that can occur in various social encounters. Another was my interview with

Andrea, in which she articulated that ambiguity had played a central role in my conservatoire training. The interview occurred during my research into the project's social context, making me realise, firstly, that I should offer a ludic pedagogy in critical response to the current system and, secondly, that ambiguity would be key to such a pedagogy.

In 1.2.2, I pointed out that I did not formulate my *both*/*and* stance at the outset and conduct my research accordingly; the stance took shape as I sought to best understand the ways in which knowledge was being produced within the project. Central to this was a growing awareness that the felt experience of the practice (the feeling of participating in complexity within *Perplexpedition*, for example) drove theoretical developments (such as my play[fulness] formulation) that exceed the usual scope of PaR by making potential contributions to fields beyond performance studies. I also made clear in 1.2.2 that in no way does this 'going beyond', and the *both*/*and* stance in general, imply the generation of more or better knowledge than that associated with other projects. I offer the stance as a contribution to the field of, and to debates within, practice research because conceiving of my project as *both*/*and* has helped me to unpick the knowledge-producing processes within it; I hope that the stance may assist other researcher-practitioners who find their projects operating in a similar way.

As I recognised in 1.6.1, the balance of the project's *both*/*and* composition leans towards practice-based-research in Part I, owing to Chapter 2's, 3's, and 4's extensive engagement with the fields of play-studies, education, and philosophically inflected ecology. PaR is the more prominent in Part II, since this is where the know-how relating to the practical strands is primarily articulated (as know-what). The simultaneity of *both*/*and* is embodied by threads such as the metaphor of the balancing act, which is intrinsic to *both*/*and* itself, and which runs throughout Chapters 5, 6, and 7. For instance, over the course of Chapter 7, I explained how the balancing act helps elucidate matters such as ethics procedures in practice research, issues of PaR examination, and how these revealed and elucidated the critical theme of structure-process-tension. The tension between structure and process also played a major role in Chapters 5 and 6, primarily in the form of information provision vs ambiguity/open-endedness (and therefore agency) within *Perplexpedition* and *Wandercast*. Crucially, through these practical and theoretical interrelations, my project as a whole reveals and exemplifies the constant rebalancing and

negotiation demanded by ecological existence. Therefore, there are productive, homological interrelationships between my *both/and* stance and the next contribution that I revisit: my conceptual framework.

8.4.3: Ludic Ecology

This project's conceptual framework contributes to play studies. Its unique PaR perspective has produced developments in play-theory; namely, my *play(fulness)* formulation and elucidation of play(fulness) as a philosophical phenomenon.

8.4.3.1: Play(fulness)

My play(fulness) formulation advances play-theory[12] by refining a distinction between play and playfulness. Though stopping short of objectively defining play, the affect-neutral play-concept proposed, which centres on subjunctivity (the layered bifurcation of subjunctive and indicative modes in one's world-engagement), allows for objective definition while avoiding the problems that I identified with current theories. These include denying that professional sport (and therefore probably also professional performance) is play and employing subjective criteria, such as enjoyment, in a supposedly objective definition. I argue that my formulation better accounts for the likely role of play(fulness) in evolution, since the bifurcatory model of play can be posited in situations irrespective of whether they are enjoyable. For example, bifurcation would provide the psychological distance necessary to recognise the indicative as indicative (but not the only possible future) and therefore enable an organism to intentionally modify its environment. This supports arguments suggesting play to be the essential precursor to rational thought (e.g. Burghardt, 2010b: 17).

Together with a positive-affect-rich Playfulness-concept, I argue that my formulation also better accounts for the complexity of human play(fulness), aiding the analysis of my practice. In 5.3.4, for example, I noted that Freddie in *Perplexpedition #3* simultaneously is a

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[12] I do not doubt that examples can be found for which my theory does not adequately account, yet I hope that my proposal might productively contribute to the progress of debate in play studies.

child and both is and is not an errant office worker. Play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity facilitates this analysis, which theories that posit a separate 'play-world', such as Huizinga's (1970) and Caillois' (1961) do not. As with ludic pedagogy (LP) discussed above, the formulation of play(fulness) was also prompted by *Perplexpedition*. As the above example demonstrates, where LP both incorrorpates and operates in parallel with existing pedagogies, it was the inability of existing theories of play to fully account for my analysis of early *Perplexpedition* iterations that prompted my formulation of play(fulness). Subjunctivity also factors into important elements of this project's know-how, as when *Spinstallation* perficipants were acclimatised to performative ludic-environmental interaction by interacting with their environment as their Totemic Figure, thereby simultaneously also interacting as themselves (7.5.1).

I also characterised play(fulness) as an affective atmosphere (Anderson, 2009), a move which revealed and helped elucidate ludic ecology's problematising of the objective-subjective dichotomy, which I consolidate in the following sub-sub-section. Play(fulness)-as-affective-atmosphere is evidenced across The Ludic Triangle. *The Family Vault* (*Perplexpedition* #3) immerses Freddie's two siblings in its ludic atmosphere, thereby engaging them before they become directly involved (5.3.3). My editing technique of highlighting key moments by slowing the footage captures the moment at which the atmosphere of *The Legendary Trio* (*Perplexpedition* #10) dramatically shifts when I ask who will perform their chosen Ludic Menu dish first (5.4.4.4). Just as they can shift sharply, affective atmospheres do not have to be harmonious; the atmosphere produced by the interaction between some perficipants and my *Wandercast Ep.3* perfilitation was one of near total disharmony, which led to an unfulfilling, un-Playful experience for these perficipants (6.4.1). The uncomfortable atmosphere at a latter stage of S2 taught me a lot about how to appropriately negotiate the research ethics procedure in an institutional *Spinstallation* (7.4.2). In S4, the perceived breakdown of the ludic atmosphere during the final Tasks reinforced the strictly indirect nature of Playfulness-facilitation (7.6.1). The perfilitator's lack of control was then further highlighted in S5, as it became clear that, although the perfilitator can set the tone for the generation of atmosphere, the nature of the atmosphere generated is always a function of the whole system that performs all involved (7.7.2). The way that play(fulness)'s unpredictability intensifies the constant

negotiations required to operate within ecological systems, I argue, not only results in greater novelty (and therefore greater creative potential) than is produced by non-ludic systems, but also enables the apprehension of certain aspects of our ecological existence. These philosophical concerns have coalesced into my next epistemic contribution.

8.4.3.2: Ludic-Ecological Philosophy

This element of the framework emerged as the project evolved into one which investigates the **structure** and **significance** of performative ludic-environmental interactions as well as how to facilitate them. The more I discovered about the nature of performative ludic-environmental interactions, i.e. ludic-ecological performance, the more philosophically-inflected the phenomena appeared; likewise, the more I viewed ludic-ecological performance philosophically, the more I discovered about its nature. Ludic-ecological philosophy manifests here in a number of ways, pertaining both to certain reality-constructing processes and to our place within that reality. I developed this element of the framework primarily in [Chapter 4](#), then described how its major constituents manifest in my practice during the [Case Studies](#). As the Case Studies have shown, although success has been limited within all strands at times, all have also successfully produced Playfulness at others; the following claims address those times when 'it works'. By way of consolidation, I now render the four main aspects of my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument into the following principles of Ludic-Ecological Philosophy.

<u>Primacy of Relations</u>

The first aspect of the argument adopts the Batesonian and Gibsonian stance, which (in Bateson's case at least) follows Alfred North Whitehead ([1926] 1978), that relations take primacy over relata. I argue that play(fulness) exemplifies, and thus affords apprehension of, this aspect of reality. Though there are many parallels between Bogost's stance and my own, his assertion that "the play is in the thing, not in us" (2016: 95) is an important divergence. My research indicates that play(fulness) is not *in* anything; it is inherently relational. For example, I intended *Wandercast Ep.3* to be Playful, yet some perficipants

found my perfilitation patronising; others, however, found it Playful. The Playfulness is neither in my perfilitation, nor perficipants' perficipation per se; it is the relation between them. One can *be* Playful, but this describes one's relation to the world, not something that is *in* oneself. In [Chapter 4](), I described affordances also as relational, as dependent on Batesonian difference, and as intimately interconnected with context. Following Bateson (2000) and Gibson (1986), I argued that these relational structures,[13] not relata, are most fundamental in the play of reality, since relational structures are real and also take primacy in perception, revealing agent-relevant aspects of the *Ding-an-sich*. Crucially, relational structures are those whose co-creation we partake in, which is not to slip into idealism (relata do not disappear in our absence), but to assert our active (cf. Noë, 2004), constitutive role in reality's structuring.

Although relational structures are universal, I argue that the dynamic decentring and flexibility-of-negotiation involved in performances like *Perplexpedition #3*[14] reveal us as co-constituted by our relations and exemplify the way in which we are always-already embedded in systems irreducible to their parts. Furthermore, by creating ludic contexts, which foreground ludic affordances and throw habitual contexts into relief, my practice can reveal how we filter our perception of affordances. The relationality inherent to and exemplified by ludic-ecological performance thus affords attuning to relational structures, thereby bringing us into closer contact with the world.

Extra-Logical Existence

The argument's second aspect expands upon Bateson's (2000) play theory, which positions play as an important and useful phenomenon for the recognition and exploration of the extra-logical nature of existence (at least for species which play). I describe existence as extra-logical because, as I have argued, play(fulness) demonstrates that our being defies classical logic on both micro and macro levels. In [4.5](), I described subjective agency

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[13] Bateson's technical notion of structure is inherently relational, so he might regard 'relational structures' as tautological. Also, he urges against using the term in plural (1987: 161), yet I do so here in order to keep in focus the various relational concepts I discussed in [Chapter 4]() – such as context, difference, affordance, etc. – and not to conflate them.

[14] This is the second *Perplexpedition* of which I conduct a close-viewing during Chapter 5, when the family approach me of their own accord. (See [5.3]()–5.3.8.)

embedded within an ecological system as one of the ways that paradox enters ludic-ecological philosophy, which constitutes a macro level; I consolidate this aspect more fully within the next philosophical principle. Evidence of the extra-logical on the micro level, as I argued in 4.2.2, is manifested in play(fulness)'s exemplification of our ability (and that of other species which play) to utilise paradoxes of abstraction, since play(ful) metacommunication violates the principle of logical types. For instance, Jimbo Bot's mock-Vulcan-nerve-pinch on Percival Camembert in S5 denotes a Vulcan-nerve-pinch, but it does not denote what a Vulcan-nerve-pinch would denote (i.e. intention to render unconscious).
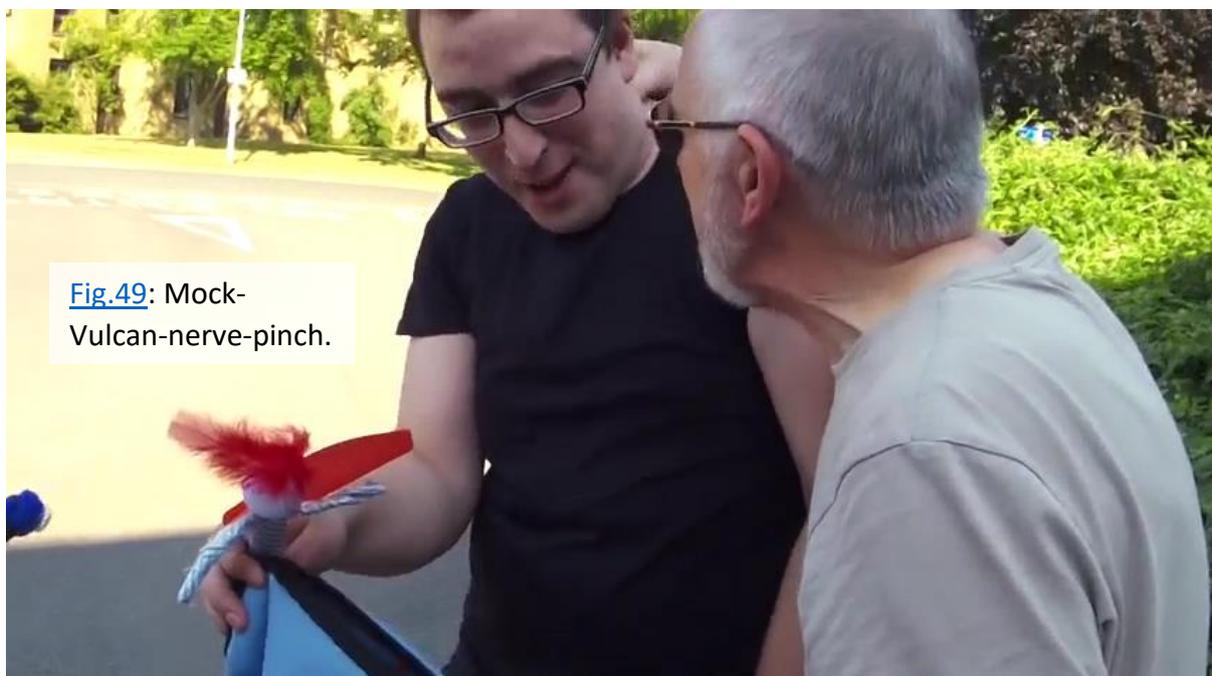
Fig.49: Mock-Vulcan-nerve-pinch.

Play(fulness) thus generates afresh the paradoxes of abstraction that were likely essential in the evolution of cognition and communication, as without them neither cognition nor communication could develop beyond formal rigidity.[15] In so doing, play(fulness) also refutes anthropocentrism by asserting our cognitive commonality with all those species that play, from wasps to octopuses (Graham & Burghardt, 2010: 394–400). All play(fulness) exemplifies this important evolutionary milestone. However, the overtly ludicrous nature of this project and its practice, I argue, intensifies this exemplification by revelling in, and thus heightening, the inherent extra-logical aspect of our communicational existence

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[15] Interestingly, an absence of paradoxes of abstraction would also seem to logically preclude acts of creativity.

represented by paradoxes of logical typing. Crucially, the humour-component of Playfulness can help us to laugh at the inherent ludicrousness of our existence without demeaning it; this is *irreverent reverence*.

Always-Contingent Agency (Strictly Holistic Ecologies)

The third aspect of the argument relates to the ability of play(fulness) to perform a kind of 'reality check' by reasserting the strictly holistic nature of the ecologies of which we are part and therefore the issues associated with considering ourselves as somehow apart from those ecologies. I have chosen to characterise this philosophical principle in terms of agency because human agency is of crucial eco-philosophical concern, pertaining as it does directly to our detrimental impact on the planetary ecology. I mentioned our embeddedness in ecologies above in relation to paradoxes; the paradox here resides in being able to exercise agency whilst being performed by one's ecologies. As discussed in 1.4.2, 5.3.1 & 7.7, Kershaw's (2015) notion of being performed by performance structures parallels the decentring-of-self (Reason, 2017b) mentioned above regarding Primacy of Relations. Decentring-of-self and awareness-of-self-within-process are interacting and interrelated concepts that describe the lived experience of inchoate, contingent agency and multifaceted subjectivity, as I set out in 2.4; my concept of awareness-of-self-within-process in particular evokes the experience of being performed by an ecological system. Both concepts have been evidenced in every strand, whether characterised as mutual incorporation (*Perplexpedition*), being "one with" the environment (*Wandercast*), or "[migrating]" one's subjectivity to one's totemic figure (*Spinstallation*). Reason argues that decentring is a fundamental aspect of arts-participation (2017b: 45–47). I do not disagree, but I argue that the unpredictability of play(fulness) manifests this in particularly dynamic fashion, thereby heightening one's experience of the ever-present negotiations and rebalancings that ecological existence demands. In ludic-participatory performance, not only is the outcome unknown but all involved must consistently exhibit considerable flexibility to maintain the ludic context. By rooting these experiences in quotidian situations, my practice affords apprehension, and perhaps recognition, of our agency's contingency; never unilateral, but always in negotiation with the ecological systems of which we are part.

