

I'll make a man out of  
you



We began our workshop by talking and discussing in our groups the explorative strategies to enhance our understanding in our drama piece. We started off by looking at the Recruitment posters from WW1. Song: " I'll make a man out of you" " Oh what a lovely War". From this discussion we learnt about the factors of war. For me going to war is about pride and love of your country. This song is relating to the thought that war will make you very popular and get the attention of lots of ladies. The song is trying to persuade young men to go out and fight for their country in the war.

The methods used to recruit the soldiers are mainly seductive and sly because the woman performing this song is making herself look as though any army man can have her, and that women only fall for the so called brave army man. These methods would attract and entice the attention of a young man. It would mostly work on younger men because a young man would not have had as much encounters with a woman as an older man and younger men at this time were much more gullible. An older man would see right through the corny/fake attempt of this song and wouldn't fall for the seductiveness of the woman.

Therefore it became much more visible and clear to me that younger men were more or less brain washed into thinking that joining the army will give power and fame. If a younger man was being told that women would fall in love with an army man, It would make him want to join the army so this method of persuasion makes young men want more than they can handle. Even if an older more experienced army man tried to show good influence and talk the younger man out of the thought of war, a young man can find it

extremely hard to resist the temptation of a woman. We progressed on and started looking at Role Plays.

We did a role-play on " former soldier and new recruit". Throughout this Role Play I learnt a lot about the effects of war. In this task we had act out a young man getting ready for war and how excited the man would be. Then there was an experienced man that had already been to war and the older man had to try and talk the younger man out of the thought of going to war. This piece made me realise that war is not all exciting, as it's meant to be. It made me realise that war can actually be dangerous and you can become maimed or even killed for your country, which is not what I expected from my present knowledge on war.

The attraction to war is advertised but the down side of being killed is not mentioned. War is real and unattractive and many a boy going off to war, come back a changed person. It can make you or break you, turn you into a nervous wreck or a man. Nobody knows starting out what is ahead of you and fear can sometimes have an adverse effect on your mind. Many a young man went to war looking for adventure and hoping to become a hero, however this false hope is not a reality for all.

They encounter a rude awakening when they are faced with the fact that they have to kill another human being and this can have a great impact on their mental attitude when they return to their homeland. The young soldier's attitude varies between anxious and brave as he tries to impress his family and friends. Going to war was a big influence to many young men. This influence made him more determined because all of the hype pumps his

ego up. We then moved on to look at a poem called " He went for a soldier". This poem was based on violence of war.

Throughout this poem, people were shot down due to their nervousness and anxiousness of being killed. My reaction to the poem was that the language and theme of the poem was glamorised to begin with but it changed to show the violence and gore attached to war. Young men had no idea of what they were letting themselves into until it was too late and there was no way back without having to fight and kill those around them. The mental impact left engraved in the minds of veteran soldiers is so immense that they have been scarred for life. It also made me think that a human being can only do so much and should be rewarded for their efforts.

Young men are enticed into what they think is a glamorous career but in fact there is nothing glamorous about shooting and killing in the trenches. The thought of war can make a man want power and feel great about him, but deep inside fear starts to gap out. This can make even the toughest man alive cannot concentrate fully when under pressure or if they are nervous. When a soldier goes to war they shouldn't be judged on what how they died or how they have killed numerous amount of people, they should be judged on his/her efforts towards the war and surviving.

Also every soldier should not be in it for the fun of going to war. War is about doing your country proud not showing off your weaponry skills. We did still images relating to this poem. The Still Images were based on a family of a soldier getting on a boat and sailing of into war. I think that the Still Imaging makes you the audience see how someone is feeling in just facial

expressions and body positioning. Our group had 5 members and we done a Still Image together. We were the family and we had to show our emotions towards the soldier going off to war.

As we contrasted the images of war we went into great depth to show the emotions of each character. We had the soldier's lover that was in awe for his bravery. Then we had the grandparents that were cowardly waving off their grandson because they know the effects of war and can be very costly. Finally there was the little child nervously hiding under his fathers arm. The child was confused and scared watching his older brother head off to war while the father was comforting him. The still imagery allows the characters to express their emotions about how they felt towards their family member leaving for war.

We then moved on to do a monologue of the family receiving a letter from their son Billy in the war. I played the father of Billy in this practical. As my character progressed into my monologue, my character started to reveal how nervous and scary it was at the thought of receiving a letter from his son Billy. For him it jumps to mind straight away that his own son could be a hero or a dead man. Opening this letter could change his life forever. The father was too scared to open the letter at the start but as he progressed he began to relax and come to realise that his son Billy might be able to achieve his goal and become a hero.

I think that this practical helped us to understand the pressure of receiving news from a loved one because it could be awful news. Then we had a Role Play of the family receiving a letter from Billy but this time it's about his

death on the battlefield. In this Role Play I began to learn that news like this can shatter a family into little pieces. It can wreck any hope in their son and destroy faith in the thought of never touching their son's face again. Events such as this can make a father/mother feel as though they made the wrong choice in sending their son to the war.

When I performed the piece I could almost feel the tears about to come out because it made me feel emotionally linked to this character as to the thought of losing a loved one. The reaction of the family was heartbreaking. They all burst into tears at this devastating news, which would be naturally expected. The younger brother was confused at the thought that he will never get to hear his brother's voice again and is too young to realise the importance of this letter.

This sort of incident would make any family break down and I think when we acted it out in our Role Play, we achieved in expressing the moral of this letter. We finally moved on to do some Improvisation in our practical pieces. For our Improvisation we had to limit our words down to 10 words. That was only for duologues, for monologues we were able to have as many as we liked. This task allowed my character to improvise his feelings towards what he had done. My character was the sniper that shot down two people. In my character's monologue I talked about how he was full of glee after shooting down those people and wishes he could have killed more.

This emotional sequence makes the audience see that people such as this sniper man can have amusement from very disturbing events, which could mostly be caused due to all the build up to war. War can make any individual

suffer mentally and cause mental illnesses. For the duologues they had to limit their speeches down to a maximum of 10 words. I think this is a very effective task because it makes the character's emotions extremely effective. It makes the character communicate with the audience not only with words, but also with facial expressions and body movements.

When someone has less words to say they have to use their emotional ability to try and show to audience how they are feeling. It made you feel really bad when you see how people can make you feel depressed by the slightest movement of their face or depressing gestures. A lot of actors can do this because they are naturally talented in making signs without using their voices. It made me feel as a character in this drama piece that words cannot describe all of what a person is feeling, sometimes you have to dig deep into your emotions to try and express yourself to other people.