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The Disobedient Game

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Education

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Abstract

This dissertation is an exploration into the future of school. In order to explore the future of school it engages with the concepts of living life with infinite game values (Harré, 2017) and productive disobedience in education (Ings, 2018). The intersections of these two concepts form the basis of a conversation about the disruption of the accepted ways of living together to engage in a different way of living *well* together.

The work is situated in the current era of globalisation and accelerated global environmental change where, it will be suggested, schools are a site for the reproduction of the Western industrial hegemonic which is stretching planetary boundaries such as CO_2 production, water usage and land system change, possibly beyond repair. Through engaging with the methods of Futures Studies, considering the complex issue of globalisation and the shift from the Holocene to the Anthropocene epoch as well as the history of schools in New Zealand, the current field of play on which New Zealand schools are situated is explored. It then aims to look forward to possible futures to offer a vision of future schools that are inclusive and based in the win/win paradigm of infinite game play in contrast to the production of winners and losers.

Using Niki Harré's suggested metaphor of lives played as a finite game of test cricket or an infinite game of beach cricket, notions of freedom and emancipation are explored with further reference to the work of Gert Biesta, Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière. This leads to an examination of how infinite game values may be enacted in life and then specifically in schools. Finally, through the use of fictional narrative, a future vision for schools in New Zealand is proposed using the principles of Harré's *The Infinite Game* and understandings from Ings' *Disobedient Teaching*.

Contents

Attestation of Authorship

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning."

Acknowledgements

Introduction

In the bird song filled valleys of the bush clad Coromandel Peninsula on New Zealand's North Island, small rivers flow through fields of boulders. As a child (and still today) I enjoyed boulder jumping. That perfect well-timed leap combined with balance and a pivot that took you to the next leap. Some small skips and some great leaps that stretched the physical limits of my body. Occasionally coming to a halt in the middle of a crossing to feel the sun on my face and taste the manuka on the air, to reorient my direction in order to make another leap. There were times when a boulder, which appeared to be immovable, shifted suddenly under me, leaving me deposited awkwardly in a puddle of stagnant water. More than once, the ensuing fall left bloody grazes and bruises. But far from staying where I fell, I got up and resumed the crossing. Tentatively at first, but I regained my confidence and joy, taking with me an awareness of the unexpected.

For me, boulder jumping is a metaphor for the journey of learning. Moving between theory, critical analysis, and practice, supported by colleagues, mentors and critical friends. Sometimes stopping on the journey in order to bask in the light of revelation and reorient my crossing with questions and observation. There have been awkward moments when I have landed in a stagnant puddle and there have been bloody scrapes and many bruises as I have wrestled with sudden shifts in thinking and perception. Far from staying where I fell, I have got up and resumed the crossing. According to Vogel (1974), this particular type of journey may be conceived as a quest. A journey which has a mission in its movement, but the path and final destination are unknown (Vogel, 1974).

The following dissertation documents the current boulder crossing. You may experience the exhilaration of sudden shifts and muse (or maybe be amused) where a pivot might take you. Consider this an invitation to journey on this crossing which will take you to another side, not *the* other side, just *another* side.

It is a time of change in New Zealand education, again. A new government has opened the task of reimagining the education system with a 30 Year Vision – Te Pae Tawhiti – for education (Ministry of Education, 2019). The 2018 *Tomorrow's Schools Report* is articulated as a component of a future focused process whereby today's learners will be prepared for their future. In addition, the document goes by the name Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinitini, which "refers to the weaving together of schools and is an exhortation to action. Embedded within are notions of connectedness, interdependence, strength drawn from collaboration as well as an implicit future focus" (Tomorrow's School Independent Taskforce, 2018, p. 3) suggesting a need for change in the current school system of independent self-governing entities to a network of pluralistic associations. The report suggests the greatest need in educational change is to address the disparity in educational experience for minority groups.

In the context of an explicit future focus, this dissertation explores two central texts, *Disobedient Teaching* (Ings, 2017) and *The Infinite Game* (Harré, 2018). Both claim to give direction to those who are struggling to see where there are choices in the way one can live their day to day life. This dissertation is a theoretical and philosophical work undertaken in the spirit of change called for by the New Zealand government. It explores the overlooked and marginalised ways of being as an alternative to the neoliberal market-driven ways which have been the norm. This is then translated into the context of school in New Zealand and explores how these ideas may address the problem of inequity identified in the *Tomorrow's Schools Report* (2018). The task called for by the 30 Year Vision – Te Pae Tawhiti, will be supported through this kind of theoretical, philosophical and playful work in addressing the development of policy which will in turn support the aspirational goals of New Zealand Schools.

This dissertation uses methodology drawn from Futures Studies to frame the process of theorising. Futures Studies takes on the task of merging previously disparate areas of research such as globalisation, economics, the arts and environmental studies to consider what we are preparing for the future generation and what they will be prepared for (Moravec, 2017; Peters & Humes, 2003; Slaughter, 1998; Wrigley, 2008). In this Futures Studies work, the notion of the game is a central device (Carse, 1986;

Harré, 2018). Games will refer to the way in which people engage with aspects of life including the way rules are conceptualised, who can play, and where games are played (referred to as the field of play). The player in the game most often refers to the people playing. However, this can extend to include environments and resources required when playing as well as the relationships formed between human players and their environment (Carse, 1986; Harré, 2018).

Chapter 1 provides an outline of Futures Studies and how it might be used to imagine the possibilities for education in New Zealand. In Future Studies, the context in which the future may be played out is an important consideration (Slaughter, 1995) therefore, a brief exploration of the state of the planet is conducted by looking at the shift from the Holocene to the Anthropocene epochs and the effect of globalisation on the field of play. Futuring requires an exploration of the past (Slaughter, 1996), therefore, an overview of the history of Education in New Zealand is presented as a way to reveal what is known about the past which leads to the current field of play.

Chapter 2, within the context of education futures, engages in a full exploration of the ideas of the two central texts, *The Infinite Game* (Harré, 2018) and *Disobedient Teaching* (Ings, 2017). It seeks to unpack the idea of living well together through philosophical conceptions of freedom, emancipation and democracy as theorised by Arendt, Biesta and Rancière in relation to living infinite game principles. In addition to these ideas, Christian theology and the notion of God as an infinite game player is explored and the influence this has had on my ability to enter the infinite game is revealed. This is of particular importance to me as Christian theology informs all that I do. I investigate the narrative of a dominating and controlling God juxtaposed with the God of love to find the God of the infinite.

Chapter 3 turns specifically to the context of school in New Zealand and how the ideas of the disobedient game may be played out in three specific areas where clear lines can be drawn between school practices and issues of inequity. These are; notions of deficit thinking, appearance and embodiment, and (over)assessment. This is completed by weaving the concepts from both central texts and the philosophy of Arendt, Biesta and Rancière.

Finally, Chapter 4 takes all of the exploration of the previous chapters and employs the Futures Studies device of fictioning or speculative imagination (Benjamin, 2016; Lashua, 2018; Rapp, 2018; Slaughter, 1995). The particular form used is based on the writing of Jean Rath who uses "mystory" (2009, p. 149) and "autoethnographic layering" (2012, p. 442) to query "taken-for-granted meanings by positioning uncertain scripts of and for the self in ways that leave invitational lacunae within and between the textual layers" (p. 442). This work of fiction is not intended to be a final answer, but a suggestion of how previously explored notions of freedom, emancipation and democracy could be outworked in New Zealand schools. Through the lens of both the student and the teacher, employing utopian and dystopian constructs, it offers a vision of future schools that are inclusive and based in the win/win paradigm of infinite play in contrast to the production of winners and losers of finite play.

Chapter 1 – Futures Studies, The Global Playing Field and the History and Current State of NZ Education

A short Introduction to the theories of Futures Studies

> While most organisations and public sector bodies tacitly assume a short-term business-as-usual outlook…we face a *civilisational challenge*. The challenge is to grasp our destiny on this small planet and to work towards consciously chosen futures, rather than drift further into crisis and devastation. (Slaughter, 1996a, p.ix)

Futures Studies breaks from traditional positivist, discipline specific, empirical research to using both empirical quantitative data combined with qualitative data drawn from a multitude of areas such as globalization discourse (with further discussion of this concept to follow), the arts, economics, governance, psychology, sociology, biology, physics, gender politics and technology. At the intersections of these disciplines it may be found how people might move into possible, probable, plausible and preferable futures (Dator, 2005; Moravec, 2017; Peters & Humes, 2003; Puglisi, 2001; Slaughter, 1998; Wrigley, 2008). This contemporary arm of Futures Studies is not so much concerned with detailing what people and societies should *do*, but instead how they will need to *be* in order to thrive in whatever future possibility humanity finds itself (Carden, 2006).

Futures Studies is not only built on gathered data, but also on philosophical thought whereby epistemology, metaphysics and ethics all play an important role in theorising possible futures (Sardar, 2013; Slaughter, 1994). For example, in determining actions which could lead to a desired future, the element of free choice in such action is still evident and expected which is what makes it indeterministic and an act of (Arendtian) freedom (Arendt, 1958; Sardar, 2013). In her conceptualisation of freedom, Hannah Arendt divided life into three areas; labour, work and action. Labour refers to the human biological processes in sustaining life, work refers to the means with which we gain resources to maintain biological life, and action refers to the choices we have to act in the world. It is the act of beginning that is freedom. However, it is not *only* the act of beginning that is freedom. Action/s are enmeshed with the action/s of others in how these beginnings are taken up. Arendt was attuned to the plurality of the world in that

we cannot have freedom in isolation but it is in concert with others. Arendtian freedom is a non-linear progression where freedom is enacted between and through multiple players who enact multiple beginnings and in turn take up the beginnings of others (Hayden, 2014; Saeidnia & Lang, 2017). Like the metaphor of a web encasing the planet with innumerable complex connections, the plurality of all human life is drawn together in a system in which humans function in connection with each other.

As part of the possible visions of the future, Future Studies offers a vision for humanity being together in ways which decentres the Western industrialist capitalist vision (Slaughter, 1995). This was a notion suggested and explored by the World Futures Studies Federation (WFSF) with the intention to make visible the rhetorical question, "Aren't there many alternative futures out there, in the hearts and minds of silenced cultures worldwide, that we should seek out and nourish?" (Dator, 2005, p. 372).

Foundational to the development of Futures Studies by the WFSF was embracing critical discourse in an effort to uncover the inherent bias in futures thinking and the development of possible futures. Richard Slaughter is careful to orient would-be students of Futures Studies to the hegemony of Western industrialism that has built an economic system based on constant growth on a planet that has finite resources (Slaughter 1994; Slaughter, 1996a; Slaughter, 1996b). Futures Studies exposes the (impossible) hegemony of Western industrialism and offers options whereby traditional cultures are part of the discourse and the whole of humanity can develop a way to coexist through mutual understanding (Dator, 2005; Masini, 1996).

One way that mutual understanding can be established is through the use of fictional works such as storytelling and metaphor to help shape a shared understanding of possibilities (Nudge, 1996). Metaphors can help a reader to better understand an idea or concept by connecting it to something that is more well-known and understood (Burkley, 2017; Nudge, 1996). Metaphors aid in the human connection to an idea or concept. A study conducted by Thibodeau, Hendricks and Borodisky (2017), determined that not only do metaphors help people to understand a concept, the metaphor can also influence a participant's response to the concept (Borodisky, 2017). Finding the right metaphor to help readers to engage with an idea is very powerful. It must also be

considered that storytelling and metaphor contain cultural understandings of concepts such as time which need to be revealed in order for the story or metaphor to offer its full potential to the reader (Carse, 1986). Eleonora Masini (1996) outlines ways of understanding time which effect diverse society's understandings of the future; cyclical, linear, and spiral. These three variances of time frame expectations of the future; the linear view of time, dominant in Western culture, enforces a narrative of progression where the future always holds bigger and better things for the individual (Masini, 1996). To resist this notion of using time to gain bigger and better things, Tully and Bobak suggest "what is especially needed to create a more prosperous future are stories of the *how this abundance is shared out* variety, so that many gain while few have the sense that they have lost anything" (Tully & Bobak, 2017, para 23). Time, as conceptualized in *Finite and Infinite Games* (Carse, 1986), suggests that the "infinite player does not consume time but generates it. Because infinite play is dramatic and has no scripted conclusion, its time is time lived and not time viewed" (p. 94). Rather than looking back in time to what was previously gained in order to determine what the bigger and better thing of the future will be, it is looking forward from the present moment with the potential to bring something new into the now. "People need to see what could be, or it is terribly hard to give up on what is" (Harré, 2017, p. 124).

