

NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE ARTS 2016

Report 2016

PREAMBLE

The National Roundtable on Teacher Education in the Arts (NRTEA) is a national laboratory of ideas, a national forum for discussion and communication, and an incubator of visions, strategies and principles, concerning all aspects of pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development.

***THE FULCRUM FOR
DISCUSSION IS
ALWAYS THE
NATURE OF THE
TEACHING-
LEARNING
ENCOUNTER IN
TEACHER
EDUCATION.***

The main organizers and participants in NRTEA come from faculties of education, teacher organizations and institutions, artist organizations, and government officials. They come together once a year, in a very non-partisan manner, to share, track trends, explore issues and engage in stimulating dialogue in the hope that these activities will lead to greater understanding of teacher education in the arts and help them make considered choices today that are important to them and the communities they serve.

Our first principle is to support the finest possible teacher education in the arts, for those involved in school classrooms and community settings. By arts, we refer to dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts, in traditional settings and in new and experimental combinations. NRTEA was founded in 2011 with the first National Roundtable held on May 25 and 26, at the National Arts Centre, in Ottawa. All of the annual Roundtable meetings have been followed by summary/analytical reports that have been given wide national distribution and are posted on our website at nrtea.ca.

Every year, a new steering committee for the Roundtable identifies and elaborates, a theme or a challenge to teacher education in the arts (TEA) that is of national significance and would benefit both participants and those reading about the outcome of the NRTEA. The focus of investigation is often an outshoot of the previous year's work, which was identified in our conclusions or suggested as possible future directions by participants. The process of developing and planning the schedule is an organic one. The steering committee invites past participants and associates to comment and participate in the elaboration of a programme. The final programme is only finalized a month before the event.

**MANY
PRESENT AND
FUTURE
TEACHERS AS
WELL AS
THEIR
STUDENTS
ARE GAMERS.**

This year, the title for NRTEA was, '**Gaming and aesthetic experiences in the actual and virtual world**'. Today, video gaming is a very big industry and is an integral part of our popular culture. It is a form of popular art. Video games offer fun and a sense of wonder. They spark our imaginations, our need to explore and to be creative. New teachers and teacher candidates have grown up with the Internet, the use of computers, smartphones and have been exposed to electronic games and understand virtual reality.

Gaming is an ancient human activity and still central to the world today. In the case of video games, the debate about whether they are an art form has been discussed by academics since this new form appeared 30 years ago. We, as teacher educators and arts educators, need to also investigate this issue and look into the impact that games and virtual reality have on arts education.

**THIS LEADS
TO MANY
QUESTIONS
SUCH AS:
HOW DOES
THIS AFFECT
ARTS
EDUCATION?**

It is important to look into the creative potential of this emerging medium for arts education, given its aesthetic potential as well as its ludic and interactive central characteristics. The use of various components of the arts is ubiquitous in these games. How are aspects of various art forms related to video games? Does gaming enhance our knowledge of the arts and develop our artistic creative abilities? Are video games a form of art and/or are they a computer programming achievement? Do they have artistic qualities? Do they provide aesthetic experiences? How do they affect the player(s)? Could the exploration of games and video games be a new area not only to use in our teaching but a way to have a better understanding of today's living culture? What role is played by virtual reality? Should this new art form (or not) be the subject of critical analysis to see what it does contribute? What is the role of graphics, space, music, emotions, narrative, characters, and motion in these games? Why should we care?

There are many genres of games and video games. Among these: adventure, puzzle, building/creating, war/'shoot'em up', science quest and therapeutic. They serve various functions: learning, entertainment, escape, strategizing and problem solving. They capture our attention, feed our imagination, invent new worlds, create social networks, encourage competition with oneself and others, and call upon our creative impulses. What role they play in our creative and aesthetic development, learning and experiences was central to our Roundtable 2016 focus and discussions.

METHODOLOGY

The 28 participants were assigned into four groups. The selection was made to

ensure all groups had representation from all four art forms: music, drama, dance and visual arts. Participants came from mainly Ontario and Quebec and represented university professors, arts consultants, arts teachers, municipal and provincial government officials including the Ontario College of Teachers, graduate candidates, students and artists.

We met on May 16th and 17th at Ottawa City Hall and the National Gallery of Canada. Participants debated at length, the same generic questions, following presentations that addressed gaming and: music, drama, dance and visual arts. All groups had a facilitator, usually a steering committee member, and a reporter. Group discussions were followed by individual group report presentations to all other groups.

