The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education

Featuring:

Questioning the Foundations of Art Education
Issues in Aesthetics
Men in Feminism?
Art Criticism in a Postmodern Age
journal of social theory
in art education

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to promote the use of theoretical concepts from the social sciences—which include, but are not limited to, anthropology, sociology, and political science—to study visual culture and the teaching of art; to inform art educators about theory and practice in the social sciences, thus acting as a liaison between social scientists and art educators; to encourage research into the social context of visual culture and teaching art; and to develop socially relevant programs for use in the teaching of art.

The editors invite formal and informal contributions on all matters relating to social theory in art education. Correspondences, permission requests, performance pieces are welcome. Original manuscripts, together with three copies should be prepared according to an internally consistent publication style. Membership is not a precondition for submittance. Deadline for submission for JSTAE No. 11 is January 15, 1991. Send relevant articles to:

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ON THE COVER: This year's cover was, once more, designed by Arthur Guagliumi. The organic graph, with its enfolded hyperspace, and the torn edge of the collage, is endangered by the new grid of postmodernism; only now this grid is no longer hard edged. Rather it resembles a "pool game," the X's and 0's marking places of chance, forming an uneasy gradation over an embattled territory. Such logics of disintegration are suggestive of the tension between late modernism and the postmodern scene/seen/seen.

Editorial Re(Mark)!

The Question of Representation(s)

JAN JAGODZINSKI

Pretext As the perceptive, or should I say - receptive reader may not(e), no thumbprint appears in the margins of this years editorial - rather, an index finger 'figures' prominently. The index sign is particularly apropos for this issue for index signs give us clues to what is being represented. Deceivably, they establish their meanings through a physical relationship to their referents. As Krauss puts it: "They are the marks or traces of a particular cause, and that cause is the thing to which they refer, the object they signify. Into the category of the index, we would place physical traces (like footprints), medical symptoms, or the actual referents of the shifters (p.198)." Playfully, on the front cover of her book, Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths, from which the above quote is taken, a thumb 'print' is literally represented as a photograph - yet, it could easily be mistaken, or 'misread' as a 'toe-print'? The word "print," such as a photographic "print," remains an index sign, a recorded representation of some framed 'reality.'

Thus, a new figure emerges - the toe/thumb - an anatomical part which never existed before! It belongs to no order. It is born in absence, seemingly in disorder. Such an indexical sign makes us oscillate its 'reading' between the hand and the foot suggesting a variety of interpretations: from an evolutionary viewpoint, hands were once feet; yet both are used for balancing our upright position differently; being on your hands and knees suggests inferiority and humbleness - the reduction to animality. Both are necessary for fine motor control but we privilege the hand over the foot; dexterity is associated more with hands than with the dance of feet.

In a more sophisticated reading, the toe/thumb which appears on the front cover is a photograph by J. -A. Boiffard. We are informed that it was the front jacket for George Bataille's, Le Gros Orteil which plays with the anatomical geography of Bataille's thought between man's pretensions toward the elevated, spiritual and ideal realm associated with verticality and uprightness (the hands?) and the horizontality of the mud, the real source of libidinal energy where 'he' is truly mired. My own misreading of this print vivifies the play of such indexical 'undecidables' (Derrida) or figures (Lyotard) which make us question the very borders or frames around signs - around names - around any forms of correspondence which we believe have captured the essence of a thing.

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Framed

'We' are all framed by index signs, by representations. And the rhetorical tropes used to construct them. Representations have now become our conceptualizations. Borders between art and philosophy has vanished as: Form becomes Content. Our naive notions of mimesis, the avant garde, and art as Truth have been decentered. For it is 'we' who 'unwittingly' create the Truth. For there is no transcendental signifier. Only form and process, which reveals the human(e) process of making Order. So Nothing remains outside the text, for what is 'real' is what is represented. Identity remains constructed through impersonal social relations of ubiquitous power.

Krauss's definition of the index sign, as it was first conceived by Pierce, remains a two dimensional effect. By introducing perceptual ambiguity on her front cover, it adds to the releasing or opening up of meaning of the signified, thus putting representation to doubt. The celebrated example of Velasquez's Las Meninas, discussed at length by Foucault, represents a signifier in the Classical Age where 'representation is the principle of ordering.' Velasquez presents the final word, the end of representation, for 'nothing seems to escape representation when representation itself is represented.'

The perceptive reader will not(e) that the interplay of the meaning of representation, quoted from David Carroll's study of Paraesthetics, is as much a conceptual end as the work he comments on. Foucault wants the spectator/reader, 'to reflect representation back on itself and open it up to what it is not - to make conscious of itself and, in doing so, to indicate the limitations of this consciousness, the gaps or empty spaces with it.' The artist in Velasquez's painting is caught, frozen in that gap of representation, 'on the border between visibility and invisibility, at a moment when he can still be seen looking out at his model and just before he moves behind his painting in order to paint his model and is hidden from view.' In that oscillation, a leap of faith is made, for what is then represented is said to be true.

In that gap, "being" hides.

To interrogate "being" requires a deconstructive move. Naively we assume sugar is sweet. The verb "to be" supplies us with the necessary illusion of Reality. But that Reality is only experienced in Taste, sweetness lies neither in the sugar nor on our tongues. It is dependent on context, in the act of tasting which exists in that gap. To the Native refined sugar may taste bitter and be spat out. To a Westerner, if raised on candies, the natural sugars of fruit or yams taste rather bland. Deconstruction of naive Reality then, requires a defamiliarization, a disturbance to everyday perception so that thought is forced to question itself and begins to confront alternatives to itself. Critical theory begins with non-recognition in a carnivalesque distorted mirror for, to confront radical alterity is to recognize the excluded categories.

Text These opening explanatory remarks permit me to dwell on the the kinds of writings the reader will find in this years journal: all in one way or another question representation by treating art education as an index sign - for they play with its shadow; they attempt to continue the decentralization and fragmentation of the meaning of art in education. There is, I sense, a continued vigor and reluctance to be entrapped by the Modernist rhetoric of DBAE and the centralizing tendencies which wish to place everything back to a 'white mythological order' and chase away ambiguity. There is, therefore, also the anxiety of beginnings - not influence, to be found in these essays, which in their part, reflect holographically the larger problematic that the Social Caucus continually finds itself in: how to respond to a postmodern world bent on nihilism, where it is far easier to go back to a Romantic past, to pull back into a conservativism and continue to promote the Great Western View of Art with its parade of Masters on reproducible celluloid slides and disregard the feminist critique that this is a phallocentric discourse occupied by the Man of Genius - the invention of humanism. The Social Caucus, like feminism, is caught in an impossible political position. It must provide both critique and direction simultaneously, forever rehearsing this anxiety of beginning within a context that already claims parity, equality and justice. Is there, I ask, any known ideological position which cannot be accommodated within the DBAE mandate? Its rhetoric serves us all. Doesn't it?

In the first section, entitled: Foundations of Art Education, Thistlewood's examination of Read's political and social commitment reminds us of the inescapability of our own posture in the World. Since there are no neutral observers, no non-neutral symbolic systems which governs our organization and valorization of phenomena, socially committed teachers must find their own political convictions and state them openly. Like John Caputo's claim that today Derrida practices a "responsible anarchy," Herbert Read, in his day, exhibited a similar anarchical conviction that art education must become socially responsible. Graeme Chalmers' essay is equally clear in its insistence that art education must embrace the cultural pluralism which exists globally today and recognize the diverse functions that the arts have always fulfilled culturally. With similar vigor and debate, Katan and Pearse give us a cross-section of the various paradigms which ground teaching. Their dialogue vivifies the variation of political commitment to transformative changes. We become mindful of the difficulties of developing a socially and ethically responsible educational practice. Lastly, Jansen offers a succinct analysis of the ideological uses of art appreciation courses in New England Universities where the the stage was set for securing the 'right' cultural capital. All of the above authors are cognizant of the conceptualization of art: how the discourses of the artworld - museums, art history within universities, and contemporary conventions of understanding art - go about shaping what art education takes to be its 'object' of study. All the above authors put this 'object' of artistic representation to question.
With this very same conviction, authors who have written on Aesthetic Issues in the journals second section go about decentering this "object" of institutional discourse by showing us that there is a wide range of aesthetics to be seen/scene at the margins. Cherokee Culture, Native American Artifacts, and the 'neighborhood' view of art are examined. These political locations constitute periphery, marginalized spaces which mainstream art education seldom entertains in its stock journals. Rafferty's study of Vancouver graffiti artists is a paradigmatic case study of those disenfranchised artists outside the art world who legitimate themselves as artists in their revolt against arts institutionalization. In a postmodern world, the irony remains that there is no political space outside/inside the art institution. These graffiti artists have become legitimated through their very documentation. Schellin adds yet another important dimension to the artist as Outsider. He questions the representation of AIDS victims in his own poetic way, thereby heightening our consciousness as to the neglect this socio-historical issue has for art educators. Historically there has always existed an iconography of disease - how the Other's Body as unhealthy, sick, alien, is charted and mapped through the media of repro­duction (newspapers, television, film, magazines). This should be the concern of all socially responsible art educators.

Men in Feminism, the third part of this journal, provides a variety of vignettes of responses by men and women who address feminism from both personal and theoretical viewpoints. Intertextually, this panel drew from Jardine and Smith's previously published book Men in Feminism, which emerged as a series of papers from a MLA conference - also presented at Washington DC. These essays provide ample evidence that Social Caucus members are fully aware of the theoretical developments in the literary field. Their responses are admirable and necessary, given, once more, the gender blindness of DBAE advocates.

Lastly, one of the most exciting sections the reader will examine, are the essays written in the area of art criticism. I am personally delighted that the four essays exemplify some of the most recent developments in art criticism, which has undergone a phenomenal change in the past several years. Tom Anderson provides us with a well balanced socially critical look at Billboards. He has paradigmatically provided a social critique which exposes the ideological assumptions behind the advertising industry. Gaines and Paul, I believe, have given us a wonderful display of how psychoanalytic art criticism is possible - Gaines through his examination of Sandra Rowe, and Paul through an entertaining playable display of word games when examining gendered images. Last, but not least, Dan Nadaner closes our journal with a thoughtful and succinct questioning whether art education can accommodate the openness of the text, the ambiguity of representation, and the multiplicity of reading which our postmodern condition has brought. This last essay, in many ways confirms and justifies the need for the existence of this Caucus.

In closing, I would like to personally thank Carolyne, Harold, Kerry, and Amy for making this issue possible through their proofing, through their typing, through their solicitation of excellent manuscripts and through their friendship. This ends my two year love-affair with this journal and I wish Harold Pearse, the new editor, the best for the next two years.

Creativity and Political Identification in the Work of Herbert Read

David Thistlewood

The idea of a class conflict, in which a powerful minority subjugates the majority among other ways by depriving it of any sense of self-esteem deriving from worthwhile, original work - that is, by suppressing its creativity - was something Herbert Read acquired through his youthful involvement in the late stages of the Arts and Crafts Movement. It was a premise he was never seriously to question, as was the corresponding idea that to assert one's right to be creative was to engage in a political act. He was certain that artistic conventions were the means of suppression, and that to be truly creative required conventions to be defied, which in a sense also meant defying the social order. While the Establishment would tolerate this in individuals - indeed, encourage it for its refreshing influence upon the elites taste and artistic possessions - it could not contemplate it in the mass (in the form Read proposed in his middle age in his book Education through Art) for this would be to initiate complete social upheaval. Thus his mild-mannered arguments in favour of a properly creative education for all, and his workable proposals for implementing this, in fact made him a danger to the political standing. It was perhaps his amused realization of this which persuaded him to dramatize this aspect of his work by calling himself an anarchist.

This is the only reasonable explanation of this political identification of Read's, the central topic of ten of his books written after 1938, and a substantial feature of twenty-five more. For he was never a member of 'organized' Anarchism; and what he propounded was hardly orthodox - his campaigning for freedom from centralized government, for localized production, for a federated industrial economy, and above all for the preservation of regional stylistic traits in all creative work owing more to Kropotkin, and to Guild Socialism, than to Anarchism in the forms it had assumed by mid century. As Read's earliest vivid political experiences had been Guild Socialist it seems fair to consider whether he was always a Guild Socialist at heart. The purpose of such an enquiry would be to wonder whether Guild Socialism, which failed as a political force in 1922 with the collapse of the National Guilds League, lived on a philosophical force in Read's writings and survived into the present in those educational ideas of his which are still widely practised. Such an enquiry, of course, must cope with the prospect of his Guild Socialism surviving other changes of political identification too - to Marxism and to communism. And it must also consider the sources of a political persuasion positive enough to have such lasting potency.
Notes on Contributors

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Creativity and Political Identification in the Work of Herbert Read

David Thistlewood

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In fact Read's inherited political instincts were Tory, for he was the son of a tenant farmer in north Yorkshire and his first perception of the world was of an utterly stable squirearchy. In 1903, however, when he was ten, his father died and his family was dispossessed of its tenancy. His mother entered domestic service, he being boarded at an orphanage school in Halifax before leaving to be a bank clerk in Leeds. The facts of industrial poverty challenged his prejudice, and by the time he entered Leeds University in 1912 to study Economics (after having matriculated at evening classes) he was ready for decisive conversion. This came about when he joined the Leeds Art Club, a society dedicated to the socialist reform of industry, politics and art, and came within the sway of his two most important mentors in political matters, Alfred Orage and Arthur Penty.

Orage had been a teacher and was an activist for the International Labour Party. Penty was an architect and member of the Northern William Morris Society. They had formed the Leeds Arts Club in 1902, and it had gathered a membership of clerks and mechanics, teachers and benevolent employers, meeting weekly for the purpose of debate. Orage and Penty themselves had met still more frequently, with the ambitious objective of thrusting out a policy for social reform. The results of this had been that Orage was persuaded of the utter sterility which would ensue in a world of standardized possessions and lifestyles (which the extreme collectivists of his party were advocating) and that Penty began to appreciate why craftsmanship could not possibly survive in an advanced capitalist economy, with its emphasis upon the lowest acceptable standards of quality consistent with high quantity production. Their consensus - embryonic Guild Socialism1 - placed an Arts and Crafts aesthetic in the context of radical demands for wresting qualitative control from financiers. Their way forward required a regaining of contact with times when craft standards were entirely the responsibility of initiates, and of course this was labelled reactionary, not least by those socialists who considered the factory system of production, with quality control in the hands of economists, superior because it appeared to be the latest evolution of scientific progress.

Penty had moved south in 1905, at the prospect of putting his aesthetic ideals into practice, to work as a freelance architect at the first Garden City of Letchworth and at Hampstead Garden Suburb. Orage had departed for London two years later, and with Penty's help had founded The New Age, a weekly paper devoted to socialism, modern philosophy and contemporary aesthetics. There was an extensive, popular socialist awareness at this time. Texts by such as Morris and Carlyle, disseminated through worker education classes and the widespread desire for self-improvement, had given rise to a concerted demand for proper housing and for civilized workplaces for the industrial poor. There was also a burgeoning middle class, inhabiting suburbia and ill appreciating its drabness and mediocrity.

In these the earliest days of Labour representation in parliament the socialist press held labourer and bureaucrat within its catholic readership: the plain reader would have had grasp on a diversity of matters - social, aesthetic, economic, philosophic - as constituting socialism, and would have concurred with the demand, as an economic necessity, for the restoration of well-crafted beauty to urban life. Though Orage and Penty were no longer in Leeds when Read joined their Arts Club, their paper, and this its most dominant theme, provided the focus for weekly debates. Their influence on Read was as profound as if they had been present, resulting in two of the most consistent features of his politics, an evangelism and an insistent aesthetic. He became a regular contributor to The New Age, and the degree to which he became regarded as Orage's protegé, in particular, is demonstrated by the fact that he was asked to succeed him as its editor (this in 1922, by which time Read was a career civil servant and nationally apolitical, which obliged him to decline). He subscribed to the paper throughout the period of Orage's and Penty's most persistent promotion of Guild Socialism1 as a socialist alternative to Fabianism, even contriving to receive regular copies at the front during his three years of active service in the First World War. He found their proposals so acceptable that by 1917 he had sketched out his own version of a Guild Socialist future.

He differed with the Fabians, as did Orage and Penty, on the question of materialism, opposing their concentration upon improving wages and conditions, and increasing workers' share of goods, at the expense of humanist or spiritual benefits which had been the goals of Arts and Crafts reformers. Penty found the Fabians hand-in-glove with capitalism, responsible for unaesthetic standards in industry, and complacent with wage slavery to the factory system of production. Their insistence upon improving monetary rewards, even at the expense of rewards in creative satisfaction, had led to tacit acceptance of soul-destroying (though profit-making) practices.3 Read could see no possible value in the simple transference of industry and commerce, along with an ingrained capitalism, to a government's control however beneficial. He was not entirely in accord with Penty, though, who as an architect had witnessed industrial and commercial exploitation at first hand. Read's early experiences having been rural, he felt less anxious about restoring a 'dignity of labour' to those engaged in repetitive production. In his memory even the most severely exploited had the satisfaction of working with the land, with growth and harvest and with animal husbandry, and even the meanest task had been acknowledged periodically in thanksgivings, seasonal festivities and other kinds of common celebration. His images of work were of hard toil cheerfully endured in the countryside, of industrial processes centered upon forge or smithy, and of urban employment housed in small-scale machine sheds - an imagery very similar to Kropotkin's, whose writings he admired. Penty wanted local guilds, responsible for the training of new entrants, the maintenance of highest standards of workmanship, the fixing of just prices and, most important, the preservation of genius loci as reflected in the use of local materials and the practice of techniques which satisfied specifically local requirements. Read wanted all of this and internationalism.

His was a soldier's priority to end threats of any recurrence of war. He had gone to the front willingly enough and had been decorated twice for bravery; but in common with many others as the reality of war had become more and more horrifying he had begun to think it tolerable only because it would lead to an inevitable internationalism. The role of politics would be to assist in this transition, and in this sense true Guild Socialism would probably be as resistant as conservatism, tied as it would be to its exclusive localism. Read proposed a pattern of economic groupings based not upon geographic divisions but upon industries and production interests. In rural
areas these probably would have been localized, but the world’s urban centers would have formed such an interlocked system of economic dependence as to have made any future international conflict impossible. He saw trades unions and industrial federations (such as the National Guilds League) as prototype economic groups which, with only a little more purpose, could be the regulators of an international economy; and like the Marxists he could foresee the withering of the state, though not into non-existence but to a size commensurate with its remaining responsibilities, virtually all of which were to be cultural.

Read’s future political beliefs had roots in these convictions - another war is unthinkable; the state has no economic purpose; and the ideal form of government is one which guarantees utmost equality while preserving individual freedoms, including the right of an individual to become detached from community-interests into which he or she had been accidentally placed by birth. This is precisely what had happened to him as a result of his father’s premature death; and it clearly both exalted and depressed him as the few ‘political’ thoughts he expressed, while bound by the conventions of his apolitical civil service, made clear. These may be understood as an apologia for his having become divorced from the locality of his birth, and for his having found a role outside the agricultural community. His position was summarized in his critical appreciation of Julien Benda’s book La Trahison des Clercs, in which a series of propositions were found to be so strikingly familiar that they came as self-revelations.

All real human existence is the existence of an individual, either of an individual person or of a common-interest group; it is competitive and necessarily aggressive. The ‘clerc’ or discontented man or woman of learning is one who protests against a morality of aggression by proclaiming ideal values revealed in contemplation of matters abstract, universal and infinite. Civilization is made possible by the coexistence and synthesis of aggressive expediency and disinterested philosophy. A world observing only a code of practical necessity would be barbarous; one which only practised a code of ideals would cease to exist. Real existence admits the gradual softening of aggression with idealism, or rather a reciprocal movement back and forth between the two polarities. Read therefore identified with the dislocated individual, leading an ostensibly unproductive life, who, however, had the special purpose of divining abstract principles for the benefit of the wider community in an age of idealism following, and counteracting, a period of great international aggression. At this time in his life (under the influence of his friend T. S. Eliot, and having edited the complete works of the classicist T. E. Hulme) the goals of his aesthetic contemplation were formal precision, harmony and elegant proportion - principles which he firmly believed, when evident in literature, art and conduct, offered the world the prospect of an international medium of understanding.

This was in the 1920s. In the following decade he was an unashamed advocate of the very opposite of this, urging all creative people to cultivate the irrational and imprecise. A sudden liberation from the civil service had much to do with this, as had his discovery of a liking for surrealism; but a significant contributory factor was his perception of the changes taking place in European politics, in particular the rise of aggressive German nationalism. He saw it as no coincidence that this nationalism attempted to eradicate abstract art, and maintained that contemporary aesthetics had to assume less easily victimized forms. He hinted at Marxian sympathies in his book Art and Society, which he wrote in 1935-6, and spelled these out most clearly in correspondence with Wyndham Lewis, in an effort to say that failure to support communism was tacit acceptance of fascism. It seemed obvious that communism and fascism were about to contest for domination of Europe, and that even if Britain were not directly involved individuals at least would be obliged to take sides. Though he recognized the repressive State capitalism that was the Russian reality, Read was prepared to countenance communism for he saw in it an essence, not present in fascism, which held promises of the abolition of bourgeois capitalism and of respect for disinterested ideals.