Exemplification of Reality-Construction

The argument's fourth and final aspect centres on perception. Within the framework of this project, perception participates in the co-construction of reality that arises from the interaction of agent and world (cf. Merleau-Ponty, [1945] 2012). Owing to the fact that this project subscribes to the ultimate relationality of reality, the perception that is of most consequence here is perception of affordances, which, I maintain, are themselves relational entities (Chemero, 2003). My practice engages perficipants in performance structures that foreground the ludic potential of quotidian situations, thereby encouraging perficipants to focus on ludic affordances. Since ludic affordances are extrinsically afunctional, I argue that they are less likely to be integrated into habitual patterns of action given our conditioning to maximise our productivity. Therefore, the "just because" (Suits, 1978: 41) of play(fulness) exemplifies, and thus reveals, the way in which we constantly "pull…out" (Bateson, 1979: 97) from the multitude those affordances that we perceive; in other words, play(fulness), as manifested in my practice, exemplifies the economy of affordance perception (Gibson, 1986: 135).

This 'pulling out' of affordances from the multitude also parallels the phenomenological thesis that sensory perception operates according to *beckonings* and *invitations* between subject and world (Cazeaux, 2005). Feedback on *Wandercast Eps 1&2* (released close together) indicated that the work impacted on these invitational perceptual processes, which may be related to *Wandercast*'s 'zoning in' on particular modalities of ludic affordance (e.g. physical, imaginative, etc.). This feedback from Eps 1&2 then influenced my decision to foreground perception in Ep.3 and to include a question pertaining specifically to (sensory) perception within Ep.3's questionnaire. Then, when researching for *Wandercast*'s case study, I found that both performance and play(fulness) are associated with perceptual exemplification, which suggests that ludic-ecological performance can compound these effects. By exemplifying perceptual processes, *Wandercast* in particular reveals some of the ways in which we construct our reality. In addition, as the above sub-sub-section indicates (8.4.3.1), play(fulness)-as-subjunctivity exemplifies the way in which we use psychological distancing in our construction of reality.[16] I argue, therefore, that my practice manifests

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[16] For further discussion of psychological distancing, see 3.6.4.

ludic-ecological philosophy in action, allowing one to *be* inside and live the experience of the philosophical principles just described.

8.4.4: Documentation

My approach to documentation advances PaR methods by integrating archivability into multiple strands from the outset, whilst maintaining the integrity of the practice. These methods variously: articulate gesturally the affective experience of the work (*Perplexpedition*), make the work itself archivable (*Wandercast*), and achieve significant comprehensiveness through collaborative approaches (*Spinstallation*). I detailed my documentation techniques in 1.2.4 as well as within Chapters 5–7, so have only briefly recounted them here. This contribution, however, is no less important than the others.

8.5: Insider Insights

8.5.1: Know-How-as-Know-What

As articulated (as know-what) within the Case Studies, and summarised in 1.6.1, each strand has both drawn on and caused me to develop my know-how as a practitioner. In *Perplexpedition* (Chapter 5), I developed the 'approach as if we haven't met' and 'give yourself a new name' tactics for establishing a performance frame and thereby turning participants into performers. I also worked out how to use video editing to both engage in organic analysis of the performance and disseminate the work, whilst remaining true to the aesthetic of the live performance and gesturally articulating its affective atmospheres. *Wandercast* (Chapter 6) involved the employment and development of techniques to engender a sense of co-presence between myself and perficipants despite our temporal and spatial remoteness. These included: direct address, working out what I was doing as I went along (i.e. improvising and thereby learning alongside perficipants), and performing the same action in the moment of recording as that which I ask perficipants to perform. In *Spinstallation* (Chapter 7), I had to learn how to best maintain the integrity of my practice

when placing it within institutional initiatives and also how to assuage perficipants' potential self-consciousness and ease them into play(fulness). One method I devised in pursuit of the latter two goals was for perficipants to create a Totemic Figure and to initially use this as a 'ludic crutch' in their performative ludic-environmental interactions.

I explained in Part II's Introduction that the Triangle as a whole is also united by the fact that each strand involved the negotiation of balancing acts that take different forms across the three. In 5.4.4.1, I explained how the intrasubjectivity involved in editing the footage of *Perplexpedition #10: The Legendary Trio* revealed how I embodied the balancing act of giving information vs preserving agency; I answer the perficipant's question with half a sentence, a head-shake, and a thumbs-up. Intrasubjectivity describes the interplay between my affective engagement in the moment of performance and my later engagement with the raw footage, which, in the case of #10, resulted in a double-take that I replicated by repeating that particular section of the footage. Then, in 5.4.6.1, I tease from #10 another ubiquitous balancing act: how to keep the forward momentum of the performance sufficiently high without significantly inhibiting perficipants' agency. In *Wandercast*, the information-agency balance is evidenced, for example, by the way in which I describe elements of *Ep.2: Headphone Adventure Playground* in ambiguous terms so as to enable perficipants' to put their own spin on them. Take the Unstunt™, for instance, which should be "as unimpressive as imaginable but conducted with the utmost seriousness and conviction". I negotiate the momentum-agency balance in *Wandercast* by weighing instructional sections against periods for perficipants to explore and put into practice their interpretation of my instructions. As I explained throughout Chapter 7, *Spinstallation* saw a diversification of the balancing act in terms of the level at which it operates. As well as the information-agency balance evidencing itself through my ongoing reworking of *Spinstallation*'s Ludic Tasks, balancing acts also emerged on the level of practice research processes, elucidating common issues such as ethics and examination procedures.

Consolidation obtains, as I explained in relation to my *both/and* stance in 8.4.2 above, in the way that the know-how associated with these balancing acts, together with their articulation through this writing, forms a pattern-which-connects all elements of this project. The structural homology of the balancing act connects each of the three strands together, connects these to my conceptual framework through the structure-process-

tension, and connects all of this to my *both*/*and* stance through the latter's inherent balancing and to the practice research methodology in general by elucidating my negotiation of common issues.

8.5.2: Ludic Ambiguity

The most important insider insight into face-to-face perfilitation, emerging from my practice and clarified through reading and writing, has been that a perfilitator must not only recognise that they are not in control, but embrace that fact. Only by putting oneself in a state of ambiguity can one reliably create the same for perficipants, engendering a Freirean mutuality. This ambiguity is more acute than that usually found within popular performance. Although a comedian must respond to an audience's unpredictable interactions, and may even actively court a situation "going out of control", stand-up relies upon the comedian "[controlling] the exchange of energy by managing and manipulating audience response" (Double, 2014: 361, 198). By contrast, I have found my role ideally to involve a relinquishing of control in order to perpetuate the ludic-ambiguous state. Dynamic walkabout performance, such as Bim Mason's Bigheads, also bears similarity to my practice in that it seeks unpredictability to avoid "closing down the scope of the playing" (2017: 210) and also values interactivity and risk. However, the clear distinction between performer and audience common to most popular performance precludes mutuality in the sense used here.[17] My practice, which all-but-erases the performer/audience distinction, aims for all to participate in the same ludic-ambiguous "affective atmosphere" (Anderson, 2009: 77).

However, as with both stand-up and walkabout, this is a risky business; if one floats too free from one's moorings one risks catching a gust like that which blew away Jimbo Bot's insides,[18] i.e. one might get cut adrift and the process might falter or fail. This is

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[17] Despite the central role that ambiguity plays in clowning, particularly within Gaulier's "Pedagogy of Spectatorship" (Amsden, 2015: 73), clown is another practice which is differentiated from mine by a clear performer/audience distinction. My practice, by contrast, could be termed a (ludic) 'pedagogy of participation'.

[18] To hear this cautionary tale, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rde4ejguEtY (PML\Spinstallation Video\S5 Creativity & Imagination\C Unit\Calamitous Life Support).

almost what happened in S5, yet I had perfilitated the formation of sufficiently strong ludic bonds that perficipants were able to withstand, and arguably flourish within, the vortex of ambiguity. In this way, perficipants underwent an experience which Barnett argues will help them thrive in a supercomplex world (2012: 68) and which Stein argues will benefit their creativity (1953: 312). These bonds were largely forged, I argue, through my employment of a popular-performance-esque jokey perfilitation-style, improvisation techniques, and establishment of an equitable relationship between all perficipants and between them and me. In affecting perficipants' modes of being, I contend, ludic ambiguity also pertains to the practice's philosophical implications.

8.6: Applications/Further Research

Ludic Pedagogy (LP) is an application waiting to happen; further to being integrated into mainstream education, LP would be of benefit in a teacher-training context, if the overall system became one which allowed for play(fulness). Training in LP would assist teachers' creation of social, supportive, ontologically-oriented learning conditions which encourage humour. I have demonstrated the association of these principles with the development of resilience, flexibility, and authenticity, all of which are qualities that facilitate flourishing in a supercomplex world. Critically, the development of creative potential and intrinsic motivation for lifelong learning afforded by LP could prove decisive as job-automation increases.

4P is also readily applicable in the contexts of socially-enagaged arts practice and creative playwork. Any practitioner with a sense of humour and participatory performance experience can adapt my 4P models by: creating new *Perplexpedition* menus; devising their own physical, conceptual, and social *Wandercasts*; and producing original *Spinstallation* exercises. Any budding pilgrims of the ludicrous would do well to heed my insider insights: don't use the word 'playfulness' unless you have to; in *Perplexpedition*, only approach perficipant pairs or groups,[19] and devise covert means of introducing a performance frame;

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[19] This puts the perfilitator in a similarly vulnerable position to the perficipants - see 3.6.1 (especially footnote 31).

in *Wandercast*, use aural-environmental overlay, practice what you preach, (maybe) curb your enthusiasm, and employ a variety of structural styles;[20] in *Spinstallation*, don't frame it as a playfulness workshop, and tailor the activities, tasks, and perfilitation-style to the particular setting whilst keeping everything as open-ended as possible. In terms of broader applicability, 4P could be employed for ends other than the facilitation of ludic interactions: bringing Shakespeare to new audiences; highlighting environmental issues; or facilitating interactions which relate to the associative richness of particular places, drawing on 4P's roots outlined in 8.1 above. 4P's use of humour would likely engage a broad range of perficipants across these, and other, contexts.

My current plan is to employ my methodology somewhere within the sectors of arts, heritage, and alternative education, or perhaps in various contexts across these sectors. In the case of alternative education, this would clearly provide an opportunity to develop the pedagogical aspects of the existing strands and to develop new 4P strands with an emphasis on LP. In respect of arts and heritage, the ability for my practice to facilitate discovery of novelty in the familiar makes it well-placed to assist organisations in finding ways for the public to engage innovatively with the organisation's collections. The positive affect of Playfulness and pedagogical aspects of the project make it also directly applicable to arts and heritage organisations' public engagement and creative learning initiatives; furthermore, the popular pillar of 4P applies directly to the broadening of organisations' audiences. All of these applications address areas that arts and heritage organisations must demonstrate progress in if they are to maintain or attract funding, which positions my project, and the knowledge I have developed, as of significant value in these sectors.

A fruitful avenue of future research would be longitudinal 4P with the same perficipants, which would enable the perfilitator to gauge when structures could be minimised, thus exploring possibilities for perficipants to create their own. After a

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[20] Ep.1 is largely improvised, featuring a main, field-recorded monologue and often self-deprecating, studio-recorded interjections over pre-recorded soundscapes (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/welcome-to-the-world-of-wandercast/); Ep.2 is also largely improvised in the field, with non-soundscaped studio interjections that help explain practically how to perform the ludic tactics and sections of field recording with no monologue to give perficipants time to try them out (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/headphone-adventure-playground/); Ep.3 is more scripted and recorded entirely in the studio, using pre-recorded soundscapes and sound-effects to create a more theatrical experience appropriate to stimulating the imagination (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/attenboroughs-imaginarium/).

Spinstallation-style training, perficipants could become perfilitators: collaborating to produce *Wandercasts*, perhaps uncovering the ludic affordances of a particular shared space; devising their own *Perplexpedition* tactics to test on the public; or even generating altogether new modes of 4P. The next logical step would be for this generation of perfilitators to become perfilitator-trainers, with the possibility that ludic pedagogy could perpetuate itself, ludic ecology, and 4P; each generation thereby offering increased research opportunities. Another interesting avenue would be collaborating with psychologists, or other researchers, who could gather empirical data relating to play(fulness)'s potential benefits. There is also the possibility of applying *Wandercast* to the study of aphantasia.[21]

We may never know definitively what play(fulness) is, but I hope that by manifesting it through performance I have shed some light on what play(fulness) does and how it can benefit fraught personal ecologies. I also hope to have demonstrated PaR's appropriateness and effectiveness here, warranting its further development as a methodology in play(fulness)-studies.

8.7: Play to Win

I close this writing by revisiting the project's origins and motivations and by consolidating how the project relates to Bateson's notion of sacred unity. My impulse to research began with hunches regarding the potential of Playfulness, harnessed through walking art, to positively recalibrate personal ecologies. As I expressed at the outset, in 1.1, my usage of 'personal ecologies' adopts a personal, affective, aesthetic perspective from which to consider and conceive of the patterns and ever-shifting systems of environmental relations in which a person is implicated. By combining the subjectivity of the personal with the objectivity of ecologies, I intend to evoke, and to invite people to consider, the troubling of the objective-subjective dichotomy that ecological thinking requires. An individual perspective from within ecologies does not imply anthropocentric ownership of those

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[21] I discuss this potential application in 6.4.3.

ecologies, but foregrounds the ambiguity and paradoxicality of personal agency that is always-already embedded within, and contingent upon, the systems of which one is part. I argue that my practice can effect subtle yet significant changes to personal ecologies and therefore necessarily also to the people who are co-constituted by those ecologies. I call this ontological change the *recalibration* of personal ecologies since I claim a modest change that stops short of wholesale reconfiguration but that nevertheless produces significant effects and affects.

It transpired that the nexus of performance, play(fulness), and ecology is a vital area, bearing the potential to help humanity "rethink and refeel our nature and destiny" (White, 1967: 1207) in the face of ecological crisis. My project offers practical and theoretical contributions to this process, I argue. I have not sought to scientifically demonstrate my practice's effectiveness; I hope I have successfully demonstrated the plausibility of its long-term effectiveness and therefore its value both as arts practice and research. I argue that the *rooted placelessness* afforded by my practical focus on form over content can facilitate increased presence by promoting novel ways of perceiving and being; *irreverent reverence* can enable one not only to reconcile oneself with an uncertain, ludicrous world, but also find humour in it.

I do not mean the above heading to connote ruthlessness or even competition, but rather that in order to win, one must play. I argue that if one cultivates a ludic-ecological disposition, using this project as impetus and inspiration to discover one's own Playfulness and unearth the plethora of playgrounds in one's surroundings, one can win big. Interrelated benefits include creative potential resulting from cognitive complexification and increased flexibility,[22] resilience in a world of ever-increasing uncertainty, and positive recalibration of one's environmental relations occurring through performative-behavioural therapy. One might thus learn to live as an organism embedded in, not set against, one's environment.

We can now appreciate the importance of recognising, understanding, and playing upon the tension between structure and freedom (i.e. process) that I mentioned in 1.3.2. This recalibration, seeing the structure (i.e. constraints) of one's environment not as a

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[22] I mean this in Bateson's sense of "uncommitted potentiality for change" (2000: 505).

barrier to experiencing positive affect but as opportunities for its attainment, allows one paradoxically to effect positive-affect-homeostasis, or wellbeing, by interacting ludically (i.e. flexibly and spontaneously) within the structures of which one is part.[23] This strongly resonates with Bateson's argument for "stabilizing…fundamental variables…[through]…flexibility of ideas" (2000: 507), which he deems imperative for shifting ourselves out of "the grooves of fatal destiny in which our civilization is now caught" (ibid: 504). Homeostasis is another example of this project's structural homology of the balancing act, since homeostasis refers to a dynamic state of equilibrium effected by the balancing of various variables (see also footnote 26, this page). The fact that both White (1967) and Bateson (2000) call for ontological change in order to alter humanity's ecological destiny (and therefore that of the planet) indicates the significance of apprehending, interrogating, and recalibrating the structure-process-tensions that constitute personal ecologies by playing with and upon these tensions.

