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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

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DECONSTRUCTING THE MASTER SIGNIFIER OF COMMUNITY: BETWEEN THE PRE-MODERN AND MODERN COMMUNITY OF ORGANIC SOLIDARITY AND THE POSTMODERN COMMUNITY OF TECHNOLOGICAL DISSEMINATION IN CYBERSPACE

These pure singularities communicate only in the empty space of the example, without being tied by any common property, by any identity. They are expropriated of all identity, so as to appropriate belonging itself, the sign €. Tricksters or fakes, assistants or 'toons, they are the exemplars of the coming community.

The Coming Community, Giorgio Agamben, 10.1

WESTERN INDIVIDUALISM

At first glance, it seems almost paradoxical to raise the question of community within the context of art and art education; after all doesn't the 500 year legacy of 'master' and 'masterpiece' imply singularity, uniqueness, and individualism? doesn't art education promote self-expression as one of its founding tenets? and, hasn't the romantic myth, characterized the Western artist, always *male*, a loner and a genius, an adventurer out on his quest to capture the 'truths' of Nature, found, to be sure in that unfathomable and unrepresentable sublime? (Battersby, 1989) And didn't modernism eventually ensure that a 'rugged' obstinate individualism associated with a particular recognizable artistic *style* was the master signifier around which all others revolved? A recent film like Jacques Rivette's *La Belle Noiseuse* (1991) which lovingly explores the painter's creative process, merely confirms, yet again, that artistic identity itself is etched in that very process of uniqueness.

The Batignolles Group, the creators of Impressionism (Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, Alfred Sisley, Frederic Bazille, Camille Pissaro, Paul Cézanne, Berthe Morisot, Edgar Degas and Edouard Manet),

might at first glance be seen as an exception, as would any artistic 'movement' which bans a number of individuals together in solidarity around a central problematic. Yet, there is enough documentary evidence to suggest that their highly important innovations and achievements were the result of a fortunate conjunction of a congenial group of friends. The 'problem' which spurred them to the joint exploration of contemporary 'scientific' color theory established an aesthetic ideology which pitted itself against The Academy of Fine Arts, providing an antithetical bureaucracy necessary to tighten the group's stance toward a common enemy or Other. Think of *Die Brücke*, *Blaue Ritter* and the Surrealists and a counter argument at first appears plausible. But, as Maria Rogers (1976) now some twenty years ago argued, there was always fierce competition and rivalry amongst 'members' as to who was to be the intellectual leader. Having a common enemy may well be all that held these 'movements' together. With the Batignolles Group, each of the painters was experimenting in a different direction; hence, they could not be properly called a 'school.' And because this was the very time that canvas and careers could be manufactured by the small-gallery systems, the group members could not agree as to how their work should be presented: individually, as a group show, in established Salons, or in alternative ones (White & White, 1965).

As is well-known, the artist as 'blue chip' stock in post-war America eventually become an established theme in the sociology of art (Guilbaut, 1983). The master signifier that names a movement or a group is simply the assurance that differences are glossed over to ensure that some sense of a rational order of development and identification is possible to write a structural view of art history. Liberalism and its articulation in the form of a self-referential Abstract Expressionism championed by Clement Greenberg in the '60s presented the heroic artist as the bearer of his/her discipline. If we now add to this generalized account that the artist is often deemed as 'mad,' or at other times a 'dandy,' it seems that the rhetoric for this fundamental discourse of individualism has held the field of art and art education for some time, and continues to do so today through the auspices of DBAE. Self-expression and uniqueness sanctify the signifier /creative/ giving justice to what form of art should be taught in public schools. So why has 'community' now emerged on the horizon of urgency in this postmodern period to act as a foil to this long standing development? The binary of the heroic artist (as represented by such critics as Hilton Kramer of the *New Criterion*) against the social collective

where art is very much integrated in public spaces (as represented by someone such critics as Suzi Gabik or Suzanne Lacy, 1995) presents a microcosm of this issue.

Undoubtedly part of that answer as to why the master signifier /community/emerges to 'button down' the debate is because of the historical failure of an 'avant-garde' which was to have provided a vanguard function; namely, to be the preservers of elite high culture, maintaining standards, abhorring kitsch, and showing ethical and moral leadership. However, this ruse resulted in the isolation of the artist from the rest of society, and the stress on artistic autonomy merely condemned art to social impotence. Distinct cultures of taste, as Bourdieu (1984) would have it, emerged in the '70s where the dominant modes of neo-liberalist capitalism continued to characterize art primarily as specialized objects to be contemplated and enjoyed rather than created for moral, practical or social reasons. Marketing and consumption continue to be the superseding values which are with us today in their hyped-up forms (Wernick, 1991). The implosion of elite art and popular culture into one another has erased any clear defining line as to the difference between them making it more and more difficult to sort out art's social function. On the one hand there is a continual re-cycling of 'high' art through the 'quote' in an attempt to recoup its practice as a discipline; on the other hand there is a continual dispersion of its definition as it begins to infiltrate everyday life ('culture'). We have arrived at a point where 'almost' anything goes: from shitting on an art gallery floor to an artist nailing his penis to a board; from high performance piercing to gallery pornography, the spaces between such 'outrageous' acts is too narrow to differentiate. As Wendy Steiner (1995) calls it, this is "the scandal of pleasure" (and I would add, pain).

"Reproduce your name, spectacularize yourself, or perish seems to be the market standard." It seems the more often an artist's name can change its *appearance*, the more likely the market consumption of it will be. Whereas modernism gave us distinct artistic styles—with Picasso perhaps being the exemplary here: changing himself only now-and-again (e.g., 'blue period,' 'pink period,' 'analytic cubism,' 'surrealist period,' etc.) as the recent retrospective of his work confirms — postmodernism gives us the Madonna phenomenon where 'style as name' has become a costume change from one performance to the next; or the name has disappeared, merely to reappear in the form of a masquerade or a disguise that adapts to a particular discursive do-

main, or attaches body parts to itself to mix-n-match genders. Here I am paradigmatically referring to the change in Cindy Sherman's *oeuvre*. If the viewer were to ask: "Will the 'real' Cindy Sherman please stand up?" there is no 'one' Sherman who will stand and be counted. So, say 'good-bye' to depth hermeneutics — the struggles to read what is 'behind' or 'below' the 'text,' and say 'hello' to the new surface hermeneutics: what you see is what you get at the 'moment,' i.e., inter-action art, install-ation art, per-formance art, ephemerality; in brief, the consumption of an artistic niche that has been prepared for the audience by a well-defined structured language-game (cf. Wittgenstein). The signifier marks the realm of discourse. In Sherry Turkle's (1995) pun, the postmodernist attitude requires that we "take things at their interface value." It's all in the 'look' or the "glance" to use Bryson's (1981) earlier formulation of it.

DISPERSED CYBER COMMUNITIES

Obviously for some this hyper-narcissistic process has gone too far. The call for more traditional forms of 'community' is on lips everywhere—in national politics, in the academic disciplines, in education, and even in business (see Noddings, 1996). However, for others, this is merely the beginning of a fantasy for a re-newed individuality; the taste of a more exciting future to come where the proper name will dissolve itself into the splendor of cyberspace and exist virtually in what ever form suits it at the time; the inter-actor will gender b(l)end at will as s/he occupies the site/sight/cite of the 'interface' which now clumsily still exists as a lettered keyboard. Moreover, *such hyper-individuality will metamorphose into its very opposite*; namely, a cyber-community of like-minded individuals who meet together in the abstractions of space to discuss art and technology (one such site/sight/cite which is currently 'happening' in this direction is the *Eyebeam atelier*). So, why physically go to a gallery, museum, or theme-park when the art can come to you, the spectator? Why not let the electronic on-line gallery come to you through the fantasmatic screen of the internet? Why not hold court in the telematic cyber-classroom where art can be discussed and experienced in different ways; where the vast possibilities and resources of the global internet become available? Art can now 'flood' in from every conceivable site/ sight/cite. Here, the benefits of a cyberspace 'community' can be experienced as well, through chat lines and MUDs (Multiple User Domains).

This question of a cyber-community which extends the legacy of Western heroic art raises a challenge to those art educators who shun such a dis-embodied dystopian world-view; those who—nostalgically perhaps—recall an organicism where art was socially integrated into an embodied community; where the local issues of the public sphere become acted out through drama plays, musical performances and artistic rituals (cf. Augustus Boals). Any 'natural' human disaster seems brings out the co-operative and supportive side of humane-ness, and the arts have always played a large role in both healing and celebration during stressful times. Such views of community hark back to pre-modernist indigenous societies, and to modernist nation building when a common purpose held the imaginary community together (Anderson, 1995).

It is important, therefore, to explore more fully this question of a cyber-community. Is there anything that should be of concern for art educators who wish to embrace this virtual space and the promotion of cyber-art that goes along with it? We can begin this query by noting that long before the fashion of VR (virtual reality) came onto the scene/seen, Gilles Deleuze (1990) elaborated the status of virtuality apropos to the mystery of a "sense-event." From the pre-historic paintings on the walls of the Lascaux caves, he argued, to VR, it seems human beings confront the same enigma: how is it possible for us to suspend reality and become engrossed in the virtual space of the fantasmatic screen? How can the 'incorporeal' event emerge out of the mixture of bodies, or bodily causes? For Deleuze (like Jacques Lacan) such a "sense-event" could not be reduced to a network of material (bodily) causes. Indeed, this fantasmatic dimension—or specter—was part of our everyday experience. In cyberspace the viewer is confronted with the possibility of a 'concrete,' and 'sensual' work of art, a text, image, video clip, with fragments of music and other sounds, which together produce an 'abstract' meaning. (This is not unlike Eisenstein's dream of producing an "intellectual montage" of *Das Capital*, i.e., concretizing Marxist theory by presenting it as a clash of concrete images.) With hypertext the possibility emerges of a new form of montage. As Douglas Rushkoff (1996) notes, the most advanced video games are very 'visceral' experiences, images and sounds penetrate the body. Like the paradigmatic film *Tron*, the mind is drawn into the machine's game without the attendant visor and data glove. Such a hypertext collage changes the meaning of what a work of art is: for now the interface user confronts a hybrid of written texts /images/sound bytes/and movements. The projected fantasy is that this

same possibility could eventually be extended to a cyberspace community of individuals.

The status of VR is provided by the differentiation that *must* be made between imitation and simulation. VR doesn't imitate reality, it simulates it by way of generating its semblance, a concept made famous by Baudrillard's notion of the *simulacrum* (or copy of a copy) over thirty years ago (1968)! In other words, imitation imitates a pre-existing real-life model, whereas simulation generates the semblance of a non-existing reality—it simulates something that doesn't exist. As such, the supplement of 'computer art' has blurred the original/copy distinction reducing all 'art' that ends up floating in cyberspace into information of sorts, another significant point made long ago by John Berger (1972). In contrast to imitation, which sustains belief in pre-existing 'organic' reality, simulation retroactively 'denaturalizes' reality itself by way of disclosing the mechanism responsible for its generation. In other words, the 'ontological wager' of simulation is that there is no ultimate difference between nature and its artificial reproduction. (Like the *Blade Runner* world, the dividing line between artificial and natural life has been erased. At least on the 'surface' of things you can't tell the difference whether the cyborg is human, or the human is a cyborg.) Consequently, there is no need to 'travel' to the art gallery to view the 'genuine' articles. The experience ultimately need not be so impoverished once the hyper-collage of the artistic hypertext is established, involving perhaps holography. The digitalized 'real' has reproduced a simulation of the pre-modern 'concrete thought' of a non-transparent world, what has been referred to as a neo-Medievalist literalization (cf. Umberto Eco), the only difference being that the sign systems circulate and continuously morph (or 'slide'—like the defunct television series, *Sliders*) into something else without a transcendental signified (e.g., God, or 'truth') to hold them accountable. Community exists here as well: disembodied, on chat lines, in interest groups, in MUDs. This disseminated community is then abstractly 're-embodied' in cyberspace as a meeting of disguised minds.

The question to ask now is: "Just what *is* this 'digitalized real'?" Is it 'really real' or it rather a produced or constructed real which covers over the mystery that lies beyond language, namely in what Lacan called the psychic register of the Real. To answer this I offer a recent screen image: For those who have seen/scene the recent sci-fi film *Dark City* (1998), the cyberspace 'community' and the hypertext art forms that float in cyberspace looking for a image-screen

at the sight/site/cite of some interface form such a concretized 'city.' For this city is simply a binary 'reality' which consists of a hyper-complex digitalized combination of pluses (+++) and minuses (---), or zeros (0000) and ones (1111) which establish the appearance of a structure that covers over the abyss of what is unknown and unfathomable, i.e., Lacan's Real. Beyond the *Dark City's* shores there is 'nothing,' simply black empty unknowable space. This fictitious city (or cyberspace community) is maintained by the very minds (aliens in this case) who think and dream it. Buildings continuously morphs and twist into new configurations as 'real mechanical time' stops and the 'real' inhabitants (earthling in this case) become comatose while cyber-time begins and the new city continues to be erected. At the end of the film, the hero simply wills this 'other' *dark* fiction to go away so that he may live in bright sunlight. But this 'darkness' will not go away so easily from VR, and here is why.

REPRESSIONS OF THE DARK

If *Dark City* embodies an in-sight into the VR experience, it is that *virtualization becomes the perfect materialization of the social order*. In this sense the virtual gallery systems try to redeem 'real life' (RL) by trying to re-locate it in VR to achieve perfect symbolic accountability. What counts as 'real' art finds itself 'on line.' (This is a bit like the phenomenon of a student submitting a handwritten essay for grading. It's unpolished look when compared to word-processed writing immediately devaluates its grade. The surface look (form) becomes more important than substance (content). The same principle repeats itself when administrators post school grades on their web sites/cites/sights to legitimate the school's excellence, even though few parents will visit its web page.)

The consequences of this are far reaching. The notion of a 'vanishing' interface where communication with cyberspace becomes transparent, as if one were directly looking and sensually experiencing a work of art, raises the issue: what if 'consciousness' itself were a frame through which we perceive the universe, simply as just another 'interface' — one of difference but not of kind? As soon as one does this the Lacanian Real is foreclosed, and all of 'reality' is reduced to the interplay of discourse, i.e., constructed realities. As Žižek (1997) queries, when a user playing with the multiplicity of Internet Relay

Chat (IRC) channels says to himself "What if real life (RL) itself is just one more IRC channel?", or, with respect to multiple windows in a hypertext, "What if RL is just one more window?", the illusion to which s/he succumbs is strictly correlative to the opposite one, i.e., to the commonsense attitude of maintaining our belief in the full reality outside the virtual universe where the fantasy dimension is simply repressed. Which is to say, one should avoid both traps, the simple direct reference to external reality outside cyberspace, as well as the opposite attitude of "there is no external reality, RL is just another window." Derrida's often quoted statement: "There is nothing outside the text" takes on a new understanding here. He does not mean that everything should be reduced to textual discourses, but that there is no 'THING' outside the text — no *ur*-signifier that makes sense, but only non-sense. This 'no-thing' is precisely Lacan's Real, that which is beyond language.

VR becoming the realization of the perfect Symbolic Order is perhaps the greatest danger as to what is to become of a 'humane' being but this is only part of the danger. What the virtualization of art and the call to cyber-community summon is a fundamental change of our hermeneutic experience of everyday reality. This happens through a process on at least three levels: first, it annihilates the distinction between the original work of art and its copy; this move repeats the general shift of techno-biology which posits living nature as being something technically manipulable, i.e., the only 'real' is the structure of underlying DNA. Second, given that VR generates 'true' reality undermines the difference between 'true' reality and semblance, i.e., the art educator is being offered the 'hyperreal' image of the designer's surface of colour and outline which supplant both depth and volume. The 'surface' then takes precedence over substance. Another way of saying this is that a *'glance' aesthetic (or 'look')* is supplanting the *gaze*. *Desire which is defined by a structural lack is supplanted by the scopophilic drive which is marked by jouissance (orgasmic pleasure)*. We are back to Wendy Steiner's complaint. And thirdly, when it comes to the cyberspace community of MUD (Multiple User Domains) the notion of Self is radically undermined (and *not* strengthened) by decentering it. The idea being here that such a 'dissemination' of a unique Self *should* be endorsed for the future holds the possibility of a 'collective mind' composed of a plurality of self-images swirling about together without a global coordinating center so as to produce a Self disconnected from all the pathologies of the body's trauma. The collective mind is touted for its sanitary and therapeutic possibilities.

