

**Marija Bulatović**

*Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia*

## **Those Who Want to Play: Pursuing Animal Politics in Upbringing and Education**

**Abstract:** Education is based on intergenerational divisions into the separate worlds of childhood, adulthood, and seniority which educational scientists further divide into even smaller stages. In this paper, in order to problematize the defined modalities of the existence of a child, an adult, and an elderly individual, I will prompt the rooted opinion that play is characteristic of childhood, while the game is typical of later stages. I intend to find in the human lifespan the moments when, after childhood, an adult abandons to play, and to propose the manners of overcoming the intergenerational differences in formal education as a field for surpassing the given in the entanglement of education and life. To surpass the given is extremely important at a time when education is instrumentalized. One of the ways the human can surpass the given is if they extract from play the principle which Massumi calls ludic expressionesqueness that is not immediately noticeable and that has the potential to reinvigorate both educational practices and life itself. Finally, I will examine theories of education and educational practices to see if they have strengths they can rely on in inspiring ethico-aesthetic practices of becoming with the world.

**Keywords:** animal play; ludic expressionesqueness; education; play within formal education; speculative pragmatism.

### **Introduction**

In his book *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*, Brian Massumi forms a life continuum by focusing on the part pertaining to animals and humans and calls it *animal continuum*, admitting that the term is arbitrary and that it excludes plants and the nonorganic.<sup>1</sup> Massumi focuses on this part of the continuum to position animal play as the potentiality of Guattari's *ethico-aesthetic paradigm* of natural politics.<sup>2</sup> In this paper, I will focus on the part of the continuum pertaining to children and adults. At first glance, I have not moved much from either anthropocentricity or the dichotomies

---

<sup>1</sup> Brian Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014), 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

which speculative pragmatism problematizes. However, formal education is based on intergenerational divisions on distinct worlds of childhood, adulthood, and seniority which educational scientists further divide into even smaller stages. In formal education, playing is mostly implemented as free play and/or a game and is adjusted to both the developmental stage of the child/student it is designed for and to the purpose it has in the child/student's life. In this paper, I will also prompt the defined modes of existence of a child, an adult, and an elderly individual, and the ways in which play is established in education. I intend to find in the human lifespan those events when they act and are acted upon in tune with animal politics / politics of play. I aim to offer manners of surpassing, instead of bridging, intergenerational differences in formal education, not as ready-to-use recipes, but rather as a field open for vitality, movement, and invention. In this research, I follow Massumi's idea of extracting from play ludic expressionesqueness – the principle which is not immediately noticeable and which has the potential to reinvigorate both educational practices and life itself. I argue that all activities during each school class and/or other educational processes within education in the broadest sense should be in-acted in a manner of ludic expressionesqueness instead of implementing play/game as one of the educational methods. Finally, I draw attention to Lawrence Stenhouse's definition of curriculum as the field of intersection of educational theories and practices with ethico-aesthetic practices of becoming with the world.

### **The political in animal play**

From the point of relational theories based on the processual model of becoming, the differences between the human and the animal are completely blurred. Therefore, focusing on animal nature is not a characteristic of anthropocentrism but is rather a search for one's own animal nature, for the envelope of becoming-animal potential, for one's own human self-surpassing.<sup>3</sup> This search does not entail an erasure of differences, but rather entering into a space of proliferated differentiation on the grounds of mutual inclusion, in which the greatest value is the zone of indiscernibility.<sup>4</sup> Mutual inclusion abolishes dichotomies and introduces the standpoint of two sides of one process of becoming – the actual and the virtual. On the actual side, forms of life are already established and it includes categorical affect, (content and structure of affect), lived importance (repetition of the roles already established), and the macropolitical sphere (normative ethics), which occur in context as a cultural creation that conditions interactions. The virtual side, as the capacity to mobilize the possible and surpass the given, contains vitality affect (transindividually oriented toward invention), lived abstraction (supernormal tendency for introducing the new to the given), and the micropolitical level (transformative vigilance), which occur in a situation as a singularity free from codification which may turn into a new situation already at the time of occurrence.<sup>5</sup> The zone of indiscernibility is the space where these two sides

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 38, 52, 60.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 43–45.

of becoming are “fused without becoming confused.”<sup>6</sup> That means that any two of the above listed pairs (e.g. lived abstraction and lived importance) do not exclude one another. Within the zone of indiscernibility, they are each other’s processual correlates which do not erase the differences between them but rather maximize the capacity for creating new differences.