Fictional works are a tool Futurists can use to offer a way to imagine possible, probable, plausible and preferable futures (Sardar, 2013) whereby giving the reader a way to imagine "moving toward a future which itself has a future" (Carse, 1986, p. 95). These works are conceived through examining the past and the present in order to envision multiple future possibilities (Bell, 1996; Puglisi, 2001; Sardar, 2013; Slaughter, 1994). Just as Siegfried Sassoon's poetry invited people to experience the horror and reality of war in order to dissuade those seeking conflict for glory, Futures fictional writing such as that of Shelley, Orwell and Huxley invite the reader to imagine and critique alternative futures (James & Mendlesohn, 1996). It must be noted that "future-talk can at times fantasise a serene, ordered, all-knowing society while hiding the violence that is caused in the name of that future" (Gibbons, 2014, p. 17). It is therefore important to not only imagine possible futures, but to "*critically imagine*" (Gibbons, 2014, p. 17) possible futures and the cost on humanity in gaining such a future. Consideration must also be

given to the risk of deferring an ideal future as "we run the risk of losing sight of the experience of freedom in the present" (Biesta & Säfström, 2011, p. 54).

Futures Studies does not demand that the complexity of the entire world wide web is tackled at once. Instead, it is a process of taking one context and applying Futures methodology which will in turn adjoin another context and form links to the future and so on and so forth. The context in which I will locate this futuring exercise is New Zealand education. To do this, I will first explore the wider field of play (the earth), the impact globalisation has on the interactions players have on the field of play, and to examine the history of education in New Zealand to understand the current educational field of play. This process will include suggested historical visions and the espoused purpose for education in New Zealand.

The Field of Play (Holocene to Anthropocene)

The current field of play on which Futures Studies is conducted requires defining, as the parameters of the field of play have changed rather dramatically in the near past (Slaughter, 1996b). Western capitalist industrialism was built on the premise of inexhaustible planetary resources (Attenborough, 2019; Chakrabarty, 2009; Friedman, 2016; Stolze, 2018). It is now necessary to define the field of play to a finite set of resources to sustain life into the future. It seems the Orwellian dystopian future of '1984' that was feared has made way for the possible extinction of humans through the Huxleyan construct of getting everything that we desire is in fact ruining us (Postman, 2006).

For approximately the last 12000 years, the earth has been in what scientists have called the Holocene Epoch. A time of (relatively) stable climate where humanity has been able to use the resources of the earth to create an ever increasing amount and diversity of products, environments, food stuffs, modes of transportation and entertainment experiences (Beier, 2018; Chakrabarty, 2009; Friedman, 2016). In this time, Western industrialised societies have shifted from traditional forms of resource use into high consumption and high waste models within in economies designed to promote further production and consumption (Slaughter, 1995). In the globalised society, this has had an effect on the whole of humanity, including those indigenous peoples living by traditional

ways with sustainable resource management (Albrow & King, 1990). In the last two decades, scientists have theorised that the earth has moved into the Anthropocene Epoch where the effects of Western industrial peoples including mining of resources, population growth, transport requirements, food production, use of water, pollution, wealth accumulation, capitalism and individualism (to name but a few) bears witness to the groaning of the earth on which humanity resides and the tipping of the scales of the stable eco-system to beyond its limits to sustain life in the long term (Attenborough, 2019; Chakrabarty, 2009; Friedman, 2016; Stolze, 2018).

"Revolution or collapse—in either case, the good life as we know it is no longer viable" (Scranton, 2019, p. 68). If this is true, how then will humans live on a changed planet and how can humans work with the planet to circle back around to the assumed planetary stability of the Holocene Epoch without also perpetuating the paradigm of the market driven mass production way of the industrialised West? Chakrabarty (2009), Scranton (2015) and Stolze (2018) theorise that in order for there to be a return to assumed planetary stability, Western industrialised people will need to learn how to die. Not physically die but die to the current ways in which Western capitalism conceives of being human. Die to individual wants. Die to the notion that wealth accumulation is important. Die to the constructs of "me" and "them" which has fuelled conflict and war evidenced in the history of humanity's existence (Stolze, 2018). As stated by Scranton (2015), there either needs to be a full revolution in how Western capitalist society lives on this planet and with each other, or face the collapse of that which Western capitalism is trying to hold on to because it is not compatible with maintaining planetary boundaries (Attenborough, 2019; Chakrabarty 2009; Scranton, 2015; Stolze, 2018). This can be conceived as a thought experiment as proposed by the 'Trolley Problem' (Foot, 1967). On one track is the life that is idealised and on the other track is the continuation of the planet and humanity's ability to live on it. Are those living the Western industrialised 'ideal' willing to change tracks to sacrifice that ideal in order to participate in the continued unfolding of humanity?

Globalisation

Futuring that seeks to decentre the Western industrialised capitalist hegemony operates within the context of globalisation (Martin, 2007; Sardar, 2013; Slaughter, 1994). A

single definition of globalisation is far from straight forward and problematic due to the on-going but different pace of change in various locations, the local influence, political persuasion and economic benefits that a global (planet spanning) economy may bring to certain areas (Christensen & Kowalczyk, 2017; Pieterse, 1994; Ritzer & Dean, 2019; Steger, 2017). Steger (2017) likens much of the current understanding of globalisation to the Buddhist parable of the blind scholars encountering an elephant. Each scholar touches a different part of the elephant and each believes they understand the nature of the elephant. The one who has touched the tusk believes that the elephant is like a spear. The one who has touched the ear believes that the elephant is like a fan, and so on. With the notion of globalisation encompassing multiple dimensions and interactions such as; politics, economics, education, social structures, marketing, communications, environmental issues, resource management and human rights (see for example; Brysk 2002, Christensen & Kowalczyk, 2017; Mooney & Evans, 2007; Pieterse, 1994; Ritzer & Dean, 2019; Steger, 2017) scholars cannot be like the blind scholars. Instead, their respective areas overlap and inform each other to form a more comprehensive conceptualisation. Beier (2018) offers readers a confronting monologue on the fallibility of individuals knowing the whole truth of a concept using the same sort of metaphor. Rather than knowing the whole truth, only a 'holey truth' can be known. Individuals can never know the complete truth as they can only ever see in part through their own bias. There may be a broader understanding for some who have 'walked around the elephant' so to speak, but it is never a complete understanding of the whole. I am going to use the definition given by Steger (2017) which attempts to include the complex complexity of planetary and human interactions. "Globalization refers to the expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space" (p. 17).

One approach to globalisation explores the globalisation of culture. For instance, globalisation has been imagined to be the homogenisation of humanity where, through a process of acculturation, all of humanity ends up resembling the dominant culture (Berry, 2008; Bhawuk, 2008). Berry (2008) concludes that the outcomes of intercultural contact are more likely to be integration (maintaining cultural practices while functioning in the framework of the society) and/or separation (a cutting off from society to strongly reassert cultural practices) rather than assimilation and

homogenisation. Although this may be true for peoples who are choosing to enter a new society through migration (another complex issue which will not be addressed in this writing), this does not hold true for the colonisation of vast communities and countries in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Colonisation may then also be understood as a phase of globalisation in which a migrant colonising culture is imposed on lands and indigenous cultures are silenced (this will be explored further in the history of New Zealand schools) (Banivanua, 2016). New Zealand colonisation affected Māori and continues to do so in the 21st century. As a country, New Zealand may be more 'woke' now than ever before, yet assimilation and homogenisation has defined the life experience of generations. The attempt to undo colonisation directed by the coloniser, further reinforces the power relationships of colonization (Gibbons, 2009). However, Banivanua (2016), goes on to say that through the connections of a globalised world, indigenous peoples are less isolated and may join together to form a stronger voice for decolonisation and a resurgence of traditional authority and caretaking of their own lands.

Flusty (2004), argues for the need to acknowledge the complexity that globalisation brings to human existence. There is not one single definition of globalization. Rather, it can be conceived as at least three different forces acting on the world. "…a mechanistically economic phenomenon….a strategic maneuver in an internationalizing class war… a psychosociological phenomenon…[as a] manifestation of an emergent worldwide community of civilizations" (p. 2). As the notion of globalisation is unpacked to further reveal its complexities, the response by researchers moves from definitive 'truths' to an offering of possibility to add to what may have already been revealed (Kim & Bhawuk, 2008). Bolstad, Gilbert, McDowall, Bull, Boyd and Hipkins (2012) borrow the term 'wicked problems' (p. 12) to describe this complexity (Rittel & Webber, 1973). They view these wicked problems as unable to be solved with a scientific formula or a reading from only one perspective or known 'truth', but require the coming together of diverse groups representing many epistemological views with participants being able to suspend one's own perceived 'truth' in order to hear another and work together.

In acknowledging the complexity of globalisation and the effect that the process has on multiple layers of society, especially the complex interactions of humans from the micro level of planetary wide personal interactions to the macro level of transnational planetary interactions, I return to the definition given by Steger (2017), "Globalization refers to the expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space" (p. 17). This could be imagined as a planetary web. When the web has an ensnarement on one side, it will have an effect on the whole web – some places more than others. Due to the complexity of multiple layers of interconnectivity, predicting the outcomes of such happenings in the web is next to impossible. However, listening and hearing the lived experience of those effected by disruptions to the web will bring us into an understanding of the other not previously available.

Education Landscape in New Zealand – Past to Present

> In order to say anything sensible about the future, one must first look back to the past and ask some key questions. Where did we come from? What are the main themes? What structures, processes and ideas have constructed our present?...Hence, looking back is a kind of ground-clearing exercise to help us locate ourselves in the wider process. By understanding a little of the world we have emerged from we can more clearly see the world we live in and those that potentially emerge from it (Slaughter, 1995, p. 5).

The New Zealand schooling system was formalised and politised with the introduction of the 1877 Education Act making school compulsory, secular, and free for all 7 – 13 year olds (Butterworth & Butterworth 1998; Codd & Openshaw, 2005; Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993; Rata & Sullivan, 2009; Simon & Massey, 1994). There is also a history of education pre-dating the 1877 Education Act which will help to frame the context.

In the early 19th Century, missionaries arrived in New Zealand to spread the gospel. What they found was a highly organised society with education traditions based in a strong oral culture (Rata & Sullivan, 2009; Sorrenson, 2014). Māori were welcoming and keen to learn from missionaries (Ballantyne, 2014; Smith, 2014). Introduced to written conventions, Māori were quick to develop their written language seeing the advantages it could bring (Ballantyne, 2014; Sorrenson, 2014). The missionaries saw that the Māori language was important in communicating so they learned the language and within 20 years there was a te reo Māori bible translation (Kaur, May & Prochner, 2014). Māori were also keen to learn of Western society so they could participate. They were not

looking to assimilate but participate in ways which could benefit their people (Ballantyne, 2014; Rata & Sullivan, 2009). However, the New Zealand Company, which followed the missionaries, sought to colonise New Zealand with the ways they brought from 'The Motherland' England, including a class system which benefitted a small percentage of the privileged from the work of the 'underclass' (Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993; Rata & Sullivan, 2009). This involved the acquisition of land, establishment of government and laws in which tribal shared ownership of land was not recognised but rather individual ownership was promoted. And despite the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, which intended to bring Māori and Pākeha into equal relationship (according to the English version, translation and understanding of the agreement is highly problematised), Pākeha continued to oppress Māori through practises such as land confiscation, the on-going effects of which are still evident in society today (for further discussion, see for example: Butterworth & Butterworth 1998; Openshaw & McKenzie, 1987; Simon & Massey, 1994).