What prevented his becoming a communist was the movement’s anti-aesthetic doctrine, in spite of all Marx had said to the contrary, and its antipathy towards all realities of art except the one it had contributed in social realism. He was appalled to discover that contemporary art had to become active rather than contemplative, partisan rather than disinterested, and subliminal rather than supercendent. It had to insinuate its ideal values as cunningly as either of the mass political movements which had opposed it. Following this line of thought the most prominent themes of Art and Society were that the greatest art of the past had belonged to communal societies, and that the modern artist, conscious of an ability to transform the world by his or her visions of a new reality, was a more consistent communist than those, so-called, who would compromise with the aesthetic conventions of a last phase of capitalism.

He hesitated before using the term ‘Anarchism’ to describe his preferred culture and politics because it conjured up images of cloaked figures carrying home-made bombs; but he came to believe that he had no choice. Communism, in its Russian form, had shored up the State and its bureaucracies, while Fabianism was unredeemably materialistic. Socialism (to judge by the new urban design of socialist authorities in Britain) was soulless, while Guild Socialism, since the failure of the National Guilds League, had become nostalgic in its soulful mock-mediaevalism. In the realms of painting and sculpture guild affiliation was now associated with adherence to ancient techniques, whereas during the First World War and just after it had been synonymous with pioneering experiment: Read was conscious of having himself been in the vanguard of this experimentation as a painter. In spite of the fact that he knew he would thus forfeit any serious consideration of his views in Britain, then, he took the concept ‘Anarchism’ to be the most appropriate encapsulation of his beliefs because it embraced individual freedom, self-determination, and a social framework of common-interest groupings, to which he himself added the idea of an avant-garde, agitating creativity. To the extent that he then campaigned for certain of Anarchism’s socio-political ends he was therefore an anarchist; but because of his insistence on a very personal interpretation, featuring this essential elitist creativity, he was always an outsider. Avant-gardes and elites are hard to reconcile with Anarchism, but to imagine a world in which the practitioners of all necessary occupations are in charge of their own affairs, democratically maintaining standards of work, establishing fair prices, and expanding the knowledge invested in
their disciplines by means of research and experiment, is perhaps to see how they were compatible to Read. (It may be more accurate to construct an image of Guild Socialism affected by Benda’s philosophy, and to imagine a society having ‘internal’ guilds for workaday occupations, and also ‘external’ guilds of experimental artists and creative thinkers and practitioners of all kinds.) In effect Read seems to have pictured a network of occupational or special interest groups, with elitism embodied in craft pride, and dedication to perfection by continuous renewal of the essential principles of each discipline, which in the realm of art of course meant commitment to avant-garde creativity.

It is significant to note that Read’s very first contact with art had been with avant-garde painting. He was an utterly conventional nineteen or twenty-years-old-conservative, Christian, and with bourgeois aspirations — when he encountered works by Gauguin and Van Gogh, Klee and particularly, Kandinsky, and these so shocked and fascinated him that he was driven to an equally shocking and subversive literature for explanations. He read Bergson and Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx and Kropotkin. This experience wrought in him moral and spiritual changes which he was convinced were for the better; but the initial impetus of change had been aesthetic. And the explanations he found in philosophy were, he believed, precisely that — explanations — that is, slightly weaker versions of truths perceptible in their most potent forms in the works of art themselves. This initiated his great lifelong beliefs: human concepts, of all kinds whatsoever, originate aesthetically by virtue of insight, and only subsequently percolate through philosophy and other forms of interpretation and use, eventually to become effective upon general life and conduct. Society needs individuals possessing suitably heightened sensibilities, necessary for engaging such truths or realities. The ordinary public, too, requires some inkling of this process of origination and dissemination, for such awareness and recognition will facilitate its effectiveness. In the short term this was to be provided by Read himself and others like him — intermediaries between society and its most creative artists. In the longer term, however, interpretation would be largely superfluous, because by virtue of reformed educational practices everyone would be, in some special way, an artist, and comprehension of the work of avant-gardes would be so much more direct.

As for the avant-gardes themselves, their authentic creativity would not be the property of individuals. Of course it would be affected by individuals, but by individuals who happened, Read would have said involuntarily, to be the sensitive registers of an evolving intelligence comprising the whole social body. He advocated the special creativity of certain accomplished individuals, and also the special creativity latent within everyone, because it would only be by extraordinary means that new aesthetic perceptions might be won, on behalf of society as a whole, as a vital aspect of a constant, necessary process of renewal and reinvigoration. His concept of elitism therefore held no connotations of rank or status or privilege: it simply referred to the extraordinary insight required to give shape to some value or truth newly perceived or perceived anew. And it referred to a cohort functioning as if it had no choice in the matter, for an occupation demanding constant nervous activity, and erratic fluctuation between achievement and despair, would surely have been the conscious choice of very few. It became Read’s preoccupation to speak for such necessary ‘outsiders’, those exerting perceptive shaping influence upon the stream of ordinary events they could never join or rejoin, and to attempt to influence some co-ordination of their creative originality. It became his twin objective to raise the consciousness of ordinary people through art; and his amused realization that this was considered subversive (while encouragement of really subversive avant-garde art was not) reinforced his inclination to call himself an Anarchist.

Recantation invariably has the result of sharpening a succeeding argument’s effectiveness; and what perhaps drove Read’s educational pronouncements home with such force was the fact that they included recantation. In one respect he had published in haste, for at first he did not countenance the possibility that all members of the community might aspire equally to creative fulfillment. Instead he supported a distinction which had been the fundamental principle of art education in Britain, since the establishment of the South Kensington system in the mid nineteenth century, by seeming to endorse the legitimacy of one kind of provision for ‘artists’ and another for artisans and all the rest. It is not difficult to detect Benda’s influence, and that of Freud, in suggestions that society required some external shaping guidance provided by disinterested visionaries, but that there had to be safeguards against a proliferation of visionaries too great to be supported by productive labour. Read had said as much in Art and Society, arguing that a consequent responsibility of art teachers would be to distinguish between the education of positive, creative capabilities in the few who would be initiators, and the encouragement of taste, discrimination and appreciation in the many who would be consumers. His view of the artist then was of an otherwise-neurotic who had chanced upon ways of evading this fate by expressing what would have been repressed phantasy in plastic form. And the masses either had neuroses of their own which could be cured by better housing, reformed industrial practices and improved quality in the artefacts of everyday life, or else they possessed relatively untroubled mental personalities because they lived in the countryside or followed satisfying craftwork occupations. In Education through Art, however, published only six years later, everyone, that is, every child, was said to be a potential neurotic capable of being saved from this prospect if early, largely inborn, creative abilities were not repressed by conventional education. Everyone was an artist of some kind whose special abilities, even if almost insignificant, had to be encouraged as contributing to an infinite richness of collective life.

What had prompted this change of outlook had been Read’s encounter with the work of the very young. He had been advising the British Council on a collection of children’s art for wartime exhibition, and in the course of this he had come across an image drawn by a five-year-old girl, which she called Snake around the World and a Boat. He was deeply moved, he said, upon immediately recognizing this image as a ‘mandala’, an ancient symbol of psychic unity, universally found in prehistoric and primitive art and in all the principal cultures of history. The child, of course, could not attach meaning to what she had done; but Read, aware for some time of what until now had been merely an interesting hypothesis of Jung’s, was shocked to find phenomenal evidence of archetypal imagery. He then
discovered an astonishing consistency in children's art of symbols Jung had associated with community stability, and he also found them brimming over in the painting and sculpture of the adult avant-garde.

The most significant of these images, to Read, was the 'mandala', which often embodied some unified shape, perhaps in the form of a flower or some other fourfold arrangement, with a distinct centre, the appearance of an unfolding, and a gathering perimeter. Especially in Eastern philosophy, though also for example in Christian iconography, these had been held to symbolize collective thought and mutual belonging. Other archetypes which gave Read shocks of recognition were the tendency to fabricate a 'dark shadow' from aspects of personality opposed to those personified in the self; and the tendency to protest against isolation, individuation and independence by creating mother-images, earth forms, and other symbols of dependence. All of these: a fixing upon abstract unities; a collection of personality traits specifically outside of the self; the celebration of maternity; an acknowledgement of belonging to the land, all of these projections-beyond-self, Read thought, were fundamentally Anarchistic. Objectified in the work of the avant-garde, their purpose was to guide the collective unconscious into normal patterns of aspiration and behaviour and away from the sinister alternatives (mass hysteria, nationalistic pride, dumb subservience to the state) to which the unnatural mode of modern life had left people prone. This remedial function, however, would wither into uselessness if the selfsame imagery, evident in child art generally, could be protracted into adulthood for everyone.

When published this observation gave new meaning to the work of many thousands of art teachers. Instead of merely assisting recreational skill and consumer discrimination, their role would be to help innate creative abilities to survive in an ungenial world, for the sake of individual wellbeing and also for the health of a collective social harmony. The potential for success was evident in Read's observation that children quite naturally give forth imagery which maintains contact with the deepest levels of social experience, and with times when social cohesion was the normal order. A corollary, which armed the art teachers and explains the enormous, immediate success of his book, was that defects of modern life - injustice, immorality, harsh competition, even war - had roots in prevailing systems of education and, specifically, in an emphasizing of intellectual development to the exclusion of everything else visited upon children from around the age of ten. Because of this the infant with inborn access to ancient, collective experience became a rootless ten-year-old and a centre of self interest. What passed for liberal education was nothing more than systematic repression, the elimination of which would give rise to recovery of individual, and also mutual, social health.

Read's other twin purpose, then, encouragement of the avant-garde, assumed a temporary, but no less vital importance as he saw that it had to retain its effectiveness until such times as its forms of creativity would cease to be exceptional. This was the objective he, as founder-president, projected into the Institute of Contemporary Arts when it was established in 1947. It was the realization of longstanding ambition, for he had attempted to found an artists' guild workshop in London in 1918, a Bauhaus in Edinburgh in the 1930s, and a Museum of Modern Art in London just before the outbreak of the Second World War. None of these had materialized, but his hopes found their moment in the period of post-war reconstruction, when there seemed opportunities to fashion a civilization with fewer inherent faults than in the past.

The Institute's founding purpose was both propagandistic and educational. It brought accomplished artists into contact with those who, as a result, became the next generation of accomplished artists. Ordinary members could tap current creative research at source and effect its dissemination throughout the wider community. It was not a place where art was made, but a place where the most tentative beginnings of its translation, by argument and debate, into other forms of thought and action took place. In effect it was an echo of Read's formative experience when, as a young man, the shock of unprecedented abstract images had sent him rushing to philosophy. But now the philosophical context had considerably altered. Whitehead, Jung and D'Arcy Thompson had influenced the present Zeitgeist, and theories of collective mind and organic formation were in the air. Artists, by whose efforts the organization of society was to be incrementally changed, needed to be alive to such philosophy, the full range of aesthetic principles which had nurtured it, and its ramifications for a cross-section of human understanding. Thus the Institute embraced a comprehensive spectrum of avant-garde art, including abstraction, surrealism, and every shade or tendency between them; and it also provided a forum for advanced scientific philosophy, as well as the latest researches in sociology, anthropology and other disciplines. It was in Read's special sense an Anarchist cell, an organic community dedicated to the constant revision and reinvigoration of its essential values, to the integration of diverse interests meeting in the common sphere of art.

Two observations ought to be made in conclusion. One is that Read's political identification at this the end of his active life was clearly with Anarchism now and some Guild Socialist utopia in the discernible future. There would be a period of energetic overturning of aesthetic values (or rather turning over, in the sense of cultivation), leading to a time of great stability characterized by mutual aid and common understanding. The other observation is that his faith in an Institute of Contemporary Arts was partly justified and partly not. It stimulated a remarkable closeness of artistic and scientific communities; and it gave rise to forms of creativity-process-dominant abstraction in painting and minimal constructive in sculpture - that permeated every level of British art education and had the most widespread effectiveness of any avant-garde tendency before them. On the other hand, it is in the nature of avant-garde creativity to engage the unexpected, and one aspect of what was nurtured at the Institute disappointed Read greatly.

Pop art developed there when scientific influences were debased by a preoccupation with science fiction, and Jungian psychological influences corrupted by a fascination for the collective fantasies of the popular press and cinema. Read did not proceed much beyond stating the grounds upon which he would take issue - pop art was parasitic, in the sense in which advertising (its chief source of inspiration), as a servant of capitalist exploitation, was parasitic. By flattering something which exploited acquisitiveness and was divisive it would contribute to social disintegration, under-
mining the natural, healthy aesthetic gains of thirty years of authentic English contemporary art. Its practitioners thought he was exhibiting fear in the face of revolutionary creative concepts, a late reluctance to come to terms with the unfamiliar. In fact it was minutely familiar to him. It was like a stranger he met whom he had always known, for its was the antithesis of all the values he had lived for. It was elitist in the way in which it patronized crude preferences and uninformed appreciation. It pretended to elevate popular taste: what it really did, however unintentionally, was to elevate the cynicism with which ordinary aesthetic sensibilities were manipulated.

If it was proof of Anarchism at work it revealed a destructive aspect Read had never countenanced. His rejection of it left him clinging to a politics of constructive gradualism, in which Guild Socialism would have had its day, rather than a politics of complete disintegration as a precondition of society’s reform.

References

1 In the 1940s this consisted chiefly of two organizations, the Freedom Press group, a circle of intellectuals, including close friends of Read’s, who were concerned with publishing, and the Anarchist Federation of Great Britain. Read chose to distance himself from both in order not to compromise his own belief in a fundamental aspect of Anarchism that was creative. See G. Woodcock, Herbert Read: The Stream and the Source (London: Faber, 1972), ch. 7.


4 It has been said that Orage enhanced all contributions to Guild Socialism published in The New Age between 1912 and 1913 (see Martin, pp. 207-8). This may have been so in respect of other authors, but there is no evidence of Orage’s editorial interference in Penty’s surviving MSS.


9 Correspondence Read to Wyndham Lewis dated 9 Dec. 1934 (48/82/14.01, 14.02: Read Archive, University of Victoria BC).


12 See correspondence Read to Frank Pick dated 19 Feb. 1941 (61/158/5.01-5.03 Victoria BC).

13 While a member of the Leeds Arts Club he had painted a succession of ‘Futurist’ works, one of which survives (coll. Benedict Read).

14 Art and Society, pp. 192-224.


17 See Education through Art, esp. ch. 7 (‘The Natural Form of Education’).


19 This is surely true. In the form of ‘Basic Design’ they entered every level of teaching in Britain, and even became enshrined in government policy in the First Report of the National Advisory Council in Art Education (the first ‘Coldstream’ Report) in 1961.


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ART EDUCATION AND THE PROMOTION OF INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING*

F. GRAEVE CHALMERS

The arts and man, published by UNESCO twenty years ago, (UNESCO, 1969) contained statements such as:

"Art increases our state of aliveness by expanding and deepening our state of awareness."
"Art makes leisure time and all time a thing of interest and beauty."
"Art gives voice to self."
"Record making in the natural and personal symbols of art enables children to record the uniqueness and significance of their lives."

Although they may quibble with one or two words, most art educators would accept these statements but they may not be so good at helping their students see that all people use art for some of these reasons; that there is no culture without some form of artistic production. Because the arts are universal as well as ethnocentric and culture-bound it is natural that learning about art be conceived as one way to promote intercultural understanding.

The International Baccalaureate, a program for the final two years of secondary school which operates in sixty-five countries requires all students to follow a course in the theory of knowledge where questions such as the following are considered:

What is aesthetic judgement and what is its sphere?
Are all humans equally competent judges in the sphere of the arts?
Is beauty/artistic significance entirely in the eye of the beholder?
Are there rational ways of deciding on the merits of personal taste?
How can we settle our differences in aesthetic judgements?
Head-counting, the consensus of experts, computers, experience and personal judgement requiring detachment?
What is the influence of tradition, ideology, religion and morality on our capacity for perception of artistic merit?
Are the arts progressive? Is new necessarily better? Do the arts and literature matter or are they merely occupational pastimes? If they have a significant role in human lives, to what extent is some social and political control of the creation and of the consumption of artistic work inevitable? What does art for art's sake mean? Is it possible that artists are not fully aware of the meaning of their works?
Is it useful to view art as a language? How is it that people seem able to enjoy and appreciate art from different cultures (Street, 1986, pp.9-10)?

These are important questions, but they are questions that have all too frequently been answered from a limited cultural perspective. This paper will consider some of these questions and their implications for international, intercultural art education. Let me begin with a quote from one of Canada's great painters. Arthur Lismer (Bridges, 1977), a member of the "Group of Seven," said that

Art is like this — it is experience, lived and shared with others. It is the living sinew that binds humans together everywhere; for no nation, no child, no person is without it (p.85).

I think that Lismer's statement is true but I don't think that we have done nearly enough to promote art and art education as a unifying element in a world fraught with division and rich cultural diversity. Art learning must go beyond techniques, tools, and materials. Art must be seen as a powerful force in shaping our vision of the world. Through art we can understand each other's vision and keep our own alive.

But why should an artist and art educator be especially interested in problems of intercultural understanding? Why should a person concerned with internationalism and cultural pluralism in schools and other educational agencies be especially concerned with art? Do the arts, artists, and performers have a special role in intercultural understanding? I believe, along with June McFee (1974) that:

Material culture is mainly art. It is the objective expression of people's concepts of reality, the nature of social roles, a feedback system that helps keep social organizations going.
It is a communication system, that tells large numbers of people... what, where, and how social action and interaction takes place (p.10).

As an art educator I work in two contexts: the local and the international. Locally I am part of a multi-cultural community. Vancouver is a Pacific Rim city with, in addition to Europeans of various extractions, an increasing Asian population. There is also an indigenous native population as well as visible minorities form Central and South America and other places. Canada is officially bilingual and multicultural. Internationally, in addition to currently being a vice-president of the International Society for Education through Art, I serve as Chief Examiner in Art/Design and Coordinator for all of the Arts for the International Baccalaureate Organization. Stressing
internationalism and cultural pluralism, the International Baccalaureate is a high school graduation qualification that began in Geneva and has spread to sixty-five countries around the world. Whether working locally or internationally I think that it is necessary to begin with four premises: one about the arts and their function and role in society, and three about culture.

Premise #1: The arts are agents for the transmission of culture and are, or should be, an important part of everyone's life. It is important to stress that appreciating art is not the same thing as understanding art. This is a distinction that we don't sufficiently make in art education. It seems to make little sense to teach a person to "appreciate" or make art, perform music, write or perform for the theater, to study art's history, or even to talk about the arts, if that person is not also helped to see that the arts can relate to various social orders in a causal, functional, and contextual manner. In other words it is important to understand the anthropology and sociology of art.

Given this contextual view of art, we need to embrace the following three premises: (1) Cultural pluralism is a reality and that grudging or tacit recognition must be replaced by genuine acceptance (2) that no racial, cultural, or national group is superior to another, and (3) that equality of opportunity is a right that must be enjoyed by every student regardless of ethnic, cultural, or national background. We all need and use art for rather similar reasons. In this sense (and if we are not to be culture-bound and elitist) it is the only sense that makes any sense, African art is as "valid" as European art, popular art as "high" art, etc. This does not mean that there is not good and bad African art, good and bad European art, good and bad popular art, etc.

No-one must think of themselves as more civilized than others. The International Baccalaureate students that I currently deal with represent about one hundred and twenty-two different nationalities. They are legatees of vast and complex cultural heritages in which a great variety of strands are interwoven: scientific, technological, religious, moral, political, and, of course, artistic. But we do discriminate and think of ourselves as superior to others. For example, if we look at the tables of contents in many general art history texts published in Europe or North America we will likely find something similar to that in a book that H.W. Janson or his publishers had the gall to title, A basic history of art and advertise as "introducing the vast world of art at a level students can understand" (Janson, 1981). Native Indian, Inuit, and African art are given minimal mention under the title "primitive art"; East Indian art is not included, and in the basic edition Oriental art doesn't even get an ethnocentric mention as an influence on Western Impressionism, let alone in its own right.