When considering animal politics, Massumi is interested in animal instinct. Unlike the usual belief that animals are automatons whose mechanistic algorithm is instinct, Massumi argues that *creativity* and *sympathy* are intertwined in the instinctive behavior of animals, paying attention to animal play as one of the instinctive actions. During play, animals demonstrate sympathy for the other in play. First, they invite other animals to play by making a playful/ludic gesture. It is unsuccessful unless it attracts the attention of the potential partner. Then, both partners experience a joint transformation - transindividuation. That same gesture induces an instant change of situation. Finally, animals at play leave space for their partner’s reaction and further transformation of the situation by showing sympathy as direct affective awareness of the dynamic of the situation. The partners engage in play with their individual differences, and so play becomes a “joint activity of transindividual mutual inclusion.”<sup>7</sup> How are instinct and creativity connected and how is that manifested in play? The instrumental value of instinct is adaptation. Massumi claims that instrumental activity is parasitic in both play and adaptation. Instinct and adaptation cannot be stripped of inventiveness because that would mean that instinct is unable to respond to changes in the environment and consequently there would be no adaptation.<sup>8</sup> Instinct is animated by the tendency to surpass the given which is impelled by creativity. Therefore, creativity is the mental power for spontaneous improvisation in inter-relation with the situation.<sup>9</sup> In play itself, the animals are simultaneously what they are in life and what they are not, but could be. In the playful/ludic gap between “is” and “could be” space is created for surpassing the given, for animal politics.

Creativity and sympathy are the surplus-value of life – that modality that separates play from instrumentality, functionality, usefulness, and representativeness.<sup>10</sup> Massumi calls the surplus-value of life/play the ludic element of play and equalizes this term with the French suffix -esqueness of play, “like in life, but with a little something different, a little something more ... with a vitality affect of play.”<sup>11</sup> Massumi points out that ludic expressionesqueness is a “pure sign of affect”,<sup>12</sup> which has the potential to induce singularity. Ludic expressionesqueness is abductive, it is a situational immediately lived hypothesis. Masumi insists that “[i]nstead of modeling play, it is a question of extracting from play

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 40–42.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 25.

that which surpasses its givenness. It is necessary to extract the ludic from play, in order to stage it in an even more extended and autonomous manner<sup>13</sup> which is “the politics that might flow from it.”<sup>14</sup> The pragmatism of animal political life is in the rootedness in the uncertainty of the situation, in mutual inclusion, whereas speculativeness lies in the mental strength to surpass the given, in the creativity of spontaneous improvisation.<sup>15</sup>

### Conformity of play within the educational context

Today’s society is interested in youth education so that it can ensure young people are ‘ready’ for the labor market, where the conditions are predetermined. Since education is financialized by the economy, education has to be accountable, it must release from school a student who is subject to the given norms which are regulated through educational outcomes – clear statements as to what a student will be able to do once they have left school and entered the world of labor.<sup>16</sup> The behavior of the normed student grows into the predictable behavior of an employee who will contribute to the reproduction of a given society. What kind of play is in play within instrumentalized education? The answer is simple – instrumentalized play that promotes growing up, while at the same time monitoring and controlling the freedom of children/students to discover new things through play. Play is considered useful for the development of cognitive, social, physical, and emotional skills; it is ordered, structured, and organized for specific purposes that serve something outside of playing.<sup>17</sup> Massumi stresses that learning focused exclusively on the modeling of forms of actions to its instrumental ends “would model its pupils to death.”<sup>18</sup> Educationalists highlight the flexibility developed during play as the greatest benefit of this activity. However, flexibility as a desirable characteristic of children and adults, like many other terms, has become part of the neoliberal vocabulary and educational policies.<sup>19</sup> Catherine Malabou proposes the term *plasticity*, instead of the term flexibility which she defines as the passive capacity of an individual to adapt to environmental conditions. According to Malabou, *plasticity* is a more subtle and more complex characteristic which is a twofold process of receiving form while at the same time giving form.<sup>20</sup> Intersected with speculative pragmatism, *plasticity* is inter-relational.