GENERIC QUESTIONS

- Why should teachers care?
- What teacher and educator concerns and anxieties need to be addressed?
- What are the advantages?
- Identify, analyse, discuss and weigh the aesthetic elements in 'Gaming'.
- What are the similarities with media arts?
- What strategies can we use when introducing 'gaming'?
- When does a game or video game become art?

The report starts with a summary and comments on the five keynote presentations that were part of the Roundtable. This is followed by a summary of responses, guided by the above questions, from all groups. We conclude with a summary of the wrap-up presentation made at the National Art Gallery by all four groups. The authors of this report have added conclusions.

SUMMARY OF KEY PRESENTATIONS

There were 5 presenters at Roundtable 2016, all of whom offered personal and professional information and insights on 'Electronic Gaming and the Arts'. The first, called "**Utilizing Game Dynamics in Arts Education and Beyond**" was an overview of these connected topics, given by Dr. Douglas Archibald, an associate professor in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa. In general, he illuminated and integrated new technologies for incorporating gaming characteristics into all aspects of arts education. He began by touching on the principles of collaborative learning with inter-active content. In this sense, he concluded that gaming could make learning more engaging; chiefly through case based scenarios in gaming structure. Dr. Archibald cited the work of Prof James Paul Gee, researcher on applications of linguistics to literacy and education. His principles* of learning through video games include:

1. The empowerment of learners.
2. Problems/case based learning.
3. Promotion of 'deep' learning or understanding.

4. Sense of ownership over the learning and the experience.
5. Power of authenticity through autonomous manipulation of the game, illustrating multiple solutions to individual problems.
6. The provision of individual challenges to problems in providing 'pleasantly frustrating' experiences leading to rich senses of accomplishment.
7. Creation of safe environment for risk-taking (accepting failure as a positive step forward), beginning with simple challenges leading to gradual increases in complexity.

*(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4aQAgAjTozk>)

In commenting on these principles, Dr. Archibald focused on gaming structures that developed understanding complexity. Here, the focus is placed on an increase of 'situated meaning', which is a combination of words and actions/experiences. He reminded us that gaming technology is only a platform for the achievement of learning goals. It is not a goal in itself.

BEN SAJO, A MUSICIAN, TEACHER AND GRADUATE CANDIDATE IN EDUCATION, AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA PRESENTED " GAME-BASED LEARNING IN MUSIC".

Ben defined music as 'organized sound in the air'. He suggested that music is the 'soundtrack to our lives'. For him, there are 2 ways to contemplate music: one, through 'concatenation', which is reacting to music as feeling from one moment to the next and two, through 'architetonicism', which is a formal appreciation as a whole, from a distance. We place our own meanings onto music so that sounds become analogous to our experience.

Carolee Mason, a former secondary teacher and currently an adjunct professor with Brock University and OISE (University of Toronto), gave the following keynote. Her session was entitled **Exploring role-play in Gaming**. She emphasized that there is a new importance for young people of all forms of social media as revelations to their places in the world. As teachers of drama/theatre, we must increasingly be aware of the impact of technology on the form and creative process of live dramatic performance. Our aesthetic frontiers have been significantly altered by these changes. Even our body images have changed. Now, our complete connection to the world must include connection to our digital devices. This has revolutionary effects on what we used to call live theatre. It is now a mix of 'actual' and 'virtual' life, creating a completely new dimension of arts impact and resonance.

THE BIGGEST IMPACT OF GAMING IS CREATING GAME

Actually, game based collaboration has roots in the writings of Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton, both writing since the 1960's, as they illuminate the collaborative impact of their concepts of role playing and

**BASED
COLLABORATIVE
RELATIONSHIPS.** teacher-in-role in collective planned/spontaneous improvisation. Through their theories, and those of others, game players can learn of the skills required in collaborative, spontaneous creative work.

Certainly the creation of on-line characters, or avatars, can be greatly enriched by experiences in the Heathcote/Bolton tradition. With the writings of Uta Hagen and David Booth, 'players' can learn deeply about writing-in-role. In general, drama work provides deeper thinking opportunities for on-line character creation in gaming. The great challenge of any of this kind of work is not to lose the actual life experience of feeling the presence of others. The danger of gaming is that it can trivialize reality, in particular, human feeling (emotion and thought combined). Real life relationships in drama can be immensely powerful. This depth of experience is very difficult to achieve in an exclusively game format. Gaming can be a great asset in providing another medium of exploration but is dangerous when it is the exclusive experience in any dramatic exploration and expression.