School, from the colonisers perspective, was seen as a vehicle to reform the 'savages' into acceptable Western societal norms (Simon & Massey, 1994; Sorrenson, 2014). Te reo Māori was banned from schools and children were punished if they used it. Māori were forced off of their tribal lands into urbanised isolating single family houses, dislocating them from whanau. The colonisers societal narrative of the 'native issue' as one of 'not trying hard enough' was entrenched in thinking and the school system intended to bring equity saw Māori failing at much higher rates than Pākeha, non-participation in higher-education and over representation in unemployment statistics and the prison population (Fernando, 2018; Hoskins & McKinley, 2015; Ministry of Māori Development, 1994). The system framed this to be the fault of Māori rather than as systemic violence against Māori. Māori tribal landowners were criminalised and their 'wealth' (land) was stolen from them on the pretence of their apparent lawlessness (which was in fact defence of their land from confiscation, see for example Keenan, 2015). This history has remained largely unacknowledged, until recently. There is a growing awareness of injustices in the translation and implementation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the confiscation of land and the acknowledgement of the taonga (treasure) of Māori language and tikanga (ways) (Hoskins & McKinley, 2015).

The New Zealand school system was developed with the intention to promote egalitarianism and racial harmony (Shuker, 1987; Simon & Massey, 1994). Egalitarianism can be conceived as the acknowledgement of inequality of people and the intent of distributive justice whereby all people get what they need to succeed to their fullest potential. "Put simply, in an unequal society there should be unequal treatment in favour of the disadvantaged" (Clark, 2005, p. 132). This can be illustrated through the now widely distributed and analysed cartoon by Craig Frehle (2012) of three children standing on a box in front of a fence to watch a game. Although they all have the same box, due to the different heights of the children the one box does not help all to see over the fence to be able to watch the game. In the second picture, the boxes are distributed so that all three children can see over the fence. They each get what they need to participate in watching the game. However, the creation of equality is not so simple. As expressed in previous sections, the world in which we live is a complex network where simple solutions do not bring about the desired outcomes. We could ask of this particular 'boxed' solution to the problem: "Why not take down the fence?" "Does the fact they are all watching the same game represent the hegemony of society?" "Are the boxes adaptive? Can they be made into a ramp for example?" "Do they all even want to watch the game?" Although the intention of education in New Zealand is to bring equity to all who participate, there are still instances where all cannot participate due to multiple complex issues such as access, cost and safety. When those who do not fit the standardised mould do manage to enter education, there are many barriers to participation through the general reproduction of social and economic status, despite children's best efforts (Adams, Openshaw & Hamer, 2005; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Cod, Harker & Nash, 1990; Coxon, Jenkins, Marshall & Massey, 1994; Jones, 1986). The system is stacked against them and they become a product of that system. Intention and purpose are also two different things. In addition to the egalitarian intention was a purpose to further a capitalist society with the production of workers. The egalitarian notion was unable to be outworked within the context of colonisation as underlying assumptions about class and culture prevailed.

For almost 100 years following the 1877 Education Act, there were no major changes in education in New Zealand. There were small policy changes such as the introduction of standardised assessments to further restrict access to higher education to those in

possession of the cultural capital needed to succeed (for further discussion of cultural capital see for example: Adams, Openshaw & Hamer, 2005; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Cod, Harker & Nash, 1990; Coxon, Jenkins, Marshall & Massey, 1994; Jones, 1986). In the 1980s, several reports were commissioned to examine the state of public education in New Zealand which culminated in *Administering for Excellence* or what is commonly known as 'The Picot Report' (Picot Report, 1988). This particular report lead to the Labour Government enacting *Tomorrow's Schools* (Ministry of Education, 1988) in 1988 (for in-depth history leading to the Picot Report and *Tomorrow's Schools*, see for example: Adams, Openshaw & Hamer, 2005; Butterworth & Butterworth, 1998; Openshaw, Lee & Lee, 1993).

Tomorrow's Schools promised to take out a layer of bureaucracy in school governance whereby the community would take on the major role of school governance through the establishment of Boards of Trustees (BoTs). BoTs would be elected by the community and entrusted to use the allocated government funding as needed for the school. It became apparent that some schools did not have the resources within the community for effective governance so the government introduced the decile system which gave schools a rating based on the average income in the community (Rata & Sullivan, 2009). Schools with a lower decile rating received further funding to access resources which were not accessible within their community. There were many other teething problems with the introduction of *Tomorrow's Schools* which the Labour government acknowledged in 1999 and wanted to address including abolishing 'bulk funding' in 2000. However, the free market neoliberal policies meant to bring the intended egalitarian educational vision into being, were in fact resulting in a greater gap between the achievements in rich and poor schools (Ball, 2016; Chrisholm, 2010; Gibbons, 2018). It appeared that no matter the political ideologies enacted in school policy, inequities remained and in many cases, exacerbated as time passed.

In the last 20 years, there have been directives such as Communities of Learning (CoL), Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L), Innovative Learning Environments (ILEs), Network for Learning (N4L), and the implementation of 'National Standards'. National Standards put an emphasis on assessment of numeracy and literacy for reporting purposes (Lee & Lee, 2015; Thrupp 2013). In my own practice, I saw the implications of

National Standards on the children. To be told twice a year they were either well below, below, at, or above the National Standard was a cause of anxiety and self-fulfilling prophesy (for further reading on Self Fulfilling prophesy of both students an teachers, see for example; Brameld, 1972; Jussim, 2002; Riley & Ungerleider, 2012). This method of assessing and reporting of children left little room for the dynamic process of learning that classroom teachers observe all the time – the acceleration and consolidation stages which do not follow a prescribed linear trajectory (Smith, Anderson & Blanch, 2015; Thrupp, 2013). There was a push to move through the expected stages set out by National Standards (Lee & Lee, 2015). In addition to the assessment of individual students, the focus of National Standards is on measurable performance and outcomes for schools. There was concern and resistance to the implementation of National Standards (Ell, 2011; Ell & Grudnoff, 2012; Lee & Lee, 2015) due both to the requirement to release information to the public where school league tables could be generated and National Standards being determined using 'overall teacher judgements' (OTJs) which synthesize data from multiple testing tools and in-class work completed by students.

In 2017 a new Labour government disestablished National Standards and mandated a complete review of education with the launch of the 'Education Conversation | Kōrero Mātauranga' inviting all New Zealanders to think about and express what they wanted education to look like in New Zealand in the future. Bali Haque, the chairperson for the Report of the Independent Taskforce on Tomorrow's School says:

> It provides a detailed picture of the serious equity and performance challenges we face and explains why and how we need to change. Our recommendations signal the need for *transformational* change in our education system. When every one of our children experiences success, we will all benefit (Haque, 2018, 6min 20 sec).

The Prime minister asks the question "what would you do if you were the boss of Education in New Zealand?" (Ardern, 2018, 8 sec). A question that I will attempt to answer by suggesting a disruption to the very need of a 'boss' but rather as Harré asks, how can we come to the game as equals, supporting each other where we need to and working together to play well. This will be explored through the notion of freedom and plurality as suggested by Hannah Arendt. But first, I will provide a snapshot of what education in New Zealand primary schools looks like right now.

The Now – Education in New Zealand Primary Schools

The 21st Century is here and schools are becoming increasingly aware of the complex interactions of globalisation and the speed in which students lived realities have changed with the ubiquity of digital technologies, connection to ultra-fast broadband, and children carrying computing power in their uniform pockets that is many millions of times more than that which was able to land humans on the moon (Freidman, 2016; Puiu, 2015). The theory of knowledge has shifted (Benade, 2017; Bolstad et al, 2012; Gilbert, 2005) from what an individual knows to what they can *do* with what they know and more importantly how they can collaborate with others to synthesize new information (Benade, 2017; Bolstad et al, 2012; Gilbert, 2005). New Zealand currently has a vast variety of school models ranging from those indistinguishable from the schools of the early 19th century to those with modern learning environments coupled with culturally responsive personalised learning (Bolstad *et al,* 2012). I have seen and experienced this range while visiting and supporting student teachers on practicums in the wider Auckland area. Bolstad *et al* (2012) in their report to the Ministry of Education investigating *Supporting Future-Orientated Learning and Teaching* acknowledges the emergent nature of what is happening in New Zealand schools, describing it as "an emerging cluster of new ideas, beliefs, knowledge, theories and practices—some of which may be visible in some schools and classrooms, some which exist only in isolated pockets and others which are barely visible yet" (Bolstad et al, 2012, p. 1).

Some New Zealand schools are not willing participants in changes, but with the 2011 Christchurch earthquake and the prevalence of leaky buildings, many of which needed complete rebuilds, schools (whether they wanted it or not) have become the recipients of new learning environments which have moved away from single cell traditional classrooms into open learning spaces. The designers of environments understand that various spaces have an effect on the activity within that space (Benade, 2017; Bolstad et al, 2012). New school builds are designed to facilitate many different modes of teaching including large group, small group, cross-age group, and individual work. They are expected to invite teamwork and collaboration of teachers who can offer a wider range of expertise to students when they work together. The spaces are supposed to harness the benefits of flexible furniture and various digital technologies to both engage in the work and also to showcase the work.

In addition to rebuilding the physical spaces in which school is enacted, in 2007 the Ministry of Education released a 'rebuilt' national curriculum document. It is non-prescriptive in terms of specific content and encourages communities to contextualise learning content for their students (Boyd & Hipkins, 2012; Cowie, Hipkins, Keown & Boyd, 2011; Fastier, 2016; Hipkins 2009; Hipkins *et al* 2011; McDowell & Hipkins, 2018; Wasson 2014). In this way, the broad achievement objectives in each of the eight learning areas can be outworked in ways which suit the context of each community of learners (Hipkins, Bolstad, Boyd & McDowall, 2014). The 2007 New Zealand Curriculum also places the values, key competencies, and learning areas on the same plane of reference, reminding educators that it is not a content focussed curriculum but a curriculum that offers multiple opportunities for engagement (McChesney & Cowie, 2008; McDowell & Hipkins, 2018; Ministry of Education, 2007). In response to much social commentary on the hierarchy of subjects and privileging certain knowledge areas (Brannon *et al.* 2010; Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti, 2005; Quantz, 2014) and the loss of creativity to outcomes focussed, highly assessed, narrow curriculums (Robinson 2006 and 2015; Scholes & Nagel, 2010), the New Zealand curriculum promotes the idea of the inter-woven curriculum strands where each learning area holds unique but connected importance. "All learning should make use of the natural connections that exist between learning areas and that link learning areas to the values and key competencies." (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 16).

The 2007 New Zealand curriculum's aspirational goal of an open, creative and contextualised curriculum, and its desire to see transformation in education to ensure the success of all children, demands unfolding the educational landscape in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Keeping in mind the issues of global sustainability, the importance of indigenous peoples' knowledge and experience, and the damage that Western capitalism has inflicted on the earth and indigenous peoples, I would like to explore a new conceptual epistemology for thinking about school.

Chapter 2 – The Disobedient Game of Life

Introduction

Engaging with the work of Niki Harré (2018) and Welby Ings (2017) has led me on a boulder jumping quest of philosophical discovery to think about the past and future of schools in New Zealand. Harré's work to imagine playing the game of life in a way which is different from the hegemonic of neoliberalism and using Ing's contribution to think about how infinite game play might be contextualised into education in New Zealand.