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>14</sup> Idem.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 47–48.

<sup>16</sup> A. V. Kelly, *The Curriculum: Theory and Practice* (London: Sage Publications, 2004), 188–189.

<sup>17</sup> Stuart Lester and Wendy Russel, “Turning the World Upside Down: Playing as the Deliberate Creation of Uncertainty” *Children* 1, 2 (September 2014): 246.

<sup>18</sup> Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*, 12.

<sup>19</sup> A. V. Kelly, “Eduspeak and the Thought Police: Reclaiming the Discourse,” *Education 3–13: Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education* 31, 1 (March 2003): 6–8.

<sup>20</sup> Catherine Malabou, *What Should We Do with Our Brain?* trans. Sebastian Rand (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008): 12–13.

Educationalists have concluded that play that is implemented in the educational process must be adjusted to the age of the player it is meant for in order to meet the criterion of efficiency in the educational landscape. The idea and purpose of the concept of development entail the process of maturing viewed as progress throughout universal phases from simpler to increasingly complex ones,<sup>21</sup> from a newborn to a maximally-contributing member of society. Codification of life serves to establish norms that need to be reached in every age. In maintaining social control in and between social groups, the state project for young people is that those who have already matured lead young people toward the productive phases of life.<sup>22</sup> Adulthood as one of the codes of human life refers to the generation that is most matured and capable of leading other generations. The codification is the basis for inclusive exclusiveness among generations throughout the educational landscape. According to Massumi, exclusion by inclusion does not embrace differences and the production of more differences, but reduces the differences to oppositions.<sup>23</sup> From the adult standpoint, other generations are reduced to the status of the objects whose characteristics are enormously exclusive, although they are all included in human rank.

Along the anthropogical continuum,<sup>24</sup> play is implemented according to levels of formal education, developmental stages, and the educational needs of students of all ages (*Table 1*). In academic discourse, play has numerous definitions. In this paper, I confine myself to the distinction between play and game. Play is the overarching term that contains free play, game, and playful state such as that within playful communication. Play as activity is stretched along the continuum that includes paidia and ludus poles. Paidia refers to spontaneous free play activity of early childhood in which rules develop along with the unfolding of play itself. Ludus refers to rule-governed activity of predesigned game common in the schoolyears and dominant in adulthood.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, the term instrumentalized play I used at the beginning of this section refers more to the presented game definition. Since the detailed overview of how the play/game is used within the educational landscape overreaches the scope of this paper, *Table 1* shows a speculation on one possible distribution of instrumentalized play/game along the anthropogical continuum.

---

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Barry J. Wadsworth, *Piaget's Theory of Cognitive and Affective Development* (Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 1996).

<sup>22</sup> Erica Burman, *Deconstructing Developmental Psychology* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 27.

<sup>23</sup> Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*, 66–67.

<sup>24</sup> I use the term anthropogical continuum as a synonym for the term educational landscape. Anthropogogy is the science of education and upbringing a person/humans throughout their lifespan. Cf. Dusan Savicevic, "Convergence or Divergence of Ideas of Andragogy in Different Countries," *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 27, 4 (July–August 2008): 372.

<sup>25</sup> Roger Caillois, *Man, Play, Games*, trans. Meyer Barash (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 13; Lois Holzman, *Vygotsky at Work and Play* (London: Routledge, 2009), 50; Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman, *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004), 300.