JoDee Allen, who is a dancer, choreographer and game designer, presented on dance with the title '**Dance Gaming as Embodied Play**'. She suggested that gaming is an exciting additional avenue for choreography. There are dance choreographic games, designed by dancers for enhanced movement authenticity. All movement in games is choreography, often following a male movement model. Form and rhythm concepts can be explored in a game design for movement. Originally popularized in an arcade setting, it has taken on an immediate social meaning in reality to parallel the virtual. The game players actually mime the designed game movements, so here, the total experience is, on balance, a combination of the real and virtual. So, embodied experience is merged with the virtual leading to an avatar in a game format actually guiding a real player's movement as well as the player influencing the avatar. This has led to an increased individualization of new dance styles and choreography. JoDee cautioned that learning to play dance games is not a replacement for learning to dance.

The final keynote presentation focused on Visual Arts given by Genevieve - Leblanc, a theatre artist, professional game designer and radio host, was entitled '**New Frontiers: Why Nurturing the Gamer is Nurturing the Artist**'. She suggested that the fastest growing new avenue for artistic expression, across disciplines, is virtual gaming.

**THE DESIGN PROCESS
OF NEW GAMING IS NOW
AS LARGE A
COMMERCIAL INDUSTRY
AS ALL FORMS OF
PROFESSIONAL FILM** Gaming design is now a very large global business and includes both international corporations and independent individuals operating on a 'cottage' industry model. The process elements of gaming design and development are closely parallel to those in film animation. Similar imaginative and

ANIMATION.

creative interactions are employed.

In this sense, the exploration and expression in gaming invention, is analogous to any artistic process. One issue that increasingly is affecting young people is loneliness. Many virtual games can both illuminate and alleviate this sense of disengagement with real life. In the catharsis provided by gaming, our emotions and stories are projected into the experience, much as happens as we engage in any art form. The unique feature of gaming is the inter-activity between participants and with the self. The player is both creator and appreciator of meaning in the experience. Here, important aspects of moral reasoning and ethical choices can be examined. Gaming can provide a powerful visual narrative with, at times, a strong sonic dialogue. Unique symbols and imagery can be developed and communicated along with the canon of current cultural symbols that apply to all aspects of the human condition. In this sense, gaming can be the ultimate integrated arts. But, there are currently limits. General real human experience remains at the moment, supreme in human condition enrichment. Virtual contexts do not currently totally replace reality with most people. At the moment, for example, gaming provides weak experiential potential in texture, taste, and smell as well as not providing our contexts in synesthesia (our totally perceptual and experiential sense of reality).

RESPONSES TO GENERIC QUESTIONS FOLLOWING ALL GAMING PRESENTATIONS

One-hour discussions followed all four presentations on: music, drama, dance and visual arts. Groups sometimes followed the order of the questions and others commented randomly on various parts of the presentation. Responses collected from all groups were then organized and presented using the seven original questions format. This summary provides the reader with a comprehensive overall view of the content of discussions. Groups made reports at the end of each discussion period. This was done in various ways: some highlighted various aspects of their discussions; others created an artistic product; and some engaged the other groups in some artistic activity that reflected the spirit or essence of their thoughts. The following is a summary of their written responses.

1. Why should teachers care?

Gaming is a culture in which kids are already immersed and sometimes is an important part of their daily activities. We, as teachers, need to understand this significant part of their lives.

Today we can say there exists a 'Digital Citizenship', individuals, who participate in society using various forms of digital means to communicate and express themselves. In gaming there is also a digital society of citizens, not limited to a geographic region. This new 'digital society and its citizens influence how we move and interact, what our values and beliefs are, and how we view secure 'safe spaces'. As arts educators, it is our responsibility to understand this new

realm of citizenry and to help create connections between these virtual and real worlds.

The gaming world is moving closer to actuality through virtual reality. Various games make use of personal avatars. This allows students to experience an imaginary world or a real one through an avatar they have created. For teachers, this can be an important tool to explore in their classes.

Dance games are important because they can be tools, infinitely more interactive than YouTube videos. They are interactive and can be used to teach steps, choreographies, skills and vocabulary. For primary/junior teachers learning dance steps, they provide ways to interact and develop more comfort with a dance form.

Video games are now \$3 billion of Canada's GDP. This industry directly employs 20,500. It represents a possible future career for our students. The skills they need can be acquired through arts education offered in our schools.