Niki Harré's *The Infinite Game* explores the problem of lives lived with little apparent choice than that of the free market driven, over consumption, individualistic offering of neoliberalism which she calls a finite game (Harré, 2018). Rather than being trapped in the finite game, she offers a framework in which people can play the infinite game. The goal of the finite game is to win whereas the goal of the infinite game is to play and keep playing, where players can come and go, and where the rules of the game can evolve for whoever is present to play (Harré, 2018). Harré, a professor of psychology, appears embedded in the same emancipatory philosophy as Biesta and Rancière. She poses questions of equality, plurality and inclusion to be able to play well together regardless of perceived commodifiable skills. Harré asks, how do we turn our attention from the winning rhetoric of over consumptive capitalism to a place where we live lightly on the earth and in harmony with others? Harré's work is based on the original work of James Carse's (1986) *Finite and Infinite Games: A vision of life as play and possibility*. He explains "the only purpose of the [infinite] game is to prevent it from coming to an end, to keep everyone in play" (Carse, 1986, p. 7).

Ings' (2017) discusses the nature of the New Zealand school system using his own educational experience, both as a student and as a teacher. He problematises the difficulties of effecting change within an established system using examples drawn from the areas of: creativity, assessment, passion and leadership. Ings then "argues for empowerment and demonstrates our ability to effect change virally" (Ings, 2017, p. 14). He draws on educational philosophy which underpins his thinking about how to be productively disobedient and furthermore, why we *should be* productively disobedient. Ings draws on the educational philosophies of John Dewey (1984) and Ivan Illich (1971)

bringing into question the foundation of the New Zealand school system, proposing explanations as to why it is failing so many students, and causing alarming rates of anxiety, depression and hopelessness in children and youth. With a government committed to addressing the well-being of children and youth (Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, 2019), there are insights to be gained into the effects of school practices on the wellbeing of students. While there is a wealth of educational research and writing into the reasons why education is failing so many students (see for instance Brannon *et al.* 2010; Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti, 2005; Quantz, 2014, on the privileging of specific subjects, and Robinson 2006, 2015; Noddings, 2013 on the problem of assessment and outcomes), this text offers practical day to day solutions for those working in the New Zealand school context. Ings' work centres on empowering teachers to acts of productive disobedience which will serve to mitigate these issues in student's lived experience of school. Ings is then engaging in significant questions regarding what it means to teach and learn. These are critical questions to ask in education. Some possible ways of considering these questions are revealed in the work of philosophers such as Biesta, Rancière, Arendt and Dewey.

This chapter, in the context of education futures will frame the way we live as game play as suggested by Harré based in the work of James P Carse (1986). It will bring in aspects of Ing's work on disobedience and choosing to play with new rules. It will then explore the central ideas in the two texts, *Disobedient Teaching* (Ings, 2017) and *The Infinite Game* (Harré, 2018) and will seek to unpack the idea of living well together through philosophical and theological conceptions of freedom, emancipation and democracy as theorised by Arendt, Biesta and Rancière in relation to living infinite game principles.

A theory of life as game play

Niki Harré, in *The Infinite Game – How to live well together,* suggests most people live their life in a competitive paradigm constantly having to compete for status, wealth, grades and validation which she describes as a finite game (Harré, 2018). She suggests a paradigm shift from finite game play to the infinite game where rather than competing to win, players, in collaboration with others, play to keep playing. Harré frames this shift using the metaphor of test cricket contrasted with beach cricket which helps the reader to understand the ideas of playing finite or infinite games.

Test cricket is a finite game. It has specific predefined rules which all players must adhere to in order for play to be authenticated. There are a limited number of people able to play and the skills required to play are very specific to a certain group of people. If you are unable to prove your skill set, you are unable to play. The aim of test cricket is to win. When one team wins, the game is over. In contrast to this very defined and rule bound game, Harré presents the game of beach cricket as an example of an infinite game. A game where all are welcomed to play, and the game will flex to the needs of the players. The aim of this particular version of beach cricket is to keep the game going. To do this, players competencies (or lack of them) are accommodated through rule modification and/or the other players modifying their own game such as bowling more gently, running a little slower, or matching their batting to the skills of the fielders. This game has no finish, it may break for a while and resume, players may come and go, equipment may change, but the goal is the same, everyone gets to play if they want to.

Harré explores the work of Carse (1986). Carse uses the overarching metaphor of the game, inviting the reader to imagine what sort of games these could be. He suggests many game possibilities ranging from intimate board games to World War games as a site for thinking about finite and infinite game play. By extending the metaphor to encompass many kinds of games with infinite possible variations, he challenges the reader to think about the finite and infinite games they may be engaged in and the effect they have on the way they are living with others (Carse, 1986).

Niki Harré summarises the ideas offered by Carse into fifteen comparative statements with the finite game play juxtaposed with infinite game play. In developing these statements, Harré has accepted what she sees as an invitation to play with the ideas that Carse has offered. In turn, Harré invites the readers of *The Infinite Game* to play with these ideas in relation to their own lived realities.

Infinite game play, where all are able to play, is a different way to engage in life in contrast to the paradigm of winning and losing of the finite game. When one steps away from what they have always known (playing the finite games of Western capitalism for example), what is there to replace it? How can I be different in the world in which I live

and to the people with whom I am playing? Both Harré and Carse advocate not just for a different world view from finite play but the metaphor of infinite play emotes joy, playfulness and hope in humanity.

In finite play, positions of power are limited to the few winners whereas infinite play encourages the win/win whereby losers are not required in order for a game to end (Carse, 1986; Harré, 2018). Eoyang (2016), observed that the way of being in playing an infinite game requires what she first saw as more feminine "habits of generosity, curiosity [and] collaboration [which] are most familiar to those who are not accustomed to power" (p. 1). What she initially saw as feminine traits, she realised were in fact traits of those who had experienced power as control and these traits were also seen "among men of colour, immigrants or those with disabilities" (p. 1). This led her to conclude that it is not gender which determines the ability to slip into infinite play but in fact how a person has experienced power. The winning part of finite game play may have been dominated by those who have traditionally been in positions of power. Infinite game play takes that power which has been isolated to a few and makes it available for all to share in.

To become an infinite game player, winning and losing in finite game play needs to be addressed. "It is an odd situation: we have become enchanted with competition, even while our experience tells us that people function much better when they are cooperating, rather than trying to outdo each other" (Harré, 2018, p. 27). Harré goes on to call these edifices of winning 'idols' that are hard to look away from and are perpetuated by the lie that because the West is doing so well, selfish ambition and winning must be the natural way to progress. Because winning is the goal of finite game play and those who win have been deemed successful, other players seek to emulate them by playing to win, where winning at the expense of other players is deemed part of the game as loosing is part of the paradigm (Carse, 1986). An infinite game player has a different narrative. Rather than winning and losing, there is room for the win win situation. This can be explored through returning to Harré's cricket metaphor. In the finite game of test cricket, there is a winning team and a losing team. The losing team not only walks away with their own loss but also the disappointment of the people for whom they were playing, a knowledge that they did not measure up and a compulsion

to work harder in order to make up for the loss when the opportunity arises. Some players may even quit the game altogether after a loss. The winners come away with the win, the knowledge that they are the best, but also the pressure to keep that position in the future. "One senses a compulsion to maintain a certain level of performance, because permission to play in these games can be cancelled" (Carse, 1986, p. 11). So even in 'winning', there is a trap in the play of finite games. However, "infinite players regard their wins and losses in whatever finite games they play as but moments in continuing play" (Carse, 1986, p. 11). Such as when a beach cricket player is bowled out, this only adds to the enjoyment of allowing others to have a turn at the crease or another group of players to join the game.

Harré runs Infinite Game workshops in which she asks participants to first identify "that which is of infinite value to them, sacred, precious, special. Of value for its own sake. That which makes the world truly alive. In any dimension – an emotion, relationship, part of the natural world, a quality, an object" (Harré, 2018, p. 37). In analysing the responses of many workshops there are themes of "human connections…human expression…nature…connections…personal qualities…vitality…and spirituality and transcendence" (p. 37-38) which emerge. Nowhere in these workshops do the participants identify competition and winning and losing as core values. Harré describes the relief of workshop participants when they realise that everyone values human and ecological flourishing. How then can participants live infinite game values outside of a workshop environment? This is where the infinite game nuzzles against Welby Ings' (2017) ideas of disobedience. One of the key concepts identified by Carse (1986) in comparing finite and infinite game play is that the finite game player must play *by* the rules whereas infinite game players play *with* the rules. In order for the infinite game to continue (which is the goal), the rules must flex to ensure maximum participation and continuation. This may mean that the rules for one player will be different for another.

Harré cautions readers to beware of the 'trickster' who would have infinite players question the value of infinite game play as too hard. "We know he [the trickster] has been present when we find ourselves in the midst of games that leave us unhappy, in conflict with each other, and destroying the natural world" (p. 157). Not only do I need to be aware of the 'trickster' at play around me, but also to see the 'trickster' at play in

myself. Inhabiting a world of finite play, I need to question my motivation and orient myself to infinite values. For example, do I want a promotion for the prestige it will bring or do I want a promotion for the opportunities it will give me to enact infinite values on a larger scale, being the 'flex' in an organisation whereby drawing more people into play. Harré confronts the reader with "our individual lives are the greatest finite hurdle we face" (p. 123). In order to participate in the infinite game, a person cannot maintain their position as an individual.

A theological play

Harré explores the function of theology in society and how, in the past, it has influenced the way people choose to live (Harré, 2018). Within theology, there are many visions of god and gods which influence the varied notions of god and in turn influence how people choose to live in relationship with one another (Vanier, 1998). This section will be grounded in Christian public theology as a way of reintroducing what Harré suggests has now passed from contemporary Western society (Harré, 2018). Forrester (2004) describes public Christian theology as:

> Theology which seeks the welfare of the city before protecting the interests of the Church…Accordingly, public theology often takes 'the world's agenda', or parts of it, as its own agenda, and seeks to offer distinctive and constructive insights from the treasury of faith to helping the building of a decent society…It strives to offer something that is distinctive, and that is gospel, rather than simply adding the voice of theology to what everyone is saying already. Thus it seeks to deploy theology in public debate, rather than a vague and optimistic idealism which tends to disintegrate in the face of radical evil (p. 6).

Christian theology has many versions. One way it can be divided is by the juxtaposition of a controlling judgemental God with a loving redemptive God. The notion of the controlling judgemental God may be attributed to the rise of Calvinism in the 16th century (Almond, 2018; Balserak, 2016). It is described as "a dark repressive force that has left a legacy of hatred and intolerance wherever it has gone" (Balserak, 2016, p. 1). The founder, John Calvin is attributed with beginning the reformation through his theology leading to the Puritan and Protestant movements which circled the globe though immigration and colonisation (Thiselton, 2015). In contrast to the Calvinist version of God as a controlling and judgemental force, is a God of loving redemption found in the work of theologians such as Jean Vanier (1998) and Baxter Kruger (2005).

The expression of God in the world as a judgemental and controlling God is disconnected from the initial invitation of God to inhabit and co-create in the Garden after creation (Vanier, 1998). In a world where God set the universe in motion and invited all other participants to respond, the act of responding could be conceived as an act of infinite play. It is a response to the beginning of another which can lead to another beginning in an infinite game which Kuger (2005) conceptualises as a great dance. Infinite game players who are also Christian have a theology that is not fixed but made up of infinite beginnings. Infinite theology is not one of fear, domination, winning and losing, but of touching the other and seeing the divine creation in all (Vanier, 1998).

In contrast to the infinite play possible with God, is finite play initiated by 'the deceiver' who offered to the players a finite game of power, winning and losing. Through this deception, humanity was drawn into the belief that the one who initiated the infinite game (God) values winning, when God is actually interested in playing. God is poised to engage in beginning after beginning in poiesis with all of humanity living in poiesis with each other (Carse, 1989).