The global cyberspace community enables the participant to discover new aspects of the Self, a proliferation of shifting, often masked identities without a "real" person behind them. So what's wrong with this utopian vision? of the arbitrariness of a produced and constructed Self as exemplified by the morphing bodies of a Madonna, or a Grace Jones? What's wrong with the virtual museum and its community of cyberspace visitors? How shall we answer?

What this means is that such a conception of community is slowly eroding the phenomenological perception of our bodies. As the difference between 'objective' or 'living' (original/organic) and 'artificial' is undermined, then the distinction between what is 'living' and its 'appearance' becomes blurred. The metaphysical kernel of what we mysteriously call 'life' becomes concretized rather than remaining empty and void and ex-isting in the Real. This leads to the dispersal of the Self where there is a profound loss of the surface which separates inside from outside. What is inside the body is being replaced by what is outside it; namely technology through artificial implants making us become like the dreaded Borgs of *Star Trek: The New Generation* (see Bukatman, 1993); and what is outside the body is always inside as we become immersed in VR we lose contact with RL. The image here is that each human being is being stretched and mapped out on a long flat strip of data that codes every emotion, every movement, every body part. With VR and technobiology this loss of boundary damages and cripples not only our attitude to our own bodies but also to the bodies of other persons. We suspend our knowledge of the flesh and what exists beneath the skin's surface of the Other. It becomes easier and easier to walk by homeless beggars as our empathic bodies become distantiated more and more from RL. RL becomes more and more like a screen-image in VR—the very interplay of these two psychic registers of 'reality' can be found in the film *Last Action Hero* (see also Murray, 1993). The scopic drive of the 'look' produces an *Anästhetisierung* (emotional numbness) (Welsh, 1990) rather than the aesthetization art educators sought for. The person becomes all sur'face' as if it were only the 'face' which expressed the 'soul,' and the disembodied grain of the voice carried only the person's character. There is then, a progressive loss of contact with RL as our senses become 'plugged into' the incoming electro-waves. The 'eye' and the 'ear' have metaphorically become grotesque protruding organs of our bodies.

Equally disturbing has been the way the disseminated Self at play in the cyber-community brings out what is usually repressed in RL. At the interface it is possible to play a game of false images by putting on a satisfying mask, to become someone other than who you are. So the game is to be seductive and a flirt when in RL you are drab and dull; or to act out as if you are heroic and brave when in RL you are anything but that. All this can be done in the face of the screen-image without taking responsibility for such projected egos. It is possible, as well, to create a screen persona where you can project imaged aspects of yourself that you wouldn't 'normally' dare to admit in RL. So in the anonymity of a MUD community you can become a promiscuous woman and engage in activities which you would never permit yourself in RL. To do so would disintegrate your sense of personal identity.

Hence, the cyber-space community is composed of RL people acting out what they take to be their 'normal' selves, and people who are acting out 'more than themselves.' The dialectics between RL self and a VR self present many ethical dilemmas. By suspending the usual hindrances in RL which prevent oneself from realizing his/her 'dark side' in RL, enables all of one's libidinal potential to be poured out onto the image-screen. (The increasing number of hate groups, pornographic web sites, para-military anarchist groups, etc. in cyberspace are well-known dangers.) All that is repressed finds its way as a virtual electronic ego. E-mail contacts have resulted in sexual encounters—sometimes successful but more often failed meetings once couples meet in RL; incidences of on-line sexual harassment, betrayal, and on-line 'rape' in MUD communities have become standard occurrences. In many ways these screen-image encounters are more 'real' than RL because cyberspace exists in what Lacan termed the Imaginary—the level of fantasy but *without the checks of everyday reality*, i.e., of what Lacan called the Symbolic Order. The Law can't quite colonize all of the cyberspace. There is no complete control and regulation here, and hence it offers the interface user a post-Oedipal playground of "Cyberspace Delights." Presenting oneself as handsome and smart in VR may well be repressing and not confronting what may be the opposite the case in RL. Inhibition and shame is suspended in the fantasy scene/seen of VR for anxiety can be avoided. The pure flux of *the drive* is what is encountered which means that the universe which has been freed of everyday inhibitions turns out to be a universe of unbridled sadomasochistic violence and will to domination. So, for instance, a married man can maintain his marriage as just another social role and engage in extra-marital sex as 'true love.' However, the

moment he is confronted with the choice of leaving his family and moving in with his 'true love' he often finds that the social mask of marriage means more to him than his personal intense passion. His guilty feelings and hesitation indicate that some semblance of the Law is still at work on his psyche. On the image-screen, however, the fantasy can be played out...until of course the couple meets and "reality bites/bytes," to quote a recent film.

We come to the conclusion that on the one hand cyberspace communities present the dream of a new populism in which the decentralized networks will allow citizens to come together in a new public cyberspace and build a participatory grass-roots political system, a transparent world in which the mystery of the impenetrable bureaucratic state agencies are dispelled. However, the use of computers and VR as a tool to rebuild community results in the building of a community inside the machine, reducing individuals to isolated monads, each of them alone, facing a computer, ultimately unsure if the person s/he communicates with on the screen is a 'real' person, a false persona, an agent which combines a number of 'real' persons, or simply a computerized program...The ambiguity of this antinomy remains irreducible and undecidable, like Lyotard's *differand*.

NOSTALGIC COMMUNITIES

I have spent an extraordinary amount of space discussing the virtual community because it is the absent Other of the essays on community that appears in this journal. While there is an ever increasing layer of art educators who advocate the technological advances of being 'on-line', by and large, there has been by far a stronger refusal to abandon the materiality of the body in the artistic process. Hystericizing the body in reaction to its 'disappearance' can also be seen in the increase of the fitness craze, tattooing, body piercing, hair coloring, s/m ritualization, high performance art, and gender b(l)ending. These are symptomatic of why the body wants to be marked to 'feel' itself alive again even if it means pain. The jitters of the technological *fin de millénaire* with its call to 'community' has perhaps become a nostalgic yearning promoted mostly by moral baby-boomers who fantasize an imaginary community of yesteryear. The American Right has laid claim to the magical romanticized decade of the '50s when 'everything was all Right': no gangs, no killings, no

moral decay. The suburbs had the 'industrial man' working while mom stayed home with the kids. (The rampant juvenile delinquency of the decade is simply repressed.) This patriarchal re-instatement of the family is but the tip of the iceberg which presents the turmoil of a re-defined masculinity, as illustrated by the 'Million Man March' and the 'Promise Keepers,' two significant symptomatic manifestations of a nostalgic 'return' to 'family values.'

In opposition, the Left has claimed an *identity politics* where community now becomes a trope for issues of ethnicity, race, class, folk, etc., where issues of representation continue to rage. Who represents whom? who amongst the member of the community is allowed to do the representing? who defines 'them?' Here, it is the *community of memory* which is often at issue. Native-Americans and Aboriginal peoples (First Nations) have taken on an almost mystical status by art educators who believe that the authenticity of art lies in its ritualization. There is a danger here, of course, in resurrecting forms of *postmodern neo-primitivism* where the 'noble savage' comes back yet again to play its role of relieving white guilt. In these developments the question of the dark side of organic community is rarely raised, for the dark side harbors the difficult issues of difference, i.e., the *abjected* Other is needed in order for such a community to define and maintain itself (Kristeva, 1991).

As Frederic Jameson (1991) points out, the antinomy of postmodernism is marked by construction and essentialism. On the one hand, the ideal being that VR makes possible the notion that everything—socially, symbolically, technically—is constructed, and contingent, i.e., there is no pre-existing ground—only an abyss upon which our species builds its structures. On the other hand essentialism presents a desperate search for grounded fundamentals—the return to Nature in search for a Limit—an ecological transcendental signifier. Hence, New Age anti-Cartesianism advocates a spontaneous spiritualism by breaking away from technological domination. In contrast advocates of "Deep Ecology" search for the very opposite—the complete technological reproduction of reality, the full fantasy of which means that future. VR will allow subjects to abandon their bodies and become 'ghosts in the machine.'

For art educators who react to this proliferation of post-modern hypernarcissism, the monadism of VR, and the endless, often boring, surfing of the Net to find a MUD to join, or a chat group to converse

with, there has been a turn to the nostalgia of community of yesteryear (cf. Ferdinand Tönnies, a *gemeinschaft* as opposed to a *gesellschaft*) which somehow remains 'grounded' in our species being of co-operation. There is a longing to bring art back into its ritualistic functions where it is embodied in community. It is no surprise, therefore, why a fair proportion of art educators and artists have taken up the chant of indigenous peoples, believing that such artistic expression—by not being delegated to a separate social sphere—is not only more 'authentic' and beneficial but has retained its 'aura' (cf. Walter Benjamin)—its spiritualism and healing effects—which art lost due to capitalist technological reproduction. It is this 'New Age spiritualism' which concerns many of them.

The four essays presented here offer different responses to the master signifier of /community/ which tries so hard to stop the unbridled consumerism of neoliberalist capitalism with its need for a decentered and global subject who enjoys. By and large, all four essays tend to favour an identity politics of one form or another. In this sense they might be identified as Left leaning in their value system. The first essay, Deborah Smith-Shank's "Sugar and Spice and Everything: Reflections on a Feminist Aesthetic," presents the reader with a narrative of her transformations towards becoming embodied as a feminist artist, arriving at what she confirms to be a 'crone stage' for her. The feminist community she calls upon is an "imagined one." Not explicitly mentioned her loyalties might be gleaned between the lines as perhaps identifying with eco-feminists like Lucy Lippard whose earlier book *Overlay* (1983) presents the metaphorical links between art, the body of woman, and Nature. As Sherry Ortner (1974) once argued—within the beliefs of many indigenous peoples woman was to Nature as man was to Culture: she lactates, bleeds, gives birth, socializes children, and cares for the nourishment of the body. Smith-Shank raises how the patriarchal community, what might be identified as the patriarchal Big Other in Lacanian terms, structures as to what counts as art. Through her identification with the imagined community of feminism, Smith-Shank is able to cathex her ego Ideal as a feminist artist and teacher who makes a difference.

Next, Rita Irwin is 'drawn' by serendipitous circumstances to the aboriginal Paiwan people of southern Taiwan; drawn to a traditional society where art as a separate 'word' and a 'discipline' does not yet exist. She presents her experiential encounter with the Piawan as yet another example of anthropological 'translation' which has re-

ceived so much attention amongst anthropological circles (Niranjana, 1992). What should be the approach to the Other? How is exoticization to be avoided? How are art educators to avoid updating the ideology of the noble savage? Who benefits for the 'translation' that goes on between cultures? Irwin identifies her encounter as providing an instance for the practice of a democratic form of social reconstructionism for art education where the art teacher and students "speak up" for disenfranchised socio-cultural groups. This is best done, she argues, by recognizing one's own roots/routes and the arterial connections that can be made with the Other.

This essay is followed by Christine Ballengee Morris's essay on Paulo Freire, the well-known Brazilian critical educator who spent his life as an advocate of the oppressed, attempting to give them a voice of literacy so that they could found their own democratic futures. Upon his recent death, in May of 1997, there have been a number of both critical and supportive views of his work as a community activist (see overview by Weiler, 1996). He has been taken to task for the way his literacy programs already pre-determine the kind of reader he wanted (Bowers, 1983), while feminists have strongly objected to his inability to incorporate a feminist stance above class analysis and his unacknowledged contribution of his first wife to his further education. However, no one can deny Freire's impact on North American critical education. In her essay, "Paulo Freire: Community Based Arts Education," Morris provides a useful focus on the 1996 presentation Freire made at Diadema's Congress of Cultural Education and Leisure Sports; she then presents how art education based on community activism might incorporate Freirean tenets.

The next essay, "Creating Community Through Art: Two Research Project Reviews" by Seymour Simmons III, might be considered as an example of at least some of Freire's ideas at work across the United States throughout various community based arts programs which try to resolve contemporary social problems. Seymour Simmons explicates two recent research projects done by Harvard Project Zero and its affiliates which provide a broad picture as to what is currently going on. He provides an exposé of the Lincoln Center Institute Arts-in-Education Survey Study and the Project Co-Arts survey, providing portraits of community art centers whose focus is on education in economically disadvantaged communities.

In the last essay, "Public Genre Art Education," Gaye Leigh Green presents her readers with a ten-fold list of art forms, or strategies to initiate what she identifies as a "social reconstructivist" art education that is needed today. Green provides concrete examples by art students at Western Washington University for each of these strategies. Through such efforts, argues Green, art moves into the community and becomes more socially as well as morally relevant, making a difference not only to the lives of the artists who undertake these projects, but also to their communities by enhancing the socio-political awareness of American culture, and to their neighborhoods in which they reside.

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SUGAR AND SPICE AND EVERYTHING: REFLECTIONS ON A FEMINIST AESTHETIC¹

DEBORAH SMITH-SHANK

Over the past 25 years, feminist art, art criticism, and action have allowed insights into the work of women artists. Because culture imposes an assumed unity on a diversity of codes and has a naturalizing function, it makes the status quo appear as given and enduring. Feminist artwork disrupts common cultural assumptions by purposefully calling into question the arbitrariness of cultural sign systems. It brings into the conversation those cultural signs which are routinely unexamined and forces a look. This article is about feminist artwork, feminist context(s), and my own development as a woman, artist, teacher, and participant in the communities which effected my development.

Remember the Cinderella story? The one where the wicked stepsisters cut off their toes and heels to fit into the small slipper so that they might have the chance to marry the prince and live happily ever after? What's wrong with this picture? For over 25 years, feminist artists have been trying to address generally unexamined cultural codes which liminally and subliminally restrict the bodies, activities, and behavior of girls and women. According to Raven (1988), "Artists who address gender and society today are no longer compelled by the perfect feminine fit. A large body of work examines the construction of the small shoe (the social body) on the one hand, and the dismembered foot (the physical body) on the other" (p. 228).

Communities construct the social body, i.e., culture, through signs. The arbitrary nature of culture is never apparent until people are exposed to sign systems which depart from their own. By its very nature, culture imposes an assumed unity on a diversity of codes and has a naturalizing function that makes the constructed unity appear as given and enduring. Feminist artwork purposefully calls into question the nature of sign systems and into conversation routinely unexamined cultural signs.

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Making artwork is an activity of encoding signs. Understanding art is the process of reasoning from culture to sign and back again. It is through this reasoning process that new cultures are created. Uneasiness occurs when expectations are disrupted and new beliefs, new cultures are created to ease the discomfort. Feminist artwork explodes comfortable assumptions and forces into consciousness the conflict between what we know as women and girls, and what the social body has told us is true. Feminist artwork is a response to patriarchal culture by women responding to circumstances in their own and other women's lives.

In this article I will reflect on my emergence and development as a feminist artist and educator within a patriarchal culture which offered me no history of women artists, which devalued crafts and belittled artwork and artists whose work lent itself to contextualization. This was/is a culture in which small was not good (unless it was a woman's body size), big was good (unless it was womanly feet), and huge was wonderful (you don't make art to fit on living room walls).

WHAT ARE LITTLE GIRLS MADE OF?

I prided myself on being a "tomboy." I didn't want to hang around with the girls and play dolls. I was active, ripped my clothes climbing trees, and painted with mud all over sidewalks. I resisted "appropriate behavior." At the same time, I desperately wanted the approval of my parents, teachers, and peers. I also wanted to be

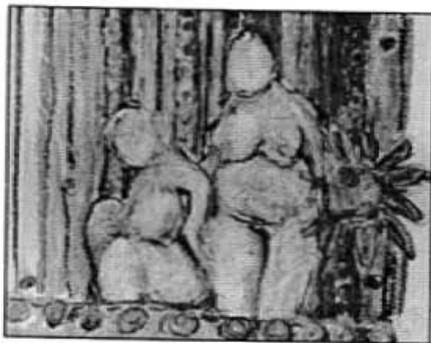


Figure 1

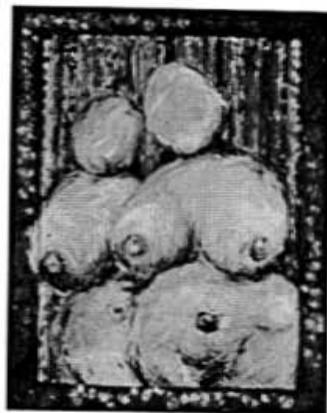


Figure 2

Cinderella, but I had hugely big feet. I hated that story. My hero was the genius artist, Picasso. He painted his life, relationships, and emotions and, as far as I could see, he didn't have to explain anything to anybody. Of course, he lived in France and partied with all of the right people, as well as making his artwork. He used a variety of styles and media. He was a very sensual fellow (even though he was actually very small) and I wanted to paint and be like him. Was I confused? Oh, yes! How could a Midwestern middle-class girl find happiness as Picasso when the Cinderella story kept going through her head?