The interplay and tension between structure and process (i.e. freedom or flux) also forms the basis for Bateson's (1987) naturalised notion of the sacred,[24] which I referred to in 1.4.1, returned to in 4.5, teased out from The Ludic Triangle across each of the Case Studies, and am now in a position to fully integrate. Although Bateson did not explicate this sacred, as his daughter (and posthumous co-author) Mary Catherine notes (ibid: 145), it has to do with the pattern-which-connects all life via the rigour of logic and mathematics but also the malleability of aesthetics and metaphor.[25] It could be described as *boundlessly specific homology* (cf. Kershaw, 2009b: 4; Bateson & Bateson, 1987: 152–153). To some,

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[23] I am not claiming that wellbeing always results from a single instance of my practice, but rather that practising ludic ecology (which I claim my practice has the capacity to foster) will assist in wellbeing-maintenance. Here, I am drawing on Bateson's notion of homeostasis, following Ashby (1945), which notes that "those circuits controlling the more rapidly fluctuating variables act as balancing mechanisms to protect the ongoing constancy of those variables in which change is normally slow and of small amplitude" (2000: 352). In making this comparison, it is important to differentiate between momentary positive feelings and wellbeing, the latter of which Dodge et al. define as "the balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced" (2012: 230). Synthesising these views, wellbeing can be characterised as positive-affect-homeostasis achieved through flexible employment of one's resources (the slow-to-change variables) in addressing challenges (the rapidly fluctuating variables). Rapid change to one's resources could lead to developments that render one somewhat desynchronised within one's personal ecologies and therefore make meeting one's challenges more difficult. However, by employing one's slowly evolving resources dynamically and flexibly, i.e. by finding innovative ways to employ them, one might effectively meet one's challenges whilst preserving the sustainability of one's resources. I argue that a ludic disposition can be key to this.
[24] As opposed to supernatural or transcendental notions of the sacred (Bateson & Bateson, 1987: 50–64).
[25] There is a certain resonance between the Batesonian sacred and the Kantian sublime, which I discuss in A8.1.

this paragraph (and, indeed, the majority of this document) may read as ludicrous, but this is my point. It is ludicrous, but also distinctly serious, just like play(fulness) itself.

The effectivities of ludic-ecological philosophy outlined in 8.4.3.2 all pertain to Bateson's sacred "communicational regularities" (1987: 142), in that they address invariants in our worldly relations, chief among which – for Bateson – is the tension between structure and process. Considering the emergence of interplay between performance structure and play(ful) process as a key theme in this project,[26] one could (playfully) contend that ludic-ecological performance is the sacred exemplar *par excellence*, a point not lost on Huizinga, who recognised the sanctity of play(fulness) (1970: 38). It is no coincidence that performance, play(fulness), and ritual share so many characteristics.[27] When, in 4.5, I playfully characterised this project as the Church of the Ludic, I wasn't joking.

This church has no god and no prophets, only pilgrims; its sacred playgrounds are everywhere, and it has only one mantra: go forth and play.

My essential argument here, as demonstrated by my practice and articulated in this writing, is that, just as "[L]ove changes the lover" (Berardi, 2014: 18), play(fulness) changes the player – I argue that play(fulness) does so in ways that are positive, beneficial, and both philosophically and ecologically significant. I further argue that performance can heighten play(fulness)'s effects and affects, which renders performative methodologies appropriate and effective for studying play(fulness) – since performance makes play(ful) process more observable – and also means that performance has the capacity to intensify play(fulness)'s potential benefits.

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[26] This came to the fore during my consideration of *Spinstallation* (see 7.5.1, 7.6.1 & 7.7.2), which revealed the presence of this interplay as greatly significant throughout the project, as expressed in 8.3 above.
[27] For more on the relations and similarities between performance, play(fulness), and ritual, see Schechner (2013, Chapters 2–4) and Turner (1982).

Appendix 1

A1.1: Rooted Placelessness

This concept has certain resonance with Wrights & Sites' notion of creating "'anywheres': an impetus towards places of interconnectivity and diversity, irony and bricolage rather than conformity to principles" (Smith, 2013: 104). However, as realised through 4P, a ludic ecology is more abstract, since Wrights & Sites' practice and Smith's later "mythogeography" (2010a), though multiplicitous, nonetheless draw on a place's narratives (see Smith, 2011; Persighetti, 2000). This project has no desire to represent narratives or structure meaning, though it does not expressly avoid doing so, instead presenting opportunities for direct interaction with one's environment on a level anterior to narrative production. In this, I took early inspiration from Robert Wilson's *Walking* (2012), an abstract sculpture walk through the Norfolk dunes. (*Walking* also informed my initial idea for *Spinstallation* [see 7.1] and partly inspired 4P's peripatetic pillar.) Barkham notes that Wilson prioritises the lived experience over the transmission of any meaning in his work, especially in the case of *Walking*. As Wilson says: "(I)f I see a sunset, it doesn't have to tell me a story" (in Barkham, 2012: [online]); a perspective which this project applies to the perception and enaction of ludic affordances in the environment.

[Back to 1.3.1 footnote 18]

[Back to A4.1 footnote 7]

A1.2: Irreverent Reverence

I am an avowed atheist, but have always been awestruck by the sheer magnificence of our global ecosystem and wider Universe. At the same time, however, the inalienable ludicrousness of life has never been far from my mind; be it the preposterous improbability

of our existing at all, or the irrepressible hilarity of someone falling over.[1] Indeed, my first master's dissertation argued that the incongruity theory of humour is mirrored by the incongruity between sensory perception and objective reality; that is to say, reality has the structure of a joke (Wilson, 2008). This is not dissimilar to Bateson's thesis of a "difference which makes a difference", which is how he defines a unit or "bit" of information ([1972] 2000: 272), deeming this the fundamental driver of change in the universe (Cashman, 2008: 50), without which neither our existence, nor our awareness of that existence, would be possible (Bateson, 2000: 315). One could characterise the Big Bang as the ultimate difference that made a difference; the difference which begot all others. Bateson (2000, 1991, 1987, 1979) saw in the idea of difference, pattern, and ecology a way to reconcile science with the Sacred, which I align with my notion of Universal magnificence. Here, I follow his general approach, but invoke Playfulness as a means of reconciling the magnificent and the ludicrous, which I take to be the mutually omnipresent, intertwined, twin polarities of life as experienced by humanity; a contemporary Yin and Yang, if you will. I describe my approach as *irreverent reverence*.[2]

[Back to 1.3.1.1 footnote 22]

[Back to A4.1 footnote 7]

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[1] E.g. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsdcGJJ3zhE

[2] Stick that in your postmodern pipe and smoke it. That's what Bateson would do. Maybe. Although I can find no mention of it in his work, I doubt that Bateson approved of postmodernism, in spite of the importance he ascribed to contingency, since he believed ultimately in the principles of science, just not always in its approach and practices. These, he argued, are based on obsolete presuppositions, chief among which are Cartesian dualism and the universal applicability of quantitative methods (1979: 217). Which gives me an idea: I should have some rubber wristbands made that say WWBD (i.e. What Would Bateson Do) on them and some others that say WWLPD (What Would LudicrousPilgrim Do). I also happen to know that Bateson smoked a pipe at least once (Bateson Idea Group, n.d.).

Appendix 2

A2.1: Playfulness & Humour

To illustrate the relational and subjective nature of Playfulness, inseparable from its association with humour, I draw on a discussion between myself an acquaintance. What follows are two examples of historic April Fool's Day pranks that my acquaintance conducted:

> Enlisted the help of a lawyer friend to send letters to neighbours telling them that their houses were up for compulsory purchase in order to make way for a new bypass.

> Took photographs of friends' and family's car number-plates, then sent letters to said friends and family informing them that they had been caught speeding and were going to be prosecuted.

Compare the above with an example of one of my April Fool's Day pranks:

> Smeared peanut butter onto a family member's shoe, so that it looked as if they had trodden in dog excrement quite fulsomely.

I argue that it is not possible to objectively adjudicate on the presence or absence of Playfulness. I would not characterise my acquaintance's pranks as Playful, whereas mine, naturally, I would. Unsurprisingly, my acquaintance finds their pranks Playful. The main influence in my judgement is my sense of humour, which is another inherently subjective notion: nothing is objectively, i.e. universally, funny. Similarly, nothing is objectively Playful. This is an inherent limitation to my project, since it entails that some individuals will not find my practice Playful. However, if playfulness is intimately bound up with humour (Lieberman, 1965: 219; Barnett, 2007: 950), as I am suggesting, then I cannot do otherwise than build my practice upon the ground of my sense of humour. To attempt to develop a

practice that is objectively playful would be implicitly to develop a practice that could not be playful in any meaningful sense.

As I explained in the Introduction, this project's major concern is with Playfulness, rather than play in general. Within my formulation, play is potentially amenable to objective determination. For example, in sport there are standards of fair play which are more or less objective. By contrast, I suggest that 'fair playfulness' would be a fairly meaningless, and perhaps oxymoronic, concept.

I also noted in the Introduction that there tends to be at least some overlap between people's senses of Playfulness. Otherwise, accepting my argument with regard to Playfulness and humour, this would be akin to saying that no two people could find the same thing funny, which would entail that comedy could not exist. It is beyond the remit of this thesis to enter the debate on the nature of humour (see e.g. Woods, 2013; May, 2015), but suffice to say that Wittgenstein's notion of *family resemblances* is useful here, which refers to "a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail" (1958: 32). There are certain characteristics present in any one person's subjective notion of Playfulness which are likely to overlap with, or resemble, those of others' Playfulnesses, so that contingent consensus can be reached.[1] Indeed, individuals could likely be found who find my acquaintance's pranks Playful and my acquaintance and I could likely find some Playful common ground.

[Back to 1.3.1.1 footnote 24]

[Back to 2.4 footnote 45]

[Back to 2.5.2 footnote 60]

[Back to 7.6 footnote 39]

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[1] This notion of playfulness-overlap has implications for the relationship between 'personal' (Runco, 1996), or 'mini-c' (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007), creativity and socially recognised creativity, as features in my discussion of creativity.

A2.2: Creativity as Heuristic and Subjective

Importantly for this project, Amabile (1982, 1983) argues that judgements of creativity can only ever be subjective and contingent, since it cannot reasonably be expected that even subjective criteria could apply across cultural and temporal frames. As I argue in 2.4 with regard to Playfulness, Amabile argues that no judgement of creativity can be entirely objective (1983: 359). Runco agrees that an empirical, and purely objective, "traditional scientific approach" cannot ever directly adjudicate on creativity due to the unpredictability inherent in the originality component of creativity, as well as the implication of affect and intuition in the creative process (2008: 93). He differs from Amabile (1982, 1983) in that he asserts that one should maximise one's objectivity (2008: 93). A reason for this difference may be that Amabile (1982, 1983) is primarily concerned with assessing creativity, yet Runco (2008) is criticising another study for claiming that their subjective approach has predictive powers. I am neither trying to assess creativity, nor predict it, yet the recognition that objective approaches are inadequate, or even inappropriate, here lends further support to the validity of subjective approaches in this area, such as the one taken by this project. Like creativity, Playfulness is not amenable to objective measurement and is thus ultimately unquantifiable.

Amabile also notes that a process must be "heuristic rather than algorithmic" to be creative, meaning that the process cannot be fully known in advance; there must be an element of discovery in the approach or even in the identification of the problem itself (1983: 360). This appears to make the notion of creativity within this project problematic, as my practice could be construed as providing algorithms (i.e. instructions) for ludic interactions. I have combated this by developing open-ended, indeterminate, and ambiguous instructions as far as possible, which remain open to interpretation. This facilitates interactions by providing a loose structure, yet maintains the possibility for discovery. Furthermore, the practice is explicitly framed as non-prescriptive; through engagement with the project, participants are encouraged to take on the perspective of a ludic ecology, but to develop their own notion of Playfulness and to find their own ways of enacting it in the everyday.

[Back to 2.2.4 footnote 17]

[Back to 2.5 footnote 44]

Appendix 3

A3.1: Consumerism & Positivism

Consumerism inhibits the ludic in a number of ways. Firstly, consumerism privileges having over being (Fromm, [1976] 2013), whereas one can only *be* playful. Secondly, although play-forms can be co-opted for commercial gain, as I explore in the main text, I argue that the Playfulness I ultimately aim to facilitate is resistant to such impulses and institutions' prerogatives. Thirdly, owing to the fundamentally subjective nature of the ludic, it would be a risky strategy to attempt its commodification, as there would be no way of ensuring or checking whether an individual had a Playful experience as a result. This links into the ultimate incompatibility of play(fulness) with, and its consequential lack of value within, a positivist epistemic paradigm. Although consumerism undoubtedly takes an interest in the qualitative, in order to perpetuate and maximise consumption, it is the quantitative that is always of fundamental importance (i.e. the bottom line), thus indicating the synergy between consumerism and positivism and the disconnect between both of these and play(fulness).

I am not suggesting that play(fulness) cannot be investigated empirically; that would be empirically wrong (see, for example, Bateson & Nettle, 2014; Proyer, 2014, 2012, 2011; Proyer & Jehle, 2013; Proyer & Ruch, 2011; Maxwell, 2005; Lieberman, 1977). However, the way in which these examples could be described as positivist, in the Vienna Circle sense, is by virtue of the limitations they place on their hypotheses and conclusions. That is to say, the above authors limit themselves to hypotheses using phrases such as "robustly associated" (Proyer & Ruch, 2011: 1), since it is understood that no more than this can be demonstrated conclusively. Even so, I find such studies problematic, since they often rely on descriptors with wide interpretations as their determinants of play(fulness), such as "fun" (ibid). Whilst I agree with the subjective approach taken by many of these authors, this is problematic in terms of science because what is being measured is far from clear. Even though the above studies make use of descriptors, i.e. qualities, they nonetheless record and analyse their findings using statistical methods. By subjecting play(fulness) to experimental conditions, such studies inevitably entail a degree of what Guba & Lincoln

term "(C)ontext stripping" and the "(E)xclusion of meaning and purpose" (1994: 106) common to all quantitative approaches. Though the above-mentioned studies have value, I argue that their shortcomings point to the impossibility of an objective definition of play(fulness)[1] and, therefore, to its ultimate imperviousness to positivist inquiry. Given this situation, there is certainly room for alternative forms of research, which produce different types of knowledge. In Chapter 2, I described Playfulness as an 'affective atmosphere' (Anderson, 2009). For Anderson, "to attend to affective atmospheres is to learn to be affected by the ambiguities of affect/emotion, by that which is determinate and indeterminate, present and absent, singular and vague" (ibid: 80). The paradoxicality of this description shows the appropriateness of using Anderson's term to refer to Playfulness[2] and also indicates how well-suited it is to an artistic, qualitative approach such as mine. It also points to the power of ambiguity, which will play a major role in the current chapter.

[Back to 3.1 footnote 6]

A3.2: The Dark Play of Capitalism

According to Friedman, "there is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition, without deception or fraud" ([1962] 2002: 133). It is interesting that Friedman describes business as a game and implies that it must be played to win; this chimes with prevailing, machismo-inflected notion of free-market economics as proceeding according to Herbert Spencer's phrase "(S)urvival of the fittest" (The Economist, 2015: [online]). As Omasta & Chappell observe, "(T)he fact that we are constantly presented with experiences in which we are driven to win…may play a key role in helping game-makers transmit ideologies, socialize players, and create the seductive ludic structures that keep individuals playing" (2015a: 15). Crucially, there is an inherent tension here between the desire to increase profits and the

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[1] I use 'play(fulness)' because the above-cited studies do not employ my technical usage, so I cannot ascertain whether their conception accords with Playfulness.
[2] See Chapter 4 to see how paradox and play(fulness) are intertwined.

restrictions imposed by the rules, which will inevitably cause conflict between the two. In the age of air-brushed advertising images, I also suspect that business and society might tend towards differing interpretations of the word 'deception'. Of course, Friedman is careful to state that the rules must be obeyed, but his description implicitly requires businesses to operate as close as possible to the threshold at which their activities would be considered deceptive and fraudulent.