**Table 1.** Anthropogogical continuum and modes of playing

A n t h r o p o g o g y							
Paidagogy	Pedagogy		Hebegogy	Andragogy		Gerontogogy	
0-2	2-6	7-10	11-14	15-18	19-25	26-65	66-106
Nursery	Kindergarten	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Higher and High Education	Adult Education / LLL	Elderly Education
Play as verbal exchange, touch, care	Free play as an integral part of children's reality	Game as an occasional method in education	Game as a sporadic method in education	Game as an infrequent method in education	Game as a highly infrequent method in education	Game as a team building method in organizational learning	Game as mental capacity training
Game as a toy-like object and/or device for stimulation of sensorimotor activities	Game as free-play-like pre-designed activity aimed at achieving learning goals	Game as a sports or logical activity outside of school	Game as a sports, logical, improvisational* activity outside of school	Game as an infrequent sports, logical, improvisational* activity outside of school	Game as a leisure-time hobby and/or entertainment	Game as a leisure-time hobby and/or entertainment	Game as leisure-time entertainment and/or hobby

\* Improvisation can be defined either as free play or game depending on the framing of the improvisational activity. Cf. Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman, *Rules of play: Game Design Fundamentals* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004), 95.

*Table 1* shows that lower levels of education contain both free play and games, while at higher levels games are implemented as educational methods planned in advance, together with the objectives they are to meet. Many educational methods could be gamified (e.g. debate, quiz, storytelling) – framed in such a way that they resemble/become games. Educationalists emphasize numerous benefits of using games within the educational process – reinforcing student engagement and motivation, enhancement of academic achievement, promotion of collaboration skills, enabling immediate feedback through quantification of the game results, catalyzing behavioral changes, ameliorating students’ self-evaluation of their own progress.<sup>26</sup> Gamification is the process of permeation of today’s society with methods, metaphors, values and attributes of digital games.<sup>27</sup> However, gamified educational methods were used before video/computer games came to life.<sup>28</sup> Gamification results in instrumentalization of the educational play/game through the mechanic implementation of all sorts of games within a school class that is sophisticated coercion of students of all ages to become both good consumers and desirable employees in today’s over-gamified society. The question remains open if there is any space for playification of the educational landscape in the manner of animal politics.

Massumi ties ludic expressiveness to play, in other words, to the paidia pole of the play activity continuum. However, he implies that there is nothing intrinsically bad in the game as a form of play. The ludic element of play is the vitality affect – the guarantor of enthusiasm and a sign of potentiality. To gamify play is to introduce emotions into play (e.g. nerves before the start of play, competitiveness during play), which belong to the categorical affect – a sign of power. Categorical affect allows the vitality affect to rise, without it play would lack intensity.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, socio-culturally oriented researchers stress the importance of simultaneity of the state of the player “who they are” and “who they could be.” However, within the sociocultural theory, a child “is” and “could be” only what is available to him or her in social interactions in the context in which they are included and which they spontaneously build during those interactions. Lev Vygotsky’s zone of proximate development counts two: first is a child who is supposed to reach an adult, as the other, with their assistance.<sup>30</sup> Massumi’s zone of indiscernibility counts three – two different, and included middle from which innovation can emerge.<sup>31</sup> The ludic “is” and “could be” opens the field of paradox of the zone of indiscernibility which exceeds context and further leads people to the conclusion that they have lost the capacity to think logically.<sup>32</sup> The fear of that

<sup>26</sup> Sangkyun Kim et al., *Gamification in Learning and Education* (Cham: Springer, 2018), 5.

<sup>27</sup> Mathias Fuchs, “Predigital Precursors of Gamification,” in *Rethinking Gamification*, ed. Mathias Fush et al. (Lüneburg: Meson Press, 2014), 119.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 132–133. One of the first educational board games with a detailed points distribution was patented as a *Memory Builder: A Game for Acquiring and Retaining All Sorts of Facts* in 1895.

<sup>29</sup> Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*, 26–27.