2. What teacher and educator concerns and anxieties need to be addressed?

Most concerns and anxieties have to do with technology and gaming - the topic can intimidate teachers. Many teachers lack of knowledge and skills in using this new tool and use this situation as a deterrent to engage in gaming. Lack of technology knowledge means fear of losing control (i.e., teacher versus facilitator). Most teachers teach the way they were taught. Teachers want to be knowledgeable and current, while balancing tradition with new ideas. Others were still struggling with all the various new technologies and various devices needed for some games. Those who felt a little overwhelmed with the technology were reassured that they could 'Push the pause button and take a walk'.

Given the present nature of gaming, some teachers are concerned with gender equality of experience, as most gaming is designed for and played by males. The gaming world is now shifting and 50% of gamers are women. Their presence has elicited some negative responses from male users that needs to be addressed and dealt with ethically. When discussing 'Digital Citizenship' it was pointed out that gender, race, class etc. are all poorly represented in the current online gaming environment.

Other worries expressed by participants included: the addictive nature often associated with game playing; the issue of safety for students; concerns centered on privacy; morals and ethics dealt with in some of the narrative used in some of the gaming (i.e. kill or be killed); and the wide age-range among participants in online gaming. How does my identity get transformed through digital interaction, emerged as a main question. The gaming community functions like a local community, featuring some divisive opinions and activities.

Some participants felt a great tension between real time learning, haptic learning and virtual learning. This concern was mentioned again and again as participants tried to evaluate the learning experience. One group even wondered if there were budgetary reasons for using gaming, as this methodology might be far cheaper than traditional tools (i.e. instrumental music programs).

Dance and gaming are often misused together for teaching purposes. The majority of games deal with miming and not learning or exploration of movement. Games on specific dance forms (i.e. break dancing) are verbatim learning that causes a codification, which is contrary to the spirit of break dancing. This situation is becoming problematic in that everyone is now dancing the same where once it was a free style form.

Dance games sometime misrepresent cultural signifiers and this could become problematic if the player's understanding of the trueness of these cultural references is misinformed. Filling in the haptic gap with their belief could potentially produce a stereotyped performance that inadvertently mocks the culture instead of celebrating it.

**3. What are
the
advantages?**

Gaming provides engagement and learning for students and is a format they know well. Gaming is a fun way to learn basics in music. Through gaming students can identify their own strengths in certain areas, which helps promote self-directed learning. Competition is not a source of anxiety for students since games can allow you to progress at your own speed, compete against yourself or be part of a team that competes with others in a safe space.

Games can provide access to music experiences where costs and initial skills deficits can inhibit some students. If teachers focus on clear overall music goals they can use gaming to achieve fresh kinds of opportunities, sometimes denied by more exclusive traditional approaches.

Teachers who are not sufficiently skilled or knowledgeable about gaming can tap into their student's abilities and learn from it. We can relinquish control and depend on the students' ability to master something we can't. Our role can be to teach the big picture and foundations using concepts/material we had anticipated presenting. Games can also help us build success criteria and assessment with the students.

We resist the integration of technology in our drama world, but it's already happened – in theatre, video, graphic novels. Students get it. Gaming allows people who don't feel otherwise comfortable to express themselves using this new outlet.

The relationship to work done in drama classes is very strong given that the constructs of many narrative games rely on a narrative/plot line, full of obstacles, rising action, conflicts, climax and resolution. Games allow us to have control, re-create ourselves and the world around us. Through games, we can provide an interesting way of exploring narratives, power imbalance and social status using a new platform.

As drama teachers, we can create the environment for reflective activities and we can push pause and debrief. As artists and teachers, we can advance the online experience of students. The relationships that are created by gaming are the essential benefit for both players and audience. It is collaboration. Even role-playing can become a multi-player versus single player activity.

Games *can* be used in interesting, intricate, intelligent ways in a dance space. Arcade performances occur in public spaces and the performance of the gamer is an integral part of the arcade experience as performer/spectator. Gaming involving body movements creates a social environment where players interact personally. They involve bigger movements that mimic reality and a bigger social space.

The video game often behaves as a choreographic script for player actions. Both dance and games involve the body in potentially transgressive ways. Dance gaming is generally done as a social experience. Gesture consoles often encourage the social experience. When players feel they are actually the avatar, they can feel the movement it makes through their bodies. There is tension between the virtual and actual world.

Games are often interactive visual narrative and there is no need for dialogue. Students are easily motivated to think and speak critically and analytically about games. This helps to build critical analysis skills.

The visual component of games is crucial to drawing gamers in and encourages students to work on designing scenes. Talented students can be led towards animation as a potential career.