There is a curious parallel here with drama-in-education and the thinking of Dorothy Heathcote: "(I)n football the brilliant player 'plays' the rules to their limit and good drama experience is as concerned with its rules as with the exploitation of them" (1984: 70–71). The difference being that business is competitive and drama is not; the exploitation of rules within drama education benefits all those participating, whereas in business the exploiters benefit at the expense of others. Recent examples of rule-exploitation in business and beyond are plentiful: the financial crash of 2008, which saw the trade of officially-sanctioned financial products cost the UK economy a possible 11–13% of its GDP (Curtis, 2011: [online]); the MPs expenses scandal of 2009, which outraged the public despite the fact that the vast majority of claims were "within the rules" (Williams, 2016: [online]) (interestingly, MPs' expense claims have risen 43% since the 2010 general election [ibid]); and the demise of BHS following questionable, though not fraudulent, behaviour by Sir Philip Green, which MPs called the "unacceptable face of capitalism" (BBC, 2016: [online]). Friedman would likely counter that the first and last examples are not in accordance with his principle, since both resulted in catastrophic losses. However, my point is that the single-minded pursuit of profit makes these sorts of outcomes almost inevitable and that those who ruthlessly pursue profit seldom feel the effects of their mistakes.

Furthermore, business has a very close and influential relationship with government through the practices of lobbying and consultancies etc., of which only consultant lobbying must be registered according to current UK legislation (unlike America, where we know that $1.6 billion was spent on lobbying in 2016 [OpenSecrets, n.d.]). Consider 'free trade' deals such as TTIP, which not only tend to be negotiated through a highly secretive and undemocratic process, but also seek to introduce Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanisms that allow companies to sue governments for enacting policies which might diminish future profits (Williams, 2015). As Lazzarato observes, in recent times, "financial

investors…have…been able to seriously undermine State sovereign power" (2012: 99).
Thus, we can see that business not only plays the rules to their limit, but also makes the
rules and arguably rigs them in its favour. I contend that the worldview and goals of
business are often in conflict with those of society in general; therefore, the commercial co-
option of forms of play(fulness) is something to be particularly wary of.

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[Back to 3.2.2 footnote 12]

A3.3: The Chair Exercise

As with any practice, The Chair Exercise is impossible to render accurately and completely in
words. With this caveat in mind, I endeavour to give an account of the exercise of Andrea's
which I deem to be the clearest example of bringing students into a productive relationship
with ambiguity. Andrea describes The Chair Exercise thus:

> the actor relaxes themselves, takes the chair, holds it with the back of the chair so
> that the majority part of the chair is against their solar plexus and when they're
> ready and when they feel the impulse the task is that they go and put the chair
> where the chair needs to be…

Quite an ambiguous instruction, right?!

The exercise takes place in as bare a studio as is feasible, not in an attempt to
employ the scientific method, but so as to decontextualise the experience and thus
heighten the state of ambiguity generated. This makes the exercise particularly useful for
inclusion here, as it foregrounds the principle itself, which could be transformed according
to, and thus incorporated into, various pedagogical contexts. The exercise is undertaken by
a single student observed by the rest of the class, who have either already completed the
exercise, or are awaiting their turn.

Andrea posits that, hypothetically, the exercise could work in the absence of an audience, though it would not be so effective. The intersubjectivity, or 'energy', afforded by the audience's presence, which is manifested in palpable focus as well as verbal and gestural feedback, is an important dynamic in Andrea's usage of the exercise. (There is a parallel here between Andrea's pedagogy and Amsden's notion of Gaulier's "pedagogy of spectatorship" [2015: 2].) The direct feedback between the student and an audience of their peers (plus the tutor), both during and between attempts, is invaluable, as the audience reflects back the surfacing of impulses of which the student may not have been aware.

A3.3.1: Perception of Impulses (Intentions)

Irrespective of whether one finds any version of mirror-neuron theory convincing,[3] the fact that there is an observable difference in brain activity when observing intentional and non-intentional action (di Pellegrino et al., 1992) indicates that we (and other animals) possess a particular sensitivity, which allows us to perceive intention in others. This is especially heightened in The Chair Exercise, wherein the audience often perceive, and make explicit to

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[3] Andrea appears to take the view that 'mirror neurons' (Gallese et al., 1996) are present in humans (Kilner et al., 2009). I am more interested in complex systems comprised of entire human beings embedded within dynamic environments than the isolated functioning of specific brain areas (as is Andrea; scientific references tend to be employed in a metaphorical sense) and remain ambivalent about humans' mirror neurons. Claims regarding the intrinsic role of mirror neurons in producing simulations of others' mental states so as to read their minds (e.g. Gallese & Goldman, 1998) do not convince me, since such claims make the mereological, or homunculus fallacy (see Bennett & Hacker, 2003): If the brain (or a part of it) produces a simulation, who could be the audience other than a homunculus within the brain? (For further criticism of simulation theory, see Gallagher [2007].) The conclusion that mirror neurons "select actions according to gesture meanings" (di Pellegrino et al., 1992: 179), drawn from evidence that only goal-directed, or intentional, actions are associated with the firing of such neurons, also makes the mereological fallacy, since only a person can perceive meaning; a neuron cannot, and neither can a brain for that matter. Personally, I find the ecologically-oriented 'associative learning hypothesis' more convincing (see Heyes, 2010), according to which, rather than being 'hard-wired', neurons become mirror neurons through sensorimotor experience. Specifically, the correlation of observing and executing the same action.

the student performing, impulses (intentions) that the student overrules by rational cognition. As Andrea explains it, the audience

> can see that that's what's going on- we read that in the body- it may be micro, very, very subtle ways [but] we can see that there's a want from the belly, from this central place, to go over here and then the head turns or the eyes turn and there's an idea that actually "that would be a better place" and sometimes they'll argue blue in the face "no that's what the- that's where the impulse was" and you go "well, that's interesting- that's not what we saw" and sometimes the exercise is repeated and repeated and we see it and we go "yeah! Do it! That one!" and they've done it without thinking about it…

Experiencing The Chair Exercise, both as observer and actor, feels like witnessing magic, but it isn't; it's simply affective cognition (see below). By having their unnoticed or overruled impulses pointed out to them, the student is able to develop their awareness of their own intuitive impulses. This increased awareness, in turn, allows the student to follow their intuition, and therefore perform authentically, more often. It is a productive relationship with ambiguity that enables this learning process, a relationship which, I argue, is facilitated by the practice of this project. I argue that productive ambiguity and associated fostering of intuition would be valuable additions to mainstream education; LP provides the framework for their integration.

One could describe intuition as a form of personal creativity, since it involves original interpretations in combination with a discretionary sense that the interpretations produced will be useful in the particular context. The difference here is that the discretion is felt, and so is affective in nature, rather than operating according to rational processes. According to Forgas, the Western view of affect, dominant since Plato, as a force which impairs, and even is malicious towards, rational thinking has been rethought since the 1980s. There is now empirically supported understanding that affect and cognition share "close neural links and a complex, multifaceted, and bidirectional relationship" (2008: 99). However, this has not translated into the significant change in the prevailing positivist epistemology, our education system, or our wider society, that this project deems necessary. I argue that intuition is an excellent example of the intimate, bidirectional relationship between affect and cognition. Given the scientific support for the interdependence of cognition and affect,

together with the links Andrea proposes between intuition and authenticity, I suggest reframing intuition, and other processes grounded in affect, as valid capabilities to be developed within mainstream education, and further suggest that LP is well placed to effect intuition's development.

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Appendix 4

A4.1: Overview of Bateson

Bateson differentiates between what he calls the "two faces" of ecology within any living system: the "economics of energy and materials" and "economics of information" ([1972] 2000: 466). It is the former, "bioenergetics"[1] (ibid), which is the chief preserve of ecological study in its most common form. However, it is the economics of information,[2] which Bateson terms "ecology of mind" (ibid: *xxiii*), that is of chief importance to both him and my present purposes.

For Bateson, bioenergetics and mind pertain to perhaps the two most fundamental descriptive levels, which give rise to all possible sublevels necessary to understand the world. These he somewhat problematically characterises as two distinct "worlds of explanation", following Jung in naming them "pleroma" and "creatura" respectively (ibid: 489). In A4.3–A4.3.1 below, I explore the ramifications of this distinction and suggest a way for dissolving it. Whilst creatura is essentially synonymous and coextensive with the notion of Mind[3] (which, both here and for Bateson, includes all life), pleroma includes not only bioenergetics but all matter, forces, and energy. Thus, one can consider creatura as the subjective world of Mind and pleroma as the objective world of substance (ibid: 462); however, in A4.3–A4.3.1 below, I argue that an ecological perspective challenges the very notion of an objective-subjective boundary.

Though Bateson argues that the pleroma-creatura dualism exists only in description, not in actuality, Cashman argues that an "unresolved ambiguity" in his conception of pleroma and creatura left Bateson ultimately unable to resolve the dualism (2008: 45–46; see also 4.3.2). Appealing to dualisms certainly seems to indicate a tension within Bateson's

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[1] Bioenergetics is of attendant, but only tangential concern to this project, so factors pertaining thereto will not be directly explored here.

[2] Bateson uses 'information' in a technical sense, derived from communication theory, but one which also resembles the common-sense usage of the conveyance of meaning, as I expand upon below.

[3] Mind (capitalised) refers to Bateson's notion of a total mental system, of which individual minds are considered subsystems (2000: 467). Similarly, I use Life to refer to all life. Whereas Mind refers only to the creatural aspects of living things, Life here refers simultaneously to both their creatural and pleromic aspects. For a discussion of issues relating to usages of the term 'mind' as a noun, see A4.3 below.

thinking, since he strongly opposes dualisms of the Cartesian sort that entail a separation. Bateson deems the lingering influence of Cartesian thinking an epistemological fallacy (1979: 217)[4] that will likely prove critical in humanity's demise if it cannot be overcome (2000: 337). This suggests that Bateson would likely have dissolved the pleroma-creatura dualism had he found an appropriate means of doing so.

Where pleromic processes occur through physical "forces and impacts" (ibid), creatural, or mental, processes proceed by the transformation of information (ibid: 315). According to Shannon & Weaver's paradigmatic *Mathematical Theory of Communication*, information is defined as "a measure of one's freedom of choice when one selects a message" ([1949] 1963: 9).[5] Therefore, the minimum possible amount of information is a "binary digit", or "bit" (a term Weaver attributes to John W. Tukey), which exists when the selection is between two possible messages (ibid). Information is explicitly formulated as potentiality, i.e. as proportional to the number of total possibilities in any given situation.[6] This is important, because it entails that Shannon & Weaver define information as being fundamentally non-local, which is to say that information cannot be said to reside in any of the possible messages (ibid).

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[4] In this, Bateson's thinking aligns with that of Bennett & Hacker (2003), whose controversial work, *Philosophical Foundations of Neuroscience*, argues that Cartesian thinking is evident in, and fundamentally confuses, a significant proportion of neuroscience, leading to logically inadmissible conclusions being drawn from experimental data. The chief (Cartesian) epistemological error that Bennett & Hacker identify is the 'mereological fallacy': an error of attributing to parts of a system properties that can only logically be attributed to the system as a whole (2003: 29). Within neuroscience, this tends to be the attribution of mental characteristics to the brain, or parts of the brain. May (2015) also finds the mereological fallacy lingering in contemporary cognitive science, arguing that this confusion is carried over into much of the work which constitutes the 'cognitive turn' in theatre and performance studies.

[5] This would seem to imply that information, so conceived, cannot possibly be transmitted. If information is potentiality, it must surely be collapsed into actuality (i.e. into one of the possible messages) before it can be transmitted and thus received. Or, if it really is the case that information itself is transmitted, this places in doubt all theories of cognition and mind which rely on contentful representations, since potentiality *ipso facto* can have no content. Shannon & Weaver appear to indirectly address this point, clarifying that what actually gets transmitted is the product of a given information source, which represents the amount of information the source possesses by virtue of the fact that the product has been freely chosen from the number of options that the source provides (1963: 16). Nonetheless, the loose and confused way in which the concept of Shannon Information has been applied and developed (Bruni, 2008: 101) is a problem for traditional cognitive science, which might call into question its standing as the dominant paradigm and, ultimately, its usefulness as an explicatory tool. Although the ecological viewpoint I am invoking also makes use of an information concept, I argue that its flexibility avoids some of the issues inherent in applying something as rigid as Shannon Information.

[6] It should be noted in passing that my notion of play as bifurcation between the indicative and subjunctive implies a partial association with the notion of information as potentiality. The association is partial because, where Shannon Information is entirely potential, play is both extant and potential at the same time.

It is difficult to overestimate the impact of this theory, since it arguably underpins the information technology revolution of the latter half of the twentieth century, which continues apace today. The development of Shannon Information influenced the development of Bateson's conceptual framework (Bateson, 2000: 482), so warrants mention here, though only Bateson's framework is drawn upon directly. Shannon Information primarily addresses intentionally communicated information, whereas organisms often gather ambient information in interaction with their environment (cf. Gibson, [1979] 1986). Also, Shannon Information does not offer sufficient flexibility for our current purposes. It only holds for digital (discrete) choices, whereas play(fulness) often operates according to analogue information, such as kinetic, or shifting combinations of each (Bateson, 2000: 192). Furthermore, play(fulness) is fundamentally a meaning-making, or -discovering, phenomenon (Bogost, 2016), which means that a purely quantitative formulation of information is not particularly appropriate in this instance.[7] Furthermore, in reality, as Bateson observes, information is always-already contextual, not only in the sense of travelling from one context to another (2000: 400), but also as "part of the ecological subsystem called context" (ibid: 338). This entails that information is co-constitutive of its associated contexts, as well as being shaped by them; something inadmissible as regards Shannon Information.[8]

Bateson defines a bit of information as "a difference which makes a difference" (2000: 315).[9] This retains Shannon & Weaver's notion of non-locality, whilst recoupling information to meaning, which Hartley first divorced from one another (1928: 538). Just as with 'freedom of choice' above, 'difference' cannot be said to reside in anything, even abstract things such as messages; choices and differences are always between things,

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[7] This is not to imply, however, that this project seeks to discover or communicate any meaning(s) related to particular places; meaning here is associated with the concepts of *rooted placelessness* and *irreverent reverence* (see A1.1 & A1.2).

[8] The example of a bit of information that Shannon & Weaver give is a choice between the King James Bible text and 'yes' as the two possible messages (1963: 9). This situation is intended to be "artificially simple" (ibid: 10) and presumably also intended to underscore the point that Shannon Information is completely divorced from meaning (ibid: 8). However, it also indicates the radical decontextualisation and reductiveness inherent in the theory, since either message may be coded as either '0' or '1'. It is difficult to conceive of a situation which would be rendered intelligible by the above. Although I am aware that, in isolating their conception of information from Shannon & Weaver's wider theory, I am engaged in decontextualisation and reductiveness myself. This I justify on the grounds that space dictates maximum brevity when expounding secondary theory.