<sup>30</sup> Holzman, *Vygotsky at Work and Play*, 18–19.

<sup>31</sup> Massumi, *What Animal Teach Us about Politics*, 6.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

paradox leads people to separate themselves from the ludic inside them and to dissect, categorize, look for a purpose, taxonomize play and other activities.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, how voluntary can engagement in a game be if it is prescribed? A game with a strictly prescribed place and time is more coercion than a choice. The educational game does not emerge from a situation, it is part of the context; it is launched “at the push of a button” instead of by a ludic gesture that engages two participants / a group and leads into transindividuation. The game artificially implemented in class is a supervised activity that develops the ordered skills necessary for life outside of class. It only points to the ludic element, but does not leave enough time for it to develop and for its seriousness and self-varying expressivity to be noticed. Thus implemented, the game stays in the domain of the discursive and cultural and loses its potentiality and plasticity. Massumi underlines that power for variation is intertwined with the ludic expressionesqueness of play, which through the invention achieved during play represents a laboratory of forms of live action.<sup>34</sup> That which is discovered in the laboratory is not a repertoire of activities ready for direct transfer into life, but rather what is learned in the laboratory is the ludic mode – the mobilization of powers for the deformation of predetermined roles and activities.

### In pursuit of an educational situation

Gert Biesta and Charles Bingham analyze the behavior of a child in the period of its life when it is learning to speak from the standpoint of a philosophical line that is not close to speculative pragmatism (i.e. Jacques Rancière’s concept *distribution of the sensible*).<sup>35</sup> However, I will take Biesta and Bingham’s anecdote about Barbara and her parents<sup>36</sup> to analyze adults’ behavior toward children in early childhood. I am interested in the modality of the adult’s behavior toward the child because education is adult-centric. The adult involved in education “is not really concerned with the child, but rather with the ways that lead towards present and future adulthood,”<sup>37</sup> be they the authority performing the transmission of knowledge or an advocate of socio-constructivist theory and considering themselves to be a facilitator of the educational process. In short, 17-month-old Barbara’s speech is fivefold. Barbara inserts new words into the English language (the bottle is *nana*); she assigns proper nouns of people and animals to similar categories (*lola* is the family dog, all dogs, but also all animals of similar size). Barbara uses words from the English language but in several dimensions (*mama*

<sup>33</sup> Following those categorizations and taxonomies, throughout the class, three types of educational games are often implemented – warming up, learning, and evaluative games corresponding to the introductory, main body, and closure part of the class.

<sup>34</sup> Massumi, *What Animal Teach Us about Politics*, 12.

<sup>35</sup> Gert Biesta and Charles Bingham, “The Figure of the Child in Jacques Rancière and Paolo Freire,” in *Jacques Rancière: Education, Truth, Emancipation*, Gert Biesta and Charles Bingham with Jacques Rancière (London: Continuum, 2010), 49–72

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 49–51; for Biesta and Bingham’s interpretation, see *ibid.*, 55–62.

<sup>37</sup> Thomas J. J. Storme, “Education and the Articulation of Life: Essays on Children, Animals, Humans and Machines” (PhD diss., University of Leuven, 2014), 57. For more details about “the child turn” and its elusiveness see *Ibid.*, 68–69.

and *dada* when she recognizes her parents, calls them, shows positive emotions, asks for something). She uses some words with two opposite meanings (*no* is both yes and no). Finally, Barbara's babbling and grunting resemble long sequences of conversation between adults, she even uses them occasionally in dialogue with her parents. The parents respond with enthusiasm every time Barbara addresses all household members and to any action of Barbara's accompanied by speech – regardless of whether they understand her completely, whether they do not understand her, whether Barbara uses words that exist in English as denotation, or in some different connotative way distinctive of Barbara. Barbara's parents accept and use the words she has inserted into English. Are Barbara's parents playing with her or is it more than play?