These ideas have been heretical in a world fuelled by Christian control. For instance, Spinoza, a philosopher now widely acknowledged as the thinker who sparked the enlightenment (Rée, Hutton & Cottingham, 2017), was damned by the church as anti-God for his thinking about God's "game" – infinite in nature because God is infinite (Spinoza, 1876). Spinoza's understanding of immanence and affect translate to the redemptive experience of 'salvation' and love outside of the fear and tyranny of God commonly used to boundary the play of people in the course of history. Spinoza offers a theology that encourages those who are considered by the populace as 'waste-people' (Carse, 1986) to rather play the infinite game, where there are no 'waste-people', only potential beginnings. Spinoza's work on ethics interpreted within the study of leadership, discourages the power dynamic of leader/follower and in its place encourages joyous encounters as a means to resist hierarchical didactic relationships and invite participation (Munro & Thanem, 2018). Lord (2017), argues that Spinoza's god is a fictional god only in place to enable people to act more rationally and as humanity is further enlightened to rational thought, they will not need the figurehead of a god to

ensure rational interactions. Arguably, Spinoza's articulation of God is what was intended for humanity's relationship with God and each other. As this relationship has been revealed, my ability to enter into the infinite game and reject the finite play of judgement and control has been supported by a strong theology of love and by an understanding of an infinite game playing God.

The paradox of humans playing the infinite game is that humans (individually) are finite beings therefore playing a finite game seems reasonable. However, humanity is connected via infinite nature or god (Spinoza, cited in Reé, 2018). This gives those entering the infinite game a different perspective on how they may now play. Those choosing to participate in infinite play are not merely individuals living out their own lives, they are an interconnected organism. Each individual plays a role in the future health of the whole.

Although Carse, Harré and Ings claim no religion or belief in God, they all suggest a life lived in a way that resonates with the infinite gameplay of God. Carse goes so far as to label (the myth of) Jesus as the ultimate infinite game player:

> It is a god "emptied" of divinity who gave up all privilege of commanding speech and "dwelt among us," coming "not to be served, but to serve," "being all things to all persons". But the worlds to which he came received him not. They no doubt preferred a god of magisterial utterance, a commanding idol, a theatrical likeness of their own finite designs. They did not expect an infinite listener who joyously took their unlikeness on himself, giving them their own voice through the silence of wonder, a healing and holy metaphor that leaves everything to be said. Those Christians who deafened themselves to the resonance of their own myth have driven their killing machines through the garden of history, but they did not kill the myth. The emptied divinity whom they have made into an Instrument of Vengeance continues to return as the Man of Sorrows bringing with him his unfinished story, and restoring the voices of the silenced. (p. 148)

As infinite play encourages flex in the way people play and various ways of playing to ensure the continuation of the game, a theological aspect of play cannot be a requirement. However, for the way that I play the infinite game, it is necessary.

The disobedient game – choosing to play in a new way

Productive disobedience "is simply claiming the right to see and respond to the world in a different way. Productive disobedience is an agency that moves things forward" (Ings, 2017, p. 14). In responding to the world in an unexpected way, there is an interruption to the automatic acceptable way of playing. That interruption has the effect of making others engage with the action in a way that they are not used to. In the world of infinite play the response to this interruption may look like finite players defending a position, or seeing a viral response from infinite players who choose to enter the game to play with the newly defined rules. In addition to these responses, there is a third. The person who would like to play by infinite values but whose 'social editor' holds them to values which they have been playing with and learned to play by for a lifetime (Ings, 2017). Your 'social editor' "says no to your ideas because they might sound silly, or they might not work, or they might be unstable, or they might make you look like a fool" (p. 25). Ings (2017) makes a point to remind the reader that in order to be productively disobedient "you have to learn to work with people, and you need to have people who love you" (p. 19). Being productively disobedient does not require that you have people who love you in the context in which you are enacting such disobedience, but you need to have a safe place to fall in your life in order to maintain your ability to effect change.

In *Disobedient Teaching*, what Welby Ings describes as playing by our "social editor" is what Niki Harré refers to as rules in *The Infinite Game*. Demanding that people play by the rules of the infinite game that Harré has suggested would be the antithesis of playing the infinite game. Rather, Harré enacts the very rules suggested by inviting the reader to play with the ideas she has presented just as she has played with the ideas from the original work by Carse. Harré saw the original work of Carse as an invitation to play differently whereby having the freedom to think completely originally in the context in which one finds one's self. The infinite game acknowledges the diverse and unique paths that all players have taken to where they currently are and the multiple paths available to carry them into the future. Although Carse quotes many works of philosophy and draws on the thinking of others, he provides no references. Harré experiences this as an invitation to play and interact with the ideas in an unbounded (from traditional rules of academia) way/s.

Biesta, Arendt and Rancière on Freedom

Harré experienced an invitation from the writing of Carse to engage in thinking and theorising about the philosophy of life lived as a finite or infinite game. It was an invitation to freedom and enacting the principals of continuing play of the infinite game. Carse uses the event of war to highlight what freedom may be for infinite players. He makes the point that infinite players "do not meet putative enemies with power and violence, but with poiesis and vision. They invite them to become people in passage" (p. 62). War is a finite game which is finished when there is a winner and a loser, rewarding the winner with apparent freedom (Carse, 1998). However, regardless of perceived freedom gained through 'winning' there is a loss of the humanness of the people made to play, through being made to play, one cannot actually play (Carse, 1986). Although a state may be declared a winner in the event of a war, the people within that winning state continue to loose through impacts such as generational trauma, economic hardship, injury, mental health issues and post-traumatic stress disorder to name but a few (see for example; Bozo, 2009; Bramsen & van der Ploeg, 2007; Chen, Loayza & Reynal-Querol, 2008; Humphreys & Weinstein 2006; Idris, 2019; Kijewski, 2019; Welsch, 2008). Even Sun Tzu's treatise on *The Art of War* warns that engaging in war should be the last option for progress as the effects can be devastating (Tzu, 2017). The desire to win freedom paradoxically enslaves the other (Carse, 1986). The emancipation of a slave could be seen in the same way. In order to 'give' emancipation, the relationship of power must first be established. What if instead, one's life could be an enactment of emancipation through seeing the other first as an equal (Arendt, 1958; Biesta, 2013; Biesta, 2019; Rancière, 1991; Vanier, 1998). It seems maybe that in fact the emancipator first needs emancipating from the ideology of power over another.

Biesta (2019), makes a point of talking about freedom, not in the neo-liberal individualistic sense of being able to do exactly what you want to do (Saad-Filho & Johnston, 2004; Jay, 2016; Nguyen, 2016), but the 'grown-up' freedom that puts our own desires in perspective of the reality in which we can live our lives. In other words, in order to enact freedom which may lead to further freedom for people, those who play the infinite game must sometimes put aside individual desires for the good of others. This is a challenge explained in the work of Arendt and perception of freedom as plurality. Freedom is only complete when one's actions are taken up by another in

relationship to each other. In order for me to experience true freedom I need the free act of another to take up my beginning (Arendt, 1958). Arendt conceives freedom not as something to release an individual from oppression but as a means to bring people into relationship with each other (Arendt, 1961). It is an understanding of freedom as a verb rather than a noun which transforms the popular neo-liberal view of freedom as a thing to be wrestled from another to something to be done with another. "Basically, whether I enjoy freedom or suffer the reverse depends upon my intercourse with my fellow men and not on my intercourse with myself." (Arendt, 1961, p. 161).

Carse and Harré both emphasise plurality in the act of play and go to great lengths to explain that in order to play, you cannot be forced to play. Play is enacted through free will, as freedom is also expressed through free will. The usual discourse is to emancipate a slave, however Biesta (2013) suggests that emancipation is not given but rather it is enacted. Rancière (1991) says "Equality is not given, nor is it claimed; it is practised, it is verified" (p. 137). Harré engages with the above idea of freedom as plurality and the verification of equality framed as "radical co-operation" (p. 151). In addition to the necessity of plurality of humans to experience equality and freedom, there is an invitation to engage with the natural world as well. More than relationships between people which promote infinite values such as "creativity, curiosity and generosity" (p. 154), Harré encourages relationship with the natural world and the importance of humans to acknowledge the necessity of the natural world for the stage on which we can enact our freedom, equality and radical co-operation.

> The radical co-operation I saw was, essentially, love…If you want to be an infinite player here and now – which is your prime opportunity – that involves unilateral disarmament. You will need to let go and give, in the face of numerous disorienting messages that you should be holding on and taking. And you can draw strength from the vision that, generally speaking, life nurtures that which gives life (p. 153).

Equality cannot be achieved when the process starts from the position of inequality (Biesta, 2019; Rancière, 1991). Rather it is the repositioning of the infinite player to a principle of universal equality or radical co-operation which brings all people into relationship with the other as intellectual equals. Because this is a radical shift from the experience of most people in encountering others, it is not always met with enthusiasm

or even willing participation due to a level of (dis)trust and scepticism of the motivation in practicing and verifying equality.

Playing with (dis)Trust

To engage in an infinite game as an individual finite human being, there needs to be freedom for other players to pick up aspects of a game and to play on (Carse, 1986; Harré, 2017). Others may play with you for a while and then as you tire or are drawn into another game, your partner(s) in play can continue to play with the freedom to flex the game to new players and conditions as they see fit. Trust and trusting other players (including one's self) has a large effect on entering and playing the infinite game. Due to the dominant socialisation in finite game play of winning and losing, there is a wariness from others and occasionally complete hostility towards the possibilities of the infinite game (Carse, 1986; Harré, 2017). Those who have worked very hard at 'winning' in life appear to be less willing to put aside their perceived security in titles and prestige to practice infinite game values (Carse, 1986). There is a fear that their winnings will be lost or stolen by another undeserving less hard-working individual. This is where the stories, mentioned previously, of the "nature of the *how this abundance is shared out* variety, so that many gain while few have the sense that they have lost anything" (Tully & Bobak, 2017, para 23) become important to those in transition from finite to infinite play.

Tschannen-Moran (2014), propose five facets of building trust; benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability and competence. Infinite game players practice and display all of these qualities to build trust with others. Without trust, people may continue to play the dominant finite games, maintaining their own individual power and prestige. Although establishing trust is important for new infinite players, for seasoned players trust is not a requirement of the game. Many people will break trust, this is not an invitation to return to finite game play. Harré (2018) conceives of trust as authenticity and Carse (1986) as including learning the techniques of your art and being able to release them in order to step into something new. Developing trust in an area is about knowing the rules of play in order to be able to flex them into new and different ways of playing. One cannot simply disrupt the educational paradigm without understanding what it is to start with (Ings, 2017). Nor can one be an object in a system, but players need to be a subject

of their own freedom (Arendt, 1958; Biesta, 2013; Biesta, 2019; Rancière, 1991). Beista (2019) suggests, "education contributes to the way in which children and young people can become subjects of action and responsibility...subjectification thus has to do with notions like independence and autonomy, that is, with being the agent of one's own actions" (p. 14). Subjectification is a goal of infinite play and in this process, there is an outworking of the emancipation of the subject.

Finite to Infinite Play

Ings (2017) is generous in responding to those who have been trained in the finite game for most of their lives. People who are objects in a system and not subjects of action and responsibility (Biesta, 2019). Ings (2017) says they have:

> Bought into the lie that we were powerless and, as a result, we became so...we became non-reformers who traded in our vision for a droll kind of cynicism that enabled us to survive but never altered the status quo" (p. 21).

Ings suggests that what is needed here is support. Those who are wanting to turn off their social editors and participate in productive disobedience need allies who also walk in productive disobedience.