[9] Bateson uses the term 'bit' not to indicate a mathematical formulation of information, but simply to refer to its elemental unit.

though neither be said to reside in any space or time between (Bateson, 2000: 458). That is to say, both are inescapably relational. Bateson's formulation offers greater flexibility of application, however, since it is the difference itself which is causal (it *makes* a difference), whereas a message cannot send itself in Shannon & Weaver's theory, and also because there are always an infinite number of differences which could make a difference (Bateson, 2000: 458–459).[10]

Meaning here is meant in a radically expanded sense. Something has meaning if it is of operational, functional, or behavioural consequence to an organism. Gibson's view that perceiving an affordance is "a process of perceiving a value-rich ecological object" (1986: 140) shows that affordances parallel differences in asserting the pre-existence of meaning in the world (see also ibid, chapter 3). In fact, I contend that Gibson's "invariants of structured stimulation" (ibid) are synonymous with Batesonian difference-making differences; since "invariant combinations of invariants…specify the affordances of the environment" (ibid) I therefore maintain that affordances are complexes of difference. Whereas Gibson limits his theory to animals (perhaps because Gibson centres his theory on visual perception), Bateson applies his difference-concept to all life. For example, a difference in light intensity makes a difference to a plant; this difference means something to the plant (Bateson, 2000: 381–382). It is reasonable to infer that the human experience of meaning bears some (however inordinately complex) relation to meanings of this basic type. Thus, for Bateson, a difference which makes a difference is an "elementary idea" (ibid: 315).

The reason, Bateson observes, that differences can cause effects is because living systems store energy, which means that they can support pleromic processes triggered creaturally. The system achieves this by virtue of the respondent part, as opposed to the triggering part, commonly providing the energy for the ongoing information transformation and thus the perpetuation of the process (ibid: 489-490).[11] Muscles, for example, provide

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[10] In this last point, Bateson explains that he is modifying Kant's observation that "the most elementary aesthetic act is the selection of a fact" from the infinitude of possible facts attending to any given object. For 'fact', Bateson substitutes 'difference' (2000: 459).

[11] Although Bateson does not state this explicitly, it is not a case of a creatural event sparking a pleromic one as a knock-on effect. Whenever mind is involved, even though difference may be the proximal cause, the creatural and pleromic aspects of any process are strictly synchronous and coextensive, despite the fact that information has no spatio-temporal location. That is to say, the two are one and the same, only described from different perspectives. Of course, any system which displays mental characteristics is also susceptible to physical causes in the usual ways (Bateson, 2000: 315).

the requisite energy to transform nervous information into kinetic information. Bateson also notes that systems exhibiting mental characteristics often expend energy as an inverse relation of energy input; thus, the side of the plant where the light is least intense will grow the fastest (ibid: 382).

The final point of Bateson's to rehearse at this juncture is the assertion that creatural/living/mental processes take place within circuits or networks around which differences are transmuted as they affect the various parts of the system (ibid: 490).[12] The fact that mental systems are "holistic", "internally interactive", and "self-corrective" entails that

> no part of such [a]…system can have unilateral control over the remainder or over any other part. The mental characteristics are inherent or immanent in the ensemble as a whole. (ibid: 315)

For Bateson, this holism has far-reaching implications: any description of a creatural process which does not include the totality of informational pathways involved renders that situation inexplicable (2000: 465), leading to significant misunderstanding. Attempts to explain human thought and behaviour in terms of brain activity, for example, make the error of artificially dissecting the requisite informational pathways (see also footnote 4). For Bateson, "the thinking system … is man plus environment" (2000: 491). This clearly aligns Bateson's thinking with the general theses of embodied and extended/distributed[13] cognition, the former of which at least tends to find favour among performance scholars of a cognitive persuasion, since performance is an ineluctably embodied phenomenon. Indeed, Shaughnessy & Trimingham describe the "theory of mind/body unity", which is central to embodied cognition, as being "implicit" in their project, *Imagining Autism*, which uses participatory performance as a means of fostering positive change in children with autism (2016: 202).

I do not intend to provide a synopsis of the premises and scope of embodied and extended/distributed cognition. Suffice it to say that embodied approaches stress the active

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[12] This is not to imply that such processes are in any way isolated. The nature of differences is that they could make a difference to any other living system at any point.
[13] Since I am only addressing these schools of thought in passing, I argue that there is sufficient overlap between the two for them to be taken together (see Clark & Chalmers, 1998; Hutchins, 2000).

and constitutive role of the body in mental process (Shapiro, 2010), and extended/distributed approaches assert the active and constitutive role of the organism's environment in mental process, inclusive of other organisms (Hutchins, 1995, 2000; Clark & Chalmers, 1998). Embodied cognition in particular sets itself against the fundamental premise(s) of traditional cognitive science, which Shapiro summarises as the view that "cognition involves algorithmic processes upon symbolic representations" (2010: 2). Further, like Bateson, embodied cognition rejects Cartesian dualism in favour of a more holistic view, as Shaughnessy & Trimingham's use of the term 'mind/body unity' suggests.

A4.2: Play(fulness) is Being, not Skill

In order to avert potential misunderstanding here, of perceived slippage of this argument into advocating play(fulness) as a generic skill to be acquired, instrumentalised as an all-

powerful tool for human creativity and enlightenment, I must stress three things. Firstly, play is technically not an action, but a class of actions grouped according to context (Bateson, 1991: 203), and Playfulness is a context-of-context, or quality with which play-actions are carried out, so neither can be construed as a skill. Secondly, I must reiterate that, as with creativity, any philosophical insight facilitated by play(fulness) remains potential until realised by some other process. Thirdly, much of play(fulness)'s value lies in its particularity; I am very clear that I do not seek to, nor could I, make people Playful. My aim is to facilitate perficipants' discovery of their own notion of Playfulness. In this, I align play(fulness) with Kershaw's characterisation of performance as exhibiting "boundless specificity", since, like performance, there is no limit to what play(fulness) may encompass, yet each instance is "incorrigibly particular" (2009b: 4). I will not rehearse the full catalogue of links between play(fulness) and performance here (see Schechner, 2013, Chapter 4), but it is pertinent to point out that both terms refer to contexts, not actions.

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A4.3: Mind, Matter & the Quantum

Mind is not to be considered as an object or entity, despite the possible temptation to do so, which arises from its linguistic formulation as a noun. Rather, mind refers to the conditions of possibility for a difference to make a difference (see A4.1 above) and for intentionality to arise, leading to the potential for action to take place. Neither should mind be confused with consciousness in the human sense. For Bateson, any systemic process of appropriate causal complexity, with appropriate energy relations, will display mental characteristics (2000: 315).

The noun 'mind' is potentially misleading because it precipitates the objectification of the mental, leading to the idea that minds can be spatially located (Ryle, [1949] 2009: 2), which, in turn, presents the possibility of their being individuated. In actuality, no mental

process can be strictly separated from any other. Despite this, Bateson defines a unit[14] of mind as any "relevant total information-processing, trial-and-error completing" system, which is to say all those elements implicated in any process one wishes to understand. He is clear, however, that these units are not actually bounded, but are rather subsystems of Mind as a totality (2000: 466). Bateson further identifies this unit of mind as identical to the proper unit of evolution, which he deems to be "a flexible organism-in-its-environment" (ibid: 457). Thus, we can see that the human body constitutes an element of the human-in-environment mind-unit.

At another level, one's body comprises a complex of minds, one reason being that the number of human cells comprising a body is roughly equalled by those of bacteria (Sender, Fuchs & Milo, 2016), for whom the body is their environment. From a Batesonian perspective, the notion of 'my mind', which is commonly taken to be limited to the individual concerned, is rather an emergent property of a complex network of distributed, interdependent mental processes; it is an "ecology of mind" (2000: *xxiii*). Indeed, Bateson argues that the self is a "mythological" construct resulting from the arbitrary carving off of one part of a system from the rest (1991: 202).

A note must also be given on the fraught relationship between matter and mind. If problematic dualism is to be avoided, mind and matter must be one and the same on some level, just as waves and particles are one and the same; in each case, both are necessary for a complete account of certain situations. However, this is not the level of lived experience, in which things must instantiate themselves as one or the other by virtue of being experienced. This arises from the quantum theoretical notion of complementarity[15] put

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[14] Of course, the notion of mind as being conceivable in terms of units presents further opportunities for misunderstanding, as with the pleroma-creatura dualism (see A4.1 above); however, we must be able to draw metaphorical lines somewhere, so as to be intelligible. Otherwise, we would have to talk about everything all the time, which would be unwieldy and exhausting. These units can perhaps be thought of as being enclosed by a permeable membrane or selective forcefield, which are more or less permeable (and/or selective) depending on the nature of the system and the specific circumstances, and which preserve always the possibility of the system being affected by some other system.

[15] Nadeau & Kafatos describe complementarity as "a logical framework for the acquisition and comprehension of scientific knowledge that discloses a new relationship between physical theory and physical reality that undermines all appeals to metaphysics" (2001: 94). Metaphysics had earlier been tacitly included in physical theory through positing that the world is a mathematical structure independent of human experience, yet knowable by us through mathematics (ibid: 86). One could argue that quantum theory instead incorporates metaphysics by characterising the physical universe as mindlike (see Theise & Kafatos, 2016; Stapp, 2011; Schäfer, 2008, 2006); in a sense, metaphysics has become physics.

forward by Bohr, according to which gaining knowledge of one complementary variable precludes seeking that of another within the same situation, for instance momentum and position (Eisberg & Resnick, 1985: 68). Complementarity also connects the space-time and mass-energy dyads, which in each case are jointly necessary yet mutually exclusive when describing reality (Nadeau & Kafatos, 2001: 92).

The universe as described by quantum mechanics is always-already contingent, which reveals an important parallel between quantum and ecological viewpoints. Since experience is part of the world, and effects change in it in order to occur (Stapp, 2009a: 219–220), no detached position is possible from which to experience anything objectively. Furthermore, since experience must be mental in order to count as such, any experience of matter must be instantiated mentally, though without matter there would be no possible experience. Mind and matter are orthogonal, yet bound together, so I argue that an analogic (or possibly actual) complementarity can be said to persist between them.

The Copenhagen interpretation[16] of quantum theory, devised chiefly by Bohr and Heisenberg, was strictly epistemologically oriented[17] until Heisenberg 'ontologised' it. Heisenberg posits that the objective world can be characterised as potentiality, symbolised by quantum wavefunctions, which transitions into the actuality of the phenomenal world through interaction. Crucially, the actualisation happens independently of observation (ibid: 151). Bohr remained a pragmatist, asserting that human ideas can only ever order human experience and can never speak to anything which might exist independently (ibid: 72).[18] According to Bohr and Heisenberg, absolute knowledge is impossible; either the world is fundamentally unknowable, or fundamentally uncertain.

As Heisenberg's view presents the possibility of knowing the objective world, I sketch its implications here. As Stapp observes, conceiving of the objective world as consisting in potentiality entails that reality is essentially "idealike", not "matterlike", also clarifying that

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[16] Though there has been much controversy regarding the interpretation of quantum theory (Eisenck & Resnick, 1985: 79–80), and many more interpretations since the 1950s, the Copenhagen interpretation has attracted new recognition since the turn of the millennium (Faye, 2014).

[17] Bateson would likely view this as a flaw, since he asserts the inseparability of epistemology and ontology (see 4.2.1).

[18] This is not to imply that Bohr was an idealist; on the contrary, he was a realist who believed in the existence of objective reality, but asserted the implicit inability of any human theory to say anything about it (Faye, 2014).

quantum theory demonstrates how an idealike fundamental substrate can be influenced by mathematical rules of the phenomenal world (2009a: 195). The consequences of this for Bateson's ecology of mind are radical in the sense that it suggests not only is mind "evident in those sections of the universe…which include living things" (2000: 472), but in the universe as a totality. Indeed, there are a significant number of theorists who subscribe to the idea of mind as intrinsic to, and immanent within, the objective universe (e.g. Penrose & Hameroff, 2014; Stapp, 2011, 2009a; Schäfer, 2008, 2006; Tononi, 2004; Nadeau & Kafatos, 2001). Bateson's assertion of immanent mentality is gaining increasing scientific credibility.

A4.3.1: Mental Ecology of the Quantum and the Subjective-Objective Boundary

Cashman proposes solving the problem of the subjective-objective boundary by bringing in intentionality and action: "I can never feel the pencil directly, but I can break it directly" (2008: 56). I can see the merit in Cashman's approach, but I suggest that quantum theory allows for a more fulsome dissolving of the problem and may provide a useful missing piece to Bateson's jigsaw. I argue that Bateson's blind-spot was not intentionality, but rather an out-of-date view of physics, leading to an inaccurate characterisation of territory. Given the stark parallels and potential for productive interplay that I argue obtain between Bateson's thought and quantum perspectives,[19] I find it odd that he appears never to have engaged with this field of enquiry. This is especially perplexing, and perhaps unfortunate, since

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[19] For example, quantum differences at the beginning of the universe are thought to explain the evolution of the macro universe as it appears today in terms of the irregular distribution of matter (Hawking, n.d.).

Angels Fear (1987)[20] seems to present a picture of the world that is broadly analogous to Stapp's notion of the universe as "psychophysical" (2009a: 93).

The introduction of quantum theory[21] into considerations of mind and its relation to the objective world make plausible some startling suggestions. Most pertinent here is that territory is more mindlike than material. Cashman criticises Bateson's (1979: 97) notion of 'drawing', or 'pulling out', distinctions on the grounds that this leaves undrawn differences ontologically ambiguous, which he finds problematic. From a quantum perspective, this is exactly how things are, not because undrawn differences do not exist at all, as Cashman implies (2008: 49), but because they exist only as potentiality.

If 'unpulled' distinctions did not exist in any sense, one would not ever be able to pull them out. Then again, Bateson argues that there are no distinctions in pleroma (2000: 271–272); distinctions are only discernable from some sort of perspective, which implicitly posits experience. These two positions seem irreconcilable until one admits the mindlike nature of the objective universe (cf. Penrose & Hameroff, 2014; Stapp, 2011, 2009a; Schäfer, 2008). The reconciliation follows from extending Bateson's concept of mind, attributing it not only to complex systems but all the way down to "elemental interactions" (Schäfer, 2008: 349). I am not suggesting that quantum particles exhibit cognition, or are conscious, but that the objective universe is constituted by "ubiquitous proto-conscious events" (Penrose & Hameroff, 2014: 71), which give rise to phenomenal experience within systems of sufficient complexity and organisation, such as organisms. Rather than describing individual organisms as possessing minds, the quantum view parallels the Batesonian in describing the universe as constituting total Mind, of which all else are subsystems. Thus, when (quantum) potentiality collapses into actuality, the universe both instantiates a random "proto-element of experience" (Penrose & Hameroff, 2014: 53) and reveals its matterlike aspect (Stapp, 2009a: 286), since the latter is what we mean by 'actuality'.[22] In living things, the complexity of the structure entails that mentality is not

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[20] *Angels Fear* (1987) was co-authored, in Gregory's case posthumously, with his daughter, Mary Catherine Bateson.

[21] When mentioning quantum theory, or the quantum perspective, I am broadly referring to Heisenberg's later, 'ontologised' version of the Copenhagen interpretation (Stapp, 2009a: 151 – for a discussion of other interpretations, see also Schlosshauer, 2005).

[22] Stapp makes clear that what I am terming the universe's matterlike aspect is not the "substantiveness, or rocklike quality, that we often associate with the word 'matter' but rather a partial conformity to

only focused, but thereby also organised, allowing the universe to experience itself in a more consistent and reliable way.[23] We could describe organisms as focal points, or centres of gravity, of Mind's overall activity.

This might seem a little overblown for a PhD about jumping over bollards, but the above has important implications for Bateson, Bogost, and my play(fulness)-as-philosophical-phenomenon argument. We can now see the physical impossibility of cartographers' detached observation of territory: all is active participation (Stapp, 2009a: 211). Human subjectivity can be described as a warp in the universe's innate and immanent field of, or potential for, subjectivity; (*paradox alert*) objectively, the universe is a fundamentally subjective entity. Indeed, as Theise & Kafatos note, "(T)he universe is its own first observer and subject" (2016: 1).[24] The subject who draws distinctions and to whom differences make a difference at the quantum level, and ultimately also in the experience of organisms, is thus the universe. The exemplification of these processes through play(fulness) is therefore a distinctly philosophical matter.