From the standpoint of inclusive exclusion, the parents are extracting Barbara from the animal kingdom and accepting her into the ranks of rational speaking people. However, they achieve that by abandoning to instinct, demonstrating creativity and sympathy in communication with Barbara – they enter the sphere of transindividual existence by relying on their animality. Massumi argues that animal play, albeit pre-verbal, is essentially language-like, that it contains a complex set of metacommunicative rules and is the foundation for the creation of a language, and that in language people reach their highest level of animality.<sup>38</sup> In described communication, all three interlocutors are mutually included, they are both what they “are” and what they “could be” – a child opposite adults, but also equal participants in dialogue. Barbara is a chattering child, but also a speaking human. The parents are simultaneously rational adults who do not understand Barbara and humans who understand Barbara's babbling without pretending. When Barbara gibbers in combination with the words she uses, she “imitates” the adults' conversation. Massumi insists that there is no imitation without innovation. Masumi equalizes the “as if” manner with reproduction, while defining the form “thus” as adding “a little something extra that exceeds all expectations.”<sup>39</sup> Barbara does not babble in the manner of “as if” I am having a dialogue with the adults. Barbara babbles in an innovative manner – “thus” is the dialogue I am having with you. Barbara recognizes the *talkativ-esqueness* she hears in conversations between her parents and addresses them in that way. After the affect – initial puzzlement, the parents abandon themselves in sympathy for the new situation, they live the imperatives of that situation and enter the sphere of transindividual becoming. The adults enter the zone of indiscernibility with the child, where differences multiply – Barbara learns that there are many more skills and much more reflection which her parents know in language, which she does not reach, while the parents learn that they understand more of Barbara's babbling than they previously thought. The singularity of this situation is clear already from the fact that every child learns language in a random and idiosyncratic way, and so there is no manual that would teach parents how to talk with their children at that age.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*, 8.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Biesta and Bingham, *Jacques Rancière*, 56.

Strangers see the communication between Barbara and her parents, in which metacommunication is almost palpable, as merely making random silly sounds and entertainment. However, there is nothing frivolous, representative or illusory in animal play. The frivolous and the serious are mutually involved in a processual alliance that numbers three – frivolous, serious, and “included middle of the processual zone of indiscernibility.”<sup>41</sup> Communication between Barbara and her parents is serious and creates a surplus-value of life, it is in-acting of animal politics. This communication is not reserved only for Barbara’s parents, rather it is typical of all adults who are continuously or sporadically in contact with Barbara (e.g. nursery nurses, grandparents, relatives). Humans engage in ludic expressions only with babies and chattering children, in an effort to tear them away from the animal kingdom, until the moment when human cubs utter their first “rational” sentences. After that, ludic expressions vanishes from the intergenerational relationship, the adult draws the child into the normative world of educational landscape anchored in functionality and utility.

How to be keen on playing in the educational landscape? For that purpose, what are the strengths of educational science and educational practices? Educational sciences embrace a variety of theoretical lines. There is plenty of both theoretical and empirical research based on post-human, post-qualitative, and new materialist theories and methodologies, which has gained credibility in educational academic circles.<sup>42</sup> However, as far as events in a classroom are concerned, approaches of socio-constructivist/socio-cultural orientation are dominant. These approaches were an innovation in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, while today they are omnipresent, at least as the declaration since they have entered the language of educational policies.<sup>43</sup> I argue that there are concepts in the branched-out educational science which could, if upgraded, sow the principles of speculative pragmatism along the anthropogical span even after the babbling child period (e.g. self-directed learning, differentiated learning, post-method teaching). It is not my intention to thoroughly analyze these concepts, detect points of intersection with and divergence from animal politics, and offer complete programs ready for implementation. For the purpose of this paper, I will briefly focus on Lawrence Stenhouse’s contribution to the field of curriculum studies, as one of the starting points of reflection on surpassing the given in formal education.

In his research, Stenhouse concluded that the curriculum that comes from the hands of a curriculum planner within formal education is never what happens in classes in different classrooms, cities, and regions for which it was designed.<sup>44</sup> He attributed this consequence to the objectives-oriented model of curriculum design.