Gaming encourages discussion on technology and social issues in the classrooms. We can focus on what we 'need', what we 'want' that will make learning more integrated, meaningful and effective for our students.

4. Identify, analyse, discuss and weigh the aesthetic elements in 'Gaming'.

There is bad music in games and some of the repetitive jingles can make many cringe but depending on the game there can also be wonderful music in the background. Gaming is often an interaction between art and commercialization with all the pitfalls that this can imply. A constant barrage of superimposed sounds creates audio-

clichés, making it difficult to identify compositions with originality. The contrast in the type of music played can be a great opportunity for critical analysis. It can help students recognize some aesthetic principles used in some games.

Music communicates using various chosen and arranged sounds. In gaming music creates mood, motivates the player, inspires action and creates flow. Analyzing how sounds and silences are used can help gamers understand various aspects of the game, how their tension can influence their moves and give them direction or insights.

There is a different use of space in gaming and it differs from the actual traditional space. Can we cultivate the same feeling or experience of being in a physical space with people and being in an online space? The same is true for time. Is the experience of time within on-line parameters equivalent to time in live drama/theatre? Is the manipulation of time the same in online drama? How do online and live time inter-relate? How do we notice and respect that this may be a new reality in our classrooms?

Avatars, their characters, their actions, their speech and costume design provide many opportunities to identify, create and explore aesthetic elements. A challenge is the use of communication tools inherent to the game and if they are enough to create human contact. Where does 'eye contact' come in?

Gaming also provides the opportunity to develop and understand a global aesthetics literacy (i.e. elements/features recognized and appreciated universally) Game creators come from various areas around the world and provide gamers with cultural diversity. Their work invites discussion about, narratives characters, conflict/similarities and culturally based aesthetics. This raises questions around whose dominant culture is represented, affected, silenced and empowered.

Visually stunning games are now being made. They explore not only all elements and principles of design but offer a variety of styles and approach that can enrich our students' own creative process in their own work. The presenter pointed out that 'Indie Games' creators are more concerned with aesthetic value of their work than with then its monetary value.

5. What are the similarities with media arts?

Electronic games do break down boundaries between all the arts. In many ways an understanding and critical analysis of the game can be examined using the elements and principles used in studying 'Media Arts'.

6. What strategies

Games can certainly help students learn basic concepts in

can we use when introducing 'gaming'?

music. Self-learning, where the student must try multiple solutions is also more accessible in gaming. Students can be encouraged to use their own creativity by creating new games or special sound tracks for games.

Using a gaming platform offers another tool to drama teachers for transferring - from the idea to the practice, the doing. Creating your own avatar with its own personal, script and appearance allows students to embody their characters in a different way. It allows them to go from the real to the virtual and back to the real to improve and modify their creation. Students can explore storyline/context in the same way. Follow-up gaming by reflecting about what happened - fosters critical analysis and self-critical reflections.

Playing video dance games provides ways of exploring, specific steps, choreographies. They provide an exploratory, learning and physical activity tool.

The visual arts components of video games are great tools for engaging students in critical analysis. The knowledge gained from such activities can inform and guide their own artistic production and development.

There is so much that could be used in art classrooms here. Teaching concept art and applicative art strategies are particularly useful.

7. When does a game or video game become art?

Music is an important component in many games. Companies often hire well-known composers and musicians to be part of the creating team. Some game scores are part of international repertoires for orchestras. These performances provoke aesthetic experiences as well as emotional aesthetic responses.

The rendering of characters and their development, the depth and relevance of narrative, the action and the cinematography produced in some games are mesmerizing and rival some of the best films. Artists working for gaming companies have created many scenes for films. There can be art behind coding and creating games.

The Dance Dance Revolution – DDR, which was presented by our speaker evolved into players owning their performance because players could nuance the body and upper body because it was karaoke for the feet - so the upper body was free. Even though they were being directed to follow a pattern of the feet based on prompts and cues on the screen and they are being measured on accuracy of execution, there was an element of, once you were very practiced at following visual cues you could begin to 'play' with how the rest of the body could nuance the performance of the game – the creativity then emerged out of very

high level practiced players. The performances of the theses dancers in arcades attract large audiences who enjoy the artistic event.

The technological tools are continually being improved and artists are creating beautiful imagery using these tools. Pixels and polygons to high realism graphics produce animations that look like a blockbuster movies. Many Art museums are turning their interest to this new 'art form' and highlighting their aesthetic merits.