The map might not be the territory, but the mapping actively renders the territory mappable to the mapper, without which it would remain indeterminate. In fact, maps (i.e. perceptions, experiences, ideas) have the greater claim to ultimate reality, as currently understood, than does the materiality described by classical physics (Stapp, 2009a: 195). That is to say, creatura underlies pleroma, rather than the other way round as Cashman (2008) assumes. Hoffmeyer paraphrases Cashman's critique of Bateson, describing the

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mathematical rules". He characterises the "primal stuff" of the universe as neither materialistic matter, not idealistic mind, but "mind/matter", or more appropriately, he argues, "mind/math" for the above reason (2009a: 286).

[23] Roger Penrose & Stuart Hameroff describe quantum processes in the human brain as being "orchestrated" (2014: 54), though I would suggest that any organism that can sense and respond to its environment must orchestrate such processes to a certain extent. Penrose & Hameroff imply as much when describing the manifestly intelligent behaviour of single cell organisms such as Physarum, which can escape mazes and solve problems and Paracemium, which can swim, find food and reproductive partners, learn, remember, and mate (2014: 41). Furthermore, I resist any interpretation of this as entailing that mind, consciousness, or experience be deemed spatially 'in' the brain. Firstly, the mental immanence thesis posited here precisely means that the above triad are omnipresent, so are 'in' everything, not just brains. Secondly, the fundamental, mindlike basis of the universe, from which the triad spring, is nonempirical (Schäfer, 2008) and nonlocal (Nadeau & Kafatos, 2001), rendering specific spatial coordinates inappropriate and ultimately impossible, since the nonempirical ceases to exist when observed (Schäfer, 2008: 331). Thirdly, all mental processes involving organisms participate in an environment, which forms an intrinsic, inalienable element of the process in question.

[24] This points to the distinct parallels that obtain between quantum theory and both Eastern metaphysics (see Nadeau & Kafatos, 2001: 191–193) and Whitehead's philosophy (see Penrose & Hameroff, 2014: 71–72 and Stapp, 2011: 85–98).

latter's position as ultimately "creatura all the way through" (2008: 3). This criticism could perhaps also be levelled at the above arguments, though I contend that this would be in error. Pleroma is brought into being by the inter-, or one could say intra-, action of creatura. In the observable and observed universe, matter and mind exist in profound interdependence and interaction; reality can best be described as "psychophysical" (Stapp, 2009a: 93).

Bateson's holistic ecological view that we are all part of Mind hints at the dissolution of the subjective-objective boundary; the quantum perspective fully effects this move, grounding it in the most complete scientific picture of the universe yet achieved. A "completely nonclassical" (Nadeau & Kafatos, 2001: 63) part-whole relationship is disclosed, such that wholes are strictly nonreducible to their parts. Importantly, this would apply to mentality in the sense that experience cannot be reduced to any number of proto-conscious quantum events; it is emergent in the sense of manifesting qualitative novelty within the system from which it arises (Corning, 2012: 305). We know that we perceive and interact with the objective world because we participate in its becoming at every instant; it is in our subjective subjectivity that the universe's objective subjectivity experiences itself subjectively. However, this subjective-reflexive perception always-already incurs the determination of potentiality. Therefore, we can only conceive of the human-observer-independent nature of things by entertaining their possibilities, which is central both to Bogost's approach and my own. This last point also reveals Kershaw's observation that "the human…is absolute only in uncertainty" (2007: 26) in a profound new light. In this way, the ambiguity of play(fulness) can be seen as a philosophical phenomenon.

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Appendix 5

A5.1: The Ludic Menu

The Ludic Menu

Everyday Adventure Playground

Bag of Tricks

Unstunt™

Attenborough for a Day

Where's my Cat?

~

The Special

A5.2: Problematising the Problematic McLuhan

These videos problematise McLuhan's already controversial notion of "Hot and Cold" media ([1964] 1994: 22). In short, according to McLuhan, the more information carried by a medium in a particular sensory modality, the 'hotter' the medium. In McLuhan's terms, *Perplexpedition* videos are examples of "hot" media, for the footage itself is high-definition, to which further information is added by way of the titles, creating a work that is "well filled with data" (ibid). For McLuhan, "(H)ot media are…low in participation, and cool media are high in participation or completion by the audience" (ibid: 23), which supports my assertion that watching video is a passive activity in comparison to reading text, since video contains more information. I have argued that the playfully ambiguous nature of the titles and the speed of editing invite a high degree of participation and completion on the part of the viewer, which would assign the videos a 'cool' label and contradict their designation as 'hot'.

Criticism of McLuhan's media theory is plentiful; in fact, Merrin (2002) observes that his work generally was always deemed suspicious by the academic community during his career, although Merrin also notes a revival at the time of his article. Recent work on, or referencing, McLuhan has focused on the internet and digital media; the arena for which my videos have been created. Levinson (1999) concludes that coolness dominates in digital media which combine hot and cold elements, whilst Havick (2000) asserts that the internet is hot. Havick's claim seems manifestly false, given that the internet gave birth to and houses the inherently participatory world of social media. I also find Levinson's attempt to discern the true temperature of hybrid digital media somewhat misguided. For me, the effectiveness of the internet (and also my video method) obtains precisely because it holds in tension its hot and cold elements. The digital revolution has afforded the creation of

media which both absorb those who engage with them to the point of "hypnosis", whilst also offering such a high degree of participation as to risk inducing "hallucination" (McLuhan, 1994: 32). (The concept of hypnosis will likely be familiar to anyone who has lost many an hour to YouTube; additionally, the energetic outpourings that are characteristic of much social media activity could be described as hallucinatory in their portrayals of reality.)

In the contemporary media ecology, it seems Anton's (2015) reformulation of McLuhan's distinction into the comparative 'hotter than' and 'cooler than' is more appropriate than the rigidity of the original. Nonetheless, I see my media works, which are simultaneously dense with information (hot) and, to a certain extent, participatory (cool), as a productive problematisation of McLuhan's theory and possibly also Anton's reformulation, since the latter still retains a unilinear scale. I argue that, in being both hot and cold, my videos do not end up luke warm, but rather are like getting into a bath that is so hot that the water feels cold on one's skin; they are absorbing, but the viewer must also work to make meaning in participation with them.

[Back to 5.4.4.3 footnote 51]

A5.3: *Perplexpedition* Practice Review

This work has a certain resonance with, though has not directly drawn on, street entertainment. Where street entertainers will not fully begin until they have whipped up a large enough crowd, *Perplexpedition* aims to operate from within the crowd and problematise the dichotomy between performer and audience. Furthermore, since this project grew out of an interest in walking as an aesthetic practice, a key mode of which is the walking tour, and especially because the form has been developed and deployed in playful ways, the walking tour offers a major reference point for *Perplexpedition*.

A5.3.1: Phil Smith & Simon Persighetti – *A Tour of Sardine Street* (*Sardine Street*), Exeter (9th, 10th, 15th, and 16th July, 2010)

This was a satellite Wrights & Sites project, an object-focused mis-guided tour (c.f. Hodge et al., 2006) with processional components, that formed part of Smith's (2012c) PhD and would later lead to his development of "Counter-Tourism", which focuses on disseminating performative tactics for reimagining heritage sites (2012a, 2012b – see A5.3.4 below). Smith and Persighetti (S&P) devised *Sardine Street* by conducting regular performative research walks along Queen Street, Exeter, simultaneously participating in and observing the everyday life of the street (Smith, 2012c: 169–178). The pair's dynamic model of participation and observation was conducted fortnightly or monthly, sometimes with invited guests or spontaneous participants. Spontaneity of perficipation was absolutely key to the development of *Perplexpedition*; however, regular contact with a particular environment was not, as *Perplexpedition* developed towards the rooted placelessness and site-non-specificity of the Ludic Menu. Where *Sardine Street* had a protracted (albeit performative) exploratory element leading to a performance product, *Perplexpedition* is an ongoing process of performance and development. Furthermore, *Perplexpedition* engaged people directly with invitations to perficipate from the outset.

The everyday objects S&P gathered throughout *Sardine Street*'s exploratory stage, such as "a dropped headband [and] discarded shopping lists" (Smith, 2012c: 189) were carried as a "burden of pilgrimage" by the audience during the performances (ibid: 170). It is interesting that Smith uses the term audience here as it shows that, despite his turn towards dissemination having begun to gestate as early as 2007 (ibid: 170–171), before S&P even began to explore Queen Street, his attitude still tended towards an audience/performer dichotomy throughout the *Sardine Street* process. This is all the more surprising given the fact that the "audience" were directly involved in the performances by way of their burden and other acts. As my research began to develop a broader conception of environment, objects started to feature more frequently in the ideas generated, such as the Bag of Tricks and Where's My Cat dishes on the Ludic Menu. However, care was always taken to ensure that objects were used so as to instigate interaction with the environment in some way, as opposed to drawing focus and attention purely onto themselves.

With or without objects, S&P practised what I would define as a ludic ecology within the *Sardine Street* performances, not least because one of Smith's research panel members described their personas, of Crabman and Signpost respectively, as "exceptionally playful" (in Smith, 2012c: 175). Yet, playfulness alone is not sufficient for the enactment of a ludic ecology. Notably, S&P engaged the environment in terms of the three ludic aspects I have identified. Even in the early stages, the pair were encouraging initial guests to interact in ludic fashion with the physical environment:

> [turning] pavements into bookshelves and hopscotch patterns … [circumambulating] and [clambering] onto the Miles Clock Tower roundabout … [descending] steps to view the road from a lower level, [walking] in a serpentine line through concrete bollards

the social environment:

> [drinking] Carling Special Brew (defying the prohibition sign) … [running] in imitation of a local military *parcours* club

and the conceptual environment:

> a zebra crossing was made into an alchemical pattern:
>
> *([Crab Man] [L]eads the walkers across the zebra crossing.)*
>
> Signpost: Nigredo / Albedo / Nigredo / Albedo / Nigredo / Albedo / Nigredo / Albedo.
>
> (Smith, 2012c: 173–174)

However, the pair decided, following further reflection and responses from guests, that *Sardine Street* required a more coherent structure. Therefore, Smith composed a mythogeographical script in the form of a "limited myth" (ibid: 176) based on the biographies of two colourful individuals from different periods of the location's history. There is no necessity for any overarching structure to *Perplexpedition*, since, unlike the mythogeographical approach, a ludic ecology is not predicated on the formation of meaning and narrative. The events, episodes, and enactments in *Perplexpedition* have been designed and developed to contain standalone tactics, or their seedlings, which perficipants are encouraged to take ownership of and use as material or inspiration to generate their own

along similar lines. In this sense, the 4P methodology acts as a catalyst and provides the initial material for the ongoing growth of a ludic ecology.

A5.3.2: Anna Townley & Lawrence Bradby – *Conversations After Dark*, Cambridge (25th October, 2009)

Commissioned by the Nightjar festival of nocturnal art, the main body of this walk was repeated (including all activities and conversations that had occurred during that time) when the hour of 2am (and the end of) British Summer Time was reached and the clocks went back to 1am Greenwich Mean Time. Townley & Bradby (T&B) had devised what they refer to variously as a script and a musical score structured around 24 specific stopping points on the route (15 separate locations, as some were visited twice). Each point had an activity to be carried out designed to tap into the "nocturnal [energy]" (T&B, 2012: 77) of the location, or an extract to be read from a conversation with a night-time inhabitant whom T&B had encountered during their preliminary research walks. The project had two key themes of exploration: night-time employment and the way in which the passage of time is experienced. The former is narrow and specific in comparison to the latter, which is abstract to a similar degree to the theme of play(fulness) explored here. T&B's (2012) subsequent article documents the work, yet also lists requisite equipment not mentioned at the stopping points described:

> for illuminating a fire escape:
> cigarette lighters ×15
>
> to give to participants at 1 a.m.:
> shiny £1 coins ×30
>
> for the picnic in the marketplace:
> table cloth ×2
> market clips ×8
> chip forks (for olives) ×30
> serviettes ×30

lantern ×2

cord ×2

olives

vodka

for the gamelan by St Andrew's Church:

bike bells ×15

for the multi-storey car park:

whistle

football practice cones ×6

tennis balls ×15

(T&B, 2012: 77)

Though tantalising, as a result of T&B's inchoate description, the playful and participatory nature of the walk is evident from the choice of objects and scraps of description of the activities to be performed. Disparity of scale is often the way in which play(fulness) can be discerned in the above: cigarette lighters are obviously inadequate to fully illuminate a fire escape (even 15 of them) and bike bells being used to create Gamelan music would likely give an impression of giants using human-sized instruments. Although not referred to by T&B, this would likely have the effect of altering participants' spatial perceptions, in addition to the piece's stated aim of exploring temporal perceptions. Disparity of scale is also present in *Perplexpedition*'s Where's My Cat, for example, which makes use of a small, plastic lion.[1]

The content of *Conversations After Dark* is more popular in nature than the considerably theorised work of S&P, is rooted in the present, and is less geared towards political resistance, in contrast with the mythogeographical approach (Smith, 2011: 266). The "privileging and enchanting of the everyday" (Smith, 2012c: 174) is present in both S&P's and T&B's work described here, yet with S&P there is always a pull towards narrative lyricism and meaning-making, whereas T&B seem content to present the stories of those

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[1] See http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/finding-fufu/

with whom they conversed as verbatim excerpts and engage in activities with their participants without the need for thematic context. In this way, *Conversations After Dark* operates in a way more closely allied to the approach taken in *Perplexpedition*.

Although it forms an entire walk, and a coherent artwork, the distinctly episodic form results in a piece in which each stopping point has a self-contained logic, much like the individual elements of *Perplexpedition*. Furthermore, the objects used by T&B are decidedly mundane and lend themselves to action more readily than those employed by S&P. Football practice cones and tennis balls, for example, have very little significance other than when practically interacted with, but the purple cloth and engraving depicting a scene from Exeter's cholera epidemic of 1832 used in S&P's *Water Walk* have greater inherent symbolic resonances (see Smith, 2012c: 204–237). S&P's chosen objects also lack the explicitly practical and kinetic affordances of those selected by T&B. This project tends towards objects whose affordances are overtly practical and are either inherently ludic (such as bouncy balls) or can readily be deployed in ludic fashion (such as chalk). It does not avoid those with direct symbolism or semiotic resonance, yet often divorces these from their original or normative context so as to privilege their ludic affordances.

The last point to mention, which simultaneously cements *Conversations After Dark*'s closeness to *Perplexpedition*, but also reflects the difference in approach, returns to the subject of structure and participation. Like the tactics, activities, and behaviours of *Perplexpedition*, T&B regarded their script as "not prescriptive but suggestive" (T&B, 2012: 78). Their approach to interaction with participants also displays a similarity to the character of *Perplexpedition* as T&B seldom addressed the group en masse, but rather chatted, discussed, and observed together, in collegiate fashion, constituting the work in their dialogic interactions. However, where this project and theirs differs is that T&B do not view *Conversations After Dark* as a performance (ibid); instead, I view myself and all those who engage with *Perplexpedition* as performers to a greater or lesser extent.

A5.3.3: Tim Brennan – *Manoeuvres*, various (1993 – present)

Brennan describes his *Manoeuvres* as "discursive performances" that take participant walkers on pre-determined routes through an urban, rural, or domestic landscape, punctuated by "recitation…stations" at which Brennan reads pre-selected and sequenced quotations which he describes as forming his response to "signs" that appear during the research process (Brennan, 2010: 80). Where Brennan finds signs that evoke historical or cultural resonances, *Perplexpedition* seeks out ludic affordances. *Manoeuvres* seek to de-centralise the performer's body through a montage-like structure with participants taking an active role, sometimes reading texts and offering responses, whilst the particular text and location of each recitation station create dialogical interplay between "discrete objects of inspection (monads) along a traversed (nomadic) line" (ibid). There is a similarity with *Perplexpedition* here, in Brennan's bringing together of individual elements, although no explicit links are intended between the discrete episodes of *Perplexpedition*. The clearest parallel, however, lies in the active and agentive role of the participant walkers within *Manoeuvres*.