---

<sup>41</sup> Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*, 40.

<sup>42</sup> For examples of this turn see: Nick Fox and Pam Alldred, “New Materialist Social Inquiry: Designs, Methods and the Research Assemblage,” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 18, 4 (2015): 399–414; Frans Kruger, “Posthumanism and Educational Research for Sustainable Futures,” *Journal of Education* 65 (January 2016): 77–94; Lesly Le Grange, “What is (Post)Qualitative Research?” *South African Journal of Higher Education* 32, 5 (October 2018): 1–14.

<sup>43</sup> Kelly, “Eduspeak and the Thought Police,” 6–8.

<sup>44</sup> Lawrence Stenhouse, “Some Limitations of the Use of Objectives in Curriculum Research and Planning,” *Pedagogica Europea*, 6 (1970): 78.

Stenhouse interprets broad-based aims and their derivatives – objectives, as extrinsic to the educational process. Stenhouse stresses the necessity of planning the *principles of procedures* according to which the educational process in the classroom will unfold, instead of the instrumental, hierarchically established aims–goals–objective mode in which content and methods are planned according to the extrinsic objectives that become more important than the process.<sup>45</sup> In Stenhouse’s approach, teachers play an important role in planning the curriculum for every class, he also proposes student participation in negotiating the meanings of the educational processes that are a part of their life.<sup>46</sup> In the early 1970s this kind of approach was innovative. From the contemporary processual philosophy perspective, Stenhouse’s approach to curriculum design is not inter-relational; it is truly interactionist and oriented toward prescription, even though it is a different kind of prescription.

Among Stenhouse’s proposals, one of his notions deserves attention and can be a point of intersection with speculative pragmatism – the curriculum is a hypothesis opened for testing during each unique educational process.<sup>47</sup> First, I argue that Stenhouse’s curriculum is neither deductive (prescribed extrinsically based on macrocontext), nor inductive (prescribed on the grounds of microcontext). Rather, it is abductive – it can be changed, refuted, upgraded in each unique educational situation based on mutual inclusion. Massumi describes as abductive the conditional duplicity, the immediacy of “is” and “could be,” the immediate dynamics involved in animal play, the immediately lived hypothesis.<sup>48</sup> Stenhouse’s prescribed hypothesis opened for testing and transformation is the bearer of categorical affect, while Massumi’s directly-lived hypothesis is the bearer of vitality affect. The class is the space where these two sides are in the common process of becoming, in the zone of indiscernibility that is the field of invention. Second, for the educational process to actually become a situation in the sense of animal politics, ludic expressionesqueness of play needs to be nested into it, instead of the modeling and forceful insertion of the game into the educational process, as described in the previous section. It is exactly abandoning in ludic instinctive animality that is the method of testing prescribed hypotheses, overcoming the given context and a way to enter the space of changing situations.

The educational process should not allow the students to practice their flexibility for dealing with reality outside and after school through the game inserted as an educational method within the school class. Rather, it should allow the students to practice their plasticity for life that thinks itself while it plays its immediate variation, through constantly practicing ludic expressionesqueness during all activities of an educational process, not just through preplanned games. Practicing ludic expressionesqueness as itself is both the means and the outcome of joint learning of an adult and a child. The purpose of expressing one’s own animality in a class is twofold – surpassing the given

---

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 80–82.

<sup>48</sup> Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*, 36.

in terms of content and process, and surpassing the given in terms of intergenerational differences. Which of these two groups will enter into their ludic animality more easily – adults or children? Questions that also remain open are: what kind of teacher do we need for entering into that kind of process, and how should a teacher be educated to be ready to surpass both the given intergenerational differences and the given curriculum?