WHAT ARE LITTLE GIRLS MADE OF?

Think of five geniuses. How many women are on your list? Christine Battersby (1989) traces the idea of "genius" through history and makes a serious case for genius being conceptually linked to maleness. Genius was linked to seminal fluid which was linked to creation. Andrew Gemant, in his book *The Nature of the Genius* (1961) rationalized that most gifted women aren't really women. "Eminent women scientists are nearly always plain or have definitely masculine features. They are actually half men, physically and mentally, their primary sexual organs happening to be female" (p. 114-15). Of course, women artists and scientists really want to be whole men. Karen Horney (1978) sarcastically points out that there is "scarcely any character trait in woman which is not assumed to have an essential root in penis-envy" (p. 247). The Guerrilla Girls² are much more direct: "You don't need a penis to be a genius."

WHAT ARE LITTLE GIRLS MADE OF?

Modernism was in full swing as I made my way through professional art training and the formalist critiques of this period created a safety net for me. I did not have to explain my artwork except through the elements and principles of art. I think I tried once, but with negative feedback, I am a very quick study. While I learned technique, theory, and the (male) history of art, my passions remained hidden. I did not discuss the feelings, desires, emotional storms, and stories that found a home in my artwork. Formalism, the dispassionate list-making form of criticism, allows detachment and objectivity which is safe. My studio professors (all men) and male peers never asked me to contextualize my artwork, thank goodness. It would have been too embarrassing. My responses would have been unladylike.

SUGAR AND SPICE

I *could* and did talk about my artwork with girl friends. They were like me. They wanted to know the stories. They wanted to talk about life. About sex. About our changing situations within the world of relationships. I was not afraid to tell them about my artwork. When they laughed, it was with me, not at me. They did not expect the art to stand alone without the stories as my professors did, without context. My girl friends' responses to my stories and to my artwork validated me and my way of being in the world. We were alike and I was okay, even if I was too emotional, too passionate, and too unconventional.

I went to see the performance artist, Laurie Anderson twice in the past year, and she was unladylike both times. She made weird noises, stuck things in her mouth while talking at the same time, and told personal stories. She has taken Picasso's place as my role model and genius artist, along with a host of other "bad girls" (see Tucker & Tanner, 1994).

People learn to communicate within their own communities and cultures. When they feel marginalized by more powerful communities, people will inevitably respond, even if it is with their silence. Our roots are within dominant culture. This is where we learn to speak, where we are socialized, and where we learn to be gendered subjects with the ability to communicate (Wolff, 1990). Traditionally, when women have spoken and been heard, it has been with and to each other and especially within the same race and class. Outside our own comfort zones of communication, we have been taught silence (Tucker, 1994). Nobody believes it now, but I really was so reluctant to talk in school that sometimes I held my hand over my mouth just to keep it shut. I learned to be quiet through culture, but it was again through the transforming culture of feminist thought and the community who listened, that my voice returned.

My male and female students learn about women artists. They learn about hidden-stream women artists who have lovingly embellished their homes with quilts, clothing, weaving, and pottery. They learn about mainstream women artists who have found their voices, and dead women artists who have been revived through the efforts of feminist art historians and critics. "In the visual arts, the process of finding a voice extending beyond the woman-to-woman domestic sphere [is evident in works by] Nancy Spero, Faith Ringgold, Mary Kelly, Adrian Piper, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger and many others"

(Tucker and Tanner, 1994, p. 18). These women artists use both visual and linguistic symbol systems to talk about "aging, racism, reproductive rights, motherhood, physical and sexual abuse, standards of beauty, and control of language itself" (Tucker and Tanner, 1994, p. 18). These issues are not sugar and spice. They problematize "appropriate behavior" for women artists in a polite society. These artists wave their big feet in the air without apology, hoping to destabilize culture. These women are uncontrollable, irrational, and sexual, and they pose a political threat to the social status quo (Tucker & Tanner, 1994). The structure of any culture is in trouble when its members start to question their basic assumptions. Feminist artists engage in symbol-laden conversations about unreflected assumptions.

In spite of my early training, or possibly because of it, I don't want to make art about anything other than my own elaborately storied experiences. My life as a girl, woman, mother, and recently, my cronish tendencies enter my artwork without invitation, and are welcomed. However, I never considered my work in this context until recently. One wintery afternoon my students asked to see slides of my artwork, and since I had been critiquing theirs, I thought it would be fair to let them critique mine. I brought a fully loaded slide carousel to class and showed them my work in chronological order, accompanied by off-the-cuff running commentary. As I narrated the context of each piece, I started listening to myself, and it dawned on me that every one of my drawings and paintings are contextualized self-portraits, even when I am not present in the picture. The absent signs are sometimes the most powerful.

AND ALL THAT'S NICE, NICE, NICE

I was in my 30s before I could call myself an artist in spite of having already participated in all of the artist rituals including art exhibits, artist statements, interviews, and of course, as a teacher, sharing with students the habits, tools, and practices of my profession. As women art students, we learned that important artists are usually men who work large and use expensive materials to make things that have no practical function (Park, 1997). Feminist artwork is about agency and about being heard. It is about finding non-hierarchical alternatives to patriarchy; it is about making art for personal growth and political insurrection. It is about participating in the construction of culture: a culture where women can have role models, women can make art, and name themselves artists if they want. I want this for my students.

Until recently, most mainstream texts about art history ignored the art of women. Even now, when women are included, they fit the patriarchal model of an artist and for the most part, adopted and approved texts leave out traditional women's arts. While it is possible to model ourselves after Picasso, culture has told us that, as women, we're supposed to be the objects of art, not the creators. Woman's supposed inferiority and consequent invisibility in the artistic realm has been rationalized as a deficiency in judgment, wit, reason, skill, talent and psychic (and bodily) heat by people such as Degas, Jung, Kant, and Rousseau among others (Battersby, 1989). When women do manage to break through multiple practical, cultural, and social barriers and actually make art, their achievements may be overlooked or dismissed without serious consideration because patriarchal ideology invariably associates cultural achievements with the activities of men (Slatkin, 1995).

THAT'S WHAT LITTLE GIRLS ARE MADE OF

The orderly, neat, small, female body is a signifier of an orderly social hierarchy. The works of feminist artists serve as bricks in the construction of a culture which is not necessarily orderly. In this construction women and girls do not have to be self-conscious, quiet, or defensive about their deviant artwork or their deviant bodies. Feminist artworks resist "appropriate behavior" and appropriate subject matter. If pollution is a symbolic system, these artists pollute the artworld with female bodies, orifices, birthing images, irony, and anger. The social hierarchy of feminist cultures is not orderly or neat. Artist Mary Riley (Wolff, 1990) argues: "The body operates as a symbol of society across cultures, and the rituals, rules, and boundaries concerning bodily behavior can be understood as the functioning of social rules and hierarchies. In some cultures, bodily refuse (excreta, blood, tears, hair, nail clippings) has magical, and dangerous qualities. In its marginality, in the way in which it traverses the boundaries of the body, it comes to represent particular threats and powers, which ultimately symbolize social boundaries, transgressions, and threats" (p. 122).

Cinderella's sisters were caught in a culture which denied them the luxury of their transgressive big-footed bodies. I didn't want to be like them, although in my mind, I knew I was more like them than Cinderella, and sometimes this made me cry. I am still more like the stepsisters, but I don't cry too often about this anymore. According to

Tucker and Tanner (1994) women who defy the medias' image of ideal womanhood, and have no interest in having their body "crippled, mutilated, bound or surgically altered" (p. 35) or who don't dress and make-up to attract men, undermine society's standards. Consequently, they are considered "politically dangerous rather than simply aesthetically dissident" (p. 35). I like this mental image.

THAT'S WHAT LITTLE GIRLS ARE MADE OF

The stages of a woman's life, according to old tradition, are Maiden, Mother, and Crone. My artwork reflects these changes within my own life. When I was a child, all along the basement walls, Mermaids swam into communities of dolphins, and I was safe with my water friends. When I was a maiden, I painted maidens, and Disney cartoons. As a student, I did whatever I hoped would bring a good grade. As a pregnant woman, all my female figures were rounded and breasts were everywhere within lush and fertile landscapes. After my daughters were born, I connected their lives to mine in my drawings and paintings. When they were young my paintings were sweet; when they were teenagers, less so. When I am angry, my violent emotions scream to me out of my colors. Changing life, changing bodies, changing relationships enter my artwork, and I have been fortunate to have found a voice to examine the development of my thoughts and artwork through the vehicle of feminist art criticism.

"Crone" is a self-consciously ugly word. In my most recent artwork, I attempt to reclaim the word because it fits the best right now, and I am really tired of struggling into shoes that are too small.

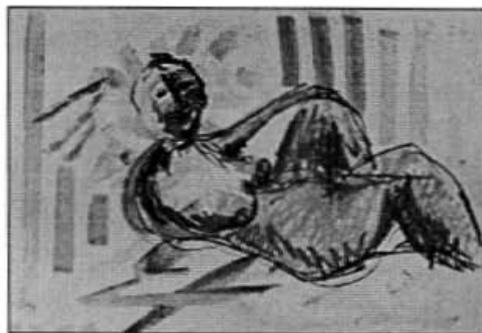


Figure 3

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FOOTNOTES

¹ "What are little girls made of? What are little girls made of?
Sugar and spice, and all that's nice. That's what little girls are made of.
What are little boys made of? What are little boys made of?
Snips and snails and puppy dog tails. That's what little boys are made of."

I know there must be a reference (Mother Goose maybe) for this folk rhyme, but I can't find it.
This rhyme is an insidious and structural part of my culture, my community, and my cognition.

² See the Guerilla Girls' Web Page: <http://www.voyagerco.com/gg/>

ROOTS/ROUTES AS ARTERIAL CONNECTIONS FOR ART EDUCATORS: ADVOCATING FOR ABORIGINAL CULTURES

RITA L. IRWIN

Arterial and life connections for art educators. Arteries are muscular vessels carrying blood away from the heart to every part of the body, eventually bringing the blood back to the heart before venturing out again. Metaphorically, these pathways locate the heart as a home from which travel extends, repeatedly, expectantly as life itself. Symbolically, arterial connections pulsate with the notion of art, expressing art through life through art. To many peoples, and particularly Aboriginal peoples¹, art translated as cultural performance is found in the very pathways and bloodlines of their geographies and histories. However, these arterial connections are available to all of us, especially art educators, as we come to recognize our own pathways and bloodlines. Sharing stories of lives, cultural roots and routed experiences, illustrates complex identity building in the late twentieth century. In this article I talk about a trip to a Paiwan aboriginal community in southern Taiwan and what I learned from/with these people. I hope this portrayal encourages others to reflect on their travel experiences in ways that may help to make classroom art experiences socioculturally diverse and politically engaged.

During my career as an art educator I have taught in three Canadian provinces, spent several months teaching in Cameroon, Africa and have visited and studied in aboriginal communities in Australia, Canada² and Taiwan.³ In each location I have encountered a complex range of experiences as a result of traveling, of practicing the crossing of borders, or as Clifford (1997, p. 2) might say, practicing a temporary "traveling-in-dwelling and dwelling-in-travel."

Dwelling is a word/concept which connotes a collective life in which travel is an extension, a supplemental experience. But what if

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This rhyme is an insidious and structural part of my culture, my community, and my cognition.

² See the Guerilla Girls' Web Page: <http://www.voyagerco.com/gg/>

ROOTS/ROUTES AS ARTERIAL CONNECTIONS FOR ART EDUCATORS: ADVOCATING FOR ABORIGINAL CULTURES

RITA L. IRWIN

Arterial and life connections for art educators. Arteries are muscular vessels carrying blood away from the heart to every part of the body, eventually bringing the blood back to the heart before venturing out again. Metaphorically, these pathways locate the heart as a home from which travel extends, repeatedly, expectantly as life itself. Symbolically, arterial connections pulsate with the notion of art, expressing art through life through art. To many peoples, and particularly Aboriginal peoples¹, art translated as cultural performance is found in the very pathways and bloodlines of their geographies and histories. However, these arterial connections are available to all of us, especially art educators, as we come to recognize our own pathways and bloodlines. Sharing stories of lives, cultural roots and routed experiences, illustrates complex identity building in the late twentieth century. In this article I talk about a trip to a Paiwan aboriginal community in southern Taiwan and what I learned from/with these people. I hope this portrayal encourages others to reflect on their travel experiences in ways that may help to make classroom art experiences socioculturally diverse and politically engaged.

During my career as an art educator I have taught in three Canadian provinces, spent several months teaching in Cameroon, Africa and have visited and studied in aboriginal communities in Australia, Canada² and Taiwan.³ In each location I have encountered a complex range of experiences as a result of traveling, of practicing the crossing of borders, or as Clifford (1997, p. 2) might say, practicing a temporary "traveling-in-dwelling and dwelling-in-travel."

Dwelling is a word/concept which connotes a collective life in which travel is an extension, a supplemental experience. But what if

we uproot the rootedness of dwelling so that we displace the notion that roots always precede routes and consider the notion that traveling experiences are practices of displacement which:

emerge as *constituent* of cultural meanings rather than as their simple transfer or extension. The cultural effects of European expansionism, for example, [can] no longer be celebrated, or deplored, as a simple diffusion outward - of civilization, industry, science, or capital.... Virtually everywhere one looks, the processes of human movement and encounter are long-established and complex. Cultural centers, discrete regions and territories, do not exist prior to contacts, but are sustained through them, appropriating and disciplining the restless movements of people and things. (p.3)

When asked where I come from, I hesitantly reply, from a dry-land grain farm in southern Alberta. This location has always represented my roots. My personal memories are deep and formative, and are held within collective family and community memories. Yet, increasingly, I have felt uncomfortable with this answer. My location is not just rooted in this one location, it is also routed in dislocation, in multiple locations. My cultural source is not just grounded in southern Alberta, it is grounded in cultural practices which include dwelling-in-traveling rather than simply locating my travels as a point of departure and return.

Diaspora is a concept discussed in anthropology, cultural and political studies, and related fields. It is a concept that provides an identification for a great many people who have traveled away from their homeland yet retain memories or myths of that homeland, who feel alienated in their host countries or communities, who hold the desire to return to their homeland and as such maintain support for their homeland while living away, and who feel a collective identity with others who continue to live in their homeland (Safran 1991). This range of experience helps to situate the concept of diaspora but should not limit our understanding of diaspora. For instance, in my own experience having moved away from my prairie roots, I have elements each place I h of diaspora even though I have never chosen to move permanently away from my national homeland of Canada. Yet, I have been temporarily displaced, sometimes for months at a time. In this sense, I experienced having a home away from home while holding a strong desire to return home.

However, I must admit that my experience is not diasporic in that it allowed me to become more or less assimilated into the norms of new cultural roots/routes in each place I have lived. In this way, I do not use the language of diaspora as with displaced people who feel a "sense of connection [which] must be strong enough to resist erasure through the normalizing processes of forgetting, assimilating, and distancing.... diaspora communities are 'not-here-to-stay.' Diasporas cultures thus mediate, in a lived tension, the experiences of separation and entanglement, of living here and remembering/desiring another place (Clifford 1997, p. 255)."

In recent years, Canadian art educators have become sensitized to cultural pluralism (Chalmers 1996), issues of identity, representation and appropriation (Long & Dickason 1996, Sacca 1997), and governmental policies governing multiculturalism and First Nations peoples (Irwin, Rogers & Farrell 1997a, 1997b). Yet in this sensitivity, I wonder how much we encourage ourselves and each other to reflect upon our own cultural source(s), identity(ies), and location(s) in an effort to understand and contest assumptions, meanings, beliefs, and values?

Elsewhere, colleagues in art education and I have written about our work with First Nations and Aboriginal peoples and communities in Canada and Australia (Irwin & Reynolds 1992, 1994, Rogers 1994, Rogers & Irwin 1995). In this work, we attempt to understand the beliefs and practices of individuals struggling with language and identity as they assert a collective cultural memory while working within a period of cultural transformation. In each case, we are struck by mistranslations made or assumed between English and Native languages, and between mainstream and First Nations ideologies (Irwin & Farrell 1996, Irwin, Rogers & Farrell 1997a, Rogers & Irwin 1997). It is apparent that to be truly involved with cultural translation, research must take on the characteristic of researching *with* people rather than researching *about* people (Alcoff 1991). Cultural translations, even when a common language is shared, are still interpretations rooted and routed within personal experiences, histories and geographical locations.