   In his piece *Luddite Manoeuvre* (2008), Brennan read "an historical reference to the term 'parliament' (the Icelandic 'Ting') outside the town's 'Iceland' (supermarket) and former site of the Luddite 'job'" (ibid), thus weaving together multiple temporal, spatial, and cultural references in one performative act. This exemplifies the conceptual playfulness of *Manoeuvres*; however, this is only one of the three levels on which *Perplexpedition*'s playfulness operates. Furthermore, *Perplexpedition* largely eschews text in favour of direct action. Text demands interpretation, which, in turn, requires intellectual engagement, whereas this project prioritises an embodied experience of the ludic.

A5.3.4: Phil Smith – *Counter Tourism*, various (2012 – present)

The 4P methodology is specifically designed to provide perficipants with tactics for the ongoing development and implementation of their own ludic behaviours, without which something that can reasonably be called a ludic ecology cannot come into existence. This disseminatory and propagatory approach is similar to Smith's development of "Counter-

Tourism" (2012a, 2012b), which began as an attempt to disrupt what he saw as the "passive and unreflective" behaviour of visitors to heritage tourism sites but became ostensibly a pedagogical exercise due to Smith's growing appreciation of existing tourist agency and the affordances present within such sites (Smith, 2013: 102). Counter-Tourism is a playful practice, as the ironic linguistic association with counter-terrorism indicates, and this playfulness characterises Smith's writing about it. For example, he introduces the concept as being "all about tripping yourself up with pleasure and falling down the rabbit hole" (Smith, 2012b: 5) where one may discover that which is concealed or ignored by the heritage industry.

The present project does not presuppose an active concealment of ludic affordances by those responsible for the structure and management of environments, as counter-tourism does, but I do seek to expose those that have gone unnoticed. Furthermore, my practice aims to promote a critical awareness that notices when environmental structure or management has resulted in a dearth of or resistance to ludic opportunities. The pedagogical imperative here is to shift and expand environmental perceptions so as to increase awareness of ludic affordances and ways to orchestrate them. However, it is by no means a dictatorial exercise; the pedagogy is a dialogic one (cf. Freire, 1972). I have learned new tactics and developed existing ones through direct engagement with participants throughout. I build upon Smith's move from disruption to dissemination, having begun the construction of my tripartite 4P model with this in mind. For this reason, the tertiary stage of *Perplexpedition* comprises disseminatory videos and the *Wandercast* podcast is freely available, along with other materials, from the project website.

A5.3.5: Further Practical Parallels

Other examples of practices which resonate with *Perplexpedition* include:

Doung Anwar Jahangeer – *City Walks*, South Africa (2000 – present; see Simbao, 2013: 408 and DALA, n.d.: [online]);

Gail Burton, Serena Korda & Clare Qualmann – *Walk Walk Walk*, East London (2005 – 2010; see Burton, Korda & Qualmann, 2010: [online]); and

Lottie Child – *Street Training*, various (2007 – present; see Street Training, n.d.: [online]). Since *Street Training* features practical tactics similar to those of *Perplexpedition*, and since I could find no literature that addresses this practice, I attempted to contact Child multiple times, but received no reply.

Appendix 6

A6.1: Selected Performative Audio Works

And While London Burns, Platform (2007 – present)

Operatic thriller in the form of an audiowalk.

Perficipants: 1

Site-specific: City of London

andwhilelondonburns.com (download available)

Guide To Getting Lost, Jennie Savage (2010 – present)

Instruction-based audiowalk incorporating aural overlay of field-recordings.

Perficipants: 1

Site-non-specific

www.jenniesavage.co.uk/ (no download, but hosted on Soundcloud)

Linked, Graeme Miller (2003 – present)

Analogue radio audiowalk in the form of a treasure trail.

Perficipants: 1

Site-specific: Route of the M11 link road

www.linkedm11.net/ (no download, but facilitated by Artsadmin)

Memory Points, Platform 4 (2012 – 2015)

Participatory promenade theatre piece dealing with Alzheimer's.

Perficipants: up to 6

Site-specific: various performance venues

www.platform4.org/ (no download)

Remote X, Rimini Protokoll (2016)

Instruction-based, responsive, cinematic audiowalk, which develops in each new city.

Perficipants: up to 50

Site-specific: various major cities

www.rimini-protokoll.de/ (no download)

The Quiet Volume, Ant Hampton & Tim Etchells (2010 – present)

Instruction-based exploration into the act of reading.

Perficipants: 2

Site-specific: various libraries

www.anthampton.com/ (no download)

Walking Stories, Charlotte Spencer Projects (2013 – present)

Choreographic audiowalk designed for green open spaces.

Perficipants: up to 22

Semi-site-specific: parks

charlottespencerprojects.org/projects/walking-stories/ (no download)

Wondermart, Silvia Mercuriali & Matt Rudkin (2009 – present)

Instruction-based investigation into the supermarket environment.

Perficipants: 2

Semi-site-specific: supermarkets

silviamercuriali.com/ (no download)

A6.2: Wandercast Feedback Questionnaire Responses

Follow the links below to see the full responses from *Wandercast* perficipants:

Episode 1

http://bit.ly/2uJ4gMD

Episode 2

http://bit.ly/2wfKVlC

Episode 3

http://bit.ly/2x4Ln3z

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Appendix 7

A7.0: S-ZERO Breakdown of Sections

The timecodes refer to specific moments from the workshop/performance, which you can see here http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/penryn-playfulness/ (PML\Spinstallation Video\S-ZERO Penryn Playfulness).

The sections of S-Zero were as follows:

- The Flight Path (00:20), within which we jumped diagonally up a few steps in a way that would become the Kerb Hop of *Wandercast Ep.2* (00:47), engaged in the quintessential ludic activity of vaulting bollards (02:27), and leaped across a concrete chasm (04:30);

- (The next section was aborted due to time restrictions and [understandable] perficipant reticence. This was to use a bike rack as a climbing frame in a way that prefigured the Everyday Adventure Playground dish on the Ludic Menu and the Swing King of *Wandercast Ep.2* [07:24]. Nonetheless, one perficipant does do a little Swing King [08:00];)

- The Rubber Biscuit Barrel (07:50), where we bounced high-power bouncy balls on the uneven surface of a car park, scurrying after them as they shot off unpredictably. The Rubber Biscuit Barrel ended up in the Bag of Tricks dish on the Ludic Menu and was chosen by *Spinstallation #14* perficipants (PML\Perplexpedition Video\#14);

- The Sky Gazing Salon (11:46), in which two lucky volunteers experienced the perceptual disorientation of sitting as if on a chair but rotated backwards through 90˚, facing up to the sky rather than forwards. Sky Gazing is the activity in *Perplexpedition #4* (http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/skygazing/ or PML\Perplexpedition Video\#4 SkyGazing);

- (The Missing Menagerie was also cut. This would have been the world premiere of 'Where's My Cat?', a game in which perficipants seek out a lost cat that I have secreted somewhere. Instead, the premiere took place during *Perplexpedition #6* in St Albans on the 25th of April, 2015. You can witness this occasion for yourself here

http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/finding-fufu/ [PML\Perplexpedition Video\#6 Finding FuFu]).

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A7.1: S1 Flyer

Saturday 22nd August 2015, 13:30 – 16:30

(we may finish a little early)

FREE WORKSHOP IN BLEAN WOODS

(the RSPB reserve next to Rough Common)

Miniature Worlds for Wonderful Creatures

PLACES LIMITED – BOOKING ESSENTIAL

We will explore this ancient, magical woodland and see what kinds of worlds we can find and create for extraordinary creatures to inhabit

Whether or not you go to the woods often, this will be a new experience!

Of course, if you have any questions, I'll be happy to answer them – just email me at the address below.

This is Fun for all the family, whatever your ages; your children and grandchildren might teach you a thing or two! Although, you do not have to be a family – everyone is welcome!

For more information and to book your place, please email robbie@ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk

(This project is part of my PhD in performance)

University of Kent

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A7.2: S2 Tasks[1]

Playfulness Tasks:

You have a set amount of time (however long Captain Ludicrous tells you) to complete the following three playfulness tasks in pairs. Please read the tasks, so you know what's coming up and therefore can start to view and interact with your environment in ways that might facilitate the tasks below; however, don't start doing the tasks right away. Begin by exploring the campus with your partner, allowing your attention to be caught by and drawn to things, and start to engage with your environment in a way that you might not normally if you were just bustling from A to B on the regs. Don't force anything, just relax whilst maintaining awareness and see this place as if for the first time. Wander about. Feel free to run, but don't lose your partner. Maybe allow your physical interactions with the environment to begin to deviate from what you would do normally. Play around, basically. Don't rush, but do leave enough time to complete the tasks.

- Location: Inside or Outside

  Make a 30 second video of your partner's figure exploring a particular object or space and (as the figure) describing their experience of that object or space. Essentially, the figure will be chatting about what they're doing as they're doing it

- Location: Outside

  Make a 30 second video of your partner interacting with an object, or an aspect or element of the environment in an unusual way (they can also interact with you, but they don't have to; if they do, then interact as necessary)

- Location: Outside

  Make a 30 second video of your partner providing a commentary to camera on the immediate environment and the creatures within it so as to playfully reimagine that environment. Possible approaches include: a David Attenborough-style nature documentary, a high-or-low-octane sports commentary (e.g. a classic FA Cup match or lawn bowls respectively), a tour guide. Let your imaginations run wild!

Remember, being camerawoman is also a creative role. Feel free to make decisions about how best to present what your partner is doing. You are co-creating each video together. Try not to overthink anything and, instead, incorporate each other as partners.

Most of all: HAVE FUN!

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[1] These were printed out and given to perficipants immediately prior to embarking on the main task.

A7.3: S3 Tasks<mark>2</mark>

Playfulness Tasks:

Captain Ludicrous, you will join in the tasks

The tasks can be done in any order

Captain Ludicrous, give out the Ludic Contact Lenses once the Recruits have made their figures. Make sure they put the contact lenses in

Captain Ludicrous, model each task during the Ludic Acclimatisation

The Ludic Area is from Studio Alta to the Park. Explore where you like but don't go too far…

We will begin by exploring together: allow your attention to be caught by and drawn to things, and start to engage with your environment in a way that you might not normally if you were going to work or something. Don't force anything, just relax whilst maintaining awareness and see this place as if for the first time. If this is the first time you've been here, imagine it's another world. Wander about. Feel free to run, but don't lose your partner. Maybe allow your physical interactions with the environment to begin to deviate from what you would do normally. Play around, basically.

We are surrounded by activity: businesses being busy, artists making stuff, exhibitions exhibiting themselves, animals in captivity, and nature doing its thing. How might you playfully interact with this environment?

<mark>2</mark> This mainly represent notes, according to which I structured my perfilitation. I hand-wrote the Tasks themselves, along with a bit of context, on the back of a Keri Smith postcard, the front of which depict ludic tasks of Smith's devising (see Smith, 2013); one for each perficipant.

Don't think about it, just let it happen, just do it.

We are surrounded by transport: cars, trams, trains, planes overhead. How might you travel playfully in this environment?

In order to find out, two of the tasks involve travelling. This can be fast or slow, over a long distance or short.

Remember, being camerawoman is also a creative role. Feel free to make decisions about how best to present what your partner is doing. You are co-creating each video together. Try not to overthink anything and, instead, incorporate each other as partners.

Don't rush, but do leave enough time to complete the tasks.

Most of all: HAVE FUN!

You may complete the tasks in any order. Please do them all outside Studio Alta.

In each case, please make a 30 second video:

- of your partner's figure travelling. Your partner's figure should interact with the environment and/or objects. You should provide the soundtrack or commentary, or both.
  - If inside: your partner's figure engaged in some activity, which involves interacting with the environment and/or object(s). You should provide the soundtrack or commentary, or both.
- of your partner travelling. Your partner should interact with the environment and/or objects. You should provide the soundtrack or commentary, or both.
  - If inside: your partner engaged in some activity, which involves interacting with the environment and/or object(s). You should provide the soundtrack or commentary, or both.
- of your partner commentating to camera so as to playfully reimagine the environment. E.g. nature documentary, sporting event, being a tour guide. Your partner can choose whichever language they like.
  - If inside: your partner (or their figure) describing an object as if it has enormous historical significance.

A7.4: S4 Tasks[3]

Playfulness Tasks:

Please complete these ludic tasks on a return journey from the Grad School to your respective departments and back (if yours is on the Canterbury campus, that is).

You could also give each other a ludic tour of your departments, and so begin to explore their playful potential. If you are feeling bold, and it is safe and ethical to do so, you could undertake some of the tasks in your departments and could even make an extra video in there, documenting your expedition and discoveries.

Think of yourselves as Ludic Ninjas. People may well see you. If they react, the best thing to do is incorporate them into your play. Remember: you are doing something very worthwhile. Own it.

(Each video should last approx. 30secs.)

- Film your partner's figure exploring a particular object or space and (as the figure) describing their experience of that object or space. Essentially, the figure will be chatting about what they're doing as they're doing it

- Film your partner interacting with an object, or an aspect or element of the environment in an unusual way (they can also interact with you, but they don't have to; if they do, then interact as necessary)

- Film your partner providing a commentary to camera on the immediate environment and the creatures within it so as to playfully reimagine that environment. Possible approaches include: a David Attenborough-style nature documentary, a high-or-low-octane sports commentary (e.g. a classic FA Cup match or lawn bowls respectively), a tour guide. Let your imaginations run wild!

Remember that these tasks are structures for you to creatively explore, just as you will be exploring the potential of the worldly structures you encounter.

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[3] These were printed out and given to perficipants immediately prior to embarking on the main task.

Also remember that being camerawo/man is a creative role. Feel free to make decisions about how best to present what your partner is doing. You are co-creating each video together. Try not to overthink anything and, instead, incorporate each other as partners.

Most of all: HAVE FUN!

A7.5: S5 Tasks<mark>4</mark>

Video-Documented Ludicrous Investigations:

Your first LudiCo mission is one of audio-visual collaborative research. Interaction is key.

This is the exploration / data-gathering stage. Prioritise inquisitiveness, interaction, and description.

Please complete around three mini ethnographic studies per LudiCo member on a return journey from the Grad School to your respective departments and back (if yours is on the Canterbury campus, that is).

You could also give each other a ludicrous tour of your departments, and so begin to explore their structures (material, social, and conceptual). If you want a really good mark in the REF, and it is safe and ethical to do so, you could undertake some of the studies in your departments, making sure to document your expedition and discoveries.

Think of yourselves as Ludic-Academic Ninjas. People may well see you. If they react, the best thing to do is incorporate them into your study. Remember: you are doing something very worthwhile. Own it.

SUGGESTED STUDIES: (Each video-documented study should last at least 30secs.)

<mark>4</mark> These were printed out and given to perficpants immediately prior to embarking on the main task.

- Your figures exploring a particular object or space and (as the figure) describing their experience of that object or space. Essentially, the figure will be chatting about what they're doing as they're doing it;

- Interact with an object, each other, the camerawo/man, and / or an aspect or element of the environment, in an unusual way;

- Provide a commentary to camera on the immediate environment and the creatures within it so as to playfully reimagine that environment. Possible approaches include: a David Attenborough-style nature documentary, a high-or-low-octane sports commentary (e.g. a classic FA Cup match or lawn bowls respectively), a tour guide. Let your imaginations run wild!

Remember that the above studies are merely suggested structures for you to creatively explore, and improvise within, just as you will be exploring the potential of the worldly structures you encounter.

Also remember that this is collaborative research and that being the camerawo/man is a creative role. Remain ever-responsive and interact so as to work out how best to present what your partner(s) is doing. Try not to overthink anything and, instead, incorporate each other as partners.

Most of all**: give yourself the licence to be LUDICROUS**!