Art teachers in schools are not exempt from the sins of stereotyping and cultural bias. Teachers must examine their own biases where these exist, and must face them squarely, realizing that as we approach the twenty-first century in order to deal with students of national and ethnic backgrounds and cultural experience different from theirs, preconceived notions of ethnic and/or social categories could aggravate rather than alleviate problems. I think that one of the ways in which we stop art from being a vital experience in the in-school lives of students is by the aesthetic standards that we often hawk in the classroom. An American art educator (Schellin, 1973) has something to say about this:

What we tell students when we eagerly expose them to paintings by "great artists" is that we, the artists and the patrons of the artists, may be superior to the students and their parents. They are "culturally deprived" while we are "culturally enlightened." What we may tell a black student, a Chicano student or a Native American student when we [constantly] show them European art objects is that there may be something "wrong" with or "primitive" about being non-white. We may debase any student as a human being, whether he or she is white or non-white, if we insult the student's or his/her parent's latest prize possession as some thing which has no redeeming "aesthetic worth" according to the culturally defined aesthetic standard we "hawk" in the classroom (pp. 7-8).

We are often elitist. We cannot afford to be.

We have to realize that as educators committed to cultural pluralism we could be more democratic if we were to look at the ways the arts are used to strengthen social bonds and to reach out to others for mutuality, to say "we belong" in a variety of contexts. It is sad, for example, when groups of North American young people regard rock videos as the only art form worth associating with, or when visual art educators ally themselves exclusively with Western museum traditions of connoisseurship, because they are less likely to be interested in and tolerant of other art forms which also have much deep meaning for the people who support them. This need not be the case. Gaining knowledge about variety, place, and role of the arts in social life is important if we wish to increase intercultural understanding, because in its diversity we can see the common functions belonging to art — what we might call the why aspects. We tend to pay too much attention to the what and our own cultural preferences tend to restrict the universality of our approach. If we are truly interested in intercultural understanding then we must study the arts as social institutions influencing and being influenced by the worlds of which they are a part.

In expanding our notion of what the arts are, many examples need to be considered, not just those that we find in galleries and museums, concert halls and theaters. The popular, vernacular, and folk arts are also important and significant. In the visual arts, we need to take into account architecture and the built environment, interior design and decoration, clothing and body ornamentation, images on living room and bedroom walls, posters, video, comic books, and passing fads such as T-shirts and skateboards. We need to concern ourselves with what students themselves define as "art." One teacher in Vancouver, B.C. asked the twelve-year-olds in her class to pick one object at home that was either hanging on the wall or that was displayed like "art." The class identified: a pottery rabbit; teddy bears; doodle art; animals from rocks; a 1920's Vanity cover; pictures of dogs, cats, and a monkey; pictures of hockey teams; bike posters; posters of John Stamos, Matt Dillon, Tom Cruise, Rob Lowe, Billy Idol, Duran Duran, Clash, Cindy Lauper; string pictures; photographs; a charging bull poster;
a landscape painting; small figurines; an oil painting of a mountain, stream, and trees; drawings done by a student of a fawn and a cat's face; a print from Hong Kong; a wood carving of a polar bear; a brass sculpture of a horse; a black velvet painting of a dog and a cat; pictures of Paris; Hoffman's "Image of Christ;" a cross on the wall; a statue of the Virgin Mary; Hummel gifts; a black light poster; trophies and pennants; a watercolor of flowers done by a student's sister, etc. From this beginning students were led to a consideration of the wider world of art and the place of art in their lives and the lives of other people. Their list of art-like objects reminds us that we all, students included, experience art every day, and that significant art is not necessarily the same as "great" art. By understanding the student's own, often culture-bound conception of the arts, the teacher is able to use the involvement that the student has already established with the arts, as a path toward further understanding and knowledge.

Adrian Gerbrants (1957), a Dutch anthropologist who has worked extensively in Africa states that the arts are essentially for three reasons: to perpetuate, change, and enhance culture. He has shown that the arts have a function transmitting, sustaining, and changing culture as well as in decorating and enhancing the environment. He has shown that the arts directly and indirectly, may bolster the morale of groups to create unity and social solidarity and also may create awareness of social issues and lead to social change. The arts, he found, may serve as an aid in identifying social position and can be considered as commodities that may increase the power and prestige of the participant and owner. The arts may express and reflect religious, political, economic, technological, leisure, and play aspects of culture. At times the artist was found to be a magician, teacher, mythmaker, sociotherapist, interpreter, enhancer and decorator, ascriber of status, propagandist, and catalyst of social change. In a culture the predominance of any aspect and the role of the artist or performer are conditioned by the particular values of that culture. There is no culture without some form of artistic expression and communication.

If society is concerned with transmission, conservation, and extension of cultural values, we cannot ignore the arts - because art is a medium that transmits the cultural heritage, maintains certain cultural values, and indirectly effects change. Bruce Archer (1978) has written that:

The reasons why the arts are so important in the achievement of cultural diversity is that they are themselves essentially wholistic, anthropocentric, and value laden. They are the media for the doing, the making and the living of a culture (p.8).

If art making and performing are the media for "the doing, the making and the living of a culture" it is reasonable to assume that cultural understanding could be one of the most important reasons for learning about the arts. Dorothy Lee (1959) has stated:

My own culture with its laws of logic, its principles of cognition, its rigidly defined limits of validation, offers me a strongly precategorized view of reality...When I study other cultures I find a different codification, I get a different glimpse of reality, from a different starting point. I find other, equally self-consistent systems of symbolization...

Thus I am enabled to some extent to go beyond my own finite view: I am enabled to see my culture as one of many possible systems of relating the self to the universe...(p.2).

For some time I have felt, that as art educators, we should look to the social sciences as well as the humanities to see what is being said about aesthetic experience and the arts in those disciplines. As a beginning I found it instructive to seek out the required texts being used in introductory anthropology and sociology classes at the University of British Columbia. In the anthropology text I found a valid attack on our ethnocentrism, e.g.:

Obviously, all music, all science, all history, all food is ethnic, in the sense that it is linked with an ethnic group. The hamburger and milk shake at the drive-in restaurant are [really] no less ethnic than the sweet-and-sour pork at the Chinese restaurant. If the Yoruba wood carver working on a mask for the next Gelede festival is doing ethnic art, so was Michelangelo when he painted the Sistine Chapel. If we must call the medicine practitioner among the Navaho a witch doctor, then we should extend the courtesy to the Harley Street gynecologist or the Massachusetts General Hospital brain surgeon. There is no universally valid criterion whereby our view of the world should be called science, and everybody else's "ethnoscientific" or "folk systems." The prefix "ethno," as it is commonly used in anthropology, is not only a redundancy, but an invidious one. What is true of science is equally true of art... What is untenable... is the notion that complex societies have artists producing "great art," while simpler societies only have artisans producing "tribal art" or "folk art." Western ethnocentrism in art is... deeply ingrained in our culture (Van den Berghe, 1975, pp.220-221).

In the sociology text I found a discussion of artistic expression as a way of communicating via a code. Code making and understanding were presented as human activities that develop naturally in the context of social experience, e,g:

All art is social experience. This may sound like a strange statement, because after all one can listen to records or paint a landscape when one is entirely alone.... Nevertheless all art is made by human beings. Art is a symbolic activity, a way of communicating an inner experience. It is obvious that one must learn to paint and that learning is a social experience. But it may not be so obvious that one must also learn to see paintings and to hear music. Of
course all of us can focus our eyes on a picture, but we may not get much out of it... Every artist creates or performs for some audience. In some preindustrial societies every adult is probably able to understand and appreciate all the art that is produced in that society. Wherever culture is uniform the same artistic codes are shared by all the members of the society. However, our society is characterized by cultural pluralism, in which a number of different codes are used by different artists (Spencer, 1979, p.59).

This has some important implications for art education and I think that we art educators might provide more significant programs if we made art education a bit more like social studies education — at least for part of our program. We might focus on artists and their socialization, publics and audiences, culturally specific values and broad cultural themes, or the changing conditions that in various ways support or influence forms of artistic expression.

Our problem has been that experience in making and performing certain types of art has led to limited knowledge about the function and role of the arts in society. In considering the arts as social studies we would focus on the "why" aspects of art. Students would integrate knowledge about the function and role of the arts in society with experience in making and performing culturally relevant art. The student would also study artists working in a variety of codes who, through their work, have been cultural maintainers, social therapists, propagandists and catalysts of social change, mythmakers, magicians, enhancers and decorators. Students would use their own art for these same purposes and would seek to answer such questions as: How do we identify "the art that matters" in a given society? How are the arts used by this particular group? How does art educate and socialize? How does the structure of the arts differ when it is said and how is it said? How do we learn the code? What is the role and influence of the artist? How are the arts, economy, and social organization related? Can we sift out (from many codes) the pioneering historically significant artists, performers, and works of art as well as identify periods and specific trends?

This, of course, is all a far cry from some conceptions of arts education which tend to assume that art education is fundamentally a mode of self-expression, that so-called "pure" aesthetic relationships are of primary importance, that "making" art transcends the activity of mind (which as American art educator Edmund Feldman has said suggests that it is thus ideal for occupying the "mindless"), and that the mastery of performance skills automatically advances the goals of general education!

Although it has been thought difficult to define the arts we can begin to see how important the arts are if we try to imagine a world without them. Can we, or our students, visualize a world without singing or music, with no dancing, no plays or stories, no movies, no sculpture, no architecture, no paintings, no drawings, and no design or decoration in the things we use in everyday life? I submit that many students could happily very well live their lives without the sort of art that some teachers typically promote. Art, as some define it, is seen as a peripheral phenomenon in culture, no longer

important to the public at large, but only to artists and their specialized public. A pluralist, inter-cultural perspective should contradict this view by helping us realize that here are many different types of art and no such thing as "art in itself." Toni Flores Fratto (1978), a social scientist who writes extensively on the arts, states bluntly:

The fact is, there is no such thing as art. That is, there is no such thing as art in itself. Art in itself is not a universal human phenomenon, but a synthetic Western category, and a relatively recent one at that. The concept has generated endlessly misleading ethnography, art history and [aesthetic] theory, and has acted mainly to mystify the social conditions which keep acts of creation and sensual pleasure out of the experience of the socially exploited majority (pp.135-136).

The concept has also generated much misleading art educational theory. "Love" for art is all too frequently believed to be independent and free. In North America, as Vesta Daniel said at a recent art education conference in Nigeria, we have not sufficiently acknowledged Western "high art" bias, patrician sensibilities, elitism, social status, affluence, and pretension for what they are. Too often we have assumed that either (1) art education isn't important, or (2) art education means enlarging, around the world, the public capable of "appreciating" those sorts of art forms that are identified with Western "big C" Culture. What we have to recognize, as Janet Wolff (1983), a sociologist of art does, is that "traditional" aesthetics which tries to identify universal characteristics of art turns out to be "nothing more than the values of a particular dominant, or strategically located group in society, able to project these as absolute and impartial" (p.107). We must not fall into this trap. We must help our students to see what one writer (Kurbisicky, 1968) would call the gnoseological (functioning to give a knowledge of the spiritual), hedonistic, and recreational functions of art in many different cultures and subcultures. These are similar to some of the functions for art that Gerbrands (1957) found in Africa, e.g., religious belief, social status, political, economic, technological, enhancement, leisure, and play. The arts need to be seen as systems of significance. We have to show our students that an individual artist may play much less of a part in producing art than our view of the artist as some sort of genius, supposedly working with some sort of divine inspiration, typically leads us to believe. We have to help our students see that the arts encode many values and ideologies and are rarely innocent of political and ideological processes. We need to become familiar with the notion of Rezeptionsthetik, and that the meaning of a work depends on the expectations against which it is received and which also pose the questions which the work must answer. These expectations are called "horizons," which are characterized as the product of the discourses of a culture. As one author (Culler, 1981) states: "Rezeptionsthetik is not a way of interpreting works but an attempt to understand their changing intelligibility by identifying the codes and interpretive assumptions that give them meaning for different audiences [in different places and] at different periods" (p.13). Such a
notion has many implications for the ways in which art should be taught — particularly for intercultural understanding.

Of course it is important that our students have an opportunity to behave as artists, but it is also important that our students see and respect the arts as being used to give voice to ideas, values, and perspectives that have particular meanings in particular contexts. The arts can be at the center of a curriculum designed to foster a pluralist and intercultural view of the world. The arts are perhaps the most ethnocentric creations of humankind. Nothing else would seem to have as much to do with group and individual values as do the arts. Thus, when the arts could be a central and real focus for, say, a social studies program, it is disturbing that the only art in social studies is often confined to illustrating notebooks and making fancy headings. Similarly the usual trite experiences of making Inuit igloos from sugar cubes and North West Coast totems from toilet rolls are hardly substitutes for looking at art as a real social study!

Art is a basic social institution in all cultures. We need curricula that stress the *why* of art and that give attention to the popular and folk arts of many cultures and subcultures if our students are to see art as a really important part of cultural life. Art educators must teach the social foundations of art and make every effort to develop the conception of art as a basic human activity, by showing its function, use, and necessity (both aesthetic and non-aesthetic) in the conduct of human affairs.

How then do we do this? As I have already stated, my answer is to deal with the *why* of art. All cultures have some form of art. All cultures use art for rather similar reasons: to give a presence to the "gods," and thus, in some way to objectify feeling; to support and to challenge certain cultural values; and for decoration and enhancement. If we understand *why* a group needs art, and then look at what the resources available to the group are, it does not become too difficult to accept the form of the art object or event, whether it be a raku pot, a delicately decorated Ukrainian Easter egg, a Northwest coast totem pole, a tinselled Shiklak shrine, a painting on black velvet, a provocatively decorated panel van, spontaneous graffiti on an inner city wall, or unfamiliar songs, dances, and theater. As art educators, surely that is one of our main functions, to teach about the why of art — of real art — the sort of art that kicks and screams in all areas and strata of society, not just the art that is currently found in galleries and museums and that is promoted by the elite few.

The comparative study of art, of response to art, and the production of art forms which *matter* can help us to understand each other. Art has always been a powerful force in shaping our vision of the world. We need to understand each other's vision and keep our own alive. We need to combat any art-for-art's-sake attitudes that may be entrenched in schools because it is a rather peculiar notion of art and one that deters a full understanding of the role of art in a variety of contexts and cultures. In contrast, art educators who view art as a process of human action and interaction and who do not confine their attention to limited artistic products will be able to give our subject greater cultural impact and meaning.

*This paper, which synthesizes much of the author's previous work in art, culture, and education, was originally prepared as part of a 1989 report by the International Society for Education through Art for a UNESCO conference on Education for the Twenty-first Century.*

**References**


Schellin, P. (1973). Is it Wilshire Boulevard which is ugly or is it we? *Art education* 26:9. 6-9.


In 1988, Harold and Elleda met, became friends, and agreed to use their differences and their friendship as catalyst to push each further along in his/her thinking by committing themselves to an exchange of thoughts.

Their first project together was drafting, at four minutes before the midnight deadline on September 15, 1987, of a proposal for the 1988 NAEA Convention in Los Angeles.

"A workshop examining the theoretical underpinnings of generic formats for art teacher education, based upon the three paradigms for knowing: Empirical-Analytic; Interpretive-Hermeneutic; and Critical-Theoretic. Particular weight will be given to the second and third orientations and their implications for social action and public policy."

After the workshop, Harold Pearse wrote out the condensed version of the original Studies article that he had presented.

Paradigms Revisited:

Theoretical Foundations of Art Teacher Education

It began with the paragraph offered at the beginning of the Dialogue [see above], and then continued . . .

I can talk about this theory, or rather meta-theory, without being immodest since it is not an original idea on my part. (And speaking of meta-theory, I've never met a theory before that I have liked so much. If you think that pun is bad, I should say that the title of the original article is "Brother, can you spare a paradigm? The theory beneath the practice.") Although I have tried to adapt the theory to the context of art education, it is twice removed from its original source, Jurgen Habermas, a scholar of the Frankfurt School. Habermas, in Knowledge and Human Interests (1971), describes a tri-paradigmatic framework to identify and analyze the logical structure of three basic forms of knowing that have characterized modern thought and action. The set of paradigms was adapted by the Canadian curriculum theorist, Ted Aoki and informed his teaching and writing.

I have long felt that understanding theory helps one be a better practitioner. I was attracted to this paradigmatic approach since the description of which I came to call "Paradigm II" described my
orientation beautifully. Moreover, it helped me get at assumptions underlying both my theory and my practice and what I saw going on around me in art education.

So, what is a paradigm? A paradigm is commonly described as any pattern, example, or model. Educational theorists and social scientists use the word to denote ways in which knowledge or behavior is structured and organized. In its broadest terms, a paradigm is a world view, an internally consistent orientation from which a conceptual and operational approach to functioning in the world is constructed. Usually, one does not consciously think and act from a deliberately predetermined paradigm, but when viewed from a distance, a pattern is discernible. If we can recognize the pattern and its relationship to other patterns, perhaps we can better understand our thoughts and actions. So, I see paradigms as useful tools. Such language may be mechanistic, but as we shall see, some technical knowing is necessary. The three orientations as identified by Habermas are derived from the history of philosophy but are not aligned with any one philosophic position. They are as follows:

Paradigm I: the Empirical-Analytical orientation [technical knowing]
Paradigm II: the Interpretive-Hermeneutic orientation [situational knowing]
Paradigm III: the Critical-Theoretic orientation [critical knowing]

Each of these paradigms presupposes a specific cognitive orientation to the world. Each represents what Habermas refers to as "interest," a unique stance with distinctive goals and values. Knowing is not neutral as we usually assume, but is highly influenced by fundamental interests.

Paradigm I: Empirical-Analytical

The concept of root metaphor, originated by Pepper (1942) as a starting point for explicating world views, is a useful one for investigating inquiry orientations. Aoki (1978) begins his description of each orientation by isolating a "root activity". In the case of the empirical-analytical orientation, or Paradigm I, the root activity is work, intellectual and technical work that will help to relate people to the natural world. Work is seen as a productive process that has as its basic intent a cognitive interest in the control of objects in the world. The relationship a person has with the world is one in which the two are separate and isolated. The world is an object and people act upon it. The interest, to use Habermas' term, is in a person's intellectual and technical control of the world and in efficiency, certainty, and predictability. The knowledge forms that promote this interest are facts, generalizations, theories, and cause and effect laws. Understanding is in terms of these empirical forms of knowing. Explanation is given in causal, functional, or hypothetico-deductive statements and evaluation is means-ends based.

The experimental study, embedded in paradigm I, has long been the dominant approach to education research. Experimental control, validity, and the ability to make generalizations are emphasized, and "variables are manipulated and their effects on other variables are observed" (Campbell and Stanley, 1963, p 1). When the goal is factual and statistical understanding, and when it is necessary to know which phenomena are repeatable and predictable in order to exert control over situations and environments, this approach is realistic and effective. Indeed, its central concern is to be effective.

What would art teaching and art teacher education look like under this paradigm? To the extent that products, facts, skills, and techniques are emphasized (in other words, technical knowing), the art teacher is working from an empirical-analytic paradigm. Outcomes are looked at in terms of costs, competencies, and behavioral objectives. Just as this paradigm is the dominant one in educational research, it also tends to dominate classroom practice. Likewise, art teacher education would emphasize learning theories, techniques, and strategies. The central concerns would be control and objectivity, cost-accountability and product efficiency.

This orientation evolved from the scientific method and received its educational applications from behavioral theory. It is most effective when the objects under scrutiny will hold still and can be isolated into groups for controlled observation so some kind of treatment can be applied. The uniqueness and messiness that are inherent in lived situations tend to be diminished. However, difficulties arise because education is a social process, and children and educators are subjective, growing human beings. When we realize that our goals for teaching go beyond simple object making and that the questions we are asking go beyond simple fact finding and quantification into complex areas of human interaction, the empirical-analytic paradigm has been stretched to its logical limit of usefulness.

Paradigm II: Interpretive-Hermeneutic

The root activity of this paradigm is communication or, as Aoki puts it, relating people to their social world. A person's relationship with the world is reflexive — it is people-in-their-social world. This orientation originates in the philosophical stance of phenom-
enology. The interest here is in experimentally meaningful, authentic intersubjective understanding. Understanding is intersubjective in that it is one subject or person knowing another as individuals capable of experiencing the world in similar ways. It is authentic to the extent that others are not made to feel themselves as objects or things. Understanding is defined in terms of the meanings, people (or in phenomenological language, “actors”) give to situations and experiences in their everyday, lived world. The knowledge form sought is situational knowledge, or the knowing of the structure of interpretive meanings. This kind of structure is referred to as the essence, ground structure, or deep structure of a phenomenon. It is the mode of knowing called phenomenological understanding.

The aim of this understanding is to get under perceived phenomena in order to directly confront the phenomena in question. It is seen as a method that would lead us to the root by moving from matters of fact to essences, from empirical to essential universality, to an understanding of structures firmly grounded. It searches for the deep structures of human events and actions to discover the rules or modes that give them order. The phenomenological researcher talks about repeatability and identity of meaning instead of generalizability, reliability, and validity. He or she thinks in terms of essences and deep structure. The words used by phenomenologists are themselves revealing (e.g., root, ground, deep, essential, presence).