Rancière (1999) offers one way to conceptualise finite and infinite play through the ideas of police and politics. He argues that police is the standard mode of hierarchical societal operation whereas politics is the emergence of something completely new in a place which is not expected and disrupts the normal flow of society. Although this idea does not directly overlay the ideas of finite and infinite play as Rancière still necessitates the policing of democracy, Harré does recognise that finite games are often played inside of the infinite game as a participatory requirement of current Western society in gaining resources to live such as food, clothing and shelter. Bassett (2014) and Lorey (2014) use the example of the Occupy movement to discuss how police and politics might be experienced. They assert that there is a distinction between a place of identification within a current police state and a new act of politics which is the beginning of something new and outside of the established police state. The complexities and nuance of the emergence of politics cannot be underestimated whereby there may be elements of identity politics (that which is within the current police state) in tandem with

authentic acts of politics (Bassett, 2014). In addition to the emergence of ideas is the space in which politics is enacted. Bassett (2014) suggests that acts of politics such as that of the Occupy movement are limited by the police state to enforce laws and disperse people from the space in which they inhabit. One solution to this limiting of politics is to inhabit virtual space such as on social media platforms where politics can be enacted and has the potential to grow through connecting isolated individuals to create a ground swell for the political act (Artwick, 2018; Syed & Rosenberg, 2018).

In November 2018, Claire Amos, Nicola Ngarewa, Andy Kai Fong, Natasha Hemara, Steve Saville and Maurie Abraham – a group of senior leaders in New Zealand schools - started the Facebook group DisruptED with the intention of networking and supporting isolated disruptors. Mentoring is offered as well as a social learning experiment group all with a focus on disrupting the taken for granted 'normal' functioning of education in New Zealand institutions, and to question; the implementation of the curriculum, assessment, homogenised learning, the teacher as all powerful, just to name a few (DisruptED, n.d.). Education that does not necessarily or only look like the traditional conception of a single teacher at the front of a single-celled classroom is explored as an act of democracy. Educators can post questions and get support from others. Not unquestioning support, but support that helps the original poster to think about their intent, values, cultural implications and personal bias that may be hindering their thinking in some way. This could be conceived as a way of mitigating the effects of the parable of the blind scholars encountering an elephant and the 'holey truth' (Beier, 2018). Productively disobedient thinkers:

> Create alternatives and open doors in walls that the rest of us believed were blank surfaces. They change things because they think beyond limitations. They ask questions that ordinary people don't, and they give themselves levels of permission others avoid. Disobedient thinking is really just another way of describing creativity (Ings, 2017, p. 23).

Through social networking and the coming together of critical friends to challenge each other's disobedience, new realities are creatively conceived and enacted in a space which is outside of the police state and may be the site of politics and true democracy (Ranciére, 1999).

For those educated in the hierarchical neoliberal model, infinite play is an intentional act to begin with before it becomes a way of being in the world (Harré, 2018). Being in a state of finite or infinite play is not a straightforward binary. There is work to be done in unlearning ways of being and an amount of human wrestling that comes with getting to the state of infinite play as normal modus operandi. Ings explores this when discussing attempting to change the 'rules' of his classroom:

> I watched as the initiative began to slide down its first brick wall. I had missed something important. I hadn't understood that these students had been shaped by 12 years inside a comfortable hierarchical system that rewarded them based on their ability to dance to somebody else's tune. They knew only external approval. Risk and responsibility may have sounded great, but these kids were trained to be risk averse (Ings, 2017, p. 159).

Students who have been trained to be risk averse do not suddenly emerge into the world as creative risk takers. Students become adults in corporations and institutions and function in the same risk averse way. They have become 'pawns' in the finite game (Harré, 2018). Pawns are those players who are used by others for their own needs. They are not choosing to play but are forced to participate in the game. Biesta, hooks, Arendt and Rancière all examine this state of being a pawn in the game as an object in life. Their ideas and models of freedom offer a path for players to become the subject of their life. Ings suggests that in order to break from this pawn position, a process of self-actualisation needs to occur which can then lead to productive disobedience and the choice to participate in the infinite game.

Self-actualisation is a concept that stems out of the work of phycologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs' moves from basic physiological survival needs to self-actualisation which is defined by Maslow as fulfilling your personal potential. There are many reasons why Maslow's hierarchy of needs is entirely problematic and there is a surfeit of analysis and critique (see for example; Compton, 2017; Green & Burke, 2007; Kendrick, 2017; Maclagan, 2003; Winston, 2019) including issues of the Eurocentricity of the original research. In synthesising the work of Arendt, Biesta and Rancière, I would like to offer a definition of self-actualisation as the way in which individuals not only think about themselves and what they can do in the world, but also about their interactions with the people in their communities. In the current context, this includes

people in face to face communities and also in online communities in which they interact. bell hooks (1994), describes self-actualization as necessary for teachers in order to demonstrate to those in their care how they may also attain self-actualization. In relating this to the act of freedom, it can be mapped onto the three aspects of life outlined by Arendt with self-actualisation being the act of freedom. This is becoming a collaborator in life with others, not a pawn who has life imposed on them. It is the move from the object of living to the subject of one's life.

To engage in the disobedient game of life is not a simple task. It is choosing to engage in life and relationships that resist the accepted neoliberal paradigm of individual attainment and winners and losers to move into a posture of plurality for freedom and flexibility of enactment depending on who shows up to play. The next chapter will take on the task of applying these ideas to the context of education in New Zealand.

Chapter 3 – The Disobedient Education Game

Introduction

The infinite game is dynamic and unfolding as it flexes depending on the players who show up to play. Therefore, there is no formula for the application of infinite game play to the education game, but rather it is a principle which emerges only sporadically (Rancière, 1995). Carse, Harré and Ings all suggest, rather than a formula, a posture of infinite play, a readiness to engage in infinite play with those who show up to play. In this chapter, there are three specific areas in education will be explored with reference to infinite game theory and productive disobedience. First is the practice of deficit thinking and how infinite game theory can address this and invite the participation of more players into the school setting. Second is the notion of appearance and embodiment and why this is important in disrupting the dominant education game. Finally, the problem of (over)assessment in education and how infinite game theory and productive disobedience can encourage authentic ways to demonstrate learning.

Deficit Thinking

Deficit thinking is a term used when school failure is blamed on the student and their living circumstances rather than the system in which they are being educated (Collins 1988; Gorski, 2008; hooks, 1994). It is an idea that there is a deficit in the student perpetuated through what Gorski (2008) describes as myths of poverty. "Poor people are unmotivated and have weak work ethics…Poor parents are uninvolved in their children's learning, largely because they do not value education…Poor people are linguistically deficient…Poor people tend to abuse drugs and alcohol" (p. 2). In an Australian study which looked at disrupting this deficit thinking, Humphry (2014) observed that teachers talking about students employed "the pause" (p. 484) to disrupt deficit discourse about the students with whom they were working. Rather than engaging with the researcher to talk about their students in a way which would place a deficit in the student, the teachers refused to answer the question directly. This may be conceived as productive disobedience. Although they did not appear to have the language to reframe the narrative of their student's experience, the teachers were aware and willing to act politically to resist the particular ordering of the student into acceptable relationships. The discourse of the infinite game could also be used to disrupt

the deficit thinking about students. What if these teachers talked about the students who have come to play and how the system can flex to their needs? Rather than school being a highly prescribed game of 'test cricket', school can be viewed as a flexible game of beach cricket.

Research would have people know that students from low socio-economic areas do not have the same home literacy environment that students in higher socio-economic areas (Burris, Phillips & Lonigan, 2019). But before placing the deficit with the family or child, it is revealed that this difference in the home-literacy environment is not due to parents not valuing education, lack of interest, literacy skills or drug use, it is due to the fact that parents in low socio-economic areas are needing to work many more hours in order to keep children fed and sheltered (Gorski, 2008). It is the system in which they are living that has the deficit, not a deficit inherent in the children or the families. Teachers playing with infinite game values ask how the education game can flex to help these students. Rather than observing what the students do not bring to the education game, they start with what they do bring. They wonder what the goals and aspirations of students are and how they may partner with them to help realise these goals and aspirations. Infinitely disobedient teachers find onramps to education at school whereby all children can bring who they are and enter into the game.

Hamish Brewer, a New Zealander who is the principal of an American middle school, is disrupting the standard schooling game with values that can be mapped to infinite game theory. Brewer (2019), discusses how he has changed the school to suit the students who are there, understanding who is coming to play each day and developing relationships with them to find out what they need. The previous system was failing the children with learning focussed on standardised tests which were contextually irrelevant to the students in the school. With a change to the system and the learning contexts, there has been an improvement in attendance, behaviour, sporting and academic achievement. Brewer (2019) emphasises that there are still high expectations for everyone and that the enjoyment in the game and the rewards from the game are dependent firstly on a willingness to take part.

Brewer contends that through extending to students the invitation to play and, more importantly, building *with* them an onramp to education based on where they are currently located, students then have choices about where they would like to travel. If the barriers in the system are such that some students do not have a choice to play, this is where teachers need to be working to create entrances, spaces of appearance, the invitation to enter the field and the opportunity to choose to play.

Appearance and Embodiment

In addition to building relationships with students, getting to know them personally and having learning that is contextualised for them, according to Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd (2009), it is also the partnership developed between home and school that has the most positive effect on students. This study highlights the historical problem of whanau being invited to participate in the school community on the *school's terms* rather than in open consultation to find out what whanau want and how they want to participate. Through a shift in how whanau are engaged with the school community, the study shows that there are significant improvements in academic and social engagement for students. To use the beach cricket metaphor, this could be seen as extending the game further to include more players and new forms of play. You may be able to imagine the game in action as new people arrive at the beach. Rather than ignoring them and leaving them to work out how they may enter, an invitation is made not only to join the game but to suggest ways of playing that will make the game inclusive and enjoyable for them. In test cricket, it would be virtually impossible for anyone to enter the game. However, in beach cricket, there is a sharing of the power and control over the game which invites anyone who wants to play the option to share in the formation of the rules. Arendt's (1958), notion of power is based on plurality and the coming together of people in political acts. In order to do this, Arendt describes the need for both physical spaces in which to participate and also the space of appearance. This describes the space which is created for people to appear and speak a beginning in order to enact emancipation. When there is only room for one voice (the school) and the plurality of power is not enacted, people are in judgement rather than participating in acts of politics (Arendt, 1958).

In addition to making space for whanau to appear in school communities, the development of space for students to appear in schools and participate in freedom (Arendt, 1958) is equally important in enacting emancipation. Ings analyses being both a teacher and student in a system, although designed with equality as the aspirational outcome (Ministry of Education, 2007), continues to fail many students (Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009). He explores small but significant ways to disrupt the system in which teachers find themselves. Critical questions to ask in education such as how can teachers approach students as equals to enact equality when the education system is built on the verification of inequality through explicative pedagogies (Rancière, 1991). Ings reminds the reader that this shift can also be a dangerous move in a school system that holds children apart from teachers for their own apparent safety. It is entering into such disobedience that participants can enact equality and start from a position of emancipation for all players. 'Profound teaching, transformative teaching, does not draw its essence from curriculum structure or tools of dissemination or planning and marking objectives, but from the quality of human being" (Ings, 2017, p. 82). As Arendt, Biesta and Rancieré all propose, emancipation is not the goal of teaching, emancipation is instead where all human interaction should begin. Teaching could be re-visioned as making space for appearance, committing to the necessity of plurality, stepping away from hierarchical hegemonic structures and resistance to explicative pedagogies which assume inequality.

Ings suggests some barriers to the type of engagement described above within the New Zealand education system, not the least of them being the historical accusations of child abuse in the 1990s. In 1998, teachers were advised to avoid all physical contact with students as it could be misread and form a case for abuse. Ings (2017), describes this time in education as one of "moral panic" (p. 106) which he believes did a lot of damage to children learning about relationships. Relationships based not only in intellectual pursuit but also the full embodiment of human being (hooks, 1998; Vanier, 1998). hooks (1998) talks about the importance of embodiment of the teacher to the practice of teaching. She asserts that somewhere in the system there was a false mind/body split of the teacher and educational focus was centred on the mind only. However, she proposes that "the presence of the teacher as someone who has a total effect on the development of the student, not just an intellectual effect, but an effect on how that

student perceives reality beyond the classroom" (p. 137). In addition to the engineered break by authorities between the physical body with the intellect of the person through fear that physical interactions may be construed as inappropriate, Ings like hooks exposes the physical space of education as promoting this split with the firm immobilized body of knowledge represented in the teacher at the front of the classroom (hooks, 1998) or the principal's office at the front of the school. How physical space is provided can limit or liberate the appearance of players (Arendt, 1958). Harré (2018) suggests that the field of play when engaging in infinite play not be limited. Unlike the limitations of the test cricket ground which is immovable and players must come to the ground in order to play by a very specific set of rules and only once their ability to play has been verified through rigorous training and competition, beach cricket can be played anywhere that people are willing to come together. The location is part of the flex in the rules that infinite play encourages (Carse, 1989).