Stuhr, Krug and Scott (1995) suggest that cultural translation is really about understanding our own lives in a fuller way. A number of years ago, I became aware of my own assumptions and ignorance about First Nations art and culture when I realized the ethnocentric

bias in art curricula. At a time when I was living in a northern Ontario community closely situated to many First Nations communities, I became very aware of my lack of knowledge about Native artists and their beliefs. As I learned about Native cultures from local First Nations people and as I became more interested in national issues surrounding Aboriginal peoples, I found I had to make a decision. Should I learn about First Nations peoples, artists and cultures on my own and for myself, or should I share what I learn in an effort to influence art education generally? I chose the latter.

Efland, Freedman and Stuhr (1996) discuss at length the characteristics of a postmodern approach to art education. Postmodernizing pedagogy within art education helps to "create an informed citizenry who question authority and the status quo, accept differences, and act in defense of others and the environment (p. 90)." One postmodern pedagogical approach is an education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist (see Cahan & Kocur 1996, Goodman 1996). In this approach, diverse sociocultural groups across a nation are expected to be represented (Rogers & Irwin 1995). Typically the representations are found within short stories that portray power and knowledge relationships, and which show possibilities for negotiation. Through a knowledge of enframing, knowing is action within a cultural frame. Probably the most important characteristic of the social reconstructionist approach is that "through the curriculum, teacher, students, staff, and community are enabled and expected to practice democratic action for the benefit of disenfranchised sociocultural groups. As Lucy Lippard (1990) contends, we cannot speak for the other, but we can speak *up* for them (Efland, Freedman & Stuhr, 1996, p.89)."

In Canada, it is widely known that First Nations peoples are marginalized, yet through their actions to secure self-government, land claims, and other legislation, First Nations peoples are re-discovering and re-creating themselves and their histories (Irwin, Rogers & Farrell in press). This lived historical moment needs to be shared in classrooms across Canada. However, simultaneously with this, greater numbers of immigrants are coming to Canada than ever before and as a result, multiculturalism plays a significant role in curriculum development. In my experience, I have noticed a tendency among art educators to include a variety of culturally-based experiences, while ignoring First Nations' cultures. As a social reconstructionist, I have chosen to speak *up* for First Nations representation in the art curricula

across Canada and encourage educators to involve First Nations elders, artists and community members whenever possible.

Within this context, I have become interested not only in aboriginal issues within Canada, but beyond, and whenever I travel abroad I ask about aboriginal cultures. To my surprise, on a trip to Taiwan about two years ago, I learned about aboriginal groups who continue to practice their beliefs and customs. After a serendipitous encounter with an art educator interested in doing research with aboriginal peoples in Taiwan, I was able to organize a trip to visit the Paiwan people of southern Taiwan. I want to share with you my reflections on this trip as a way to further examine not only my own personal roots/routes but also the roots/routes of the Paiwan as they provide arterial connections for art educators interested in a social reconstructionist approach to art education.

Taiwan is an island about 250 miles long and 80 miles wide at its broadest point. With over 20 million in population it is the mostly densely populated self-governing area in the world outside of Bangladesh and the city islands of Hong Kong and Singapore. The straits between Taiwan and mainland China are just over 100 miles wide and contain more than 85 islands controlled by Taiwan. Japan controls islands 70 miles to the northwest and the archipelago lies 200 miles to the south of Taiwan (Long 1991). The eastern mountainous spine of the island, though inhabited, remains forested with lush vegetation while the remainder of the island is densely populated. It is also in the mountainous region that most of the aboriginal peoples live, with the Paiwan people living at the southern tip of the island. Other aboriginal groups live in the western and northern lowlands (Knapp 1980, Wang 1980). Overall, the aboriginal cultural groups make up much less than one percent of the population even though they have very deep roots in Taiwan. Historians have determined that some aboriginal groups date back over 2000 years.

Over the last 400 years, Taiwan has been colonized by the Dutch (1624-1662), Chinese (1662-1895), Japanese (1895-1945) and the Chinese (1945-present) again. The Dutch and early Chinese "did come into contact with the mountain aborigines but because of the difficult terrain and strong resistance they did not invade aboriginal territory until the late nineteenth century. The mountain aborigines were thus enabled to maintain their way of life into the twentieth century without much external interference (Wang, 1980, p. 39)."

During Japanese rule, interest in exploiting Taiwan's natural resources marked a planned intrusion on Paiwanese territory. Many older Paiwanese individuals remember Japanese influence on their region, with some having fond memories. It was during this time period that aboriginal peoples were consolidated into settlements close to urban areas. The Japanese established schools and police stations and encouraged the learning of aboriginal languages among the Japanese. In the postwar era, aboriginal peoples became citizens of China with all of the same legal rights as the Han Chinese. In an effort to "protect them from exploitation, the Chinese government continues the reserve system forbidding Chinese to enter without a permit but leaving the aborigines free to depart or enter (p. 50)." Nevertheless, a Chinese influence is felt. A network of roads makes the region highly accessible allowing capitalistic influences to penetrate communities. Young Paiwanese leave their home communities for employment, secondary education or military service. As a result, the Paiwanese are becoming deeply influenced by a Chinese way of life, not only as they migrate away from the reserves but also as the Chinese influence slowly penetrates Paiwanese communities.

Prior to my visit to Taiwan, a colleague in art education at the National University of Education in ChangHua, Dr. Yuh-Yao Wan, initiated a research project with the Paiwan community in Ku-Lou village (Chen 1961, Hsu & Ke 1994). Her knowledge of the community, individuals, and festivals, provided an introduction into the culture. Previously, my research colleagues and I were able to locate individuals who could speak English and their own aboriginal language. In this way, an aboriginal person was able to translate the ideas, beliefs and language from one culture to another, in an effort to act as a cultural translator and pedagogue between cultures. In Taiwan, this was not possible. Few Paiwanese people speak Mandarin and virtually none speak English. With Wan speaking Mandarin and English, interviews were conducted with a Paiwan translator who could translate into Mandarin. From here, we tape-recorded English translations (see Irwin, Rogers & Wan 1997), recognizing that with two levels of language translation already in place, our attempts at cultural translation became more tenuous. However, if we accept that cultural translations like this are happening around the world, it gives us an opportunity not only to examine the ideas that are gathered in a foreign place but to examine our own interpretations of the experience and how we try to learn from one another. Engaging in the activity of sharing stories of our cultural experiences offers each person an

opportunity to learn more about themselves. It also fosters respect, interest, and participation in cultural events (Chalmers 1996) among cultural translators of diverse linguistic and sociocultural backgrounds.

Stuhr, Krug and Scott (1993) suggest that cultural translation is a collaborative research method which should begin with researchers situating their own backgrounds, histories, and geographical roots. They state all cultural translations are still interpretations, set against personal experiences, and can never be complete translations, regardless of shared language. Therefore, one must understand why cultural translations are important, especially to art educators: "to translate is an effort to know more about ourselves and the world we live in" (Stuhr, Krug & Scott, 1995, pp. 31-32). Cultural translation, states Krug (in press p. 1) "is a way to study the contextual complexity of cultural identity ... through a collaborative, ethnographic research method." Using this approach, he suggests the development of partial tales or short stories to illustrate the complex nature of lived activities in an effort to provide a basis for developing mutual understanding. If we choose to enter the lifeworld of another person as cultural participants, cultural translators and cultural pedagogues learning from one another, we create a pedagogical space for interpreting meaningful partial tales (Stuhr, Krug & Scott, 1995). It was from this place that I found I could learn from the Paiwanese while I also tried to share some cultural stories from my own background. The following account is a partial tale of what I learned during my stay.

The Paiwanese people are quick to talk about their daily activities and especially their cultural beliefs and production. During our stay of one week, we lived in a local teacher's home and experienced the hospitality and warmth of our hosts and many other community members. Over the week, we were able to interview ten men and women who carve ceremonial items, bead or cross-stitch garments, or make jewelry. We also interviewed two female hereditary chiefs, a shaman, several community members and three contemporary artists. In return for their generous gift of time with us, I gave them gifts from Canada: cloths and carvings with First Nations designs, and for some, tinned salmon. I took many pictures during that stay and share several with you here.

The primary focus for the conversational interviews was to understand enough about the culture to determine if a parallel concept

for art existed in the Paiwanese ideology and language. What we found was not surprising. The Paiwan people could not translate art as a word nor as a concept. However, through long conversations about cultural practices in their community, certain words⁴ came to the fore which are used to describe activities with natural objects. For instance, *vinzig* is used to describe 'being able to do.' A thing of beauty might be called *nonwag* or if it is very beautiful, *nonwagwag*.

Participating in some of the local events and activities, talking with elders, chiefs and shamans, one notices carvings (see figures 1 & 2) in every home and intricate beadwork and cross-stitch (see figures 3 & 4) on ceremonial costumes. Chiefs wear special headdresses and showcase valuable cultural forms in their homes (see figure 5). The older hereditary chief was particularly distinctive with her tattooed hands. At the age of fourteen, her hands were tattooed to distinguish her forever as a chief. As she grew, and her hands grew larger, the tattoos no longer covered all of her hands (see figure 6) yet they continue to symbolize her position in the community. Although the Japanese and Chinese governments allowed the Paiwanese to make cultural products they were not allowed to continue any cultural performances or ceremonies (Hung 1993). After much resistance, the Chinese government allowed the Paiwanese to practice their cultural beliefs through ceremonial rituals in the late 1970s.

Cultural products repeatedly illustrate certain symbols that are easily recognizable in the region as Paiwanese. Most visual products portray snakes, eagles, and male and female heads with large round eyes, which are often combined with regular geometrically patterned decorations. Carved ceremonial drinking cups (two linked together for two people to drink from) are used for special occasions and were used during a marriage celebration during my visit. When asked if the Paiwan gave the makers of such objects a specific name, they struggled



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

to find the following words: *rraruvenzigan* meaning the one who carves often and *rrariwalunya* meaning the one who weaves, beads or does cross-stitch very often.

Traditional designs tell ancient stories of events, relationships among people(s), ceremonies or tribal conflicts. These are passed orally from generation to generation and if certain items are considered ancient, they cannot be sold for fear of offending spirits. However, many Paiwanese today adapt the Paiwan style for tourist trade items which do not possess cultural stories. Contemporary aboriginal artists are careful to adapt Paiwanese designs without offending elders. Young people are encouraged to learn how to carve, bead, make jewelry, weave and make other cultural products. This is usually encouraged through the watching of accomplished creators, though there are times when direct instruction is given.

The cultural memories or roots of the Paiwan are deeply situated in the oral nature of their cultural practices as well as in their relationship with land, their environment. The Paiwan believe land is a sacred entity to be honored and respected. Even though governmental relocation of their communities has separated them from traditional lands, they firmly believe their souls will return to their sacred Da-Wu mountain after they die where they will join their ancestors. In addition to this belief, the Paiwanese also believe that Chiefs inherit land on behalf of the community. Chiefs are entrusted with land and with this entrustment, cultural rituals and cultural performances of all types, are sustained, cared for, nurtured.

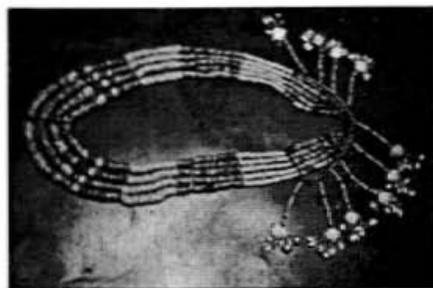


Figure 5



Figure 6

Though the Paiwanese roots or cultural memories are deeply felt, so too are their routes. These routes assume several forms. Before the nineteenth century, cultural memories passed on through oral traditions recall tribal connections, travels, and conflicts. With colonization, routes were imposed with entire communities relocated, permanently. Clifford (1997) discusses the tension and relatedness of diasporist and autochthonist histories, that is the histories of migrants and aboriginals, respectively. In many ways, the experiences of aboriginal peoples holds diasporic elements: displacement, dispossession, and adaptation of dispersed peoples. By claiming their "firstness" on the land, and articulating their common histories of marginalization, aboriginal peoples hold diasporist visions of returning to an original place. The Paiwan hold these same views, though interestingly, not to the degree I expected. My experience with First Nations peoples in Canada has deeply sensitized me to issues of treaties, land claims, and self-government (among others). The Paiwan people never spoke of such activism or concern to me. Upon reflection, I came to appreciate another interpretation of the relationship between rootedness and displacement.

Before reflecting on my experience with the Paiwanese, I assumed that most aboriginal peoples sought their roots, their homeland, their place of ancestral memories in an effort to argue against the relentless trend toward the routedness of a global, transnational world. Even though I felt an opposition between roots and routes, I never questioned this opposition to any significant degree. My roots were in southern Alberta. My familial pride, my metaphoric agency,

my formative grounding came from these roots. In imaginative moments, I still feel a desire to return to what and where I once was. When I thought about the routedness of my travels, my assumption was that they formed trajectories that looped outward yet returned homeward. My roots/routes were central to my experience, my identity, my sense of community.

My interpretation of aboriginal experience, as well as my own experience, assumed a centrality of cultural roots. I suspect, this notion is not unusual. However, I have come to perceive the relationship between the rootedness *and* routedness of experiences differently as a result of my visit to the Paiwan. One of the visions of modernization has been the decimation of autochthonous notions, cultures, communities. However, these same autochthonous groups have never been purely local or regional: "they have always been rooted and routed in particular landscapes, regional and interregional networks (Clifford, p. 254)." In a curious turn, "what may be distinctively *modern*, however, is the relentless assault on indigenous sovereignty by colonial powers, transnational capital, and emerging nation-states (p. 254)." In an era of post-modernism, what is needed is a shift of understanding toward the roots/routes of our cultural identities. We cannot have one without the other, nor would we want one without the other. Diasporic consciousness is not in absolute opposition to tribal consciousness, but rather, is in a dialectical relationship. Our understanding of ourselves, our lives, our beliefs is rooted/routed in dialectical relationships. These dialectical relationships may have been in place with the Paiwanese, perhaps other aboriginal groups (and others), prior to colonization.

Arterial connections for art education. In the opening paragraph I metaphorically suggested that the roots and routes of one's experience might be compared to the bloodlines of the muscular vessels leading to and from the heart. In our experiences, we situate our formative sense of home with our traveled sense of home-away-from-home. We negotiate these roots/routes through dialogue and reflection. As we do so, we develop a stronger sense of ourselves, but we also develop a stronger sense of community.

These arterial connections are profoundly important for art educators. Not only because all art educators are cultural translators and pedagogues, but because we are cultural performers teaching about art as cultural performance. Earlier in this paper I mentioned

that the Paiwanese people did not have words or concepts that translated to an English language notion of art. Nor have any other aboriginal cultures with whom I have worked. The reason no clear translation exists, I am told, is because cultural products which might be considered art in mainstream society, cannot be separated from the flow of cultural life, from the memories of cultural sources, from the environmental and spiritual situatedness of cultural identity and community. Cultural performances not only involve cultural products, they also involve the active beliefs, active meaning-making, active understandings that surpass temporal notions of past, present and future. These cultural performances are often celebratory in nature but they may also be everyday experiences that link the mundane with the spiritual, the practical with the abstract in and through time. These products are not separate from but are integrated with cultural life. The best, yet poor translation, is that art is life, is integrated with being and becoming, is a source of memory and forecast, and is the flow of culture itself. Culture is performed in and through life. Art, or cultural performance, pulsates in and through life.

For art educators, understanding the roots/routes of our experiences helps us to understand the roots/routes of our students' experiences. As we recognize the dialectical relationship between the two notions, roots/routes, we begin to realize the narrowness of the concept of art in a modern sense. Post-modern pedagogy encourages educators to explore difference and diversity. For me, embracing the sense of art as cultural performance helps to liberate me from the separation of art from my life. There are times my rootedness to art is comforting, but increasingly my experience and routedness toward cultural performance influences not only what I create but how I create it and how I live through it.

Classroom art experiences which recognize the roots/routes of our identities should help to form pathways for understanding ourselves and each other in ways that are pulsating; an engagement with life itself.