## Conclusion

In this paper, following Brian Massumi's theory of animal politics, I problematized the basis for the excluded inclusion of generations along the anthropogical continuum. I pointed to the forms of the educational game's conformity to the economy and society based on the developmental stages established in developmental psychology. In the educational landscape, play exists as such only up to the level of elementary school because it is believed that play is a part of reality only for children up to the age of six. After that, play becomes an educational game which adult educational experts, as the generation most mature for leading other generations, model for children/students/seniors, forcefully implement in the teaching process to serve the reproduction of the existing. Forcefully implemented and launched "at the push of a button," the educational game is not voluntary, it is separated from life itself and loses its most important value – the ludic expressionesqueness that brings the aesthetic yield, the excess over function, the surplus value of play and life.

Moreover, I showed that adults abandon themselves to play only at the time when they teach their youngest to speak. Adults treat a non-speaking child not only as non-adult but also as non-human. Only in that period, adults allow themselves ludic expressionesqueness and mutual inclusion with those little non-humans, and only as far as language is concerned. In that period they demonstrate a desperate desire to initiate human cubs into their club through the development of simple sentences in children at a precisely defined stage of life. Once they have started speaking, children are pulled by adults into a normative world ossified in functionality and utility. Afterward, I briefly intersected animal politics with curricular researcher Stenhouse's notion that the curriculum, defined as a process, is a hypothesis open for testing during each unique educational process. Precisely in the testing of hypotheses of each procedure and activity of an educational process, not in using play/game as an educational method, exists the space for practicing ludic expressionesqueness as the means and outcome of joint learning of the adult and the child for life that thinks itself while it plays its immediate variation. Educational sciences and practices have other strengths (e.g. differentiated learning, post-method learning) based on which practicing ludic expressionesqueness can be stretched across the entire anthropogical continuum. The potentiality of these concepts is to be examined in some future research.

## References

- Biesta, Gert and Charles Bingham. “The Figure of the Child in Jacques Rancière and Paolo Freire.” In *Jacques Rancière: Education, Truth, Emancipation*, Gert Biesta and Charles Bingham with Jacques Rancière, 49–72. London: Continuum, 2010.
- Burman, Erica. *Deconstructing Developmental Psychology*. London and New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Caillois, Roger. *Man, Play, Games*. Translated by Meyer Barash. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001.
- Fuchs, Mathias. “Predigital Precursors of Gamification.” In *Rethinking Gamification*, edited by Mathias Fush, Sonia Fizek, Paolo Ruffino and Niklas Schrape, 119–140. Lüneburg: Meson Press, 2014.
- Holzman, Lois. *Vygotski at Work and Play*. London: Routledge, 2009.
- Kelly, A. V. “Eduspeak and the Thought Police: Reclaiming the Discourse.” *Education 3–13: Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education* 31, 1 (March 2003): 4–12. doi: 10.1080/03004270385200021
- Kelly, A. V. *The Curriculum: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage Publications, 2014.
- Kim, Sangkyun. Kibong Song, Barbara Locke, and John Burton. *Gamification in Learning and Education*. Cham: Springer, 2018.
- Lester, Stuart and Wendy Russel. “Turning the World Upside Down: Playing as the Deliberate Creation of Uncertainty.” *Children* 1, 2 (September 2014): 241–60. doi: 10.3390/children1020241
- Malabou, Catherine. *What Should We Do with Our Brain?* Translated by Sebastian Rand. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.
- Massumi, Brian. *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Salen, Katie and Eric Zimmerman. *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004.
- Savicevic, Dusan. “Convergence or Divergence of Ideas on Andragogy in Different Countries.” *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 27, 4 (July–August 2008): 361–378. doi: 10.1080/02601370802051504
- Stenhouse, Lawrence. “Some Limitations of the Use of Objectives in Curriculum Research and Planning.” *Pedagogica Europea* 6 (1970): 73–83. doi: 10.2307/1502500
- Storme, Thomas J. J. “Education and the Articulation of Life: Essays on Children, Animals, Humans and Machines.” PhD diss., University of Leuven, 2014.
- Wadsworth, Barry J. *Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive and Affective Development*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 1996.

Article received: April 20, 2020

Article accepted: July 1, 2020

Original scholarly paper