[Back to 3.6.1.3 footnote 42]

[Back to 7.7.1 footnote 60]

A7.6: *Spinstallation* Practice Review

The main part of this review pertains to my initial *Spinstallation* idea of creating a series of interactive installations from materials found in or native to the particular environment (see 7.1). After realising this idea's impracticality, *Spinstallation* soon moved towards a play(fulness)/performance workshop more or less of my own making, which drew on

generic performance workshop forms as well as exercises from my associate lecturing at Kent. These latter workshops bear little resemblance to extant performance practices.

Louise Ann Wilson and Robert Wilson (only Robert Wilson's *Walking* [2012] production is of importance to this project) have created installation pieces across expansive environments populated by performers (in different senses of the word) that informed my initial idea. However, *Spinstallation* is directly interactive and, therefore, participatory to a greater degree than the works discussed within the following subsections.

A7.6.1: Louise Ann Wilson – *The Gathering* / *Yr Helfa*, Snowdonia (2014)

This was a commission from and a co-production with the National Theatre of Wales (NTW), which took the seasonal workings and life cycles of a Snowdonia hill farm as its material. The title refers to the gathering of the sheep from Snowdonia's high ground in September, which is when the piece was performed. Although Wilson defines those who experience her works as participants, the level of direct participation appears minimal. Lyn Gardner and Laura Barnett of The Guardian, reviewing the piece as theatre and installation respectively, both use the term "audience" (Gardner, 2014; Barnett, 2014), and the television news coverage also presents those who experienced the work more as audience than participants (BBC News, 2014). To experience *The Gathering* in its entirety required the completion of a six kilometre walk which Barnett describes as a gathering "in reverse" (2014: [online]), as the audience were herded in small flocks up the mountainside. Is this enough to warrant their being termed participants? Certainly, the audience are integral to the performance event, but surely this is true of all performance. Playing their part in a reverse gathering, the Yin to the sheep's Yang, would place the audience in the role of participants, but this appears to be Barnett's rather astute observation and does not appear in LAW Co, nor NTW, literature.

Judging from the BBC video news coverage and production stills, I argue that the passive spectatorship seemingly demanded by the performances and installations strictly limits any participation on the part of the audience. The NTW actors' performances can scarcely be distinguished from those one would find in a traditional theatre, save for the

fact that they have a mountain for a backdrop and seem to be projecting for all they are worth. This relates to the problem of theatricality in site-specific performance. For instance, the concepts of both theatricality and character created much "unhappiness and uneasiness" (Smith, 2009a: 160) amongst the members of Wrights & Sites as they made the move towards walking after *The Quay Thing* (1998). Indeed, Smith portrays his initial clinging to theatricality as a product of anxiety and describes how Wrights & Sites' walking practice began as an "anti-theatrical act", yet also notes how the group later came to value the productive tension created as theatrical elements re-emerged within their peripatetic work (Smith, 2009c: 81–82). There seems to be no such critical awareness in *The Gathering*. Although my project is site-non-specific, I have sought to maintain a critical awareness of theatricality throughout (see, for instance, 7.5, 7.5.1 & 7.7.2).

I must be clear that, not having experienced the performance for myself, I cannot preclude the possibility that my assessment is influenced by theatre's unavoidable impoverishment whenever captured on camera.[5] However, the importing of actors to the site in this instance, with little evidence of divergence from traditional acting practices, seems to have created a subtle yet significant barrier between the audience and the work. That said, it is evident that the three years' ethnographic and ecological research conducted by Wilson produced a piece that was rigorously and sensitively grown from the land in which it took place; it is regrettable that this seems not to have been fully realised in performance. I perceived this as something of a lesson and have striven throughout to make direct contact with perficipants. Both Barnett and Gardner write of *The Gathering*'s organic rootedness in its material environment and also of Wilson's attentiveness to the social and conceptual; the handing down of history, memory, and embodied mountain knowledge by "hand and heart" (Gardner, 2014: [online]). However, neither give a sense of a piece that goes beyond spectatorship.

Albeit from my detached position, it seems as though *The Gathering*'s reliance on theatre and performance forms (including an aerial artist) that were not imbued with the same environmental responsiveness as the piece's content resulted in the inability of the

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[5] The fact that the footage and article went live on the BBC website the same day that the show opened also leads me to suspect that the footage is of a dress rehearsal (at least the day before) and so may not quite represent the piece as it was presented to the public.

audience to be transformed into true participants. Reflecting on this work provided valuable insight into difficulties arising from the employment of certain types and modes of performance within an organic environment and also difficulties relating to the management of perficipants' perceptions who may be unused to work of this nature. As such, *The Gathering* significantly influenced my pared-down, form-over-content performance aesthetic when perfilitating 4P.

[Back to 8.1 footnote 3]

A7.6.2: Robert Wilson – *Walking*, Norfolk (2012)

Wilson created *Walking*, which took place across three miles of the North Norfolk coast, in collaboration with Dutch theatre artists Theun Mosk and Boukje Schweigman. Audience[6] members experienced *Walking* alone, guided by so-called "angels" who ensured that the prescribed slow pace and distance from the person ahead was kept. The stated intention of *Walking* is to change the spatial and temporal perceptions of the audience (Norfolk and Norwich Festival, 2015), which is a recurrent theme in peripatetic performance (e.g. Myers, 2010; Wrights & Sites, 2006a). Although lacking the rootedness in the location's social and conceptual environments as is present in *The Gathering*, *Walking* is certainly responsive to the wide and stark Norfolk landscape, which Wilson describes as "nature in the raw" (in Barkham, 2012: [online]), feeling it to be reminiscent of the expansive scenery in his childhood home of Waco, Texas. Wilson achieves the audience's perceptual shifts in part by insisting that *Walking* be undertaken at a pace well below that of everyday, functional ambulation, which is a technique also employed by Wrights & Sites (2006b). However, in addition to the fact that walking is not the main focus of 4P, a decrease in speed is not inherently ludic (unless used to enter into an exaggerated and self-aware slow-motion mode); therefore slowing down is not a key technique within 4P to realise shifts in perception.

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[6] As they are referred to by Kate Harvey, lead producer on the project (in Dewachi, 2012).

Although it is responsive to its site, I argue that there is a problematic ecology within this work, which was billed as both a walk and theatrical experience "punctuated by gigantic architectural installations" (Norfolk and Norwich Festival, 2015: [online]). The very fact that the installations are referred to as "gigantic" gives a sense of their imposing nature. Even though the installations are largely produced from natural materials their architectural scale necessitated a large operation of importing to and imposition upon the environment. Ludic Ecology, on the other hand, calls for a smaller-scale approach that might hopefully be propagated through interpersonal interaction beyond the performances. This realisation informed my move towards what I term the 'found installation' (see 7.8.1).

Walking is undoubtedly more directly participatory in nature than *The Gathering*; the architectural scale of the installations entails that they are interacted with to a certain degree as they are passed through. Nonetheless, the inspiration for *Spinstallation* came in part from a desire to explore the extent to which a series of installations, created from natural materials, can be made more interactive than those of *Walking*. As this process progressed, it soon became the interaction between perficiant and environment that generated the *Spinstallation* itself (see 7.8.1). In further contrast to *The Gathering*, the absence of dramatised performers in *Walking* also removes a 'them and us' disparity between performers and audience, leaving the audience in the role of performers as they engage with the installations. This is particularly evident with installations such as the "zen-like courtyard space" (Harvey in Dewachi, 2012: [online]) at the work's outset and Tom Waits' sound installation, wherein the audience experience not only space and sound but also each other.

Although the angels were selected artists at various stages in their careers (Dewachi, 2012), specifically referred to as "choreographed performers" in the call for volunteers (Field, 2012: [personal communication]), the piece's video documentation suggests that their actions did not inhibit the 'audience's' capacity to perform. Within the context of *Walking*, the actions of the angels are undoubtedly performative, yet always unobtrusive to the point of being reminiscent of Victorian domestic staff (notwithstanding their bright yellow jackets). To follow this analogy: when sharing the same space, both masters and servants play their respective roles and together constitute the performance of social class. In *Spinstallation* there is necessarily a distinction between perfilitator and perficiant, yet I

strive to reduce the distance to the point where it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.

In *Walking*, as with *The Gathering*, the environment was engaged with in such a way as to allow the site to perform itself, and also the people within it, in the manner championed by Smith (2009c). Each work, though, has a factor which appears to limit the environment's performance: in *The Gathering*, it is characterisation and passive spectatorship; in *Walking*, it is the domineering nature of many of the architectural installations. I may conclude differently, however, had I experienced either of the works directly. Nonetheless, having perceived these potential issues allowed me to develop *Spinstallation* in such a way that they could be addressed from the outset and the performative nature of the environment could therefore hopefully be maximised.

A7.6.3: Play Workshop & Performance Pedagogy

Graduate School *Spinstallations* in particular took on a recognisable academic workshop form: with introductions, initial activities, and a main activity, followed by a plenary/work-sharing. This is not dissimilar to a typical format for adult play workshops, which seek to reconnect adults with childlike engagement in play (e.g. Chalufour, Drew & Waite-Stupiansky, 2003). I did not draw specifically on adult play workshops, except for the inclusion of the free-play activity in S4 & S5. Adult play sessions tend to be comprised of ostensibly childlike play forms, structured much as they would be in childhood, for which adults often pay a significant sum, leading to accusations of an "infantilising commercial trend" that embodies a "bizarre type of regression" (Hicks, 2016: [online]). For instance, Aya Husni Bey, a certified therapeutic play practitioner (whose sessions cost £70 – see Creativity Unmasked, 2015), specifically describes her play counselling practice as enabling her clients to explore their childhood selves (in Hicks, 2016).

Conversely, *Spinstallation* aims for perficipants to explore their adult selves. When including activities which target childlike play-forms, such as object manipulation, lexical inventiveness, and art-making with colourful craft materials, I have sought to structure these so as reconnect perficipants with discontinued developmental stages important for

creativity (Runco, 1996: 3), yet avoid wholesale regression. When introducing the object manipulation of Bag-of-Tricks Playtime, I encourage perficipants to use the imported objects and those native to the room to create structures with constraints whose ludic potential may then be explored (see 7.7.1 & 7.7.2). In Neologism Time, the wordplay activity, I seek to reconnect perficipants with this childlike play-form through the arguably more sophisticated mode of renaming elements within their work environment. Lastly, I structure art-making into the task of creating totemic figures, aiming also to bring greater conceptual sophistication into perficipants' play with the craft materials. Thus, although *Spinstallation* bears some resemblance to other adult play sessions, I argue that it is crucially different. As the above indicates, I have developed *Spinstallation* in light of my research into the nature of play(fulness), its relation to creativity, and my ludic ecology framework, hopefully leading to a workshop that retains a sense of playful abandon, yet is structured according to rigorously researched principles.

On the performance front, I have incorporated activities from The Empty Space, a first-year undergraduate module devised by Oliver Double (my internal examiner) on which I have taught during my PhD. I adopted Olly's method of conducting introductions amongst the group: this consists of each person saying their name, where they are from (in Graduate School *Spinstallations* this means their university department), and an interesting fact (which doesn't really have to be interesting). I always model this, giving two contrasting facts. This is an effective performative ice-breaker because, in choosing a fact and how to relay it, perficipants are already performing a version of themselves to the group. I also incorporated Johnstone's three blocks to spontaneity (see 7.6), which Olly includes in The Empty Space when teaching the students about improvisation. The other exercise drawn directly from performance pedagogy is the pairing of a noise with an action (see 7.6). However, this is an exercise I have come across so many times throughout my performance training and practice that it is not possible for me to accurately identify its source. All in all, I argue that *Spinstallation* has developed into a practice which combines elements in such a way as to significantly differentiate itself from those practices to which it bears resemblance.

[Back to 1.2.1 footnote 11]

A7.7: *Spinstallation* Feedback Questionnaire Responses

Follow the link below to see the full responses from *Spinstallation S1, S2, S4 & S5* perficipants.

S1, S2 & S4 responses are in one file. The relevant *Spinstallation* number is handwritten on the top-right corner of each page.

S5 responses are in a separate file. The reason for this is simply that S5 responses were scanned and uploaded to the website at a later date.

http://ludicrouspilgrim.co.uk/spinstallation/spinstallation-feedback-questionnaire-responses/

Appendix 8

A8.1: The Sacred and The Sublime

Kant posits the (mathematically)[1] sublime in moments when the mind strives and fails to grasp infinitude, thereby simultaneously revealing both its limitations and ability to indirectly surpass those limitations (1987: 103–106). We cannot think about what we cannot think about, but we can think about thinking about what we cannot think about; we may even be able to think *about* what we cannot think. Note that these are paradoxes of abstraction similar to ludic metacommunication, and ones which allow for a working-through of Kershaw's commandant-supplicant paradox (2009a: 135), since it presents the possibility of dealing with the paradoxicality of subjective agency embedded within ecological systems by simultaneously recognising the reality of both. A divergence between Bateson's and Kant's views is Kant's anthropocentric notion that humanity is "sublimely above nature" (ibid: 123), which I refute, whereas Bateson's sacred arises from organisms' paradoxical status as agents *within* nature.

I argue that play(fulness) can reach a similar sublimity by affording recognition of the limits imposed by reality's structuring, and therefore the finitude of possibilities for action, but also the inherent, effectively-boundless, freedom within that structure, owing to the enormous number of possibilities.[2] Humour enters, I argue, because ridiculousness is yin to sublimity's yang, which may be perceived through *irreverent reverence*. For Kant, "nothing sinks deeper beneath the sublime than the ridiculous" ([1764] 1965: 83). However, as Limon points out, Kant misses his own joke, having lent "the ridiculous a sublime, even oceanic, depth" (2000: 51). Limon exposes another comedic moment, in which Kant defines the sublime as "large beyond all comparison" before swiftly asserting that "everything else is small" when compared to it (Kant, 1987: 103, 105). For Limon, "sublimity is

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[1] Kant also discusses what he calls the dynamical sublime, yet this is not so germane in this context since it is defined in terms of irresistible might (1987: 119–123), whereas I characterise play(fulness) as the negotiation of terms (see 4.3.1).

[2] The "boundless specificity" of performance (Kershaw, 2009b: 4) thus indicates the appropriateness of PaR in this context, in addition to the close interrelation of play(fulness) and performance (Schechner, 2013; Shepherd & Wallis, 2004: 122–127; Turner, 1982). See also 4.4.1.

ridiculous…jokes are sublime" (2000: 53). Therefore, an effective, fun-filled[3] way of having a sublime time is by actively courting the ludicrous through play(ful) performance, whether that be hopping up a kerb, taking your totem for a walk, or kicking a lion off someone's face.[4]

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[3] I mean this primarily in Bogost's sense of "tinkering with a small part of the world in a surprising way" (2016: 4), but, if you can augment your play with Playfulness, then fun in the sense of pleasure will likely also be yours.

[4] Or anything else that takes your fancy, of course.

Glossary

Irreverent Reverence	The aspect of a ludic disposition which approaches the Sacred in its profundity by recognising, and revelling in, the paradoxes involved in reality's structuring, thus unifying reality's Ludicrous and Sacred poles.
Rooted Placelessness	A heightened sense of presence in one's environment that stems from levels of awareness and being anterior to those involved in the production of narrative.
Subjunctivity	The phenomenal experience of the subjunctive ('as if') mode of world-engagement, which I deem always additional and parallel to the indicative ('as is').[438]
Intrasubjectivity	Interactions between different aspects/facets/elements of one's overall self-structure. Essential for the experience of Playfulness in the absence of other agents.
Ludicality	A property attributable to agent, environment, or object etc. which is broadly synonymous with playfulness, but with the added connotation of musicality.
Perficipant	Performer-Participant.
Perfilitator	Performer-Facilitator.

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[438] I thought I had coined this term, but it appears in Shepherd & Wallis' section on play and performance (2004: 124).

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