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FOOTNOTES

¹ I use the term Aboriginal to refer to all indigenous peoples. First Nations will refer to Canadian indigenous people. Although I will generally refer to the Aboriginal people of Taiwan, I will refer to the Paiwan people in this paper.

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⁴ All of these Paiwanese words which follow are phonetically spelled as they are said in the Paiwanese language. Linguists might disagree with our spellings or translations.

PAULO FREIRE: COMMUNITY BASED ARTS EDUCATION

CHRISTINE BALLENGEE MORRIS

This paper is about Paulo Freire and his influence on the perspective and application of literacy programming and interdisciplinary education through the arts. Portraiture, as used in this paper, is a collection of stories that illuminate historical, social, and cultural influences that connect (Reinharz, 1992) Freire to a community and to the world. Freire's pedagogical theory requires educators and students to examine self, culture, and community. It also addresses issues of power, voice, conflict, class, gender, and race. Freire's philosophy and application illustrates the value he placed on education through life experiences/knowledge, the arts, and cultures of the people. In this paper, I present excerpts from Freire's 1996 conference presentation at Diadema, interviews with Freire, Francisco Brenmand, a Brazil artist and co-worker of Freire, and Ana Mae Barbosa, past president of International Society of Education through Art, a professor at The University of São Paulo, and a student of Freire.

BACKGROUND

Paulo Freire came from the State of Pernambuco whose capital is Recife. Once considered one of the world's poorest regions, its economy has improved in recent years (Freire, personal interview, September 3, 1996). Freire was born in 1921 into a middle class family. In the 1930 depression, his family went bankrupt. However, due to his father's determination, he was able to stay in school. He studied philosophy and law at the University of Recife, then worked for three years as a labor union lawyer. His professional experience with workers and his past experience as a poor student made him realize that education was a privilege enjoyed by a minority in his country. The majority of the people lived in poverty oppressed by a minority that dictated the rules to the oppressed majority (Mashayekh, 1974, p. 4).

He became a professor of Philosophy of Education at the University of Recife, where in 1959 he earned a Ph.D. in education. With the help of student volunteers, Freire started the Adult Education Program of the Popular Culture Movement, which taught people how to read and write, and also encouraged popular festivals, performances, and the arts in the ghetto and rural areas of Recife (Brown, 1974, p. 245). The Movement's objectives were to raise class-consciousness and increase the popular vote. This was during the early 1960s when rural and urban unions started organizing in the Northeast of Brazil. In 1961 two farm workers' strikes brought together 83,000 and 230,000 workers in an effort to bring about social reform (Freire, 1978, p. 110).

In Brazil, literacy was intimately associated with power. According to the law, only those who were literate could vote; and the traditional political duty was to vote according to the interests of the elite. However, with the formation of the peasants' leagues in the 1950s, farm workers became aware of the power of voting. Consequently, they wanted to change their powerless poverty situation which was fostered by the elite. Freire's cultural movement accelerated the revolts. In 1963 conditions were ripe for the literacy campaign to start in the country. Its beginning was June 1963, several months before the end of the populist government of President Jao Goulart. The Minister of Education, Paulo de Tarso was a friend of Freire. He was impressed with the work in Pernambuco, and decided to adopt Freire's literacy method for a Brazil-wide National Literacy Program. Under Freire's direction, training programs for adult literacy educators were developed in most all the state capitals from June 1963 to March 1964. The coordinators were mostly college students. The campaign started in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul, and in the Northeast states of Rio Grande Norte, Bahia, and Sergipe (Elias, 1976, p. 13-14). Freire's plan was to start the literacy campaign in regions where social and political reformation had already begun through organizing leagues and unions. As Freire (1978) wrote, "the tone of the literacy campaign in Brazil was eminently political" (p. 110) and not only training for illiterates. He added that it was urgent to establish as close a link as possible between literacy education and political consciousness of Brazil's masses.

The following excerpt is from Freire's 1996 presentation at Diadema's Congress of Cultural Education and Leisure Sports. Freire

tells his story of that time period and how his educational theory developed. Freire's speech is presented in an unedited form. His English is spoken with the intonations and patterns of his Brazilian dialect.

It was hard for me to understand how these people dealt with reality, they used to explain pain, discrimination because of destiny or god's punishment. For me, this ideology paralyzed the people and maintained stratification. We had to learn the power of the counter attack because to stay in fatalism helps the dominant. What we tried to do was place the people in movements—candidates of subjects within history. When I went home I felt drained but happy. Paulo, I asked myself, how could I challenge the gently ingenious consciousness with this group of people that is out of the fight? Paulo, why not use something to provoke reflection about culture before reading and writing class. Paulo, what you need is to be able to offer challenges that allow growth and apprehend the comprehension of culture as a result of practical intervention of the human beings of the world (world not made by humans) through their work. The results were to create a world in which culture became one with history, politics and social knowledge for all. I tried and it worked very well. And I thought, well, if me and two more fellows [sic] are able to open a hole to get water—if you are able to defend us against bad climate. . . if I'm able to change the world that we didn't make. . . why can we not change the one we did? Culture is the instrument of the world changing. So, I thought that it would be a very good idea to work with concrete and existential situations. So I asked an artist, Francisco Brennand, a sculptor, to make ten visual works that illustrated concrete and existential ideas. What I wanted was to provoke the reading of codification that brought to them discovery of the relationship of culture and nature and try to overcome fatalism through community arts.

Soon the campaign spread all over the country. The plan was, by 1964 to equip 20,000 groups to teach approximately 20 million illiterates. Working this way I was fascinated watching people discovering that it is possible for people to change the political world by collaborating. [On April 1, 1964] The literacy campaign was interrupted with the military coup

which ousted Goulart. [Blamed by the new government for applying a model of education opposed to national interests, Paulo Freire was put under house arrest and imprisoned for about seventy days.] Because the dictatorship wanted to find something on us and found nothing, they intimidated the students. A student who was very scared about the situation told the military about the visual art works. The government apprehended the art and stripped my citizen rights.

I met with the artist Francisco Brennand at his Recife studio in 1996. I asked him to give an account of his working relationship with Freire, to describe the art work that was seized, and how he dealt with the dictatorship.

Freire was very famous in Recife for his literacy program and his political work with the workers. The idea of educating illiterate was so simple but so dangerous and Freire made many enemies. The company owners and elite did not like the idea of literacy programs. They feared that the workers would want more say and more money. Everything was political. Freire approached me to make art that symbolized culture, reformation, literacy, and self. I studied the program, the situation, and I began to design the works. I make tiles which is a traditional art form. I paint on tiles. I work with clay. Clay is from the earth and is a part of humans and we are a part of it. Freire's goal was for the viewer to understand the relationship of self to the world and that people can make change for the good. I produced the works and Freire was very pleased. The political situation became unstable and we began to realize that the literacy program and the connection to culture and the arts of the people were targeted by the elite and others. When the military coup occurred, many people were in danger and others easily talked to save themselves. Freire was one of the targets because of his work with the workers. My art was seen by the dictatorship as dangerous and it was destroyed. There are no reminders of that work, no photographs. Freire was not yet beaten. He asked me to make another set. I said no Paulo. They will be destroyed also. This time was hard for everyone but especially for those who had dreamt of a different Brasil. I was fortunate. I continued to be an artist and made tiles and sculptures.

Freire was exiled to Chile and worked with the UNESCO Consultant at the Institute of Capacitation an Agrarian Reform. While in Chile, he also directed a National Literacy Program under two different government regimes: the Christian Democrats and the Popular Unity Party. Under both governments, literacy was narrowly viewed as a way to increase workers' production and quality of product (Freire, personal interview, September 3, 1996). During the Christian Democratic government, the purpose of adult literacy programs was to strengthen production on the farms and factories. During the Popular Unity Party government, the role of the literacy campaign was to make the peasants aware that literacy and having a job was one in the same (Freire, 1978, p. 111). Although the governments' objectives and Freire's differed, literacy was the ultimate goal for all.

In 1969, Freire came to the United States at the invitation of the Harvard University Center for the Study of Education and Development and the Center for the Study of Development and Social Change. In 1970, he went to Geneva, Switzerland, to work as a special consultant to the office of education with the World Council of Churches. During this time, he kept in contact with key people in Brazil (Barbosa, personal interview, September 10, 1996). Ana Mae Barbosa is a recognized international leader in the political movement of Brazilian art educators. Barbosa's first elementary education course was taught by Freire:

He was already famous in Recife, but not nationally known. In a writing examination, Freire asked us to tell why we chose to be teachers. I wrote why I hated the idea of teaching and that I was forced to do this to get a job. The next day he gave back everyone's composition except mine. He said that we had to talk privately. He invited me to investigate the possibilities of education. I used Paulo Freire's methods. For three years, I taught literacy, reading, and writing to children in the first grade; I did that through art. This was revolutionary in my day. I was invited to teach art education in the school where Paulo Freire was president and then I worked for the *Escolinha de Arte do Recife*. I was a fighter. Freire taught me about liberation. (Morris, 1998, in print)

Barbosa and her husband lost their jobs as professors during the dictatorship. Barbosa remembered: "Paulo was always trying to send books to us and we would write to him frequently about our work, our readings, and our research. I went to Geneva twice to visit him" (Ibid).

Until his death in May 1997, Freire continued to write, support the Workers Party, present at conferences, teach, and mentor educators from all over the world. Freire remarked, "I find all the experiences have helped me grow as a person and of course as a teacher. I have enjoyed meeting so many people from all over the world but I belong in Brasil" (Freire, personal interview, September 3, 1996).

COMMUNITY AS THE HEART OF PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED: THEORY TO APPLICATION

Freire's theory considers the arts and education as cultural community action for freedom. Adult literacy can only be viewed as cultural action for freedom—an act of knowing and reflecting critically on the process which motivates people to learn to read and write. It is not enough to become literate for the purpose of obtaining a job or keeping a job. He explained that "illiteracy is not a disease that needs to be cured but a concrete expression of an unjust social reality. At the same time, it is a linguistic problem and a political problem" (Freire, 1977, p 16-29). The act of knowing is based on a dialogue between the community, teacher and the students. The subject to be explored is determined by the community needs. The exploration facilitates action to reform problems. Through reformation, freedom from illiteracy and oppression is possible because the people have determined the process and course of action. The cultures and the arts are ways that express issues in languages that are understood by the community. He referred to this as problem-posing education. Freire maintained that in order to become literate, it is necessary for the learners acquire a new vision of the world which is based on a critical awareness of social inequities (1978, p. 72). Freire believed:

- that the same way they were denied the right to read and write, they were also denied the right to profit from the product of their work

- that their work, regardless of their illiteracy, is for them a source of knowledge
- that nobody knows everything, and nobody ignores everything. In this world we are all learners (1977, p.29).

Freire did not consider the literacy movement a miracle instrument for freedom, but it certainly contributed to the process of becoming free. He believed literacy increased the learners' consciousness and helped them to become aware of their social, historical, economical, and political realities. In his presentation at Diadema, Freire explained his pedagogy in simple terms:

Joy makes a political differences and joy to be happy is the key to literacy. Education is not only about school systems. Education is about joy—education, culture, leisure. Without arts, we have no way to express the needs for reformation. Why the arts, when there are so many needs such as jobs, homeless and I reply who doesn't have a cultural project doesn't have an educational program—both are needed.

Freire viewed the arts and culture as languages. To be literate and to be understood by many, people must be able to express their ideas in a multitude of ways. Freire (1973) wrote that "to be human is to engage in relationships with others and with the world" (p.3). If people adapt to the world, accommodating themselves to situations, they become passive, unable to change anything. If they integrate and have relationships with the world, they become dynamic and will be able to change things, creating culture. By developing a critical attitude, people can overcome a posture of adjustment and become integrated. According to Freire, students should experience this process in education by experiencing art, expressing through their cultural arts, integrating subjects, integrating one to the world, developing a critical consciousness and encourage dialogue. This requires a new pedagogy, attitude, and approach.

Freire believed that literacy implies discussion of the whole education field in society. It does not make sense to discuss literacy in a society whose form of education is selective and elitist in character. This kind of education has to reach everyone, should be revealing and critical, with learners and teachers conscious of their own role, and be interdisciplinary. Freire recommended exploring issues, ideas, values, concepts, hopes which characterize an epoch, as well as obstacles

which impede human's fulfillment. He referred to those as generative themes because "they contain the possibility of unfolding into again as many themes, which in their turn call for new tasks to be fulfilled" (1972b, p. 74).

Here are two examples of Freire's theory as applied. The first example took place in São Paulo from 1989 to 1992. When Freire was nominated the Municipal Secretary of Education in 1989, he faced several political and pedagogical challenges. The Workers Party assumed power in São Paulo, the third largest city in the world. Never had this happened before and the pressure to succeed was great. Freire also inherited an almost broke educational system that had developed into:

- reproduction of fragmented and compartmentalized content, and use of pedagogical didactic books as the sole instructional resource;
- an authoritative relationship between the divisions of the school;
- powerless school communities which were not allowed to participate in the educational process;
- disregard for the students and community's social and cultural experiences in the development of the curriculum (Rizzi, personal communication, September 12, 1996).

São Paulo has almost four million children between the ages of 1 through 14. Fourteen percent of these children are illiterate. There are approximately four hundred thousand dropouts and 80 thousand juvenile delinquents. The Municipal Educational System is composed of nearly seven hundred schools in which about seven hundred thousand students are enrolled. Because of the complexity and magnitude of the problems, Freire and his Secretary of Education team selected the following goals as a plan of action:

- to establish a public, popular and democratic school system;
- to create interdisciplinary curricula (Ibid).

Freire's conceived school as a place where participation is understood to be indispensable for the growth of the individual in society and there must be a partnership between school and community. A school is where educators are free to choose their own peda-

gological approaches, be capable of critical thought, select programs and methods to suit their needs, and be able to understand their community. The schools that participated in this project volunteered to do so.

This project was the opportune chance to work with generative themes in a public educational system. The former experiences took place in alternative pedagogical situations. Freire's generative themes: issues, ideas, values, concepts, hopes, characterize an epoch, as well as obstacles which impede people's fulfillment. Freire calls them generative themes because "they contain the possibility of unfolding into again as many themes, which in their turn call for new tasks to be fulfilled" (Freire, 1972, p. 74). The investigation of generative themes is the investigate of people's thought about reality and people's actions upon reality. This is why, according to Freire, investigation of themes requires investigators to work with the people of the region as co-investigators. Collaboration was viewed by Freire as a valuable educational tool. The questions raised at this time by the Freire team were:

1. Which content is the best and for whom?
 2. What is the relationship between course content and the students reality?
 3. What is the relationship between school and life or more specifically, what is the significance of school in daily life?
- Samples of generative themes that were chosen by the schools during this process:
1. The subway and leisure
 2. Raising social consciousness: prejudices and employment
 3. Quality of life: consciousness and participation
 4. Housing: urbanization and values
 5. Cohabitation and violence

Triangular Methodology of Art Teaching was formed by Freire's pedagogical principles and specifically assumed the proposed stance of Ana Mae Barbosa, based on her interpretation of Discipline Based Art Education (Rizzi, personal communication, September 12, 1996):

1. The knowledge of Art is constructed at the intersection of experimentation, codification, and information. Three domains must be taught:
 - a. Art History
 - b. Studio
 - c. Reading art: including aesthetics and criticism.

2. A society is artificially developed when, along with high quality artistic production, there is also a high level of understanding of this production.
3. Each generation has the right to look at and to interpret history personally giving it new meaning.

In the evaluation done by the Secretary of Education at the end of 1992, the following items were considered successful outcomes of the project:

1. New School organization with collaboration of teachers allowing for growth of the educators and professionals.
2. The opportunity for dialogue was created which modified the concepts of curriculum and construction of knowledge.
3. The students became more participatory, creative, aware, and critical.
4. The integration of the community and of the parents in the schools.

The following obstacles were noted and still exist:

1. Teacher turnover
 2. Organization difficulties such as scheduling
 3. Difficulty in integrating the general curriculum with the arts
 4. Lack of professional development
 5. Lack of professional commitment by some educators
 6. Establishing a dialogue where none had previously existed
- The following were considered difficulties in the art education process:
1. The practical and theoretical preparation for classroom educators.
 2. Difficulty in abandoning old pedagogical practices because of a feeling of insecurity and fear of the unknown.

The following were considered successful of the art education process:

1. Better comprehension and awareness.
2. Better comprehension and awareness concerning areas of knowledge which are involved in the construction of the knowledge in art.