An art teacher operating from a Paradigm II orientation is interested in the subjective and intersubjective meanings the work (both the artwork and the process of working) has for the individual child. Such a teacher strives for what Buber (1967) calls an I-thou relationship with a learner. The student is regarded as an authentic self. There is a primary concern with process and events. Likewise, teachers in their education are to be educated “to make their own way as persons, if not as producers; they are to be educated so that they may create themselves.” (Greene, 1967, p 4)

In preparing to become a teacher, not only must one understand the theory, methods, and practice of education, one must also understand oneself. The purpose is existential in that the emphasis is on the student’s personal discoveries through his or her own thoughts, feelings, actions and choices. While the student learns about many things during this period, it is the learning that bears directly on one’s personal orientation to teaching that is of primary importance. It is the learning that is the response to the human longing for order and meaningfulness in an dense, immediate, contingent, “absurd,” world. The process is a dialogue with others and with oneself, in the world of things, people, and ideas. Greene (1973) calls it creating and choosing oneself and says that “as one chooses and becomes responsible for those choices, he or she achieves a continuity of identity and a continuity of knowing” (p 163).

The aim is to stand forth as an existing self as one teaches. The end is not the fabrication of a role or the construction of a disembodied self, but the achievement of an identity. This identity is one of self in relation to lived situations, understood, and transcended. The self-aware teacher can then give his or her own students a sense of their own possibilities as existing, conscious persons, present to themselves who can deal critically with their own realities. But what is there to ensure that what is developed in a student teacher is a critical consciousness, not merely a self-centered and adaptive one? What is there to remind him or her that teaching is a political act and that what is taken for granted in our school and community experiences must be questioned and made explicit? In order to shift into this kind of consciousness, we must shift paradigms.

Paradigm III: Critical-Theoretical

The root activity in the critical orientation is reflection, or the relating of people to their selves and their social world. Its fundamental interest is emancipation and improvements of the human condition by rendering transparent tacit and hidden assumptions and by initiating a process of transformation designed to liberate people. The valued people-world relationship is people-in-their-world, with their world. It is a relationship in which a person reflects on the world and acts in order to transform it. A central notion is that of praxis, the reciprocity of thought and action.

Understanding is considered in terms of reflection, and knowledge is a result of a process of critical thinking that combines reflection and action. Evaluation is considered in terms of discovering underlying assumptions, interest, values, motives, perspectives, root metaphors, and implications for action to improve human conditions. This paradigm takes meanings, the essences, and the understandings of multiple realities gained from the situational-interpretive orientation and adds the critical dimension. It probes for tacitly held intentions and assumptions, discovers implications for actions, and “promotes a theory of man and society that is grounded in the moral attitude of liberation.” (Aoki, 1978, p. 63).

Who are the critical theorists in the art classroom? They are the teachers who see learning as understanding and understanding as self-reflection leading to critical knowing, leading to action. The aim is a raised critical consciousness about the visual world linked inextricably to the social world. The method is one of deliberately relating this understanding to action in a larger community. It is not merely learning about the community or doing things in the commu-
nity. It is the effort to make problematic what is taken for granted and to make explicit and to question that which underlies our school and community experiences. Admittedly, examples of Paradigm III art teachers and art teacher educators are few. Perhaps more exist than may be immediately evident and although they exemplify this basic orientation, they may describe what they do in different ways. My point is that whether or not it is clearly articulated, art educators, when engaged in inquiry or practice cannot help but operate out of some sort of paradigm. I have found this particular paradigmatic structure a useful one for getting a handle on how and why art educators think and act as they do. It also appears to have struck a responsive chord with Elleda Katan. She has used it as a template to examine her own conceptualization of what it is that she teaches and to make problematic what is taken for granted.

Our dialogue preceding the workshop had gone like this:

February 25, 1988

To Harold of Nova Scotia:

I'm feeling guilty. I have so many documents with which to orient myself to your way of thinking — “Brother can you spare a paradigm?” and “What does it mean to be a student teacher?” from a 1985 Canadian Review of AE Research. From me, you have nothing. I feel conscience-bound to send you a progress report on my thinking about our presentation together so that there will be no surprises.

Something most central: You describe Aoki as believing that the boundaries between paradigms II and III are less distinct that those between Paradigms I and II...that the transition from the second to the third is more fluid, the latter being extended from the former. Now, I remember that way back at my first reading of your article — after absorbing the amazing thought that there were these three paradigms and that I really should read this guy Habermas — I did feel that some key ingredients were missing in the description of paradigm III. My lived and unexamined experience of what you were teaching me to call “Paradigm III” was that it was as different as night from day from Paradigm II — while Paradigm I and II were really two sides of the same coin.

However, another part of me said to ‘slow down’. If this Dr. Pearse said it, and it's printed in Studies, then, it must be true! If I was feeling there was such a huge difference between II and III, it must be because the whole critical perspective was so new and so fresh. I was exaggerating the meaning of the event for the rest of the world because of the way I was experiencing it inside myself.

Well. I don't know if it has to do with getting to know Dr. Pearse as 'Harold', or not... but as I prepare for the National Conference, I find that I really do believe in my original gut level reaction. As Aoki describes paradigm III, it is as an extension of Paradigm II: “This paradigm (III) takes meanings, the essences, and the understandings of multiple realities gained from the situational-interpretable orientation and adds the critical dimen-

References


As so described, it hardly represents, as I see it, a paradigm shift. What is being attended to has changed, but not the conceptual framework within which it gains its meanings.

And what is Elleda's (& C Wright Mills & Bourdieu & others) paradigm III? If, as I just stated, "the mark of a paradigm shift is a change in the conceptual framework with which a same phenomena is viewed", then a key concept around which to distinguish paradigms is that of 'objectivity', or the preferred intellectual-social-psychological stance of the individual inquirer who would get results that count. (Now, doesn't that sound a lot more phenomenologically sensitive than the 'dominant cognitive interests' Aoki offers?)

Empirical objectivity: Through disengagement from personal and social contexts, an impersonal investigation and public evidence produces a universality of results applicable to all times and circumstances where same phenomena are investigated.

Phenomenological objectivity: Through bracketing, or the deliberate effort to set aside all ontological judgments about the 'nature' and 'essence' of things, events, etc., personal reflection and subjective-inter-subjective evidence produces a record of the mental processes of experiencing which is universal to all the times and circumstances within which self-conscious human inquiry is undertaken.

Critical objectivity: Through locating oneself within one's period and ones social group(s) and taking consciousness of the 'invisible architecture of assumptions' within those particular institutional and social contexts, one can attain a mode of control over previously uncon-trolled factors in thought, the unconscious motivations and presuppositions' (Mannheim) and so an imperfect and temporary objectivity. Inquiry becomes a form of participation within a given historically changing tradition in its interrelatedness to other traditions contemporaneous to and preceding it in society. Universality in Paradigm III resides not in the results of inquiry, but in its conditions—i.e., those of being issue of a particular historical and social time within which the variety of group formations establishes the existential basis for individual thought.

The test for whether these represent three substantively distinct paradigm orientations would be whether the definitions of 'work' and of 'communication' and of 'reflection' change according to the paradigm within which one works. I think that they do.

Ah, well it seems to me as if I’ve been trying most of these last years to clarify the difference between the phenomenological and the critical. Teachers College was a phenomenologist's paradise, what with Maxine Greene, Justine Schorr, Dwayne Heubner. While I took most of Maxine’s and Dwayne's courses, their ideas always left me frustrated. There just did not seem to be the necessary linkages between their theory and my school practice. I'm really delighted to be forced to use the next weeks as a house cleaning of my mind.

Looking forward to seeing you in LA. Take care,

Elleda Katan

March 29, 1988

Elleda M’ Dear:

Thank you for the progress report on your thoughts ... I like the way you outline your encounter with the theory I elaborated and how the notions meshed (or didn't) with your already well-developed intuitive theory of art education from the critical perspective.

My first thought is that maybe the best way to introduce the session is an account of our initiation to these ideas and our sense of discovery on finding the paradigms ... Then outline the three paradigms.

I see from glancing at the proposal that we are presenting this meta-theory as a theoretical foundation for art teacher education programs, so will keep that in mind and try to relate my examples to teacher education ...

The last ten minutes could be where we can argue the validity and usefulness of the model. Does each paradigm represent a distinct world view or is one an extension of the other? Maybe your critique will explode the model so that it is unrecognizable. At least let's hope (and aim) for something fuller than what I started with. Looking forward to seeing you in L.A. Harold Pearse

and the dialogue following the workshop ...

Hi, Harold!

I am just reading your condensed version of the Three Paradigms article. You do write with such an easy grace.

Had a thought though . . . Could you provide scenarios, course sequences, bibliographies, projects, organizing concepts which distinguish your art teacher educa-
tion program from one built upon an empirical model? For instance, I remember an NAEA workshop that you gave with Nick [Webb] in which you had had your students do a rather unique form of research. . . . was it their own art as a child? . . . something deeply responsive to a phenomenological sensibility and treating a range of imagery not conventionally attended to within an art school.

Also, I'm sure that the way in which you introduce yourself and have your students get to know each other is distinctive. For instance, I remember a former student of yours talking about a coffee corner at Nova Scotia and its role in supporting a special ambience within the program.

I ask you this both because that's what I want to talk about, and because I think that's just the form of linkage that is so sadly missing within our professional dialogues and research.

Whew. The air is thick with honeysuckle. Thunder's on the sky's edge. Humid. Salt. Trees waving at me to come outside. Love it, Elleda

July 12, 1988

Dear Elleda:

Thanks for the note. . . . I like your suggestion of including concrete examples of "organizing concepts" that characterize the kind of art teacher education program I favour. . . . The way I would like to approach it though is to wait until I see yours and then try to work in my examples in a way that would parallel yours. . . . In the meantime, I will be thinking of examples and making notes — maybe even a draft.

Hoping to hear from you soon, Harold

July 25, 1988

Dear Harold:

Lordy. More words from Leda! As you can probably guess, I'm chugging along on the critical segment of our duet. I just realized that something amusing is happening as I develop it. I thought I'd share it with you, both as a progress report and also possibly to see if you would like to play along with it.

In redrafting my talk into a paper, I'm picking up with some measure of concreteness on the issues that kicked me into critical gear in the very phenomenological milieu in which I received my education and began my teaching within higher ed. As a result, the paper is becoming anecdotal, a auto-biographical account, somewhat mythologized into ideal types. I find myself learning and teaching myself a lot of fascinating things as I rethink my past from my present day perspective. Hummed along on that track for a few days . . . . and then felt I should step back and look at the whole and see how what I was doing fit together with your piece.

I was surprised to see how autobiographical my paper had become.

Now, the two people who have best modeled for me the autobiographical mode are you and Amy [Brook Snider]. In a sense, it's one of the gifts of the phenomenological sensibility, and you two have been the vehicle for bringing it into my practice. Without the work done with you, I doubt that I would have entered into the format for this article with anything like the same comfort and ease.

And yet what an irony, for what did I find when I reread your article? While your style is wonderfully informal, and while you declare your allegiance to Paradigm Ill quite frankly — and in so doing, you distance yourself from academic formality and objectivity — you offer no personal history! How about it? What were your issues with the empirical mode of practice? Why did you reject it? In what ways did the interpretive mode resolve them? Did you do your education studies within an empirically dominated program? Or was your training, like my own, essentially within a phenomenological ambiance? One that for you made sense . . . while for me, it didn't?

If so, how interesting. Why would that be? What forces would lead a same social role in one rather than the other direction. For instance, is it important that my background is art history, not studio? That I taught elementary in the '60s and in Manhattan, not high school in the 70s in Nova Scotia? That I'm a woman and mother and more readily fulfilled by the idea of a career as school teacher. Would this be less likely to be true for a male? Could all this add up to my being more deeply/existentially school teacher/educator rather than, as you are, professor/artist? Or was all this determined at the oedipal level — the which is hardly appropriate for discussion within a professional journal?
The draft of Elleda's article that was enclosed:

It began with the paragraph offered at the beginning of the Dialogue [about the world being divided into three parts, although, because of the nature of the issues at hand, Elleda's definition of the third part or paradigm is quite dissimilar from Harold's], and then continued. . .

"What were my issues? Well, central was the fact that as a longtime school teacher teaching for the first time within the university setting, I felt myself to be a stranger in a strange land. Until then, my experience had been inner city Manhattan, in elementary, pre- and after-schools, during the progressive resurgence of the 60s. Now, I found that I had left the ferment of social and political experimentation in schools and their communities for an institution little interested in community and intellectually superior to social imagination. From highly collaborative projects, I now worked within a ceaseless competition. From contents integrated around student and social well-being, I now worked within content areas serving their own elaboration. Not least, that which I valued most in myself as a professional educator was denoted to "personal style" and "techniques"; that which I valued least—student projects in education research and artmaking—were sent out for publication and hung up on gallery walls.

Now, like any of you reading this piece, I'd spent a number of years as a university student, so it wasn't all totally unexpected. However, I'd done that late in life and after hours. It had been experienced as little more than a gray necessity between my children's bedtime and my own. Now, as a "professor," I had to live out my meanings within the institution. At first glance, this seemed easy enough. My colleagues were delightful—witty, wise, lively, subtle, sensitive, creative. They were people that I loved to call "friends," and who greeted me the same. Alike, we read Dewey, valued community and ate quiche. And yet, that which most troubled me was invisible to them. That which they thrived upon was for me problematic. When I declared my commitments, they called me 'dreamer' or 'drudge', 'structure freak' or 'missionary'. They'd hug me and continue on as if I'd never spoken. Clearly they were possessed of an expectation of their world and of their work which made or left harmonious just that which for me was conflicted and which made 'opposite' that which for me was "the same." What was it?

Well, Harold's article didn't give me that answer. What it did give me with those three paradigms was a publicly labeled name and place for my alienated and isolated condition. I understood Paradigm One, or the empirical-analytic orientation, to contain the vast majority of educator-technicians against which my colleagues along with a large number of other art educators protest. Paradigm Two, or the interpretive-hermeneutic orientation, contained my wonderful but confusing colleagues in art ed. My Paradigm must then be Three: The critical-theoretic orientation. At last, a label, and it was the equal of the group that dominated my field. I was no longer an odd ball. That I didn't really know what this paradigm was, other than that it seemed a piece with the progressive education within which I had learned my practice. Mattered less. I'd been given the courage to get on with it. With time, I would learn.

The Strange Land

The Student Teaching Seminar:

My first sense of a useful direction for my work within the university came from the student teaching seminar. Wonderfully, the full art ed faculty (all three of us) shared in the teaching of the seminar and in the supervision of the student teachers. Thus those who had designed the preparatory content met weekly with the students who took it into the field. Fueled with coffee and donuts, the spirit was supportive and generous. A collaborative community within the remorseless competition of higher education. A center for ideals within a number-crunching bureaucracy. The language was playful, personal, humorous, poetic. I felt blessed. It was a grand space to get one's sea legs as a first-time professor and an ideal place to evaluate the art ed program in terms of the social reality it served.

Or so I thought.

My sense of possibility was tempered by an exchange during the first session. The student teachers had arrived with the glazed eyes and fixed smiles many of us saw in our own mirrors after our first five days of internship. After warm-up chatter, one colleague launched discussion with the question: "What small thing have you been able to do in this first week in the schools in order to
change in some measure the atmosphere and attitudes of the institution?" Utterly
stunned, I asked him what he'd changed about the university in the recent past. He
seemed to find my question as inappropriate as I did his. How could two people be
so far apart? I looked anxiously for the answer in the months that followed.

Each week the student teachers came back from their internships, often
discouraged, sometimes feeling betrayed: their students tore up art projects;
principals complained of noise; teachers patronized the specialists. How could a
generosity and a commitment such as theirs be received with such indifference?
How could an activity so central to their own well-being not be important and valued
by others? My colleagues provided a strong shoulder and a good ear. Their
questions moved the student teachers to reflect upon their experiences and to enter
into the feelings of their students. The conversation was gentle, supportive,
sensitive, a slow sifting about and returning, always reaching out for and eventually
regaining equilibrium. However, there was little reference to past course work and
how it might inform present actions. No reference to the future possibilities served
by the projects in hand. Instead, we seemed to be nestled within a permanent present;
to be spectators, not participants in the world; to be judges, not partners with
the schools. The result was that the student frustration with their internships was
seen not as reflecting upon an art education program in need of change, but as
confirmation of the inadequacy of the larger world to the art programs qualities. I
ended up asking myself just who was being served by this community and these
ideas. Was it the larger public good or group therapy? Were these the issues of
American education or of the well being of specialists? If the latter was true, it
became important to figure out whether there really was any role here for someone
imbued with the '60s vision of changing society through its schools. Would this
protective posture prove too strong and too necessary to its proponents? Or could
the very genuine individual generosity and love for the arts and for children be
opened up and connected to socially responsive goals?

The University Preparation:

The more I listened to the conversation of the seminar sessions, the more the
betrayal seemed to lie less with schools and more with the knowledge that the
student teachers brought to them. All they knew of art media were the scatter shot
learnings from their studio classes. Some knew high fire clay and Raku traditions.
None knew low fire technology and faience ware. Some knew engraving and
Rembrandt's exemplars. None knew relief print and Hiroshige. Now, abruptly, all
of our student teachers were obliged to learn all the media of the school art room
and under pressured conditions. There was no time to relate schoolroom technologies
to the knowledge acquired in the university studios — and so it went largely unused.
Further, they had all been taught art history as a succession of western styles,
realized, predominantly, within painting. They knew little of the art histories of the
non-paint media nor of the art concepts they were now teaching. Again, no time now
for research — so history was excluded or trivialized. And their few courses in the
humanities were so disparate and specialized. They provided no foundation on
which the group could build toward a common understanding of the visual culture
of America. Their immediate concern had to be the material culture of the
Hammet's catalog. The result was an instructional content so onedimensional that
it excluded the meanings of most students; so subjective that it ill served a public
education; so elitist it ignored the values of the community; and so technical it drew
little of the student teacher's artistic sensibility into play.

The Art Education Preparation:

And what of the two art education courses that these students had shared? The
function of such courses should be, shouldn't it, to bridge the gap between the
knowledge of the university and the work of being schoolteacher? Clearly, the
courses had nourished a spirit of mutuality and trust. Equally clearly, there was little
reference to their content. Readings in Lowenfeld were the grand exception.
Students remembered him gratefully. They were thrilled to discover in their
student's art projects the developmental stages he described. They seemed to
welcome some form of pattern to their work. The professors, on the other hand,
referred repeatedly to the bountiful and distinguished literature listed in the
bibliography for the introductory course, History and Theory of Art Education.
Quotes were dropped into the anecdotal discussions of the seminar like inspirational
milestones, recalling qualities of "I-thou" communication, of creative inspiration,
of artistic experience, and so reaffirming a common ground in ideals.

And the Methods and Materials course? At most, there were references to
techniques found in the readings. Otherwise, the course seemed to have been a
miscellany of administrative strategies, how-to recipes, union speakers, inspira-
tional books, and case histories, all offered at a level too particular to generalize
readily to the internship situation. Absent was systematic study of instructional
designs, of teaching practices, or of educational goals — in a word, the structures
that mediate between theory and practice. Such matters, said my colleagues, reduce
learning to a social determinism and art to a formula. The spontaneous, the intuitive
and the unpredictable get scheduled out and the very special gift of the arts — that
creative encounter which makes of each individual a whole — is lost. Art becomes
indistinguishable from other areas of instruction. In place of such studies, my
colleagues seemed to have an unsaid faith that 'METHODS, semester two' would
offer the techniques to bring some form of idealized 'ARTISTIC EXPERI-
ENCE, semester one' to any and all students, whether child or adult, whether
compelled or self selecting, whether of our culture or of another. And their faith was
nourished by the fact that their way was the way that it was done everywhere else.
Strange Land Inverted

Inversion:

Such had not been the case in the schools where I had worked. There, we repeatedly challenged "the way that it was done"—especially when that way was our own. We'd schedule ourselves the time to surface from day-to-day pragmatics in order to check out our program activities against changing contexts and stated purpose. When the process of stepping back and taking perspective proved difficult, we'd play out an exercise we called "Inversion," one in which we'd try to visualize a teaching practice that was the mirror opposite to our own. The first efforts were always banal, but with the whole group working together, we'd slowly unwrap the layers of assumptions that habit made invisible. By engaging everyone who participated in the teaching practice, there would develop a spirit of common cause which would extend from our meeting back into the classroom. I was tempted to suggest the same exercise to my colleagues. However, their interest in alternative schools did not seem to translate into an interest in alternatives to their own practice. So, for a first time, I played out the exercise alone: What would be the teacher education program that was as opposite as possible to the one just described?