One relatively new and emerging location for the school game is the online space. In applying Arendt's notions of space, the same consideration for a space for appearance within the online environment can be made. Research suggests that using tools such as e-portfolios and social groups are a way to engage both students and the wider family network in classroom activities (Higgins & Cherrington, 2017; Papp, 2014; Ministry of Education, 2011; Sunderland & Speden, 2017). This is not a one directional interaction simply to view students' work but an invitation to respond, suggest and interact with the community. Making space for teacher and parent interaction and collaboration both in physical and online spaces has ongoing benefits to the child's sense of belonging, connection and support of their learning (Jesson, McNoughton, Rosedale and Zhu, 2015; Porter, 2008).

The Manaiakalani Trust schools have explored how extending their community interactions from physical into virtual spaces could support children's learning where families had traditionally not appeared in the context of the school. The Manaiakalani Trust started with one school in a low socio-economic area in Auckland, New Zealand. The espoused aim was to challenge the workings of traditional schooling to better suit the needs of their community. The emphasis was placed on the use of digital technologies to engage both learners and their whanau with authentic community

consultation and participation (Manaiakalani, n.d.). In research undertaken about the outcomes of the trust, Jesson *et al* (2015) determined that, in addition to a commitment to teacher professional development having an impact on student learning, the online learning spaces that had been created were also having a positive impact on student learning. The researchers observed higher levels of co-creation and collaboration with more students continuing their learning outside of traditional school hours. This is not to credit the use of digital technology solely for the increased engagement, but rather it was the tool used in this context to offer a space for appearance and engagement with which the community were receptive.

The Manaiakalani Trust actively promotes lifelong learning in their community (Manaiakalani, n.d.). Biesta (2013), problematises the notion of the continuation of learning outside of the traditional boundaries of education as it has a tendency to be a commodification of learning. He argues that the discourse of lifelong learning "becomes the matter of the abstract production of human capital" (Biesta, 2013, p. 64) and suggests that although life-long learning is an inclusive part of human development, it is necessary that it is not forced only for economic development. Biesta proposes three *education* purposes (not to be conflated with *learning* purposes); qualification, socialization and subjectification. He argues that the discourse of lifelong learning only attends to the qualification and socialization aspects and does not lead to subjectification.

> While qualification and socialization can contribute to the empowerment of individuals in that it gives them the power to operate within existing socio-political configurations and settings, subjectification has an orientation toward emancipation, that is, toward ways of doing and being that do not simply accept the given order but have an orientation toward the change of the existing order so that different ways of doing and being become possible. (Biesta, 2013, p. 64).

Ings (2017), illustrates that this different way of doing and being comes first from the productive disobedience of teachers to help students imagine alternatives to the ways in which they have been trained. It is more than the subjectification of the learner, it is the subjectification (what hooks refers to in the same way as actualisation) of the teacher. One way that this dance of subjectification can be played out is in the area of assessment.

(Over) Assessment

The Animal School, a fable by George Reavis details the absurdity of school assessments when put into the context of animals like the poor duck who had to drop swimming and stay after school for running practice. The book dedication reads "Dedicated to those children and adults who have unjustly suffered the fate of standardized tests and inappropriate curriculum standards" (Dedication page). Ings (2017), points out that comparative assessment is a relatively recent phenomenon eventuating from the 1700s with the introduction of grades as a means to assess students. Prior to this "assessment was associated with demonstration, discussion and reflexive learning" (p. 52).

Assessment is a game that students learn very early in school with early literacy word lists and basic facts. "Nearly all of us have come through school systems that use comparative methods of assessment, and most of us have learned that they do one thing very well: they teach us that we are not as good as other people" (Ings, 2017, p. 48-49). Filer (2000), identifies systems of assessment used in school as 19th century mechanisms driven by the modernist ideals to rationalise the social world and are based on the "aspiration that merit and competence should define access to power and privilege" (p. x). As previously explored, the aim of infinite game play is not to engage in these types of games which only give continued access to those who already know the rules of 'test cricket', infinite game play in assessment therefore will use productive disobedience to ensure power and privilege are not replicated but all players are supported to self-actualisation.

A report on assessment in New Zealand schools carried out by the OECD in 2012 identified student assessment in New Zealand as "less focussed on summative and "end point testing" and has a broad focus on improving both teaching and learning" (Nusche, Laveault, MacBeath & Santiago, 2012, p. 42). The report also identified varying levels of competence in teachers carrying out such assessments and expressed concern at the time over the implementation of National Standards. The report makes for very encouraging reading with no national assessments and the autonomy of the teacher to make judgements about student learning in ways that suit the school community and the students. However, this is not the lived reality of most teachers and students at the coal face of teaching and assessment. There would not be many students in New Zealand

who have not been subjected to standardised multichoice Progressive Achievement Tests (PATs) and the consequences of ability groupings that flow out of these (see for example; Bailey & Bridges, 2016; Bradbury, 2019; Francis, Taylor & Tereschenko, 2019). Schools have individual policies on the administering of assessments whereby some schools follow a more infinite practice to allow for individual difference (such as more time given to students with processing differences or no time limits placed on the completing the test) and others ensure the finite values of 'standardisation' of the test is strictly followed.

There is much research on the validity of standardised testing and what it may offer to the process of schooling (see for example; Dewey, 1916; Fullan, Quinn & McEachen, 2018; Pearce & Williams, 2013; Stewart-Beach, Brown, Fabiano, 2016). In addition to the validity of the results is the question of the purpose of assessment. Understanding that standardised assessments can give data that may be circumstantial and not a reflection of the learning or reveal the next steps the student may need to take in their school journey; how might teachers disrupt the application of these tests to better reflect the purpose of the assessment and guide the school journey of students? For example, if the purpose is to find out how many mathematical strategies a student knows and can use, yet the test is written in language that requires a student to have a certain reading level in order to show their use of mathematical strategies, it would follow that this student would need a reader for the test to assess their mathematical strategies rather than their reading competency. If reading comprehension is what is being assessed, is there a need for the test to be timed? In fact, it would provide a more comprehensive picture of the learner's reading comprehension if the time restrictions were removed and the time it took was instead noted. This may help the teacher to understand and then support the learner who is racing through tasks with multiple mistakes in contrast those who may get everything correct but need more thinking time.

In response to assessment *for* learning rather than assessment *of* learning, teachers can develop learning experiences to suit learner's needs. With information which is more indicative of where a student is currently and where they want to journey to, the student and teacher can work together. "Comparative education systems teach us that in the race for learning, there are winners and losers and, as in most races, the losers outweigh

the winners" (Ings, 2017, p. 49). How can teachers in the school system be productively disobedient in assessment and change the test cricket nature of the assessment game into a beach cricket paradigm? Questions of; purpose, time, context and delivery need to be considered with a strong defence of unstandardised procedures for those engaging in such changes.

Another aspect of assessment that warrants questions is the giving of grades or marks. "What do I need to do to get an A?" Marks "make assessment about what will be 'worth' learning based not on intrinsic value but on its capacity to earn them marks" (Ings, 2017, p. 53). Ings (2017), describes all of this comparative assessment as leading to the view that education is a product, not a process. This is particularly disheartening in the field of Teacher Education as there is a hope that the process of learning would be valued. Gilbert (2005), explains this using the idea of the "production line of education" (p. 56). She paints a picture of the student moving through the production line, each 'product' getting the same input and at the end of the production line quality control tests the products and sorts by ability to determine who will move on and who are rejected (Gilbert 2005). Gilbert asserts that this industrial age system was tolerated "largely because there were plenty of low-skill, reasonably well-paid jobs for our education system's low achievers" (p. 61). Gilbert goes on to conceptualise knowledge and how it is transmitted from the expert to the novice who is expected to be able to store and retrieve that knowledge as close to what the expert passed on. In order to see this product of education, assessments are used to determine if the knowledge stored is correct. Gilbert highlights the need to shift from students only having to access stored knowledge (and this may mean not needing to store it in our own memories but knowing where to find it) to the need to mobilize that knowledge. She strongly suggests that "we need to start thinking about education as helping people learn how to *do* things with that knowledge, how to use that knowledge to generate new knowledge" (p. 75).

Although Carse and Harré do not speak to assessment directly, infinite game play does theorise the nature of knowledge and how it is used. "The infinite game seeks and responds to information about the world; Winners of finite games claim knowledge of the world which may be treated as truth" (Harré, 2018, p. 106). In traditional models of school and assessment, summative assessments (assessment *of* learning) could be seen

as part of the finite game. The end point where there are winners and losers – those who pass and those who fail. Winning admits you into further play whereas losing gets you removed from the team unable to compete anymore. For infinite game players in schools, formative assessment (assessment *for* learning) would be an appropriate way to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to continue playing with the support and direction they need. Disobedience in the area of assessment is where Ings (2017) offers many examples of needing to know the rules in order to bend the rules (Carse, 1986). Ings argues:

> In this environment the generation of measurable artefacts and performances has gradually become more valued than the process of learning. This may be very good if we understand education in terms of performance and its indicators, but we might ask, 'Does this systematised, measurable and demarcating paradigm value learning, or merely nominated performances of it?' (p. 97).

In tertiary institutions, which are heavily regulated (Ball, 2012), there is room for innovation in assessment to highlight an on-going process rather than the nominated performance of it. Instead of the standard academic essay as a means of reproducing the learnt knowledge (Gilbert, 2005), more innovative assessments may be used to demonstrate not only understanding but also how concepts may be synthesised and used in practice. Iterative assignments can be used which encourage the progressive development of a final product with feedback at many steps of the process reflecting more of a real world work process used in the design industry (Barker & Pinard, 2014; Davis & Dargusch, 2015; Ko, 2014; Meek & Godwin, 2014). Using an iterative process, students can choose to act on the feedback, or not. At the end of the process, the final iteration is given the required grade. Through this process students have the opportunity to circle back on what they are in the process of producing to revisit and improve. Iterative assignments also lend themselves to collaboration designed to simulate team/syndicate working conditions. Not only is the on-going process and the final content assessed but also collaboration and communication skills through artefacts such as diaries and self-reflection (Meek & Godwin, 2014).

There has been a shift in assessment in New Zealand secondary schools to NCEA, but because "Marking and belief in its veracity became a socially embedded truth" (Ings, 2017, p. 51) the system still grades and ranks students against the number and type of

credits they achieve. Access to scholarship exams and therefore scholarship rewards to tertiary education are open to the highest scoring students. Not all schools are obediently following this 'socially embedded truth', there are a small cluster of schools experimenting further with new ways of learning and assessment, resisting the standard individual grade allocation to a final product. Albany High School, Ormiston Junior College and Haeata Community Campus ("Albany Senior Highschool", n.d.; "Assessment Online", n.d.; "Education Review Office", 19/07/2018; "Haeata Community Campus", n.d.) are in the process of disrupting the norm in learning and assessment and stretching the aspirational values of the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) with project based learning, co-operative teaching, vertical student groupings, micro-credentialing and developing authentic partnerships with business and industry. This all leads to formative assessment practices such as the use of small group feedback, peer and self-feedback, the use of portfolios and student agency in how they narrate their learning as a process and not as a final product (see for example; Ballentyne, Hughes, Mylonas, 2002; Barnes & Gillis, 2015; Nusche, Laveault, MacBeath, Satiago, 2012; Tait-McCutcheon & Knewstubb, 2018).