The second example was in Diadema. It is a city in the state of São Paulo. The Workers Party was in power and the school system had adopted Freire's theory. The education administration's evaluation had been almost identical to São Paulo's project evaluation. The difference is that the Workers Party lost their power in São Paulo and the project was abandoned. The Diadema school system administrators "decided to produce a conference that celebrated our accomplishments and address the obstacles. Paulo Freire was contacted to be our keynote speaker. His words will inspire us to continue the long hard work that is in front of us" (Personal communication, September 1, 1996). The conference was viewed as a place and process where problems regarding art and community centered education could be discussed. "If dialogue is the key to Freire's theory and literacy process, then teachers need a forum to dialogue" (ibid.). The emphasis was to evaluate the project and make changes that would address the problems.

THE INTERVIEW AND CONFERENCE

The conference was a time to share and to celebrate their development of a community art centered literacy curriculum and program. The lobby was filled with visual displays of art work by children and adults. The artists were there to discuss their works with interested viewers. The 1,500 seat auditorium was full. People were sitting on the floor and on the stairs. One of the teachers that I had met earlier asked me to follow her to a room where I was introduced to Freire. He smiled, patted my hand and asked me if I spoke Portuguese because he preferred to speak in his language. I admitted that my Portuguese was at a two year old level. He laughed and decided that it would probably be best if he continued to speak English. I asked many questions, but the main question I had was about the conclusions of the São Paulo and Diadema evaluations regarding teacher reformation and attitudes when initiating integrated/interdisciplinary pedagogy and curricula. How do you continue the momentum when there is resistance to change? How do you get beyond negative resistance? Freire thought for a moment and then answered:

Time. It takes time. We forget that it took a long time to get to this moment. Often failure is due to enthusiasm that turns into frustration. To be successful the identified goals must never be forgotten but often the way to obtain those goals

change due to unperceived needs. If you think of literacy metaphorically, we are all illiterate of something. Teachers are taught and then they teach. If they are taught to do a job, they do not know the value of learning beyond making a living. They will measure their success according to their pay and in Brazil it is very little. It is not hopeless. I get tired of hearing how this prevents successful reformation. These teachers, like illiterate students, need to be taught the intrinsic value of learning. They need to experience the joy of teaching and making a difference in one person. They need to have the support of those who already understand this and not feel inadequate. Negative resistance is illiteracy. To never try is fatalism. To attempt and quit because some did not see it your way is fatalism. To continue but not address problems is asking for failure. In applying a theory such as in this case in Diadema, the teachers must go beyond believing and just be it. It is not about literacy it is about living, it is about being, it is about cultural identity and expression, it is about political awareness and participation. Teachers who resist reformation are often afraid—afraid of inadequacies, afraid of challenges, afraid of change because it is new.

We discussed the Diadema and São Paulo projects and the similarities of the evaluations to projects that I had worked with in the United States. He stated that "many times people assume I have the answers but I do not—only the energy to explore." Back in my seat, the conference began with a working people's chorus. The content of the songs was culturally and politically influenced by the community and the audience responded with approval. At times, I felt that I was attending a church service because of the confirmation and affirmation that many of the teachers were experiencing. The second act was a dance company that addressed issues of the working class including company owner's attitudes. They combined European music, African dance and Catholic religious symbols to tell their story.

When Freire walked in, everyone stood, applauded, and greeted him. The ovation lasted for over thirty minutes. He did not seem to notice the mass as a whole but greeted individuals with a smile, a handshake, or a hug and a kiss. The physical manifestation of mutual admiration was contagious. It was hard for me to realize I was actually witnessing this occurrence. Freire climbed the stairs to the stage and took his place at the long table. Political figures, teachers,

and adult students sat at the table and each proceeded to greet him. After the introduction, Freire delivered his presentation which included his educational and political history and what he perceived as the current pedagogical concerns:

Democracy is hard because it demands tolerance. To live democratically demands and makes us go beyond words and to leave our differences which is so hard to face. To change is difficult but possible. It is my advantage to be seventy-five years of age and it is possible of having no fear in speaking because of the experience I've accumulated. I remember when I was discussing with a street sweeper about culture and the worker said 'Oh my God, I'll go into the work place with my head up high because I know who I am. This is the way we change things—not with guns. To change with guns gives power to the gun not with the people.' Everything is about people. Reality is the reason for reality. We have no time to think about change—we have to do it. The neo-liberal ideology is perverse and I'm astonished with the number of educators and fellow students after the fall of the Berlin Wall, pervert themselves and start to become pragmatic educators [strongly stated]. For me the dream is fundamental, utopia didn't die, history didn't die because if history is dying what we have is eternity of the present and the present is Capitalism, Capitalist. And to be politically conscious today is even more important than that of the 1960s. Do you believe or not? The neo-liberalist arrived at the university, they are the post modern fatalist and they are who we have to fight against. It is important [necessary] to continue to fight for the people. The globalization of the economy will be able to generate a new world-wide dimension. Even being this way, I can not accept quietly the perversity of the neo-liberal theology that imprisons people and makes the poor miserable. This theology is fatalism. With the same energy—only a little tired at seventy-five, I'm still fighting today. So fight. Don't stop the fight because the motionless will get to you.

Freire expressed that power is not in a few but in the mass called—democracy (Personal communication, September 3, 1996). It is through the cultures and the arts of the people that the masses will understand the importance of education. Literacy is not about a job and/ or a career, but lifelong learning, knowledge, and pursuits in

possibilities. Freire pointed to several aspects of the Diadema and São Paulo projects that deserve to be highlighted.

During and after this project students and teachers experienced:

- respect as human beings and citizens
- the possibility of trying the joy of collective creation
- the possibility of doubting and figuring out the best way
- the possibility of being different and not being excluded
- the possibility of thinking, being, expressing this existence and being listened to.

(Personal communication, September 1996)

In 1994, I taught a workshop for teachers at The Paulo Freire Secretary of Education Building that was sponsored by The University of São Paulo. Many of the teachers had been a part of the Freire project. The teachers spoke about the joy of being able to exist, think, and contribute to the welfare of a community. Those who experienced it stated they would "never forget the quality and commitment of this project and they know that they still have to work hard in order to build up all the possibilities and hopes" (Personal communication, June, 1994).

As I read and write about current educational reformation that includes aspects of integration, critical theory, and collaboration, I conclude that it is very important for art educators to look outside of their own countries, to find and explore reformation projects such as those at São Paulo and Diadema. According to the National Institute for Literacy in The United States, illiteracy is on the increase and by the year 2000, two out of three American could be illiterate. Adults who can't read cost Americans an estimated \$224 billion each year in lost wages, lost taxes, basic skills training, unemployment compensation, prison and law enforcement, and lost international competitiveness. The most poorly educated adults suffer the highest rates of morbidity and mortality from chronic diseases and conditions. Children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents, especially their mothers. The most significant predictor of success in school is having a mother who completed high school. These are our realities and possibly integration, collaboration, community-based, and arts centered programs that encourage critical thinking, cultural identity, cultural embracement, and multiple ways of expressing are the pathways toward literacy. Paulo Freire has passed away, his influence has touched and inspired many. Freire was his

theory. I found his philosophy and actions to be one in the same. I conclude with a thought that Freire expressed during our interview, "Education is a process that requires collaboration, democracy requires patience, and life requires both."

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CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH ART: TWO RESEARCH PROJECT REVIEWS

SEYMOUR SIMMONS III

Against a background of contemporary social problems and concerns, this article considers the role of the arts in creating community. It begins with a synopsis of Ellen Dissanayake's anthropological perspective on the importance of the arts in human evolution, human development, and premodern societies. It then considers current approaches to community-building through the arts based on two recent research projects done by Harvard Project Zero and its affiliates. One project, the Lincoln Center Institute Arts-in-Education Survey Study, reviewed twenty-two arts-in-education programs including community art centers, cultural centers, arts-infusion schools, and state and local arts councils. The other, Project Co-Arts, involved a survey and portraits of community art centers that focus on education in economically disadvantaged communities. In discussing this research, different forms of community-building are considered, including efforts to sustain ethnic communities as well as those intended to bring diverse populations together. Suggestions are made in conclusion of ways art programs can enhance connections within communities while maintaining autonomy and integrity.

With all its technological and material benefits, contemporary society is often characterized in terms of its declining human conditions (Goleman, 1995; Kids Count, 1997; Kozol, 1988, 1991). The breakdown of the family, homelessness, alienation, amorality, abuses of various kinds all affect our lives, whether directly or indirectly, on a daily basis. In response to these circumstances, arts advocates have advanced a number of claims for the social and personal importance of the arts. Certain of these claims focus on the value of studying art to help us reflect upon the central themes and challenges of human

theory. I found his philosophy and actions to be one in the same. I conclude with a thought that Freire expressed during our interview, "Education is a process that requires collaboration, democracy requires patience, and life requires both."

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existence (Esterow, 1993; Fowler, 1996; Greene, 1995). Others recognize the role of making art in conflict resolution (Raphael, 1996) or in dealing with disturbing issues of various kinds (Henley, 1997). Still others address the significance of the arts in developing a sense of community, which then becomes a means to counter the difficulties of modern living (Grauer, 1995). In this last category, some of the most compelling arguments come from the anthropologist, Ellen Dissanayake (1995).

This article begins by reviewing Dissanayake's position. It then highlights contemporary examples of community-building through the arts as described in two recent research projects done by Harvard Project Zero and its affiliates. These arguments and examples, I believe, affirm the ongoing importance of the arts in fostering essential human values such as empathy, self-awareness, communication, and collaboration. They also demonstrate the diversity of approaches taken by arts organizations in meeting the needs of all types of people: privileged and under-privileged, young and old, those within ethnic communities and those in multi-ethnic environments.

Beyond its value in advocating for the arts, this material should provide arts educators with models that can be tried in other situations. It should further invite them to reflect on additional ways the arts can be applied to address enduring community concerns.

BACKGROUND

As suggested above, this article hopes to demonstrate the potential role of community arts experience in the resolution of contemporary social problems. Similar concerns seem to be at the heart of Ellen Dissanayake's research into the importance of the arts in human life (1992). Dissanayake's position is summarized in an article for *American Craft* (1995). It rests upon three main points of reference: the centrality of the arts in the evolution of our species, the natural development of arts-related capacities in humans from infancy to maturity, and the socio-cultural role of the arts in contemporary premodern societies. She finds through these points of reference that art-making is a pre-determined part of being human, a fundamental means of learning, and an innate source of pleasure — what she calls *joie de faire*.

More than this, Dissanayake claims that art-making is necessary to human survival. For in the arts, individuals work together to construct objects or events of shared meaning and common purpose. These objects and events, in turn, help individuals and their communities safely cross life's treacherous thresholds, ward off enemies, overcome disasters, and endure what must be suffered. The arts, then, do more than reflect and reinforce community traditions; they foster the creation or re-creation of a community in response to changing times. Unfortunately, Dissanayake adds, little remains of this central role for the arts today, and the loss to modern humanity is both practical and spiritual (p. 45).

While agreeing in general with Dissanayake's thesis, I nonetheless see signs of hope based on two recent research projects undertaken by Harvard Project Zero and its affiliates. The first was a survey of twenty-two arts-in-education programs, commissioned by Lincoln Center Institute (LCI). Methodology included a review of program materials, a written questionnaire, and phone interviews. Survey questions addressed such topics as curricular offerings, educational philosophy, community relationships, and program evolution (Simmons, 1997).

Part of a large scale program evaluation (Lincoln Center Institute, 1997), the arts-in-education survey was not intended to compare programs with one another, but rather to situate LCI within the broad field of arts-in-education, nationwide. Programs selected therefore varied radically in size, scope, geographical location, offerings, and philosophy. In looking at these programs, the survey hoped to identify diversity as well as commonalities among programs and to determine important issues in the field of arts education. Based on survey results, these issues included: (a) the importance of arts advocacy which is grounded in evidence of educational effectiveness; (b) a trend toward the "intensification" of offerings such as the development of "arts infusion" schools and other long-term residencies for artists in schools; (c) a growing focus on cross-disciplinary connections; (d) the search for alternative models and settings for arts activities; and (e) the need to cultivate or enhance connections with communities (Simmons, 1997, p. 20). These issues will be discussed in greater detail below.

The second research project, Project Co-Arts, was a study of community arts centers that focus on education in economically disadvantaged communities (Davis et al., 1993a and b). Project Co-

Arts research began with a review of printed materials from 316 community arts programs. Questionnaires were then collected from 113 selected programs and interviews were done with 89 of these programs. From this last group, five programs were chosen for site visits and in-depth "portraits" (Lightfoot, 1983; Lightfoot and Davis, 1997). These were written up in the publication titled *Safe Havens* (Davis et al., 1993a).

Based on the study of these programs, Project Co-Arts researchers were able to identify "emergent themes" which were distinctive to each center. They also determined a set of common "criteria for educational effectiveness in the field" (Davis et al., 1993a, p. 182). Among these criteria, Co-Arts found that "educationally effective community art centers": (a) "espouse and engage the power of art to transform and/or articulate personal identities"; (b) "cultivate strong relationships among center constituents (teachers, students, parents, staff)"; (c) "know and carefully attend to the interests and needs of the communities they serve"; (d) "provide enduring oases for students and families"; and (e) "carefully attend to their own process of development and transformation" (pp. 182-184). To help programs document their accomplishment of these and other criteria, Project Co-Arts produced *The Co-Arts Assessment Handbook*, including a model and guidelines for "authentic assessment of educational effectiveness in community art centers..." (Davis et al., 1993b, p. 3).

Looked at even superficially, the LCI and Co-Arts research makes visible the remarkable number of art programs serving communities, large and small, across the country. A closer look reveals the variety of ways these programs use art to meet diverse community needs. It also suggests how programs are regularly re-configured in light of changing populations and changing times. Finally, the detailed study of these programs begins to demonstrate how community can be created in places like schools and cultural centers when people come together to make or respond to art. In the following sections, I will consider such topics as program diversity and program evolution in order to build a coherent case for the role of art in helping to create community today.

VARIETIES OF COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

Organizations referred to in this research include traditional community-based art centers, arts-in-the schools programs, cultural

centers, and even city and state arts councils. Citing such a range of venues, I intentionally challenge notions of community based solely on locality or ethnicity in favor of a more expansive view appropriate to the character of contemporary society. Moreover, as I will argue, the arts can unite a population in deeper and more lasting ways than proximity or ethnicity, in and of themselves, can promise.

Dissanayake (1995) illustrates the unifying role of the arts with the *mbari* ceremonial ritual, "practiced until recently by the Owerri, a southern Ibo group in Nigeria" (p. 42). She describes the ritual as follows:

Mbari...uses the labor of 30 to 40 people, who are secluded in a special enclosure and supported by their families for a two-year period. They construct a large two-story edifice of mud that they decorate with colored clay designs applied (like a gigantic piece of cloisonné) between outlining strips of raffia. In addition, anywhere from 35 to over 100 large painted images are modeled from claylike anthill mud that, like that for the walls, has been collected at night, then specially pounded and puddled. After the completion of the structure, the villagers incur additional expenses, with new clothes, a great feast and dance for visitors, and animal sacrifices.

What seems most extraordinary is that after this concluding feast, the *mbari* house and figures are left to crumble to dust or melt in the rain and ultimately fuse with the earth. (pp. 42-43)

Far from a unique and rather eccentric incident, Dissanayake explains that "throughout human history and prehistory societies have engaged in undertakings like this" (p. 43). But why? Dissanayake provides an evolutionary explanation. Such ceremonies persisted because:

they mobilized, coordinated and unified the members of the social group, ensuring that they worked together in a common cause, believing in the validity of their world view and the efficacy of their action. Groups who worked together in confidence and harmony would have prospered more than those whose members acted individually, selfishly, haphazardly, without reference to communal purpose. And, it should

be clear, the arts were vehicles for this kind of unification. They riveted joint attention, synchronized bodily rhythms and activities, conveyed messages with conviction and memorability, indoctrinated right attitudes and behavior. (p. 43)

Mbari unites in celebration and common consciousness an entire village, building upon centuries of relatively stable traditions and beliefs. By contrast, contemporary society is characterized by mobility and a heterogeneity of backgrounds and beliefs. Nonetheless (and perhaps because of these reasons), the need for common causes and collaboration are more strongly felt today than ever. In light of these concerns, the LCI survey study asked specifically how arts-in-education programs fostered community involvement (Simmons, 1997). Not surprisingly, the responses were diverse. These responses included: attracting a board of directors from the local business community, seeking funding from area industry, and bringing in volunteers for staff support and ushering at performances. Programs also mentioned getting parents involved in advocacy, in fund-raising, and as aids to artists.