Abstract ➔ Commonsense:

What if a program did not begin with theoretical ideas as authored by singular individuals in isolation from their practices? What if instead of Plato, we began with the practices and theories of the class participants themselves, both teacher and students, their values, skills, interests, experiences, but mostly, with their passions. What if we then pushed ourselves to continuously broaden our sphere of consideration in a movement away from self-expression and towards group action; beyond individual concerns and towards public problems; away from the private creativity of the artist and towards the institutionally and intellectually complex creativity of the teacher. Periodically, we'd revisit those dimensions of our individual lives which hold a high vitality in order to integrate them into the new understandings. Thus they would be personalized and held responsive to qualities of passion, of empathy, and of insight. Rather than begin in a strange place which with further studies becomes familiar, we'd begin with the familiar and build slowly towards the strange.

Ideal ➔ Concrete:

What if a program did not promulgate an ideal, born on poetic imagery and rooted in subjective and individual experience? What if instead, it began with a comprehensive and concrete inventory of the art skills and knowledge needed to be an art teacher in the schools in the present? If it then studied those media and concepts and modes of art as components within the richest and broadest network of connections reaching out into the world surrounding the students, their schools, the larger community, the biosphere; connections extending back to the moment when humans first felt the need to which that activity was a response; connections into the major forms of cultural elaboration that that activity has known in human history? And what if the key resource for this research was seen as a collaboration between professors of art, school teachers and university students towards the "best" solutions serving a shared social role? Rather than begin and end with the ideal, begin with the real and build towards the "best" possibilities for that social role within the varied contexts within which it must function in the here and now.

Absolutes ➔ Alternatives:

And finally, having dropped the notion of art education as a single ideal, isolated from the other content areas of formal education and from the informal art experiences of the young, we'd be open to the study of the many art educations that exist within our society. Most immediately, there are the several art educations within the university—studio, craft, design, architecture, media—the structure of their content differing with their respective positions within the hierarchy of occupations. At a step more removed, there are the arts educations of the schools—preparatory, parochial, vocational and public—each inflected towards the place within social hierarchy of their student populations. Yet another step further and less formal, there are the quilt workshops of the Women's Guild; the historic house tours of the Wellesley Club; the wet canvas how-tos on public TV; the shipyard apprenticeships; the pick-and-glue of the preschools, each reflecting the ideals of distinct social groups, ethnic traditions, and gender models. From there, we'd build backwards to the origins of each practice in history, and sideways towards an ecology of the art educations which sustain our contemporary society. The educational imagination fully exercised, we'd be equipped to debate the possibility of alternatives, wouldn't we, both to those educations and for that society in the future? Rather than a singular art education which under certain limited conditions succeeds, the notion of alternative art educations which, where knowingly formed and re-formed, are not only successful within a variety of contexts, but can influence those contexts and the social conditions within which they take place.

Ah-h-h-h. There it was. A grand reversal! It brought me back home. Back to the notion of education as a grand experiment with the teacher at the creative center, rather than education as the perpetuation of the predefined with the teacher as the technician applicator. Back to the notion of collaborative projects between the members of one generation attentive to the well-being of a future one, rather than the competitive mastery among individuals of predefined career skills. Back to an education in service to a society that not only changes but has as its ideal, those changes which would render it more fully a democratic. This in the place of a therapeutic subgroup operating within an endless and self-serving present. This was what I would be about! What was I to do? A reversal in the head—and in one head alone—is not a program in education. How to begin to carry these values into an educational practice within the strange land in which I now worked, and in which
I seemed to work alone?

There was more, but Harold wrote back . . .

January 23, 1989

Dear Eileen:

I’ve finally had a chance to read through your article… My only reservation is that perhaps it is too mammoth — did you say, you were going to write a book? I… suggest that you end after page 7 because I think the main point has been made. . . .

I have slightly reworked my part to include examples from the teacher education program within which I work to illustrate Paradigm II. However, I don’t want to be too heavily autobiographical or long since I want my part to serve more as background and as introduction to your paper.

You know, after reading your description of how your approach to art teacher education has evolved, I’m even more convinced that these paradigms work. Your notion of art education as a “grand reversal” which questions the taken-for-granted established order and emphasizes the social context of art, education, teachers, learners, and schools sits squarely in what I understand to be the Paradigm III camp. I think that the short comings and limitations which you allude to have more to do with my sketchily inadequate description of the Paradigms than with a weakness in the model.

Hope to hear from you soon. Harold

Harold’s “slightly reworked part” is the following paragraph, to be added to the Paradigm II section of the original paper . . . .

The art teacher education program with which I am presently involved displays many of these features. Throughout the program the students, in their roles as student learners and student teachers, must keep journals as a vehicle for recording their encounters with ideas, individuals, groups, and situations, and for reflecting on how new experiences relate (or do not relate) to the existing fabric of their emerging world as art educators. This self-dialogue is buttressed by interaction with other students, faculty and cooperating teachers — all colleagues. It is no coincidence that what a visitor to the Art Education Division first notices is a pot of freshly brewed coffee. The next is probably the area with comfortable chairs and a coffee table littered with magazines and journals, where students and faculty (sometimes hard to tell them apart) gather and converse. He or she will probably also not miss the posters listing the upcoming events for the “Art Education Common Hour,” a weekly Friday noon opportunity to share lunch and listen to and debate with a speaker or workshop leader — as likely to be a student colleague as a visiting ‘expert’. All of this and more contributes to the creation of an environment in which the student teacher can feel his or herself being an active participant in the process of becoming a teacher.

August 18, 1989

Dear dear Harold:

I’ve allowed an awful time lapse in our dialogue. I am sorry. I’ve been developing those post-page-7 pages. As you anticipated, the whole is getting far too long and cumbersome to be a part of anything called “a dialogue”. Somehow though, the work I’ve been doing seems important in getting to a good place from which to contribute a next step in our conversation.

And WHAT a strange place I find myself in!

Basically, I would characterize it as this: Ideas, procedures, concerns that originally appeared to me as merely interesting, playful, provocative, colorful, I now see as methodological imperatives, with ethical and political significance.

For instance: When I first began teaching at the university level, I saw my job as that of tightening up on the slack management of my colleagues. When I first played out the teaching-teachers inversion, I saw it as a neat intellectual puzzle, capturing many ideas in few words. In the same spirit, when I wrote you that paradigm III was “as different as night from day from paradigm II — while paradigm I and II were really two sides of the same coin,” I thought that I was talking only about intellectual systems.

But no longer. Not at all!

After a year of reading critical theory and reflecting back upon progressive teaching practices, the ‘TRUTH’ left the pages and entered into my interpretation of lived events — i.e., the relationship between patterns of action and systems of thought is integral and very political. I didn’t just differ from my university colleagues in temperament or teaching style. We differed over the ‘best’ distribution of and authority over cultural knowledge, and hence over the nature of the social order we would serve. That teaching-teachers inversion wasn’t
just a neat puzzle. It profiled a covert agenda within institutionalized university practices to subvert democratic possibilities within our public education. And paradigm I and II are two sides of a same coin, because neither recognize the political content in intellectual and social processes, and therefore both fail to lay the critical foundation for social change: however differently each inhabits the status quo, both leave it untouched. Paradigm III, Elton/CWR/Goeldner/Mannheim-version, on the other hand, does, and it does it by asking very tough questions about oneself and about one's practices.

What kind of questions are I talking about? Well, in my introductory paragraph, I wrote that one theoretical orientation is not more right than another "according to some abstract measure, but that each is 'more right' in providing answers to a very different set of issues." That's true as far as it goes. However, if one would work within the critical orientation, it is only a first step. To become socially, and not just personally, responsible, one must move into an empirical mode of research, and (1) take consciousness of the period and social groups within which one took on identity, and within which one's issues were framed and labeled 'issues;' (2) identify the 'invisible architecture of assumptions', both cultural and social, which characterize that group at that time in history; (3) and then, extrapolate the political and ethical implications of carrying the found values into the practices of other groups, or, in the case of educators, of bringing those values to bear in the formation of the generation to come. In other words, that which is neither more or less right in terms of affirming an individual identity, becomes most emphatically more or less right when brought into public and professional practices which would shape a society.

And the role of theory and paradigms in all this? Once again, critical theory recognizes that, like any social product, theory serves the interests of the social groups that generate it. It's an instrument by which they act within and upon the world around them, opening up understanding in ways which maintain the authority and autonomy of the theory-makers. And the social group for whom theory is the weapon of choice = that class of folk called 'professors.' Does this mean that they/we use it against other social groups in order to preserve the authority of their/our own class? Yes, indeed it does! But not always. There are good guys/gals and bad gals/guys in every crowd. However, to discriminate the socially good from bad, we must accept that theory can be a weapon against as much as a weapon for the good of the larger society; and then examine it not only for its logical coherence and expressive power, but for the politics embedded within both its intellectual and social processes.

For example, let's take "The Paradigm Professors" — Habermas/Aokl et al. There are two questions to ask: How did they reduce critical theory to a subset of interpretive theory? And why?

How? They replace the concept central to the critical orientation of 'ideology' [or intellectual systems as weapons for social interests] with 'paradigms' [or logically coherent patterns devoid [like 'scholarship'] of contextual specificity]. Thus they protect intellectual activity from the tarnish of a political agenda.

They label the activities which distinguish the three paradigms — work, communication, reflection — interests, and then give as the definitions for those three activities [which like all activities are shaped by the interests they serve], definitions which serve reductive technocratic elitist interests. For instance, "work" is not understood as the many ways in which humans engage with their world in order to sustain, explore, express, change their life within society — a definition which opens outwards towards the largest possibilities of cultural adventure. Instead, "work" is presented as 'a cognitive interest in the control of objects in the natural world' — and thus is reduced to an intellectual technology, or a science. Having performed the traditional academic insurrections flip, the Paradigm Professors have tucked out of sight the role of collective self-interest. [Universities, where knowledge is organized around the object studied — life, nature, social institutions — rather than around the social interests that knowledge serves, are of course doing this all the time.]

They divide the world in two parts — WORK vs COMMUNICATION/REFLECTION, thus maintaining intact the dualisms foundational to the domination of experts, a domination that depends upon convincing everyone of the superiority of those who think/express over those who merely work; of the scholar/artist over the layperson; of the education professor over the school teacher; of the theorist & of theory over the practitioner & of action.

They construct a model in which the empirical, the
interpretive, and the critical are presented as either/or choices organized around cognitive 'interests', thus blocking from recognition the fact that a socially responsible theoretical practice must complement phenomenologically vivid detail with an equal empirical attention to political-economic and social-structural developments.

And why do this? Reducing critical theory to an add-on to the interpretive orientation drains it of the potential to raise troubling questions, questions that would make problematic the authority of the theorist. [It's the theoretical correlate to the social reduction performed in every art teacher education program that I know; where the social role of teacher is reduced to an add-on role to that of artist. While the theorist does this reduction through concepts, higher education does it through an institutional structure whereby only students screened into studio art programs can elect to become teachers.]

So now: Do you see what a strange place I am in? This way of thinking raises serious questions for me about the social and political role of an art education field that exists isolated within art colleges from the central issues of a compulsory public education within a democracy. More and more, the field of art education appears to me to have performed historically the role of a therapeutic interlude within a society that refuses to take responsibility for itself, that hides from the implications of its commitments.

What on earth does one do with such a perception? Who on earth wants to hear it? Why do I need to ever have such thoughts?

But, to get back to our dialogue. You must hear in all this that I really do disagree with you and that the fault is not in the sketchiness of your descriptions. I hope you also hear that the disagreement is a professional and not a personal one. I worry that that may not be clear. I find that frequently those colleagues who are drawn towards the interpretive mode, are also those individuals who equate agreement on ideas with affection for each other; disagreement with dislike—a conflation of the subjective into the objective at the level of psyche and of theory.

What you should hear is that it is only as we do love and respect each other that challenging dialogue can occur, dialogue which challenges our weaknesses as well as profiles our strengths. For me, that is why I need friends like you and groups like the Caucus: to help me stay sane while wandering off into strange places. Having a very specific and kind and witty friend to which to address all of this allows it to happen.

On rereading our correspondence, I also realize that we haven't really had much of a dialogue. It's understandable. You've only had bits and drabs of my thoughts to respond to and, for the most part, I haven't been all that clear to myself. I hope that this last contribution offers a clarity and a development which will invite your response. Does it respond to your invitation to 'explode the model so that it is unrecognizable'? Will you abandon the decision "to serve more as background and as introduction to [my] paper"—especially now that that paper has outgrown the format of dialogue, or, to put it more positively, has taken the form of background for letters from Elleda to Harold of Nova Scotia. Love

Elleda K.

And then, because it was getting into the month of October and into the deadline for the Journal of Social Theory in Art Education, Harold & Elleda agreed to type this up and send it out, all while understanding that the dialogue was by no means ended.
THE PROMISES OF ART APPRECIATION:
The Foundations of Aesthetic Education

CHARLES R. JANSEN

I. A history of appreciation could quickly multiply into a collection of histories, some tracing theories of appreciation as a phenomenon of mind and some tracing appreciation as a pedagogical subject or goal. In order to limit the directions a history of appreciation could take, this paper assumes that art appreciation in pedagogy encompasses and reflects various theories of art appreciation as a process of mind and thus focuses on the institutionalization of art appreciation.

Even with this narrowing, the historical ground of the study continues to shift. Because understandings of both mind and education have been imprecise and dynamic, references to appreciation or to various activities associated with art appreciation are often ambiguous. For example, college catalogs, which constitute a principle source of information on the early history of art appreciation studies, establish an array of factual information on when and where art appreciation emerged as well as how the subject was conceived. But catalog information must be interpreted with caution. As Elaine Foster (1970) notes in her study of the art offerings at what is today Columbia University, lectures in Roman Antiquities offered in the inaugural years of 1860-61 turn out not to be the earliest art history or even among the earliest courses about art in higher education. Foster determined that "antiquities" in the nineteenth century was a word that could refer equally to ancient literature as to artworks. In fact, the Columbia course dealt very little, if at all, with artworks (Foster, 1970, p. 37).

The shifting sense of academic terms is not the only potential problem in mining college catalogs for a history of art appreciation. In like manner, the changing departmental structure of higher education also presents a problem. Possible nineteenth-century ancestors of today’s college courses in art appreciation were dispersed among such varied departments as Pure Mathematics in the School of Applied Sciences (where Columbia’s first drawing courses appeared), Classics (through which archaeological studies entered the curriculum), Philosophy, and Pedagogy. Moreover, information about offerings in these various departments did not always find its way into annual catalogs. Foster found much important information also in special bulletins and other occasional college publications. Thus, it must be acknowledged at the start that this history may have missed important information in its examination of individual institutions. But by looking at some 30 colleges and universities of different types and from different geographical regions, a generally accurate picture of the development of art appreciation studies emerges.

II. Early references to art education follow soon on the heels of the American Revolution. Thomas Jefferson had already submitted his plans for education and incorporated in them his belief that the arts should have a place in the curriculum. Later, in a letter to Peter Carr of 1814, Jefferson even suggests that institutions of higher education might include a school of fine arts for "the gentleman, the architect, the pleasure gardener, painter, and musician" (Hubbard, 1962, p. 115). But Jefferson’s interests in the arts were not shared. Quite the contrary, many in post-revolutionary America disparaged art’s study because they associated it with feminine pursuits on one hand and with aristocratic privilege on the other, "both of which were the anathema of serious minded men when engaged in the formidable task of governing a new and proud Democracy" (Hubbard, p. 115).

Before aesthetic matters would be thought a worthy addition to school curricula, the subject needed some moral support. This was supplied by the many books of John Ruskin and William Morris (some, it appears, specifically for a female readership). Following Ruskin, American art historian and critic James Jackson Jarvis viewed the arts as "signs of moral stages in developing societies" and published his beliefs that "Beauty could help men [and women] perform their moral duties [as well as] inspire morality and high ideals" (Saisse, 1984, p. 94). Such ideas found fertile ground in American education and by the last quarter of the nineteenth century many American educators at every level had become convinced of art's reformatory powers.

In the nineteenth century, moral instruction became an ever greater focus of college education. Especially after the Great Awakening, ministers of all denominations began to sit on boards of trustees in increasing numbers and, with missionary zeal, progressively recast the college curriculum. Ministers became deeply involved in college education precisely because they saw it as "higher education," that is, as the education of "spiritual faculties" and, therefore, as central to the preparation of ministers. Strengthening the "spiritual faculties" in turn was seen by guardians of faith as the best defense against materialism, naturalism, and "environmentalism" (see Butts and Cremin, 1953, p. 200) which loomed on the horizon, threatening the cultural hegemony of religion.

More conservative ministers saw art's study as another threat and fought to keep it out of women's institutions where it was first formally introduced: "Serious Puritans . . . were horrified at the way in which the frothy smattering of this and that embellishment crowded out the teaching of morals and religion" (Curti, 1935/1959, p. 175). To such puritans, the idea
hat art should carry the moral standard for society must have appeared to
liminise the power and the authority of the church or worse, to establish an
alternate religion.

Despite early misgivings, however, a review of the catalogs of selected
schools reveals that a variety of mostly Ivy League schools incorporated art
studies in their curricula by the 1870s, many explicitly to provide moral
finishing. The earliest reference among leading institutions is found in an
865 Prospectus of the Vassar Female College. Under “Social Education,” the
nineteenth century ideal of women’s role — and the part art instruction was
do play in that role — is announced:

In society also, woman has a special place and mission, which should not be lost sight of in the composition or con-
duct of her educational course. It is hers to refine, illumine,
purify, adorn — not, under any ordinary circumstances, to
govern or contend. She should be as intelligent as man, as
broad in the range of her information, as alert and facile (if
less robust) in the use of her faculties, more delicate and
pure in her tastes; her moral tone equally high: but her
methods should be all her own, always and only womanly.
Oratory and debate (whether public or private) are not
feminine accomplishments; and there will be nothing in
the College arrangements to encourage the practice of
them. Conversation, reading, and the beautiful arts, are; so
are letter-writing, and other forms of elegant composition:
and these should be cultivated to the highest pitch compat-
bile with the natural gifts of the student and consistent with
her circumstances in life (catalog’s emphasis, p. 18).

More specifically concerning the visual arts, the prospectus promises
that:

The History of Art, and principles of intelligent Art-crit-
cism, will be carefully taught. In connection with the
ordinary collegiate instruction in Theoretical /Esthetics,
the rich materials of the Art-Gallery will be used systemat-
ically for purposes of illustration. The progress of Architec-
ture, Sculpture, Painting, Engraving, Decorative Art, &c.,
from the earliest to the present times; the different schools
and phases through which each passed; its various ma-
terials, instruments, and methods, and the peculiar effects of
each; together with the criteria of a sound taste by which
the results are to be tried and judged — will all be taught
from actual specimens or reliable pictorial representations,
under the eye of the learner (pp. 21-22).

This ambitious program of study today sounds much like many collegiate
programs to prepare students for careers in the visual arts, but in the middle
of the last century the purpose was more proscribed, as the catalog’s list of
“practical lessons” makes clear.

Practical lessons will also be given, by proper officers, in the
Arts of Decoration as applied to the common purposes of
life; as, for instance, to the laying out of a garden plot or
ornamental piece of ground, the planting of a parterre of
flowers, the composition of colors in a lady’s dress with
reference to each other and the complexion of the wearer;
the disposition of jewelry and other personal ornaments,
The embellishment of a home-interior by the judicious se-
lection and arrangement of furniture, carpets, curtains,
paper-hangings, table-ware, pictures, statuettes, flower-
vases, and other articles of bijouterie, &c., &c. — where so
much bad taste is continually displayed ‘without regard to
expense,’ and where intelligence and good taste may be
made as economical as they are admirable. Matters of this
kind enter so largely into the daily business of every home,
and are so generally committed to woman’s direction, that
she should not be left un instructed in the principles of
taste, discretion, or morality, that ought to regulate them.
These will all form appropriate and interesting topics for
sensible conversation and friendly discussion in the social
circles (p. 22).

The thrust of such initial instruction in art appears to have been, then, a
somewhat technical preparation for “women’s work,” but improving taste
as the hallmark of high moral stature was the overriding concern.

At least in art studies, Vassar’s curriculum seems to have been little
more than a formalized version of the finishing school or seminary where
“the teaching was designed to promote taste and propriety, and to provide
a veneer of artificial graces and a superficial knowledge of drawing,
painting, modern languages, and music” (Curti, 1935/1959, p. 178).
Such courses of study — as Curti’s description itself makes clear — did not lack
for critics. Sensitive to such criticism, Vassar President Dr. John Howard
Raymond nevertheless recommended that a liberal education for women
should include art:

Provisions for aesthetic culture should have a recognized
and prominent, though not a dominating, place in the
scheme; and music and drawing should be taught, not
merely as pretty accomplishments, but as intellectual arts
— ennobling and purifying the taste, instead of debasing
and enfeebling it, as is too often the effect of these fashion-
able acquirements (Orton, 1873/1986, p. 35).