WRAP UP SESSION AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

On the final afternoon session of the second day of discussion, each group was asked to connect all their observations to TEA. The following represents the conclusions shared:

1. Not all teacher candidates are familiar with electronic gaming. Fewer are aware of the aesthetic qualities of gaming. So, the main challenge for teacher educators is the facilitation of gaming experiences with an aesthetic dimension in their classes. Candidates cannot be expected to think deeply about the pedagogy of gaming if they do not have recognizable aesthetic experience with gaming. In part, this is an issue of bringing the present lives of students into the teacher education experience.
2. Teacher educators and candidates are both learners and facilitators together in gaming. The voices of all candidates must be respected. Gaming can assist in discovery of who we are as individuals and as teachers. Here, we can reveal another element of our comfort zone in classroom experience. Teacher educators might benefit from collaborative experiences in gaming project networking.
3. The pedagogy of gaming involves the importance of negotiated relationships in collaboration. The virtual world is shifting even faster than the actual world as they both parallel and intertwine with each other. The digital and embodied worlds are in increasingly dynamic oscillation. The question emerges – how do the arts and media of exploration and expression, shape each other? In pedagogical terms, the space created for gaming affects the nature of the experience itself. To what extent will the virtual and real worlds totally merge? Will there always be a division of some kind? How does gaming reveal our 'true' identities?
4. Is there a distinction between "game, gaming and gamification"? Where do teachers fit into the process of gaming? Gamification of reality may lead to a trivialization of authenticity. 'Re-imagination' is the evolution and intensification of the visual, providing a sense of renewed insight. Gaming might be the most recent and total example of arts integration. What is

the role of the teacher and teacher educator in all this? Teacher educators must think creatively about how to approach the pedagogy of gaming as an aesthetic activity. To what extent does the practice of gaming change us? Is gaming a fundamentally different language of self-communication and communication with others?

5. One of the last questions asked - whether 'Gaming' was a teachable i.e. is it an art form that should be taught in our schools? The participants were divided. One half was in favour and the remaining felt it should just be part of every art form now being taught.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Most of the general conditions of learning that benefit from gaming are the same desired conditions in any learning context. The 7 principles that Dr. Archibald refers to in the work of Dr. James Paul Gee, apply to many learning contexts, including the concept of 'situated learning' which has long been established in the drama education literature (e.g. Way, 1967, Slade, 1954, 1968 etc.)

The ideas of 'organized sound in the air', 'the soundtrack to our lives' in music, as well as the distinctions in contemplation between feeling responses in time and formal holistic appreciation as space in music, brought out by Ben Sajo, are provocative and potentially illuminating, not only in music but in many aspects shared by all of the arts. The space/time dichotomy, as well as the tensions between mass/space; sound/silence; movement/stillness and light/dark, are present in almost all artistic exploration and expression. These oscillations can be heightened by the immediacy and simultaneity of expressive communication in gaming platforms.

In drama experience, gaming can provide a very rich additional dimension. But, the heart of the work is always the face-to-face, live interactions between characters, environment and story frame.

Gaming can provide effective choreographic dimensions in dance, particularly as the dancer can move and plan at the same time. The spontaneous moment can be made more intense and can be captured immediately for further elaboration. These are enhanced tools and opportunities. But, none of it diminishes the power of real bodies moving in real space/time.

There is an oscillating tension between the virtual and actual worlds for many young people today. It would seem that these worlds are becoming increasingly merged in the consciousness and minds of school age children and youth. This probably represents a dramatic change between how generations think and feel. Generationally, we may be growing increasingly apart. Older generations will sense that gaming trivializes life. Older people

feel that the actual world provides greater potential for deep meaning. Digital technology and gaming seem to provide expansive, instant but superficial response to life's imperatives. This may be so. It may also be the case that each generation feels the next one cannot feel life as deeply as they could. It may be a natural human condition of generational tension, caused in part, by the increasingly blurring rate of change and alteration in almost every aspect of life.

Gaming can imprison the player to passive connection to the platform device on which the game is played. For the most part, electronic gaming is a two sense medium. Tactile, olfactory and taste senses are generally minimally stimulated. The normal physical stimulation of exercise and embodied learning is largely absent.

Marshall McLuhan (1964) suggested that all new inventions or phenomena, developed as enhanced tools of communication, ultimately change all of us fundamentally. The fundamental change to the human condition caused by gaming is, as yet, undiscovered.

The future is opaque indeed.

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This report was compiled and written by the co-chairs of the event: Madeleine Aubrey and Michael Wilson.