I return again to the Buddhist parable of the blind scholars and knowing 'holey truth' and suggest that in addition to productive disobedience of using and flexing assessments with the purpose to inform the learning process, that those playing the infinite game know that there is not one holder of all knowledge. It is a conscious move away from individualism to authentic plurality with others and valuing what each brings to 'the game'. It is the coming together of multiple players from multiple contexts that gives a fuller picture of 'truth'. This is plurality at work, it is the beginning of freedom (Arendt, 1958).

Chapter 4 – An Invitation to Play

It is at this point in Futuring when aspects of the past and the present have been examined, the field of play has been considered, a philosophical basis for thinking has been established, and playing life as an infinite game player has been suggested as a framework for living in what is a Western industrialised individual hegemony of finite play. It is time to envision what is possible in this paradigm and determine how to enact it in the present.

The following work of fiction attempts to pull together the threads of possible lives played in a finite and infinite way. The purpose of the work is to offer the reader a space to indulge in poiesis, forming ideas of how finite and infinite games may be played, specifically in the context of school. There have been many written, thought about, and talked about iterations of this work. The practice of making space for others to appear in the confines of a linear work of prose is not as straight forward as I expected. But nor is the work of performing it in everyday life.

As stated in the introduction, the form is based on the writing of Jean Rath using textual layering to leave "invitational Lacunae within and between the textual layers" (2012, p. 442). It is an experiment in praxis (Freire, 1972; Freire, 1985) where the new may emerge in an act of poiesis, emancipation, freedom and democracy, or not, this is where the freedom lies.

Sunrise. That moment where all is revealed as new in the world with the beginning of the day. But the sun does not rise. It's a common fallacy that the sun breaks the horizon and rises to reveal itself in all of its vibrant colour, screaming to the world "you are dark no longer". But this is not the case. The sun does not rise. The sun stays in its place, it is the earth that moves to reveal the sun. The earth tilts allowing the sun to spread across its face, while simultaneously hiding the sun from others.

If our fundamental understanding of day and night and the movement of time is flawed through belief in the rising of the sun rather than the tilting of the earth, what else might be wrong…

My name is Mika. I'm average. No need to try too hard 'cause it won't make any difference. I don't really know why. Last week when I tried to tell my teacher that the sun didn't rise every day but instead the earth tilted, she said "same thing" and just moved on. But it's not the same thing. And the sun that rises for me is not the same as the sun that rises in Africa or in the North Pole. People see things differently and a sunrise (that is not really a sunrise) is not experienced the same everywhere, at the same time, by everyone. But I am just average, so who am I to think such things. My writing for the day talks about a sunrise because talking about earth tilt is not what is wanted or expected.

> Everything I thought this would be it is not constant demands for data and proof of learning and planning before I even get to know who I am planning for and mental health issues that I don't have time to do anything about cause I am swamped with meetings that could be emails and writing reports that no one reads and parents blaming me for the job that they are supposed to be doing with digital streams telling kids who they are supposed to be in a world that has gone bonkers with the need to be busy and fill every moment and every space with something as long as it's not nothing. God, I just want to stop.

My name is Mika. I love writing. It's when I think about things. Pen on paper, fingers on a keyboard, dictating to my AI, lying on the floor, sitting in the forest, at a desk, with my friends, alone…it doesn't really matter. I craft images of real and imagined things, of possibility and dreams. Some of it is great, my friends say it's inspiring. But sometimes they screw up their faces and say "huh?". We laugh at the absurdity of it and move on to something else.

My name is Kahukura. This is just how I thought it would be…well, most of the time it is. Bit different from when I first started doing this. It took plenty of leaps, from

boulder to boulder to get to this place. Standing mid-stream and taking in the view of where we have been and the multiple paths we could still take. Some of the kids are just starting this crossing while some are far ahead. We are all in view of each other though and can report where there are unstable rocks which we might want to avoid.

God, this feels good.

Ugh…it's writing again. Why do we have to do this every day? Book out. Write the date. Underline in red. Leave a line. Do a mind map to plan. Plan a story that no one will read and I did not want to write. Write on every second line so I can edit later, another thing that is pointless. But I will "need it in my future". Really? If that's what the future holds then I want no part of it.

Reliever.

Tashi and I wrote a story today and posted it on our blog. We also recorded it as a sound file so Ahi could enjoy it as well. We thought "The Dragon Teacher" was a great story. But Kahukura mentioned that it could be taken the wrong way and upset some people. So we went back to our writing to make sure the Dragon Teacher was depicted as a mythical creature taking students on flights of learning rather than a beast to destroy children and their quests. Ahi suggested that there could be a "bad dragon" as well and then there could be an epic fight of good and evil. But we didn't want a fight. We did invite Ahi to write the other side of the story and post it though.

Dragon teacher? Delightful. I could show them what a Dragon Teacher really is. It's not what they mean though. The teacher is mythical. Bit sad. But I can see how they would think that. It's not easy being a mythical dragon in a world of pre-programmed cyborgs.

Perfect, it's PAT listening test today. Two hours of taken up where I don't have to think and I'm so tired from Grandma's tangi last week I could do with the naptime. I mean, What. Is. The. Point?

I am here but I am not really here. I have to go. I can't stay. I am dying. There is no life. What. Is. The. Point?

My world fell apart last week when Grandma died. I haven't been to school in a week and as I returned this morning there was a quiet respect from Tashi and Ahi as they surrounded me with aroha. Kahukura asked what I needed but I didn't know. "Do you want to talk about Grandma?" I did, I wanted to tell all of our stories of baking ANZAC biscuits at the bench in her kitchen and gardening and every year trying to win the bean growing competition. There was too much to remember and I didn't want to forget anything. Kahukura led me to the sharing area, we sat down, "tell us your stories and we will listen and record them for you". At the end of the day there was a memory book and I loved Kahukura and my friends even more than I did before.

Oh God…pain shared is not pain halved and all I want to do is make things better for Mika. We can't though. We can make space for grief and for remembrance and for love and maybe for the seed of hope. Hope that even though grandma is gone, she lives on through each of us sharing the stories and re-membering her into our lives. Today I will go home to bake ANZAC biscuits at the bench with my children and think about Grandma.

Sunset. That moment where all is shadowed and the world is left to rest. But the sun does not set. It's a common fallacy that the sun dips below the horizon sinking to veil itself behind the earth with vibrant final streaks of colour, screaming to the world "I will return". But this is not the case. The sun does not set. The sun stays in place, it is the earth that moves to veil the sun. The earth tilts removing the effects of the sun from its face, while simultaneously revealing the sun to others.
If our fundamental understanding of night and day and the movement of time is flawed through belief in the setting of the sun rather than the tilting of the earth, what else might be wrong…

Conclusion

According to Slaughter (1994, p. 22) to "steer correctly, a system with inherent physical momentum needs to be looking decades ahead". Even though the New Zealand Curriculum has aspirational infinite game type vision, the physical momentum of the education system holds the current status quo through the training of people in a system that replicates inequitable outcomes through such devices as deficit thinking, loss of participation and embodiment for authentic participation and (over)assessment (for further reading see; Boyd & Hipkins, 2012; Cowie, Hipkins, Keown & Boyd, 2011; Fastier, 2016; Hipkins 2009; Hipkins *et al* 2011; McDowell & Hipkins, 2018; Wasson 2014). In addition to the problem of a system which replicates inequalities, looking decades ahead can be difficult when a political term is three years and education is dependent on the finite ideologies of politicians (Slaughter, 1994). Slaughter goes on to say that "educators arguably constitute one of the few constituencies in society with an inherent responsibility to take a longer-term view" (p. 25). However, the responsibility is not placed only on educators, but that educationalists, planners and policy makers all need to work together with the empirical informing the critical and epistemological (Slaughter, 1994). Most important in this planning is the inclusion of indigenous world views so that the ideology of Western industrial hegemonic is not the imposed answer on a grateful world but that a range of cultures and world views are represented (Slaughter, 1994; Slaughter 1995). Part of this planning will be the invitation for all players to sit with different beliefs and ways of being. 'Being' here contrasted with that of 'having' (Slaughter 1995). The tension of sitting with these different beliefs and ways of being will need to be viewed as a positive feature of being rather than an attack on one's own person (Gibbons, 2009). As both Slaughter and Carse point out, the future is a reorientation away from a completed past to a future that is yet to be created. A future in the state of 'being' which is where:

> One rests secure in the richness of one's human and wider cultural inheritance. It is a poised and dignified state, not under threat. One lacks nothing essential because all the essentials are already given: life, consciousness, awareness. There is no inner scarcity" (Slaughter, 1995, p. 19)

In imagining education as diverse, non-hierarchical, collaborative, connected and a joyous expression of what it is to be human, what are the connections and potential

pathways that might lead to this? It would be hypocritical of me to suggest an answer as the preceding work intends to highlight the necessity of multiple voices and multiple possibilities for the future. However, as Sardar (2013) points out "It [the future] is created through our actions or inaction in the present" (p. 5). What if teachers' future actions were guided by infinite game principals in an effort to invite and make space for as many people who want to play to be able to play? The barriers put in place to keep people from playing, such as (over)assessment and the valuing of Western constructs of knowledge might be questioned in order to unveil systems of oppression and open pathways in which more people might play the education game. How might a de-centring of the personal and individual, in order to make space for the experience of others, aid all to learn how to play new variations of the game? I would suggest a posture of radical co-operation with an intention to invite the same from others.

As described at the very beginning of this dissertation, this boulder jumping quest's purpose had a mission in its movement, but the path and final destination were unknown (Vogel, 1974). I have explored an overlooked and marginalised way of living in the world to question the way in which schools are currently operating as social constructors and restrictors and how these ways of living can act as resistance to economic, social and political competition. In collaboration with the works of Biesta, Arendt, hooks, and Rancière, I have suggested ways in which freedom might be enacted and experienced at school. However, more than the academic pursuit of philosophy, thinking and writing, the quest has been formational to the core of my personhood. I engage in life equipped to outwork that which I have learnt. In fact, there have been opportunities for this outworking as I have quested across the great boulder field of words, readings, re-readings, questioning, and conversation, to tentative acts of appearance, democracy and freedom. The pull of poiesis to truly see others and be part of the new brings deep joy and a desire to continue this quest.

There are several diversions which have not had the space to appear in this particular boulder crossing, such as: the deeper notions of colonisation, not just colonisation in the past but how it continues into the present; the way in which futures discourse can paradoxically inhibit change due to the future framed as forever deferred; and the more insidious nature of globalisation with the attempted erasure of a diverse future. The

intention is to continue beyond the end of this written dissertation to explore philosophy more fully with an explicit desire to listen to indigenous philosophy and marginalized world views to embrace the life expanding differences found in diversity all the while asking, how does this form and inform the spaces which I inhabit?

Welby Ings finishes *Disobedient Teaching* with an encouragement to those choosing to play by the ever-flexing rules of 'beach cricket':

> And finally, question bravely and constructively. Stand up for ideas. Be tenacious. Take courage. Disobey. To do this you have to believe in yourself. *Really* believe in yourself. You are your own source of power to make things better. You are the font of tenacity and wonder, the wellspring of ideas and the origin of strength. Never, never let people convince you otherwise (p. 189).

On the first read through *Disobedient Teaching*, I found this inspiring. After examining all that I have and taking up the invitation of Carse and Harré to play with that which is offered and in collaboration with the ideas of Arendt, Biesta, hooks and Rancière, I would like to modify this ending slightly and offer an invitation for you to do the same…

And finally, question bravely and constructively. Stand up for ideas that seek to include the participation of all, especially in taking down barriers to participation such as Western, neoliberal, individual barriers. To do this, you have to believe in others. *Really* believe in others. It is *we* who are the source of power to make things better for those who have been unable to join the game. We are the font of tenacity and wonder, the wellspring of ideas and the origin of strength. Never, never let the 'test cricket' players convince you otherwise.

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