Critics notwithstanding, leading women’s institutions like Mount Holyoke
Female Seminary (est. 1837) and Vassar insisted that art studies could
beneficially affect moral training and sought ways to incorporate them into
their curricula.

By 1885, the study of art at Vassar had settled into a department where
instruction leading to a Diploma could be pursued only by special per-
mission. The curriculum displayed a three-fold emphasis on the theory of what
were called the “major arts,” practice or “application to the ornamentation of rooms, to furniture, dress, etc.” (catalog emphasis, Twenty-first Annual Catalogue of Vassar College, 1885-86, p. 27), and “the history of these arts” (emphasis added, Twenty-first Annual Catalogue of Vassar College, 1885-86, p. 27). Only in 1892, did art’s study achieve parity with other college work leading to a Baccalaureate degree. In the 1892-93 Vassar catalog, “Course A” titled “Theory of the Art of Design” details for the first time what the Theory component of the art curriculum was thought to entail:


This course was followed by two semesters of art history under the titles of “History of Art, Architecture and Sculpture” and “Painting.” Judging by descriptions of their contents, all three courses were now clearly specialized as an introduction to an art major. In addition to these courses, however, all members of the college were offered a series of “twelve illustrated stereopticon lectures, which bring all the prominent works of art on a large scale before them” (Twenty-Eighth Annual Catalogue of Vassar College, 1892-93, p. 55).

By 1898-99, the theory course (whose contents the catalog no longer specified) had become a part of the upper division, with art history as its prerequisite, thus (as will be shown) bringing the curriculum at Vassar in line with prevailing curricular practices. By 1902-03, art history had been expanded to four courses, all of which were prerequisites to a theory course titled “Structural Aesthetics and Constructive Art Criticism.” The description of this course was decidedly formalist turn:

The topics discussed will be Architecture: the determination and value of planes of light and shade. Effect upon the development of form. Theory applied to the Doric Order.


Yet despite the ever stronger specialization, the fine arts section of the catalog ends with a brief statement intended to broaden the department’s mission:

The purpose of the department is to offer all students, whether possessed of natural talent or not, a broad introduction into fields of the fine arts, and through the application of the critical and historical method to arouse and train the aesthetic sense to a rational appreciation of what is good in art (catalog’s emphasis, Thirty-Eighth Annual Catalogue of Vassar College, 1902-03, p. 62).

In the following year, however, aesthetics became further specialized and was moved to the philosophy department. A general introduction to the visual arts was left to historical studies and no other type of introduction would be offered at Vassar again until 1924.

III. As the brief review of Vassar’s offerings suggests, the origin of contemporary art appreciation courses was diffused among quite different emphases and torn between forces within academic moving toward specialization, on the one hand, and forces within society favoring a general education of morals and taste, on the other. Indeed, Vassar provides an example of what were widespread curricular patterns. The three-part division of the art field, the gradual acquisition of academic parity within the curriculum through specialization, the making of studies about art available for upper-division credit while also offering general, initially noncredit lectures on the subject, all would be repeated not just at schools for women, but also at co-educational institutions and schools for men, such as Syracuse, Yale, and Columbia. At these and other schools, general education developed parallel to a professional education, both in its specialized language and its “scientific” approach.

The continuing assumption that art could provide a degree of (moral) “finish” for “rough” undergraduates perhaps explains why some of the earliest ancestors of art appreciation courses — i.e., lectures in aesthetics and art history — often made their first appearance in the curriculum as general requirements in the upper division (as they did at Syracuse). Why else would a school like City College of New York make the series of lectures called “Philosophy of Beauty” (introduced in 1872-73) a required course for seniors in the following year under the title “Architecture, Study of the Antique and Figure, Philosophy of Beauty” (Twenty-Sixth Annual Register, 1874-75)? Even at schools where art lectures were not required of all upper
division students, such as at Yale and Columbia, they were still restricted to junior and senior electives.

Courses about art such as aesthetics and art history at both Syracuse and Yale were required also because these subjects came to be viewed as necessary for the professional preparation offered by both schools. The professional emphasis at Yale and at other leading schools shows up clearly in the increasingly technical quality of course descriptions. The field of art — already divided into theory, practice, and history — became further divided into principles and elements of art. By the early 1890s, an emphasis on art’s components was found in many course descriptions, as Yale’s lecture course “In the Principles and Means of Art” (offered in the 1891-92 catalog) illustrates:

[A] course of lectures is provided, fully illustrated, embracing the subjects of Line, Chiarosuro, Color, Composition, and Expression — following the path of the artist in his work. A course of lectures discussing the technical methods of the Painter, the Sculptor, the Architect, and the Engraver, including an historical account of the technical development of these arts, is also provided (Catalogue of Yale University — CXCII Year, 1891-1892, p. 143).

Along similar lines, the preface to offerings in the Departments of Architecture and Painting in the 1890 Syracuse Annual emphasizes the professional character of art instruction:

The course of study already established includes systematic and progressive instruction in the theory, history and practice of Architecture and Painting, and in those branches of mathematics, natural science, history, language and philosophy which bear most intimately and directly upon these arts, and without a knowledge of which success in the higher domain of art is impossible (Twentieth Annual of the Syracuse University, 1890-91, p. 44).

Moral refinement and professional preparation were not, however, the only force reshaping catalog descriptions of college offerings.

The broad capitalization of nouns in nineteenth-century catalog descriptions, so like German language practices, suggests another power magnifying the technical aspects of college art instruction. Not only professional preparation but also the latest in educational thinking was at work. By the end of the last century, higher education in America had largely adopted the German model of university training and, with it, a focus on specialization. American universities found specialization attractive for a number of reasons. In the largest sense, it was an effective bulwark for keeping a controversial post-Darwinian world aloof from sectarian intrusions (Craigie, 1986, p. 1). In the developing art curriculum, specialization offered fledgling art studies a way to establish a niche in the expanding curriculum of higher education. After all, if understanding art were not a technical matter, then presumably anyone could “appreciate” art and there would be no need to give it formal study. Further, specialization also supplied a mechanism for maintaining what was thought to be an “ennobling” distance between art and life. Indeed, for art studies to be in a position to offer moral instruction, such studies had to take higher moral ground and stand removed from the valleys of the commonplace.

The post-Darwinian world — with its new conceptions of nature and of change — would profoundly affect language and ideas about art. The restrictions and rhetoric surrounding the earliest ancestors to contemporary art appreciation courses in higher education increasingly reflected influences from advances in natural sciences and from conceptions in the newly established social sciences. In this regard, Elaine Foster’s study of the early art curriculum at Columbia supplies some illustration. For example, in an article titled ‘The Fine Arts and Classical Archaeology,’ published in an 1896 issue of the Columbia University Quarterly, Professor of Greek James R. Wheeler makes the following case for art’s permanent inclusion in Columbia’s curriculum:

[...]. There are... certain subjects which appear to lend themselves more readily than others to the diffusion of culture; and among these are such as awaken the intellect through the eye... and those of us who have abiding faith in the educating power of Greek ideals cannot help hoping that a greater familiarity with the beauties of Greek art... may spread abroad those ideals... [U]ntil quite recently American education has neglected the truth that there exists in men a latent capacity for the appreciation of beauty, the development of which will constantly tend to call forth better emotions (in Foster, p. 64).

The professor’s words not only project the sort of faith that would allow one to rise in the artworld (Wheeler later became Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts at Columbia), but also suggest many widely circulated ideas about art and culture that secured a place in higher education for various sorts of art studies. Wheeler’s claims for the infectiousness of Greek ideals and for a “latent capacity” to appreciate beauty also reflect the profound influence of new scientific ideas — specifically, germ theory and evolution.

Wheeler seems to have believed that the transforming (moral) power of art — like a cleansing fever that results from getting one’s feet wet — could work on an individual by mere exposure. The notion that an appreciation of art could be “caught” appears earlier in M.A. Dwight’s (1880) essays. He rhetorically queries: “How was it possible for the ignorant to see daily such works as the Parthenon in its best days, and such a multitude of statues, tripods, and all the most finished works of art, without acquiring a love for the beautiful?” (pp. 38-39). Many in the last century who adhered to this notion urged art’s study: at every level of schooling convinced that widespread exposure to art would fortify the “esthetic faculties” and thereby furnish a means for inoculating society against moral backsliding and other ethical “diseases.”

Wheeler’s reference to a “latent capacity” for appreciation may reflect a further belief in some new evolutionary understanding of human nature
and human society. Many at the end of the last century, most notably Herbert Spencer and G. Stanley Hall, began to conceive of all changes in terms of larger evolutionary patterns outlined in widely discussed versions of “culture-epoch theory.” Based on the idea that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, development of the individual or of society was thought to repeat the whole history of Western culture. Robert Wiebe (1967) describes beliefs in culture-epoch theory as a blend of naturalism and idealism where the spiritual gained ascendency over the material in orderly stages of development:

Although descriptions of this orderly progress varied in form, their substance remained constant. In Dynamic Sociology (1883), the pioneer Lester F. Ward analyzed society’s evolution in four stages. Following the anarchic conditions of natural man, society formed loose aggregates, then congealed into national state, and finally achieved universal integration. In the penultimate stage the state was assigned extensive powers in order to prepare society’s collective intelligence for the arrival of world unity (Wiebe, p. 141).

By virtue of their intellectual tidiness, in part, stage theories of development swept through university departments with remarkable speed.

In the art curriculum and elsewhere, culture-epoch theory translated into units of instruction that were tailored to run parallel to the supposed developmental stages of civilization from primitive man to modern industrial civilization. Developments became an important focus of course content. Some teachers stepped away from religious orthodoxy by assimilating change—in society, in individuals, in art—to natural laws. (1) In the same way the opposite of the “caught” theory of appreciation, these educators asserted that since the development of a more refined appreciation was inevitable and “natural,” then latent capacities should be susceptible to accelerated cultivation through special instruction. Here, then, was a rationale for a systematic instruction in art appreciation through a focus on compositional principles and elements, a “basic” approach that would win over increasing numbers of professors. To many of them, the “scientific” orientation of culture-epoch theory seemed perfectly in step with the technical orientation that had already developed in the curriculum. But this coincidence with trends toward a specialized, professional education was only part of the reason why culture-epoch theory enjoyed such remarkable popularity. Equally important was the fact that, like the still powerful Hegelian philosophy, culture-epoch theory promised the salve of Progress for the wounds of change.

IV. Progress, that shibboleth of modernity, was synonymous with “scientific” understandings, a permanency of change, an inexorable evolution to Something Better, Something Bigger. Progress in the nineteenth century brought an urban-industrial socio-economic system which reorganized older patterns of life into new “progressive” ones increasingly bent on reform and efficiency. Specialization came to seem the result of a “natural” growth pattern, one fully in tune with the ways of nature as newly conceived by natural science. In colleges and universities, course contents in all fields became increasingly technical in character and divided into component aspects.

In education, classical humanist idealism with its universal and invariant (moral) truths was challenged by new more dynamic visions that emphasized development and the necessity of ongoing, practical adjustments to the changing conditions of modern life. In art education, conceptions of appreciation as caught by exposure to noble examples of morally superior artworks drawn from the “Golden Ages” of art history gave ground to conceptions designed to instill more generally useful understandings of art. In some sense, the “practical” benefits of art’s study had never been far from mind. Already in Vassar’s catalog descriptions—the earliest cited here—art lessons were understood as aids to gardening, interior decoration, and social intercourse. Similarly, the conception of art studies as a necessary background for fully professional practice—first expressed for architecture—sounded a decidedly practical note. But in the early twentieth century, new practical justifications for art studies joined these older purposes. The study of art was increasingly seen as a means for social adjustment and, at the turn of the century when unanticipated changes and even anarchy apparently threatened to overwhelm the nation, as an instrument of social control.

In order for the nation to retain national unity and regain domestic tranquility, many educators began to advocate social adjustment and social control as legitimate educational missions: "Hardly an annual meeting of the National Education Association was concluded without an appeal on the part of leading educators for the help of the teacher in quelling strikes and checking the spread of socialism and anarchism. Commissioners of education and editors of educational periodicals summoned their forces to the same end" (Curti, 1935/1959, p. 218). Feeling the need for new weapons in this national effort to counteract social discontent and "racial" upheaval, educators turned to ideas generated by the newly established social sciences, particularly the sociology of Lester Ward and the psychology of William James.

For some educators, a new “social” education meant helping students with new and necessary social adjustments: “Getting students to cooperate with and adjust to the rules of social institutions” (Welsh, 1980, p. 25). For others, new education meant indoctrinating students more carefully in traditional “social habits” of “self-control, respect for other’s rights, thoughtful consideration, manners, cleanliness, appropriate styles of dress … the ethics of brotherhood, teamwork, and responsibility” (Welsh, 1980, p. 23). Both approaches were thought to offer mechanisms of social control. The Arts and Crafts idea that aesthetic education rendered a service to society by helping individuals to adjust to the changing conditions of labor, thereby reducing social tensions, quickly crept into concepts of college education. Many educators in the 1880s who opposed the introduction of a specifically “industrial” education attuned to specific job requirements, nevertheless embraced the task of developing the “social character of the working classes” to suit a modern industrial state (see Herschbach, 1973, p.
control. In a particularly disturbing example, the influential art educator
around the turn of the century, the disinterestedness of aesthetic distance
Indeed, as Waldstein's words suggest, the time-honored concept of aes-
thetic distance, he avers: "This suppression of thought of where the road is
leading needs . . . careful preparation . . . . Art instruction in the school is the
great social scheme which the community has at its disposal to train this
discoonnected from "external concerns." Based on this conception of aes-
thetic distance, he avers: "This suppression of thought of where the road is
leading needs . . . careful preparation . . . . Art instruction in the school is the
great social scheme which the community has at its disposal to train this
power" (pp. 33-34).
In conclusion, it seems inevitable that some accommodation should
have been found in America between (spiritual) art and (material) com-
merce. By the end of the nineteenth-century, bankers, lawyers, and busi-
nessmen had replaced ministers on boards of trustees. No less committed
to Progress than the ministers, the new board members were, however,
more likely to see progress in secular and material terms. They were acutely
aware of the new urban-industrial world evolving in America and de-
manded a new, more appropriate (practical) education. Administrators
and educators responded both by admitting vocational studies with their
emphasis on education for living and by adapting the contents of courses
across the curriculum to new conceptions of life as described by the new
fields of sociology and psychology. In the process, art appreciation which
had been a mark of elevated (moral) character, of appropriate (professional)
preparation, in fact of a kind of (class) superiority, also became an agency
of social adjustment and social control to help insure (socio-economic)
Progress.

Footnotes

1 An example already cited, Vassar's "Theory of the Art of design"
course description: "This course comprises a study of Beauty in Art,
intellectual and optical beauty. Unity, its application to different modes of
expression. Definition of Architecture, laws derived from nature . . .
" (Twenty-Eighth Annual Catalogue of Vassar College, 1892-93, pp. 55-56).
Also the description of "Esthetics" at Syracuse: "Instruction is given by lectures
in the general principles of the science of Esthetics, which is the foundation
of all the Fine Arts" (Annual of the Syracuse University for the Collegiate Year
1890-91, p. 46). And, from Philip Gilbert Hamerton's (1871) Thoughts About
Art, there is this tribute to the "science" of art: "The progressive element in
our art is the scientific element, not the poetic; . . . it must not be forgotten
that the scientific portion of any work of pictorial art is a very large portion
of it — is, in short, the whole body of it" (p. 178).

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**THE LIMITS OF LINEAR MODES OF INQUIRY INTO NATURALISTIC WORLD-VIEWS: A CASE STUDY OF CHEROKEE CULTURE**

KAREN L. SORENSEN AND CHARLES G. WIEDER

We begin with the cultural–anthropological assumption that a people’s world-view is based in concepts of time and process, and is reflected in the ceremonies, customs, rituals, and other traditional patterns of social conduct within the society. In a case study of the Native American Cherokee, linear modes of inquiry, characteristic of Western science, are shown to be limited in their capacity to examine and appreciate these dimensions of culture in pre-literate societies. It is suggested that those aspects of our own culture which are grounded in aesthetic value may also be relatively inaccessible, for the same reason. By examining meanings of time and process in Cherokee culture, we discover traditions of life processes occurring within cyclical rhythms of nature as well as a sense of personal identity. The hope is that, armed with such awareness, we may be better able to move beyond a confining ethnocentrism toward a more comprehensive understanding of our selves within a world-view that is more integrated and participatory.

Key to an understanding of a people’s world-view are the concepts of time and process (Brown, 1982). Embedded in the world-view of the native American Cherokee is their belief in time and process as cyclical and reciprocal, and in a relationship of individuals and nature best described as naturalistic and aesthetic. Grasping their aesthetic sense of time and the notion of a reciprocal relationship of the individual and nature is a key to an appreciation of Cherokee culture.

More formally, the term world-view is used here in the sense of cultural heritage. It can be defined as the composite of implicit, basic assumptions about reality embraced in a society which are given expression in rites of passage, religious rituals, linguistic mannerisms, and codes of conduct. These cultural patterns of beliefs and values are typically transmitted via myths and folktales, or dance and drama, more so than by means of formal, explicit ethical or legal codes. Approximate synonyms are “cultural milieu,” *weltanschauung*.

James Moodey’s (1897-1898) *Myths of the Cherokee* (Part I) contains a folktale titled “Man is Punished by the Animals,” which may give some idea of the richness of the symbolism in Cherokee mythology reflecting this outlook on life. It tells of spirit gods which have power to affect health and sickness and the giving and taking of life. These spirit gods are not remote, distant beings detached from human affairs and activities, but rather take the form of cubs of bear and deer, frogs and grubworms, and various plant life forms. In fact, in this tale it is the trees, grasses, and mosses who


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We begin with the cultural-anthropological assumption that a people’s world-view is based in concepts of time and process, and is reflected in the ceremonies, customs, rituals, and other traditional patterns of social conduct within the society. In a case study of the Native American Cherokee, linear modes of inquiry, characteristic of Western science, are shown to be limited in their capacity to examine and appreciate these dimensions of culture in pre-literate societies. It is suggested that those aspects of our own culture which are grounded in aesthetic value may also be relatively inaccessible, for the same reason. By examining meanings of time and process in Cherokee culture, we discover traditions of life processes occurring within cyclical rhythms of nature as well as a sense of personal identity. The hope is that, armed with such awareness, we may be better able to move beyond a confining ethnocentrism toward a more comprehensive understanding of our selves within a world-view that is more integrated and participatory.

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come to the rescue of humankind when it comes under attack from the forces of disease which are unleashed by the animal kingdom (pp. 250-252).

The sort of cultural appreciation entailed in grasping the significance of folktales such as the one above - in connection with a culture's world-view - is no modest achievement. It may require no less than stepping outside of the languages through which we have learned to see the world. As McFee (1986) explains:

Culture is learned, transmitted, maintained, and modified through language, behavior, ritual, play, and art... [T]o be effective in cross-cultural teaching... we need to become more aware of our own cultural patterning, less ethnocentric, less judgmental... more flexible and empathetic (p. 13).

Our source and medium of thought and cultural transmission, the English language, both written and oral, can be characterized as a linear medium that is more or less convergent and means-ends oriented. To suggest that such a mind-set is characteristic of and structures much of Western thought is not to denigrate Western thought but to attempt to describe an aspect of our own world-view affecting our sense of time and how we perceive ourselves. Moreover, we think it not unfair to suggest that this mind-set may limit our capacity to appreciate such pre-literate cultures as that of the Cherokee.

It is the intent of this paper to examine the disparate cultural mind-sets of the Cherokee and that of Western, European culture in order to help clarify and learn about each. A side benefit of this journey may be similar to the kinds of discoveries that can be gained from travel to distant countries: Upon returning home we may see more clearly what binds us together and gives our lives meaning and purpose (Weinkein, 1986, p. 90). (For a moving personal account of such a journey, see Edmonston, 1984, pp. 33-44.)

The Aesthetic (Mythic) Dimension of World-Views

The fact that studying another, dissimilar world-view requires some measure of intellectual readjustment and reorientation has considerable bearing on social science research. McFee (1986), citing Page & Martin, suggests that the most successful methods of cross-cultural research are those that combine cognitive understandings of a culture with the admission that one is a product of one's own culture (p. 12).

As anthropological studies of comparative philosophy have demonstrated, there is not a clear, general consensus among the world's civilizations concerning those "ultimate" truths (or mythologies) which give rise to human values and understandings. Cultural world-views are based in assumptions about reality which have varied considerably from one society (and social sub-group) to another. And it is these assumptions, typically mythological in character, which affect (more so than depend upon) our perceptions of reality - which, in turn, in no small measure affects our capacity to appreciate other cultures.