More to the point, several programs also held events to engage the community as a whole. Of these, perhaps closest to mbari in practice is the Italian Street Painting Festival: *I Giovani dell'Arte*, held annually by *Youth in Arts*, a community arts center in San Raphael, California. The event "brings together hundreds of students and professional artists [from the Marin County area] who create paintings, using pastels as the medium, on the streets for 50,000 visitors to enjoy. Each image is sponsored by a business, corporation, foundation or individual (Youth in Arts, 1995)." Like mbari, the festival involves sponsors, creators, and visitors. In addition, it emphasizes process over product, for, in the end, all the carefully crafted images are washed away.

Closer to mbari in spirit, however, are the community-centered events provided by New York's *El Museo Del Barrio*. First, *El Museo* holds its own street festivals, family art days, and holiday events. These latter, in particular, unite the Hispanic community around important cultural traditions such as the "Day of the Dead", the traditional Mexican holiday to honor ancestors and departed loved ones. Art enters in through music as well as in the creation of a special altar, tissue-paper skeletons, candy skulls, and other constructions (Anonymous, 1995).

More contemporary concerns are addressed in "Day Without Art" involving, among other activities, twenty young people trained as peer educators within their school to combat the AIDS crisis among Latino youth. Along similar lines, *El Museo* has created "The Caring Program", a prevention-oriented art project for inner city children developed in conjunction with Columbia University's Child Psychiatry Department (Canino and El-Gabalawi, 1992). Its purpose is to help area youth address social issues affecting their lives — e.g., domestic and street violence or gender roles — through talking about works of art and creating personal images based on the study of these works. For example, a discussion of "personal illness and disabilities," as well as "parental difficulties" was sparked by an exploration of the lives and work of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera (pp. 110-111).

Exposed to [Kahlo's] work, the children were able to discuss their own personal accidents and the whole arena of fears of body damage. They discussed surgery as well as the meaning of suffering. The group addressed strategies of how to deal with parental difficulties and how to develop resiliency in spite of disability and suffering. (Canino and El-Gabalawi, 1992, p.111)

A similar spirit of cultural concern is reflected in the Co-Arts site, *Plaza de la Raza*, which serves the Mexican community of East Los Angeles. The motivation for forming this "educational and cultural oasis" in the late 1960's is explained by this quotation from some of the center's founders which was cited in the Co-Arts report (Davis et al., 1993, a, p. 118):

The most important contribution we could make to our community was to create a place which would represent the heritage, the culture, the pride and aspirations of Chicanos and Chicanas, a place where they would feel proud and comfortable....Above all, a place which would give them access to programs, both educational and artistic, which would tap the neglected and in many cases, destroyed abilities and talents of people in the area. (p. 118)

MEETING A DIVERSITY OF NEEDS

Whereas *El Museo del Barrio* and *Plaza de la Raza* focus on the specific needs of the urban Hispanic and Chicano populations they

serve, other programs seek to create community across ethnic differences. One example portrayed in the Co-Arts report is *East Bay Center for the Performing Arts* in Richmond, California (Davis et al., 1993, a, p. 118). The student population at *East Bay* includes large percentages of African-Americans, Caucasians, and Latinos along with smaller numbers of Asians and Native-Americans. While the same mix in the schools can invite racial tension, the *Center* encourages positive interactions and mutual respect. Moreover, as the leader of the *East Bay* theater ensemble says, "diversity makes for 'grand and inspirational' theater: 'you get this aspect from here, that aspect from there, and you bring them all together, it makes it right'" (p. 162).

Another way to meet the needs of diverse populations within a community is through multi-cultural offerings and events. This approach, common to many of the larger programs surveyed in the LCI report, is exemplified by a sampling of touring performances from the Chicago-based *Urban Gateways' 1995-1996 Catalog of Programs* (Urban Gateways, 1995):

- DANCE: *Chinese Folk and Classical Dance; Dances of Many Lands; Flamenco!!!; Mathematics on the Move; Myths and Stories: East Indian Dance; A Taste of the Caribbean; The Rap Ballet.*
- MUSIC: *Bach to Bebop; La Bamba: Latin American Journey; Maxwell Street Klezmer Band; Spirituals.*
- THEATRE: *Edgar Allan Poe in Person; Greek Myths Through Story and Art; Mythical Adventures of the Orisa; Poems of the City and Suburbs; Roots: The Young Harriet.* (pp. 2-12)

Offerings such as these evidently serve at least two purposes: They cater to the interests of ethnic groups within a community, confirming their sense of identity and history. At the same time, they help unify a multi-ethnic population by fostering common understanding through shared experiences.

In many programs, cross-cultural experiences are facilitated by teaching-artists from the particular culture. To prepare these artists, the *Connecticut Commission on the Arts* offers an Artists Training Program specifically for "culturally diverse artists." The Artists Training Program includes "experiential activities that will provide participants with tools for adapting their artistic talents and expertise and cultural background into teaching in schools" (D. Marshall, personal communication, February 16, 1996).

Intergenerational learning programs offer a different take on linking diverse populations. Designed to engage the elderly and youth together in creative activities, these programs help break down barriers of mistrust that oftentimes divide people of different ages. At the same time, these programs educate young people about their own community and help them realize what it means to be responsible members of a community. One example is provided by New York City's *Arts Partners' "Intergenerational Program"*:

This program brings neighborhood youth and elderly people together to make art, and, in the process, to explore each others' lives. With kids resistant and seniors afraid of them, the process of collaboration and dialogue must be facilitated by artists trained in intergenerational techniques — strategies to bridge the gap between generations (and often, between races). These may include simple ice breakers to get older people to speak, or more intimate measures like ways of touching: touching hands; asking each other about their hand; writing a poem about the other's hands; asking about a ring, a scar, a wrinkle. Once communication is established, educational opportunities abound. First, kids discover local history with seniors telling stories about what the community used to be like. They then write how they would have lived in those times. Evidently, artistic and educational values are complemented by more personal and social results as friendships grow up in place of distrust on the one side, and fear on the other. (Simmons, 1997, p.13)

The links to community made here are personal and emotional with moral and ethical implications. But practical connections with the community can also be made through art encounters. One community art center profiled by Co-Arts particularly emphasizes such connections: Pittsburgh's *Manchester Craftsmen's Guild* (Davis et al., 1993a). Founded nearly thirty years ago by African-American ceramic artist, Bill Strickland, the *Manchester Craftsmen's Guild* offers "at-risk" students, often from lower socio-economic backgrounds, the chance for a "place in the sun" — preparation for college and a career along with encouragement "at-risk" students generally need to succeed. These goals are addressed through an intensive mentoring program in photography or ceramics, along with the *Guild's Life Skills Training Program* (p. 84).

Photography and ceramics, "both equipment-intensive and process-oriented media", were chosen because these media provide "something (students) could do as a trade and still make money" (Davis et al., 1993a, p. 89). Equally important, as Co-Arts researchers put it, these media involve both "creative expression and disciplined technique, arts education and career advancement" (p.89). But students who do not end up becoming professional photographers or ceramists also benefit from the experience, and from the *Guild's* Life Skills Training Program. As explained in the *Guild's* introductory handout,

Manchester Craftsmen's Guild uses [the Life Skills Training Program] concept to further advance the personal expression and cultural and personal insight of its at-risk culturally diverse students. This process then opens doors of educational opportunity and, ultimately, employment security, through attitude adjustment and heightened self-esteem using the successes achieved in the field of performing and visual arts. (Davis et al., 1993a, p. 84)

Educational opportunity is of particular concern to the *Guild*. Therefore, among their many other activities, staff members regularly help students navigate college catalogues and "negotiate financial aid and employment procedures in the higher education system" (Davis et al., 1993a, p. 103). As a result, the *Guild* reports that 75 to 90 percent of students regularly enrolled in its programs since 1992 graduated from high school and matriculated into post secondary educational programs. While the *Guild* does not have statistics concerning the number of its graduates who have become professional artists, approximately 20% go on to be art majors or art education majors in college (J. Green, personal communication, February 26, 1998).

Situated in a decaying, but once opulent, section of Pittsburgh, the *Manchester Craftsmen's Guild* is helping re-create the community it is in simply by providing a warm, art-filled, welcoming environment, and by setting an example of excellence: "excellence in the physical plant, the teaching materials and the instructors" (Davis et al., 1993a, p. 93). At the same time, the *Guild* also creates a community of support, direction, and hope for the students who chose to attend. Lastly, the program prepares students to return to their neighborhoods as successful, constructive citizens, ready to assist in community transformation at home.

Such contributions have not gone unnoticed. Besides the Co-Arts portrait, the *Manchester Craftsmen's Guild* received a visit in 1990 by then President Bush and was written up as a Case Study by the Harvard Business School (Hallowell, 1993). According to the Case Study, President Bush's visit "sparked discussions with government representatives and agencies about the possibility of 'franchising' the...model in other U.S. cities" (Davis et al., 1993a, p. 114).

RESPONSE TO CHANGING TIMES

Even pre-modern communities change over time and their rituals and celebration evolve to honor and to facilitate such change. Postmodern society is virtually defined by change. Thus, in the five year period during which the LCI research took place, wide ranging changes in programs were to be expected. These changes were prompted by declining funds from government and private sources, as well as by changing population patterns, and evolving community needs. Severe cutbacks in state funding, for example, caused The *Cultural Education Collaborative* of Massachusetts to cease operations for an extended period of time in order not to compromise the quality of its programs (R. Orchard, personal communication, January 31, 1996). In similar cases, other programs reported holding retreats and focus groups in order to re-assess their priorities and narrow their offerings.

One of the most striking changes, reported by *Allied Arts of Greater Chattanooga*, was ultimately a response to community needs, but was prompted by massive funding cuts and new priorities among funding sources (Simmons, 1997). As explained by *Allied Arts* Director, Dr. Douglas Day, funding in 1995 was reduced to one-third of what it had been at its peak in 1993-94 when support from the National Endowment for the Arts in particular dried up. At the same time, state legislators were turning their attention and moneys away from curricular issues like arts-in-education, and more toward social problems like drug abuse, violence, and teen-age pregnancy. As a result, *Allied Arts* had to rethink its own priorities, and eventually began to transform its offerings from those oriented toward "arts for arts' sake," towards those which demonstrated the role of the "arts as a social service" (D. Day, personal communication, January 22, 1996).

Working in conjunction with community agencies like the Housing Authority and the Department of Parks and Recreation, *Allied Arts* now offers "arts workshops especially designed for kids at risk (emotionally disturbed, wards of the state, unwed mothers) as well as involving artists in pregnancy prevention programs, anti-drug education, etc." (Simmons, 1997, p. 12). In light of such changes in venue and needs, programs like *Allied Arts* may also shift emphasis away from appreciation-oriented activities toward more active and expressive engagement.

Other organizations, including the *Lincoln Center Institute*, have similarly steered their programs toward addressing the social and emotional needs of children and young adults in their communities. LCI began over twenty years ago with a focus on the appreciation of works of art, music, dance, and drama through an understanding of the "elements and principles" which connect them. By contrast, current approaches focus on finding links between a specific work of art and the students' personal experiences (C. Goodheart, personal communication, January 2, 1996).

This change of direction has been made explicit by other large programs. For example, the *Ohio Arts Council*, in its state standards document, now puts an emphasis on "life-centered learning" (Ohio Arts Council, 1996), and the *Music Center of Los Angeles* focuses many of its educational offerings around five "universal themes": Transformation, Enduring Values, Freedom and Oppression, the Power of Nature, and the Human Family (Music Center of Los Angeles, 1995). Arts activities based on these themes have the potential to bring into focus commonalities of all human experience, bridging ethnic, generational, and geographical boundaries.

COMMUNITY "SAFE HAVENS" IN ARTS CENTERS AND SCHOOLS

Project Co-Arts uses the phrase, "Safe Havens", as the title of their collection of community art center portraits. The phrase, according to the authors of the report, "seems especially salient because it addresses the relationship of these centers to the communities they serve" (Davis et al., 1993a, p. 13). The authors further explain the term:

Safe Havens speaks to the connection that is securely maintained between community and center and the ability of the center to be there constantly for its students in a world in which uncertainty abides. Safe Havens describes the oasis of alternatives the center offers: alternatives to failure; alternatives to the realization of low expectation; alternatives to street life; alternatives to alienation and disenfranchisement. Safe havens.

...Crafted by artists, these havens are works of art in progress in a world in which the arts, like many of the individuals these centers serve, are devalued. These are safe havens, then, for art and culture as well as for the communities served. (p. 13)

The many stories of children at Co-Arts centers illustrate the role of these centers as safe havens, places where, at least for a while, young people can find a community within a community, one which is free of drugs, violence, and other dangers. One vignette, buried in the portrait of *MollyOlga Neighborhood Art Classes* in Buffalo, is particularly telling of life inside and outside the centers:

"Even a 4 year old can register without a parent," [Molly and Olga] point out, adding that it is not at all uncommon for them never to have met the parent of a child who has been coming for years. Several years ago, one preschooler who lived down the street came almost every day to painting classes. "Her mother never knew where she would go with the other kids around 3:00." Olga explains. This little girl died in a house fire, and for that year's art show, an entire wall of art in the exhibit was dedicated to her memory and displayed her work. "Somebody told her mother, and her mother came...[She] had never known." (Davis et al., 1993a, pp. 73-74)

In addition to community art centers mentioned earlier in this article, the LCI survey found "safe havens" in certain schools devoted to the arts. Longest standing among these schools was the *Fillmore Center for the Arts*, a program that serves a cluster of public schools in Washington DC. The *Fillmore* program provides students with regular and intensive instruction in dance, drama, music, visual art, and writing, taught by professional artists. Perhaps closest to a "safe haven" in Co-Arts terms, however, was the *St. Augustine School of the Arts*:

[*St. Augustine*] was established in a parochial school in the South Bronx to save the school which was about to close due to declining enrollment. Under the direction of Principal, Tom Pilecki, twelve teaching artists were hired and a curriculum was developed in which students spent 30% of their time doing arts. For example, every child learned to play two instruments. While the arts were taught as separate disciplines, they yet served to reinforce skills used in academic subjects, e.g., the essential learning skills of concentration, perseverance and cooperation. As a result of such "arts infusion," enrollment soared, retention increased, and test scores improved dramatically. Nonetheless, after eight years, the arts program was discontinued for financial (and perhaps political) reasons and the school has been returned to a largely academic institution. (Simmons, 1997, p. 7)

Despite this closure, places like *St. Augustine* have inspired arts-in-education programs in Florida, Connecticut, New York, and Ohio to develop arts-infusion schools in their states (Simmons, 1997). And, increasingly, the academic success of students as well as their personal and social growth, is being recognized and documented by research studies such as that undertaken by Lincoln Center Institute.

One noteworthy example of this documentation is *The Schooled Mind: Do the Arts make a Difference?* by Richard L. Luftig, an "empirical and parametric" evaluation of the Spectra + Program affiliated with the *Ohio Arts Council* (Luftig, 1993, 1994, see also Eisner, 1998). Findings noted by Luftig after the second year included very strong performance among students "on overall creativity, academic achievement (given the limitations of this analysis), self esteem, and appreciation of the arts..." (p. 44). Along with such large-scale program evaluations, community art centers are increasingly involved in smaller scale self-studies using, for example, guidelines from the *Co-Arts Assessment Handbook* (Davis et al., 1993b, p. 3). Beyond its public relations value, documentation of success is becoming increasingly necessary for funding, and thus, for program survival.

CONCLUSION

Research such as the LCI and Co-Arts projects reinforces compelling theoretical positions like those of Dissanayake and affirms the importance she attributes to the human need, not only to make

(*Homo Faber*), but to "make special" (*Homo Aestheticus*). One might equally argue for the application of critical and reflective thinking skills to existing works of art as ways to understand these works, and to connect their meaning(s) to the life and needs of the viewer. As noted above, art programs pursue one or both these goals in serving their respective communities.

Along with these curricular considerations, additional elements are evidently necessary for the creation of community in its fullest sense. These elements, reviewed below, will help recall important points exemplified by one or another of the programs mentioned in this article. The review may also serve as a checklist for programs wishing to develop, expand, or integrate their community offerings.