The treatment that an individual gives and receives from others expresses (and assumes) implicit definitions of self and others, as does the immediate social setting for this conduct. A cultural world-view, as defined above, parallels, in a basic sense, the sociological concepts of place and conduct (behavior norms). Assumptions and reciprocal images of one another and our natural and social environment provide us with a more or less coherent way of understanding the purposes and meanings of our efforts, endeavors, and interactions. It is in this way that a world-view encompasses these assumptions and images of individual persons and their actions and relationships (McFee, 1986).

Each society can thus be seen as a particular assemblage of ideas and behavior reflecting basic (mythic) value-assumptions. This image of ourselves gives rise to the ideas and behavior patterns that bind a society together. It is the framework and the backdrop against which individuals relate to one another as well as to their non-human environment (Kearney, 1984).

Time and Process in Cherokee Culture

Within traditional Cherokee culture, notions of time and process were understood within a more naturalistic frame of reference than our own. As the folktale told earlier expressed, life and death struggles occur within and as part of nature. Life processes are seen as cyclical and reciprocal rather than separate and apart form natural events.

Notions of industrial development or progress or of mastering nature would be foreign to the Cherokee. In Cherokee society, the rhythms of the workings of the world - and of all life forms - were believed to be interwoven. And, importantly, in Cherokee tradition, the teaching of the young in the workings of social and natural events was passed orally. In contrast with Western educational practice, the cultural heritage was not recounted in linear terms of time past or future. Past and future tenses are not to be found in most native American languages (Brown, 1982, p. 50). The Cherokee's rich mythic account of creation, for example, is not locked into a past time-space orientation, but describes an on-going process where what has been created continues to actively participate in the process of creation.

The Linear Orientation of Western Industrial Society

In Western, industrial societies, as noted earlier, individual and social efforts in the struggle for survival are typically seen in terms of human achievement and progress, a kind of upward metaphysical mobility. Despite ups and downs in the path of Western progress there is a relentless manifest destiny, a requirement of constant upward and forward motion. This perspective, described here as linear, is derived from a conception of time - and life processes - as demarcated in terms of past, present, and future.

Planning and organizing one's life according to past and future events, it has been suggested, makes one more apt to be distracted from en-
joyment of the present ("smelling the roses"), less inclined to indulge in the experience of one's being in the here-and-now. This linear Western perspective has been described as a quantitative approach placing a premium on measurement. Part and parcel of the value orientation that gives rise to it is the assumption that what came earlier on the human progress time-line is inferior to more recent developments, which, in turn, are measured against a future world toward which society is inexorably advancing.

It is hoped that this characterization of our Western mind-set as linear does not offend. Its virtues are not the subject of this paper. Rather, our concern is the way in which it permeates our lives and vision - affecting even the best-intentioned of social scientists.

It can hardly be denied that anthropologists writing during the early part of this and in the nineteenth century had convinced themselves that the peoples they were studying were innately or developmentally primitive, i.e., inferior in their humanity and lifeways in comparison with modern technological civilizations. Such loaded normative terms as primitive/progressive, backward/developed, literate/illiterate, continue to be used today to describe nature American cultural traditions (Brown, 1982, p. 115; Highwater, 1983, p. 3).

To be sure, there are times when our unfamiliarity with Native American cultural traditions and symbolic rituals leads to bewilderment. Ethnocentricity will understandably lead one to question the meaning and even the legitimacy of civilizations that differ from one's own. Sometimes this bias amounts to little more than that the other culture is puzzling in its lack of resemblance to our own.

Only in recent decades have scholars of culture and religion recognized the viability and nobility of Native American religions. It was as recently as 1978 that the United States Congress guaranteed religious freedom to Native American peoples. An ironic twist to this recognition was the fact that Native American languages rarely had a word for "religion" as we understand the term. This omission is thought to be a consequence of the fact that their world-views integrate spiritualism, worship, reverence, etc., so completely into everyday life.

Limitations of the Literature on the Cherokee World-View

As indicated earlier, no small amount of imagination and liberal-mindedness is required to appreciate the character and viability of cultures that differ from one's own. This is particularly true of cultures which are nonliterate - i.e., have an oral tradition of transmitting their heritage. Indeed, terms such as nonliteracy require very careful usage.

As applied to Native American people, the term "nonliterate" denotes only that alphabetic writing is not a (primary) means of discourse. The term does not imply illiteracy or inability to read. Nor does it imply preliteracy, a formative stage of writing skill development. Still another error, albeit more sympathetic in motive, is that of associating nonliteracy with romantic notions of a primitive innocence presumed to have existed before the alleged corrupting influences of language, culture, etc. A minimum acquaintance with the sophistication of Native American speech quickly dispels that notion.

The Cherokee tribe is, in a number of respects, unique among its Native American counterparts as far as language use. During the fifteenth century the Cherokee adopted not only aspects of Anglo-American technology but also assimilated the English language into their customs and commerce. The result has been described as an intermediate biculturalism (Starr, 1917, p.8). In 1821, a member of the Cherokee tribe, Sequoyah (c.1760-1843), had devised a language system similar to the English alphabet in which the phonetic pronunciation of each syllable takes on referential meaning. This syllabary enabled the Cherokee to read and write in their own tongue. Before than, Native American languages had never been written (Starr, 1917).

This syllabary led to the emergence of several types of literary documents - newspapers, educational and religious tracts, legal statutes, and other such sources of written information on Cherokee life. A small number of these early published materials (intended for use within the tribe) have been translated. This one exception to the oral tradition of Native American cultural transmission, a mere handful of literary artifacts, is an invaluable source of information on Native American heritage.

Of the volumes of published materials on Native American religions, no comprehensive synthesis of Cherokee cultural beliefs and social patterns exists (Fogelson, 1987). Just three studies exist which make direct references to the Cherokee world-view: Charles Hudson's 1987 comparison of the Cherokee view of nature with that of Western religion; a 1962/63 paper by Harriet Kupferer on Cherokee health practices; and a 1961 doctoral dissertation by Robert K. Thomas describing Cherokee ceremonial practices.

Hudson's (1970) work describes a cosmological orientation using the metaphor of a three-layered universe to illustrate general features of Native American belief systems. In his model all of nature is said to "participate in a system" in which individuals are an integral part (p. 51). In a section on "The Cherokee Concept of Natural Balance," this three-layered model is contrasted with the Judeo-Christian scheme of how the universe works:

Although superficially similar to the Christian scheme of heaven, earth, and hell, the Cherokee cosmos in fact differed from it in most respects. In the Cherokee cosmology the world upon which ordinary people and animals live was a great flat island suspended from the sky by four cords and floating on a sea of water. The earth was covered over by a vault, and above this there was the upper world. Beneath, the earth and the waters was the underworld (p. 51).

Hudson further explains that elements within each of the worlds were thought to symbolize distinctive features of the universe. East, for example, was not only the source and place of the sun, it was associated with the color red, standing for fire, blood, and power as well as for accomplishment and good fortune.

Thomas' 1961 The Redbird Smith Movement, acclaimed by the American Indian Bibliographical Society as the best of the published accounts of the revival of Oklahoma Cherokee ceremonial practices, provides additional insights into Cherokee world-view. Despite the great many changes that
are said to have taken place in the 1880s, Thomas writes that “What had remained stable is the Cherokee value system and world-view” (p. 163). He goes on to say:

[A] crucial part of the Cherokee world-view... is seeing the universe as having a definite order... a system which has balance and reciprocal obligations between its parts. The individual Cherokee is a part of this system, and membership entails certain obligations. When the Cherokee does not fulfill his obligations, the system gets out of balance and the Cherokee no longer have “the good life” (p. 163).

Kupferer’s 1962/63 anthropological study of Eastern Cherokee groups cites a typology proposed by Thomas, which describes the degrees of acculturation of individuals and their “place” within the larger society as well as within their immediate social subgroup: “The Conservative (tribal member) views himself as an order of man different from the rest... Overtly, he is still the stoic red man,” preserver of the native traditions of language, medicine, and so forth. The Generalized Indian, according to Kupferer, considers himself as much an American as an Indian, shifting between Western values and Conservative values, often inconsistently. A final class of Rural White Indians is characterized as being much like rural, Southern Whites: a “Generalized Indian... (who adheres) firmly to an orientation which emphasizes progress and individual efforts” (p. 224).

As defined earlier, it is the aggregate of beliefs and value assumptions embraced in a society that comprises its world-view. The internal logic of these assumptions is what gives coherence to the core precepts that make up that culture and are prerequisite for understanding what it is about and what life means within that frame of reference. The aforementioned studies of Cherokee world-view by Kupferer, Thomas, et al. represent the best efforts from the scant material that is available on the subject. Primary historical sources can hardly be said to make up a definitive composite. What is clear from both Hudson’s and Thomas’ writings is what might be described as a dialectic between Cherokee society and the cosmos. Kupferer focuses on the dialectic between the individual Cherokee and the cosmos/society. What is difficult to discern, however, is the relationship between Cherokee values and the patterns of social activity as well as the place of individuals in their external environment.

As a preliminary step toward filling this void, the attempt will be made to see why the void exists. Toward this objective the paradigm of these authors in their efforts to decipher the world-view of the Cherokee will itself be examined. And more generally, pertinent shortcomings in the anthropological literature on Native American cultural traditions will be called into question.

We begin this critique by asking why it is that the sort of value questions which are most fundamental to an understanding of Cherokee life were rarely the subject of inquiry. This scarcity, it has been suggested, can partly be explained by inadequacies in the research methods and methodological assumptions of these early ethnographic studies (Hultkrantz, 1983, p. 1). It will be further suggested that these research efforts were still further limited by their reliance upon the written word, not only as a source of information, but as a method of inquiry.

The cultural belief system of the Cherokee, we have seen, is describable as aesthetic and naturalist, reciprocal and present-oriented, rather than linear-literate. The question being asked is whether such a world-view lends itself to linear literary accounting?

Unlike oral speech, the written message is slow and deliberate. It is typically refined and revised in editing numerous times before being submitted for public scrutiny. What is written can also be read at any time and by anyone familiar with the language. More significantly, the written word is inherently a medium of communication which puts some distance between the reader and the source, separating the vicarious observer from the act of observation, the actor from the action. Another tendency is that readers are led incrementally, and frequently subliminally, toward the writer’s point of view. Usually anonymous, the author remains at a distance from questions and criticism.

In the book Native American Traditions, Sam Gill (1982) captures this power of the written line, also noting its inherent limitations:

The phonetic alphabet and all its derivatives stress a one-thing-at-a-time analytic awareness in perception. This intensity of analysis is achieved at the price of forcing all else in the field of perception into the subliminal. For twenty-five hundred years literate man lived in what Joyce called “ABCED-mindedness.” As a result of this fragmenting of the field of perception and the breaking of movement into static bits, man won a power of applied knowledge and technology unrivaled in human history. The price he paid was existing personally and socially in a state of almost total subliminal awareness (p. 226).

(“Subliminal” in this context might be translated as an-aesthetic.)

These limitations of written language described by Gill - linearly and subliminally - are important to keep in mind in a society like ours where written communication has become such a primary source of information and thought. Our forms of government and law, economy and polity, culture and entertainment, and our means of transmitting this heritage are based upon linear, linguistic communications. This structuring of our modes of learning and communicating must not be taken for granted, especially if we value explaining or checking what we think we know, or correcting the errors of our ways, and other related life-enhancing educational values.

Literacy Redefined: Overcoming Linear Limitations

Literacy - bestowed the highest of intellectual values in Western society - has traditionally implied the ability to comprehend and manipulate both oral and written communications (Brown, 1982, p. 55). Various scholarly disciplines are currently re-examining literacy, refining and ex-
panding its definition so as to either include visual perception or indicate the role of visual perception at the base of language (Horton, 1984, p. 194). Among art educators, the work of Rudolf Arnheim (1954) is often cited for clarifying our understanding of the perceptual-aesthetic base on which language use and apprehension rest.

Also pertinent is recent research in psycholinguistics documenting children's verbal acquisition, which corroborates important aspects of the work on visual literacy done by Arnheim over the past three decades. Visual literacy has come to be seen as a composite of intellectual skills necessary for understanding or "reading" as well as for using (translating or composing) and evaluating communications (Clayback, et al., 1980, p. 629). This is a view which links linguistic and visual modes of thought and communication, recasting the "basics" of our learning as perceiving, thinking, and forming, in place of the traditional 3-R's.

Earlier this century, Alfred North Whitehead had described language acquisition and use as a spiral, reciprocal process with stages of romance, precision, and personalization. A name later given to this process was that of "learning how to learn." More broadly speaking, the process entails the achievement of clarity of vision and a measure of self-reliance in navigating life's opportunities and crises. Thomas Szasz (1970) refers to this as an attitude of being a student of learning, especially of human learning, which requires, and has as its goal, personal autonomy - in nature and in society.

Final Reflections on Language and World-Views: Educational Implications

The tendency toward narrow definitions of literacy - as linear and denotatively literal - has ill-prepared us to study other cultures and ways of life. It was sheer ignorance on our part to believe that without a written language Native American Indians lacked culture, knowledge, or insight into the workings of the world. In focusing attention on such alleged deficiencies in Cherokee culture, we not only misapprehend the depth and completeness of Cherokee wisdom, we also fail to learn more about ourselves and our ways of learning and relating. Only by appreciating how so called non-literacy shaped their spoken language could we come to understand the core values that sustained and gave meaning to Cherokee life. Like examining the underlying structure of assumptions in order to define a people's world-view, examining the grammar of a language can also reflect a culture's belief system. Language, in this way, both supports and conveys the range and significance of a people's values and social attitudes.

Built into the grammar of many Indo-European languages is a linear, literal image of time (Kearney, 1985, p. 99). The verb of every English sentence must be expressed in tense according to past, present, and future. Every utterance in the language thus designates events as existing in a time-frame extending from the past into the future. As against this, Cherokee language has forty-five variations of tense. There are also no prepositions (Kilpatrick, 1968, p. 41), which has been taken to indicate an emphasis on an active relationship between the individual's sense of place and of the life-processes of nature. Sensitive to this relationship between language and culture, contemporary ethnosemanticians have begun focusing attention on verb forms rather than noun forms (Kearney, 1985, p. 33).

Another aspect of Cherokee language which is common to Native American languages is the absence of any single word for either art or religion. Conjecture has it that this is because in Cherokee society the two are not separate kinds of activity but rather pervade all of life in the society. An interrelatedness of cultural meanings and values is thereby created, and a sense of personal and metaphysical wholeness. Rather than existing as a distant, external force, the sacred and the aesthetic are taken to be present in all forms of life and being, a part of all natural process and human action.

Concluding Discussion

The language through which and with which we think and communicate has been seen to indicate a particular disposition and value orientation. A linear, progress-oriented conception of time defines and to some extent delimits Western, industrial society. Such linear modes of inquiry, moreover, we have argued, are not only capable of distorting how we understand preliterate societies, but may have had an effect on our own sense of well-being as well. In contrast, Native American thought may allow for better ways of living meaningfully in nature in the present. Will our language allow us to ask if we have to some extent been predisposed to act against the achievement of a kind of peace of mind that stems from a more reciprocal sense of our place within nature?

When Western science began flaunting its prowess, Francis Bacon cautioned that, to be conquered, nature must be obeyed - words telling of a more reverent world-view with which we may have lost touch. On the horizon one can discern cultural counter-forces urging that we take a backward look at the costs of our "progress," re-examining the premises underlying some of our most cherished beliefs. Alternatives to and refinements of our linear concept of literacy are being sought in education as well as in medicine, law, government, etc. Called by various names from "new-age/self-help" to "post-modern hermeneutics," these emerging models of inquiry are grounded in an effort to understand connections between sociological processes and individual autonomy. An appreciation of cultural context, subjective value, and personal place is seen as key in this search for meaning. In this quest for a new model of education and sociological inquiry, the world-view of Native American Indians can serve as a reminder of another methodological starting point, one that is more aesthetic and naturalistic. In denying such qualitative approaches to the study of human nature we may be risking alienating ourselves not only from one another but from nature as well. We take this point one step further in suggesting that such alienation may be a root cause of much of the harm that we inflict upon ourselves and others. We can learn to be and do better.
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COLLECTING WOMEN'S ART AND NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS: ISSUES FOR MUSEUM CURATORS

JOHN WILTON

Egalitarianism is quite possibly the education buzzword of the eighties. Egalitarianism is belabored in the literature of late that it seems inconceivable that anyone or an institution with any degree of social responsibility has not yet acted to realign the programs and policies of our biased past. Yet many major social groups still remain disenfranchised in the current American cultural scenario. This commentary addresses the predicament of two of those groups — women and Native Americans. While seemingly unrelated, both groups share a common dilemma: their voices, their opinions and their expressions are not yet respected in the realm of art and history museums. Women consistently find little or no value placed on their artistic expressions, and Native Americans find their values and wishes utterly violated. While focusing on the plight of these two groups and the roles played by museums in determining the respect and value bestowed upon objects and people, let us not forget that there are many other groups whose work is mistreated or ignored and whose voices are not yet equally respected by those who dictate museum policy.

What exactly is the role of the museum in our society? Definitions of the nature and purposes of museums have been propounded over the years by organizations such as the American Association of Museums, the British Museum Association, the Canadian Museum Association, and the International Council of Museums. Indeed, it seems that the role of museums has been well defined with considerable input from many formidable sources, resulting in a single-minded purpose and rigid standards of acceptance. The outcome has been, for the most part, the collection and preservation of objects valued by those academically trained in the traditions of white, Western thought. Perhaps it is time to redefine museum purpose and reevaluate museum policies.

The museum is now generally understood to mean an institution devoted to the procurement, care, and display of objects of aesthetic, historical, or scientific interest (Meyer, 1979). And therein lies the problem. Who decides which objects are “of lasting interest and value” and what is the criteria for making those decisions? Ultimately, the task falls on the museum personnel, and the criteria being used, in my mind, is highly suspect.

The role of the curator is the acquisition of specimens, chosen carefully for preservation and display. Curators ask (or should ask), “Is the specimen useful?” (Lewis, 1976). The question is valid, but what criteria is being used to select a group, reflecting limited values and limited tastes.
Perhaps we overstep our bounds when we separate artifacts from the culture that created them. Perhaps our ethnocentrism roars too loudly when we decide what from another culture is or is not art, is or is not of value. Applying our value system to objects from another value system seems to be the basis of the white, patriarchal, Western aesthetics of the academically trained. And with the introduction of the word patriarchal, let us segue with a look at this issue facing curators—women. We can begin with a look at this issue by listing the statistics used in an opening speech at the 1989 Women's Caucus of Art Conference in San Francisco, California.

Women today
- own 1% of the world’s assets
- have 5% of the world’s income
- are 38% of all artists
- make up 10% of all art exhibits
- created 4% of all art in museums

The first issue a curator might want to consider would be equality. The facts speak for themselves—if 38% of our artists are women, shouldn’t approximately 38% of our art exhibitions be women? Shouldn’t 38% of our collections be made up of objects created by women? Why hasn’t this happened automatically? One possible reason is that until the last decade it was very hard to name a woman museum director (Nochlin, 1979), since there weren’t many women holding those jobs. (The result of cultural inbreeding again?). Another possible reason is that art is an instrument of social status and control (Metcalf, 1983). The facts listed in the two previous paragraphs say enough about social status and control to make the point plainly. If women aren’t in positions to collect objects for museums, then there is no need to worry about the loss of patriarchal control in the process of elevating the status of the women’s art. Women artists will continue to develop as the pace of an Andy Warhol film.

In reaction to this situation, a separate museum for women’s art has been established—by women. Its purpose is “to acquire, research, interpret, and expose for the public the vast achievements of women artists through a strong permanent collection, a changing exhibits program, traveling exhibitions, library resource center, and public programs” (Day, 1986). However, even this step is controversial. One critic believes this museum will help to trivialize the position of women as artists, reinforcing their artificial separateness and second-class status. Conversely, “it could be gaudy to other museums,” says founder Wilhemina Cole Holliday, “reminding them of what they could be doing” (Day, 1988).

But will the National Museum of Women in the Arts really be able to remind “them” of what “they” could be doing? Or will it continue in the traditions of male-dominated society? If women are trained in institutions controlled by patriarchal concepts, it may be difficult for them to consider different values. Langer (1985) states that given the moral and intellectual climate of our times, it is risky to address such issues as sexuality, pornography, sadism, masochism, eroticism, prostitution, rape, lesbian and gay male relationships, cross dressing, and transsexualism. These are the potent topics much of contemporary women’s art and criticism seeks to address—precisely the focus that makes it hard for patriarchally educated historians, artists, and critics to respond.

Success (at this point) is still measured by where we are shown, by whom we are published, by where we are invited to speak, and by what grants we have gotten (Langer, 1985). And let’s not forget “by whose museum collections we are in.” Are curators ready to respond to feminism? Or will they respond like one senior Washington museum official, who asked not to be identified: He thinks that the National Museum of Women in Arts collection is of marginal interest and is being “showcased and glamorized” (Daly, 1986).