- Art programs must continually extend and strengthen ties to the communities in which they dwell. This, in turn, requires ongoing dialogue with community members representing diverse constituencies. Strengthening community ties also requires that programs regularly review their offerings in light of these dialogues to insure a fit with community needs.
- Programs should continually seek ways to collaborate with other community institutions (e.g., schools, social services agencies). This may mean that, where possible, art programs should find ways to develop or adapt their offerings to complement the services of these institutions. Community art programs may also wish to provide more collaborative art-making opportunities for students in order to foster community-building attitudes and skills.
- At the same time, as Project Co-Arts puts it, programs must balance this pursuit of "seamlessness" with their community with efforts to sustain "individuation" or distinctiveness (Davis et al., 1993a, pp. 188-215). This includes remaining autonomous in organizational decision-making. Autonomy may also involve maintaining the integrity of the art form in terms of content, practices, standards, and values. Art has a unique place in meeting community needs and need not be subordinated to other activities. Similarly, art programs have unique roles to play and must not be subsumed by other community institutions.

- In light of the above, programs need clearly to identify their mission and the role of art in achieving that mission. This effort, in turn, may

result in curricular decisions, organizational changes, plans for program development, or new relationships to the community.

Such self-awareness and self-direction is typically the fruit of self-reflection by teachers and administrators within an art organization. Reflection is also obviously tied to self-assessment, for reflection often includes the determination of goals which can, in turn, be linked to procedures and finally compared with actual outcomes (Winner and Simmons, 1992). Admittedly, however, the day-to-day demands of operating a community art program may allow personnel little time for extensive and thorough self-examination. For this reason, programs with sufficient means have increasingly sought research organizations to facilitate the reflective process. In addition, reflection may be forced upon a program as a result of decreased support or changing funding patterns, a fact often reported by LCI survey participants when discussing changes over the five years of research (Simmons, 1997).

Despite these crises and the wide-spread loss of revenue during the period, all but two of the programs survived intact. Moreover, several programs reported that they grew in purpose and direction as a result of stepping back and taking stock. For organizations, just as individuals, often find that connections to others are best served by maintaining deep and abiding connections to the self.

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TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS: NEW GENRE PUBLIC ART AND ART EDUCATION

GAYLE LEIGH GREEN

Public genre art education follows the lead established by the professional art world to engage the public with artforms that depart from traditional media usage and intentions to encourage collaboration, the demystification of art processes, and societal reconstruction. Termed new genre public art, Suzanne Lacy (1995) described in *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* a new sensibility exhibited in the past three decades by artists who deal with the most profound issues of our time "in manners that resemble political and social activity but is distinguished by its aesthetic sensibility" (p. 19).

Addressing artistic reconceptualization of both form and content, the artists included in this movement "cross borders, invent new forms of representation, and at the same time interrogate the quality of social life by addressing the language of sexuality, social exclusion, identity, and power while avoiding a doctrinaire politics or narrow critique of the sites in which art is produced" (Giroux, 1996, p. x). Privileging public response rather than private authorship, public genre artists such as Guillermo Gomez-Pena redresses historical inequity through "pseudo-ethnographic dioramas" while muralist Judith Baca engages the public in large-scale projects that "portray the struggles and contributions of indigenous peoples, immigrant minorities, and women from prehistory to present" (Lacy, p. 202.) Ranging from ritual performance to installation and mixed media forms, the content of public genre art functions as social criticism with reconstruction as its primary objective.

The inclusion of public genre art concepts and methodology in art education encourages students to envision new art forms, engage the community in projects that are socially reconstructive, and to reconceptualize artmaking as intellectual, scholarly endeavor. Such rethinking of art education curricula requires the presentation and analysis of work by such artists, study and evaluation of societal issues, consideration of audience, installation or performance of work, and final evaluation. The process is summarized in the following chart.

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TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS: NEW GENRE PUBLIC ART AND ART EDUCATION

GAYLE LEIGH GREEN

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PUBLIC GENRE ART EDUCATION METHODOLOGY

Media Usage: Research public genre artists by examining their use of media, concepts, and philosophy. Suggest possible forms of representation to include: indoor exhibits, outdoor exhibits, site specific interactive, performance, didactic, exhibit specific, portable public access, intercultural exchanges, community liaisons, and indoor public installation.

Conceptual: Research social issues such as gender, race, and class by reading newspapers and periodicals, observing how such issues are presented in the media, and consulting other fields of related study such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Choose an issue that is relevant or significant to your life and/or society. Explore the visual solutions of public genre artists to represent the selected issue. Read what art critics, art historians, artists, aestheticians, and art educators have written about the topic.

Artistic Formulation/Public Interaction: Brainstorm artforms that can be used to express the selected issue. Consider both traditional and nontraditional media forms, especially concentrating on experimental forms. Determine cost, site, and materials. Consider the composition of the audience, potential for collaboration, and the impact and significance to the community.

Revision: Revise concept, form, and media usage. Reconsider audience, space, and materials.

Install or Perform Work: Install or perform work for public interaction.

Evaluation: Evaluate the conceptual nature of work, issue selected, relationship to professional public genre work, media usage, and effect on audience. If a formal evaluation tool was used with the audience, what were the results? Which artists, art critics, art historians, art educators, and aestheticians did you research and how did you apply the information within the artistic process?

To provide examples of student work that exemplifies public genre art education, I present five student projects that illustrate outdoor exhibits, performance, portable public access, intercultural exchange, and community liaison. The categorization of possible art forms are based in part on those presented by Lucy Lippard in the article—"Looking Around: Where We Are, Where We Could Be."

Outdoor Exhibits: The ramifications of being both a mother and a lesbian prompted the creation of an outdoor exhibit by a Western Washington student. Concerned with the escalating statistics wherein the court system has not only limited the contact of lesbian mothers with their children but has also, in some cases, completely denied custody, the student researched organizations and resources regarding the legal rights of lesbian mothers. In order to educate the community, she placed five dolls throughout the university campus. Upon each doll's stomach, the artist placed texts that noted the proceedings of various court cases—for example, in the spring of 1995, a Wyoming mother's visitation rights were severely restricted to six weekends a year with no overnight visits due to her sexual orientation. In conjunction with the dolls, the student also exhibited a poster with additional statistics and the text, "Have you seen me? What do we fear?"

Curiously, the poster, the journal that the student had left for comments, and all of the dolls disappeared by 2:00 p.m. of the same day in which they were exhibited. Such projects not only educate the public about vital cultural issues, they also inform a community of their fears and biases.

Performance: In "Rain" art education student Lynda Lucas presented a performance piece that focused on societal perception of obesity. Composing a monologue that chronicled a lifelong struggle with weight problems, Lucas related the taunting that she received as a



Figure 1



Figure 2

child, the continued public stares, and misconceptions about public views of overweight people. Using the word "rain" as a metaphor, Lucas passed out rainsticks that her audience was instructed to manipulate whenever they heard the work rain. A work that reflected both personal and political implications of obesity, the performance was both edifying and poignant.

Portable Public Access: Questioning how Asian women are stereotyped by American culture, art education student Carla Field circulated a poster asking: "Who is this girl?" The multiple choice answers included: "A. The foreign exchange student that studies 20 hours a day. B. The girl who has more boyfriends than classes. C. No one you really know." The poster concluded with the following statement: "It is easier to ask this girl who she really is instead of shoving her in a mold. Break the stereotypes. Our nation is depending on it." Posting the flyer throughout campus and local venues as a preview for a Roger Shimomura retrospective to be held in Western Gallery, Field provided a provocative introduction to an exhibit that also addressed how stereotypes are promulgated by society.

Intercultural Exchange: The organization of a mail art exchange that focused on the theme of body representation as influenced by race, culture, and sexual identity, demonstrates one possible form of national and international liaisons. Organized by art education Patricia Cutts for Western Washington Viking Union Gallery, Body Language featured works from such diverse communities as Uruguay, England, and Mexico including media forms that ranged from metal sculpture to intricately drawn postcards. By soliciting artwork from world-wide sources through student generated websites, Cutts created an installation that provided international perspectives, and cross-cultural insight.

Community Liaison: Art education student Lynda Lucas formed a liaison between a group of Bellingham, W.A. retirees and elementary students that attend Alderwood Elementary School. Meeting for weekly art sessions, the senior citizens served as mentors for the children facilitating lessons in contemporary studio concepts and practice. Developing relationships that were both compelling and inspiring, such associations demonstrate the utility of community-based endeavors.

TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS

"Society is formal. Community is soulful" (Harper, 1994, p. 1.). The words of art critic Peter Schjeldahl resonate the profound experience that public genre art education can generate. The projects presented in this paper merely hint at the potential for pedagogy that engages the community with relevant, socially-conscious content.

Facilitating artmaking that is relevant to both the personal lives of students and the society in which they reside, public genre artmaking melds aesthetic practice into life experiences. Although this approach fosters critical thinking by requiring students to analyze, revise, and synthesize through studio practice based on research, public genre art education encourages instruction that transcends the acquisition of information by teaching students to utilize artmaking for the purposes of restructuring society. Such endeavor heeds Graham Chalmer's suggestion that while acknowledgment of diversity is laudatory, it is time to act by questioning and challenging the dominant culture's art world canons and structures through social action (Chalmer, 1996, p. 45).

Ultimately, community-based methodology propels students beyond the confines of classroom walls into the world-at-large. Considering Becker's observation that "today's schools were, for the most part, conceptualized decades ago" and that they are "on the verge of becoming obsolete," it seems timely that we rethink art education objectives and pedagogy to include curricula that exposes oppression, includes all cultural groups, and that teaches our students to become agents of social change, reconstruction, and humanization (p. 105).



*Retirement and Elementary School
Liaison*

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BOOK REVIEW

SUSAN L. SMITH (1995);
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 A TOPOS IN MEDIEVAL ART AND LITERATURE,

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 295 pages, 49 black and white reproductions. Typeset in Linotron Galliard, retaining many features of the 16th century typeface. Printed on acid-free paper.

ISBN: 0-8122-3279-8 (hardcover) approx. \$65.00

KAREN KEIFER-BOYD

While browsing the library shelves I came upon a 1995 book, *The Power of Women* by Susan L. Smith. I was surprised to find inside the book many images of a woman riding a old man with the title under each image, "The Mounted Aristotle." Even more unusual was that these carved stone reliefs, embroideries, and manuscript illuminations were included in the sacred venues of Medieval churches. Later at a social gathering, I asked a group of colleagues if they had ever seen or heard about the mounted Aristotle. A historian who had taken a series of graduate courses in the 1980s taught by a leading scholar of Medieval times had never seen these images or heard about the topic in the three courses he had taken. An art historian, who specialized in Renaissance art, while not familiar with the images thought that they might refer to the woman as representing the spirit while Aristotle represented merely secular knowledge. The university art educators in the group had never seen the images. A brief perusal of the book only made me more puzzled. Once I began to read the 202 page book (with an additional 74 pages listing the abbreviations used, notes to each chapter, works cited, and an index) I could not put it down until I had read the whole thing and explored Smith's interpretation of "The Mounted Aristotle."

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I realized that variations of the mounted Aristotle tale in Western Europe, which were abundant from 1200-1600, is still a common theme in contemporary art, film, and literature. I used the Power of Women topos in a course on approaches to art criticism and another course on women and their art in order to introduce undergraduate and graduate students to the concepts of intervisuality and intertextuality, and to issues of interpretation and empowerment. It also is a potent example of the use of marginalized spaces to redefine status quo belief structures of marginalized people. Topos first took visual form around the end of the 13th century in the margins of medieval art. It appeared along the edges of manuscript paintings and on the arms and backs of choir stalls, under choir seats, and other peripheral zones in Gothic churches. It also occurred in textiles, tableware, musical instruments, and objects of personal use (Smith, p. 16). Perhaps due to their marginalized status as profane images in sacred spaces and as "minor" or "decorative" art, scholars did not study the power of women topos until women began to rethink art and history.

There are six chapters: (a) Introduction: The Power of Women and the Rhetoric of Example, (b) "Thise Olde Ensamples Ought I-Nowgh Suffice," (c) Tales of the Mounted Aristotle, (d) "Body It Forth": The Mounted Aristotle's Visual Example, (e) The Power of Women Topos in Fourteenth-Century Visual Art, and (f) Conclusion: The Topos in Fifteenth Century and Beyond There are 48 figures of the Power of Women Topos from woodcuts, brassplates, a drawing by Albrecht Dürer, painted personal objects, miniature illustrations in manuscripts, embroideries, stain-glass windows, etchings, and sculpted reliefs in ivory, wood, and stone. There is one diagram showing the relationship of topos images in a church. The author began the research for this book in the 1970s as her doctoral dissertation. In writing the book in the 1990s she drew upon recent critical theory to examine the multivocality of Medieval discourse concerning gender relations. Smith goes beyond traditional iconography to an investigation of how text and image acquire meaning, contradict each other, and are sources of reinvention by artists and viewers. She argues that, "visual images cannot be treated as if they were reducible to texts, as merely their secondary representations, as too often occurs" (1995, p. xiv). She explores the intervisuality of the topos images by interpreting them in their physical relationship to one another and to the space, as well as their relationship to oral traditions, text, ideology, and to other images outside the immediate

context but known to the viewers. The original languages of the Middle Ages are inserted throughout the book with English translations to allow Medieval scholars and nonspecialists access to the material. Smith's scholarship is well grounded and explained in an accessible manner for non-specialists. She also encourages reader contemplation and reinterpretation by providing thorough information.

Literally, topos means place: "A place where arguments are found" (Smith, p. 4). It relates to the English concepts of topics or commonplaces. Originally the term topos was introduced by Aristotle (400-320 BCE) in the *Topics* (I.i.) to refer to generally accepted principles or reasoning. A topos is a form of argument with strong persuasive power since it uses examples as if they are truths or common occurrences. Aristotelian logic examines particular cases from which a general principle may be inferred and then applied to a similar instance. However, women's experiences have often been discounted or ignored in history, philosophy, and other areas as not established or not the canonical examples. Yet readers vary and, therefore, the topos has operated in multivocal ways since individuals may derive contrary or unintended interpretations depending on how they see the example. The Power of Women topos included medieval debates about gender hierarchy and female identity. It used celebrated men of the past from biblical and secular spheres to prove the power of women. It has textual, oral, and visual forms.

Much like advertising techniques used today, the topos was used by preachers not as proof but rather to stir emotions. Persuasiveness "derives not from the authority of the history but from the authority of the speaker and from the inherent plausibility of the story itself which anyone could, in principle, have seen or heard" (Smith, p. 9). For the poet, the topos was expressed in such a way to allow different interpretations to please the specific audiences who filled the poet's purse.

The mounted Aristotle tale has three main versions. The basic outline of the story starts with that Alexander the Great warned by his mentor, Aristotle, to abandon his love for Phyllis to allow for serious and important study. Alexander follows Aristotle's advice. Phyllis, angry at being abandoned by her lover (or in some versions her husband) retaliates against the source of such advice. She flirts with Aristotle outside his study window. A window, in the tale, served as a

"metaphor for the eyes through which women arouse men's desire" (Smith, p. 155). This metaphor referred to the belief that we are deceived by sight. Aristotle seduced by Phyllis' raised skirts swears his love and asks her to provide him with sexual pleasure. She agrees if he will prove his love by allowing her to ride him like a horse in the garden prior to their rendezvous. Phyllis invites Alexander to the garden, where he witnesses the folly brought to his wise master by a woman. The Christian sermon version used the tale to prove that women are evil temptresses. The poet version changed to suit aristocratic audiences. Love wins out in these versions which emphasized that love or passion is stronger than reason. Women are the objects of lust in the poet versions. Christine de Pisan, a 13th century writer, argued that the tale was not an example of women's experience and that different stories would be told if women's voices were recorded. She believed that men created the story to deal with women's rejection of male attentions. Her interpretation of the mounted Aristotle tale emphasized women avenging faithless men. She also maintains that it represents men who are insistent in their pursuit of women who are not interested in them, and how women act to get rid of the unwanted attentions.

My students and I began to compile lists of contemporary art, film, and literature that convey these three themes. The Christian sermon version can be found in films such as *Fatal Attraction*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, and *Legends of the Fall*. For the poet version we identified Maid Marian in *Robin Hood*, Aladdin, *Bridges of Madison County*, and Gertrude in *Hamlet*. We found several examples that fit Christine de Pisan's version of the mounted Aristotle tale including: *Nine to Five*, *The First Wive's Club*, *Waiting to Exhale*, and *Thelma and Louise*. I highly recommend the book as a source to stimulate discussion about gender power relationships expressed in contemporary images that have long, enduring histories.

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