Will curators realize that women, as Miriam Shapiro says, “want to be recognized for what they make? They want a history of their own... they need recognition of their basic sense of value... to be part of a critical mass that matters” (Day, 1986). I’m afraid it will take a bold curator to defy traditional thinking, and collect the art of, as Joanna Freuh says, “women-as-dangerous-sex” (1985).

Perhaps until the character of our museums change, anything ending up in one will remain, as Lucy Lippard (1984) says, a display of upper-class taste in expensive and doubtfully “useful” objects, chosen by those who are not yet responding to the voices of the disenfranchised. In so doing they perpetuate the prevailing relationship between art and the masses, or the idea that “we who are educated to know what’s correct must pass pure knowledge and good taste down to those who haven’t the taste, the time, or the money to know what’s good” (Lippard, 1984, p. 98). It is possible that this dangerously pompous attitude is the root of many of the problems connected to the museum as it exists in today’s society? Perhaps this is the very point at which museum policy makers should begin their reevaluation.

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ART EDUCATION IN THE TIME OF AIDS

PETER SCHELLIN

Motivation

The health crisis which in recent years has depleted the ranks of the art community, has not received much formal notice in art education journals. A continuing stigma remains attached to AIDS due to its appearance among gay men and IV drug users. Many people pretend it is not there. My own life has become consumed by it, due to the illness of many, many friends and associates. For nearly two years, because of the enormity of the crisis combined with relatively little action on state and federal levels and the mounting grief and loss in my own life, I began to feel that art education is a silly field contributing very little to society in general and contributing nothing to end this awful disease. I decided, despite my advanced age and status at the university, to work on a nursing degree and leave teaching, finger paint and clay to other people. In nursing, I found an advancing technological approach to treating human organisms, not human beings. Wanting to work with people, I switched to social work. In the meantime, I have been volunteering on the National AIDS Hotline, handling diverse crisis calls ranging from suicide threats to education about the virus and its effects. I have also volunteered to spend time with the dying at the Brownie Hospice, in a move to do something else very concrete. I may still complete my MSW degree to work with PWAs (People with AIDS) as a professional social worker. Curiously, however, this mid-life career crisis has led to a re-evaluation of the importance of art and art education in the lives of every person I know including myself. As with the dying themselves, there seems little time for game playing and intellectual gymnastics. Our human limitations, our financial constraints and the unrelenting, destructive, lethal character of this particular virus, form a metaphor drawing attention to why we do what we do and why it matters.

History

The value of art in the curriculum has been the subject of debate in American schools since the time of Samuel H. Smith and the Massachusetts experiment. When Puritan values were still dominant in this culture, art was part of a child’s learning primarily for practical reasons, no different than learning various trades or gaining the skills required to run households and farms. The idea that art is a frill goes back to the days when quilt making and the drawing of patterns for sewing were considered luxuries.
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As America's Protestant values matured, art gradually gained prestige not only in the schools, but in society at large. By the mid-twentieth century, most art teaching had become an endless series of Friday after-recess project-making, although sometimes very aesthetic project making, without much intellectual underpinning or concern as to how art fits into the social, historical and political fabric. The emphasis on technique, however, especially among high school students, resulted in some wonderful art products. Nowadays, fewer art teachers but many art students, are still largely unaware of the history of art, its social functions, its political implications or its psychological impact. Some teachers and most students cannot separate art as product from art as process. They frequently do not understand the value of art lessons which do not produce art products.

Society at large remains skeptical about the value of art except as some remote and strange "stuff" that the wealthy can afford to collect and use as tax write-offs when they give it away to publically owned museums. As late as 1989, the application forms for entry to the MSW graduate program at a well-known Southern California university required computation of the entrant's GPA, specifically excluding grades received in studio art and physical education courses. When asked why, the clerk in the graduate school, stated, "Art and gym are recreational, not academic." This one example may be typical of general American attitudes despite the growing awareness that art and design pervade all aspects of our daily lives and often determine our reactions, thoughts and feelings. The level of visual and aesthetic sophistication among teenagers is sometimes quite profound, due partly to better teaching, more informed home environments and possibly even to the wonderland of television, cable, film and highly visual mass-media magazines, outdoor advertising and newspapers.

Better teaching about art has been given a boost by Disciplined Based Art Education (DBAE) primarily because, for the first time, art is being taught as an academic subject in an organized way, with factual information being learned in structured sequences. Art teachers can assert that they teach data on which objective tests can be written. These data include historical background, aesthetics and art criticism along with technical skills and other relevant bits of information. DBAE has given art education a patina of respectability among academics, but it has also created dissension among some art educators who feel that DBAE does not address what's really important about art, namely, its social context. Since DBAE is standardized and achievement oriented, some claim that it ignores the increasingly diverse cultural make-up of most American classrooms.

A small number of writers in art education have called for an alternative approach, named "Cultural Literacy in Art Education (CLAE)" which would, they claim, better recognize the needs of minorities and multicultural students in the public schools by guiding students to decode personal cultural experience related to their own art products, the culture and the art of others. CLAE would not abandon training in criticism, art history or aesthetics. CLAE would, however, be a more personal and more inclusive approach, with less emphasis on goals, achievement and art products. It would be a much less standardized approach to education in the arts than is DBAE. And there's the rub: it must be acknowledged that CLAE would also depend on the flexibility, education, sensitivity and intelligence of the individual teacher much more than DBAE does. Perhaps the greatest value of DBAE is that a teacher, relatively uneducated in the arts and methods for teaching art, can have some sense of success using its standardized formats.

But the question really ought to be asked: success at what? Is the purpose of art in the curriculum only to teach skills, facts, history, heritage, and social context byrote? Is the purpose of art in the curriculum to teach better citizenship or one's place in the social order or the impact of certain colors, lines and shapes on the psyche? Is the purpose of art in schools to foster creativity or conformity? Are we training future Picassos? Are we educating a generation for visual literacy to better appreciate what artists do or to oppose, with better information, the Jesse Helmses of the next century? Are we creating a group of connoisseurs to enrich the art community with wealth and social prestige for inflation's sake? Do we want a generation of people who are more sensitive to and demanding about everyday designs? Do we wish to have even bigger, better and richer publically controlled museums and museum programs for our evening and weekend entertainments? Do we want to encourage private collections? Why are we teaching art?

The need to give coherence and definition to the aesthetic area of education is urgent. Economic cutbacks and political reactivism have put arts education under considerable threat - however, some of the responses to this present crisis among arts educators themselves have been seriously misguided... The basis of their argument(s) is that their particular emphasis will allow the integration of the arts into the mainstream of the curriculum. I want to suggest that this is entirely to misconstrue the singular contribution that the arts could make to a child's general education - that the arts are different and that therein lies their strength.}

In addition, what can we learn from art in a time when thousands of people are jobless, filthy and sleeping in the streets? What is the strength of art in a time when possibly twenty per cent of all the children in America, and more than half the children in the world, go to bed starving? What's important about art in relation to the millions of people who go without medical attention in a country which seems to reserve ordinary, daily health for those who can afford to pay for it? What aspects, elements or strengths can be found in an art curriculum for a society which has been described as addictive, where almost every household is struggling with some form of abuse of alcohol, drugs, credit cards or food? And, while the government does next to nothing to stop it, possibly because the "right" people are dying, what is the value of teaching art in the time of AIDS? What are some of the metaphors for AIDS and the implications for art education of the AIDS epidemic?
A Reflection on Artistic Processes

One of my students completed an assignment to visit a museum and write a paper about one of the paintings she had seen. It wasn’t enough for her to write the paper. She had to talk about it, not just to me, but to several of her friends. I overheard a conversation between them in which this relatively uneducated eighteen-year-old, who described herself as uncreative, a little dumb and “completely terrified about taking art in college,” started expressing her feelings about a nineteenth century portrait of a young girl, sitting in her mother’s lap after a bath, a typical work by Mary Cassatt which both she and I had admired in a local museum.

What I remember about her statements is not so much the words she used, but the tone in her voice. She was excited. She was enthusiastic. She said something about being surprised at herself for feeling that the painting was so important to her and that it had held her attention for so long and that she felt as though she knew the girl. Then she corrected herself. “No. I felt like I became the girl. I felt like I lived there and I could feel my mother’s hands drying me off. I was a part of the picture.”

I turned the corner and caught her eyes as she wiped tears away, somewhat embarrassed. It was obvious that she was not trying to impress the teacher, but rather, she had had a truly moving experience. It taught her something about who she was becoming and about how she experiences the world. She had trouble expressing herself in words, I suspect because we had been trained to think in terms of static entities, not in terms of fluctuating processes. I tried to emphasize that the learning she had experienced was more profound than mere facts about the painter, the era, or the technique. “Maybe that’s what art is really about,” she said.

The above vignette is perhaps illustrative of those rare moments when we are moved through art by a profound identification. It is the exploration of such a process in a time of AIDS which I find, requires restating. In an age of specialists, art educators have often been both valued and devalued for being generalists. Elementary teachers and teachers of art may be the last generalists with degrees in liberal arts and global vision. Subject specialists may never desire to conceive the overall picture, being concerned mainly with the minute detail of their particular expertise.

Art educators, however, possibly due to the unique character of art, learn to think inclusively, like painters, production designers or movie directors. Artists consider the whole. Every aspect of any lesson, like every aspect of a painting, a stage production or a film, must be arranged, or the overall outcome may feel incomplete. This may be due to the experience of making art as a whole process. However, neither of the newly defined approaches to the teaching of art (Disciplined-Based or Cultural Literacy) take into account the art process as the transitory experience of making and/or viewing art. But it is this transitory, fleeting experience in a time of AIDS, which is a constant reminder of my own finitude. The reason for this neglect may be that the major philosophical influence in contemporary art education theory, has been, and remains John Dewey. The history of art education is filled with defenses of Dewey’s democratic and inclusive idea of aesthetic experience as integral to complete concepts of human nature and the human condition. However, it is unrealistic to insist that the subject perceiving is central to an understanding of either art or the human condition; most contemporary aestheticians, especially those who are persuaded by reception aesthetics, no longer maintain this view. AIDS has vivified the fleeting experience of art. Maplethorpe, an AIDS victim himself, has been declared a postmodern master. What does this say to us, as artists and educators? The compression of history, and time itself, provides an instantaneous verdict.

It is surprising that few art educators have picked up on the philosophical output of one of the last great generalists to publish in English, Alfred North Whitehead, whose rich writings explore what could be described as the human experiential equivalent of Einstein’s theory of relativity. Whitehead’s process philosophy seems so natural for art education. In contrast to traditional Western philosophy which views reality in terms of concreteness, permanence and uniformity, Whitehead defines reality by emphasizing change and novelty. Whitehead’s reality is essentially historical, taking into account the continuing emergence of actual occasions (“things”) with a past, becoming something new in a novel future. Static, traditional conceptions, like atoms as fundamental entities of the universe, are inadequate, according to Whitehead, for understanding the temporal nature of the universe which we experience as a process. Whitehead’s process philosophy, as an adumbration of what was to come, reminds us, again of the finitude of all things. We have come to a historical cross-roads where the permanency of things is greatly shaken. New metaphors are emerging to grasp this postmodern condition.

Four Images From Our Time

First: (The following event took place during the same time period as Martin Luther King’s March on Washington for civil rights and the Woodstock Music Festival in upstate New York.) Around midnight on Friday, June 27, 1969, four police officers and a pair of detectives descended on a seedy gay bar in Greenwich Village and prepared to arrest patrons without ID’s. Such raids were routine... but the atmosphere at the Stonewall Inn that night was antic, almost carnival. As the habitues—drag queens, leather(men) and assorted demimondaines—emerged in police custody, the gathering crowd cheered... then on with cries of “We’re the pink panthers...” A mobile chorus of transvestites mocked the police with impromptu cancons. But when a paddy wagon arrived on the scene, the mood turned ominous. Onlookers hurled beer cans and bottles at the windows, coins at the cops’ heads... A burning garbage can was tossed inside (the Stonewall Inn)... Brush fires between cops and gays continued to break out for two more nights. Stonewall, which occurred twenty years ago... was the opening salvo in the fight for gay liberation.”
Second: AIDS is not a disease, but a condition in the body resulting from the invasion of a virus which attacks the immune system and leaves the person open to a variety of rare illnesses. Several of these, alone or in combination, are often lethal. The virus is transmitted through blood, blood products, semen and vaginal secretions and possibly through other body fluids. The virus is not air-born and dies quickly in the environment. In Africa and the West Indies, the virus took hold in the heterosexual population, but in Europe and the United States, it got a foothold among gay men where it appeared first in 1981. Since the beginning of the epidemic, the virus has killed 107,312 people. Sixty-seven percent of these have been gay men. Many of these people, a majority of whom had not made public that they were gay, had been leaders in the popular and fine arts communities. The virus has now also spread among IV drug users by way of contaminated syringes; hemophiliacs and other people who had blood transfusions before March, 1985, are at risk and so are the sex partners and children of people in any of these groups. AIDS may not show up for years after infection. The virus does not discriminate between races, male or female or gay and straight. AIDS is simply a disease-like condition which progressively destroys the body's ability to fight off lethal infections. AIDS is now estimated to be affecting more than a million people in the United States, many of whom do not know they have it. The CDC believes that the virus may be spreading into the heterosexual community via bisexual men and prostitutes who use drugs. People with AIDS currently live longer due to treatment, but not enough is known about the virus. At present, there is no cure for AIDS. Most people with AIDS die within eighteen months of diagnosis.

Third: In October, 1989, The Quilt was unrolled in Washington in its entirety for the last time because it has become too large to display in one place. It is a huge piece of folk art, made up of six foot panels designed and sewn together by survivors of people who have died of AIDS. The last unfurling filled the Ellipse. More Americans have now died from this epidemic than were killed in the Viet Nam War. The Quilt has been coordinated by the Names Project whose motto is “Remember Their Names.” Each panel commemorates one person. Each is quite individual, sometimes incorporating personal items once owned by the person, such as items of clothing, or a favorite poem, embroidered with loving care by the maker of the panel. It has become a uniquely American memorial, starkly contrasting the solid and seemingly permanent memorials to those fallen in wars. While it may not be displayed all together again, The Quilt will continue to grow, offering both makers and observers an outlet for their bereavement and their love.

A Metaphor only for “today”

Viruses are not simply agents of infection and contamination. They transport genetic “information,” they transform cells and evolve. While the smallpox virus appeared to stay constant for centuries, influenza viruses evolve so rapidly that vaccines need to be modified every year to keep up with changes in the “surface coat” of the virus. The virus or, more accurately, viruses thought to cause AIDS, are at least as mutable as the influenza viruses. Indeed, “virus” is now a synonym for change. Linda Ronstadt, recently explaining why she prefers doing Mexican folk music to rock ‘n’ roll, observed: “We don’t have any tradition in contemporary music except change. It mutates, like a virus.” Because of the countless metaphorical florishes that have made cancer synonymous with evil, having cancer has been experienced by many as shameful, as something to conceal, as unjust, or as a betrayal by one’s own body. With AIDS, the shame is linked to an imputation of guilt; and the scandal is not at all obscure. Few wonder, Why me?...Indeed, to get AIDS is precisely to be revealed, in the majority of cases, as a member of a certain “risk group,” a community of pariahs. The illness flushes out an identity that might have remained hidden from neighbors, jobmates, family, friends. The medical discourse on AIDS shapes its
If the "rule of metaphor" is so powerful in representation, what does this mean to the art educator in a time of AIDS? By objectifying students' own feelings and values, art educators, like the artists who create metaphors in the first place, are in the business of clarifying who we are, as individuals and as groups. While values clarification has this therapeutic and cultural outcome, the beginning of the quest is a personal, aesthetic encounter. The quest for self-knowledge and the identification of values is the result of the curious, intimate and unceasing activity of the artist. That, in turn, transcends the particular circumstances of both the art and the observer-participant. Transcendence, that sense of being "moved" or taken into another time and space, as my story recounts, is a signal that some kind of transformation is taking place, a transformation which leaves people permanently changed. It is in this sense that art is a way of knowing. The elicitation of such powerful emotions through artistic representations, it must be understood, works both ways. In a time of AIDS it can provide the public, through images in newspapers, magazines, film and television, a representation of AIDS victims as deviants who deserve their fate, much as the moral majority might argue, or other representations might reveal the suffering and struggle of life as that which is common to all of humanity, regardless of sexual preferences, gender, color. In a time of AIDS, I feel it is these transcendent aspects of human worth which require a reminder.

The religious overtones injected into my description, through the use of a word like "transcendence," are not an overstatement. Scholars generally agree that what art does, religion, in the broadest sense of the word, also does. With almost childlike innocence, people, deeply experiencing either the art or religious process, welcome the new and the unusual. Both the aesthetic process and the worship process yield collectively created frames of perception and meaning by which we interpret and order our experiences through separating and distancing ourselves. Aesthetic and spiritual processes each function to objectify and clarify what we would not and cannot assimilate from direct experience. Ceremony and ritual function like the art process, transcending the temporal and introducing us to a new time and space which we cannot know through any other means or in any other way.

No one teaching art, ought ever to ignore the process just described simply because it is what makes art unique; yet no theoretical approach in art education is rooted in it. Methods for clarifying values, like "aesthetic scanning," in DBAE, imply that DBAE teaches students what makes art important. However, the great strength of the experience of art, unlike anything else in the world, is the personal and intimate way individuals interact with it. The Discipline-Based approach allows nearly any intelligent teacher to teach art because of its standardized, goal oriented objectives. It must be extremely difficult, by necessity, ever to be very personal or intimate using standardized objectives. The whole idea of intimacy, and thus, the whole idea of what art is about, is excluded from such objective solutions. In a time of AIDS such programs cannot possibly speak to the need for a compassionate representation. CLAE, on the other hand, encourages personal decoding and other intense encounters with art media and art products, especially within the contexts which produced and used them. That is certainly better than standardized formats, but look what we sacrifice when we try so hard to be thoroughly academic in our self-conscious strutting of hard curriculum ahead of the one quality about art which makes it what it is, and makes it so important! Especially in the time of AIDS, it is urgent that we come out boldly and confidently about the significance of intimacy in art, as if to defy that lethal virus which flushes out everything that used to stay hidden in our private lives. Douglas Crimp's recent edited book, AIDS: Cultural analysis, cultural activism (1988) presents an overview of the sorts of sympathetic representation and activism necessary in a time of AIDS.

During crises like earthquakes and plagues, one discovers that many simple absolutes are no longer true. Engineering can fail; solid ground can liquify; muscular, seemingly healthy young men can drop dead overnight from the effects of an invisible virus contracted ten years before; acts of love can become lethal; doctors can admit out loud that there is nothing to be done. In the time of AIDS, it has become plainly obvious that medicine is not the cure-all and doctors are not the gods we once thought. Drugs, which used to be magical, are now thought to be dangerous and sometimes destructively addictive. The time of AIDS has reversed so many things, turning them upside down, flushing out identities that in other times might have remained hidden.

One of these identities is that of the hea ler. It was assumed, when we were children, that if you wanted to be a healer, you studied chiropractic or medicine and became a doctor or a nurse. Likewise, if you wanted to deal with the spiritual or the transcendent, you studied religion, especially mystical asceticism, Buddhist meditation and the lives of people like Julian of Norwich and Saint John of the Cross. But in the time of AIDS, healers can be found in every profession. Some people in medicine have no idea what healing is about, and some people, even in art education, spend their lives healing. Healing used to mean that the disease was arrested and you got to live in your own body on this side of the River Styx. But in the time of AIDS, healing has come to mean "going in peace," either here or beyond, either in this body or whatever form comes next, if any. Healing has come to mean, "issues and values clarified," and "angers put to rest." In this sense, the arts can be more significant for healing than any drug or surgical procedure, and many times more transforming. We can be strengthened by them. We can be reassured through them that we are not alone. We can experience who we have been and who we are becoming because of the arts. We cannot, however, continue to gloss over the unique element which makes art itself and the teaching of art so dynamically healing and important.

In the broadest sense of the terms, art and education in the arts can heal AIDS. It will be through personal encounter with images and metaphors, recreated and universalized by artists from the horrors of the AIDS epidemic, that finally, as with other great tragedies, all humankind will not only understand what has happened, but will be able to assimilate it into consciousness. Doctors and social workers may administer to immediate medical and social needs, but only art heals in this sense, and the healing happens as a result of sensitive and intense intimacy.
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Footnotes

2 ibid., p. 17.
3 Instructions for the application for a master of social work, California State University, Long Beach, June, 1989.
5 ibid.
6 Ross, p. 1.
7 Munro, p. 4.
8 Mellert, p. 21.
9 ibid., pp. 22-5.
10 ibid., pp. 26-7.

References


Our Neighbours’ Understanding of Art: A Class Field Study

Patricia Stuhr and Jeffrey Leptak

Introduction

Most people believe that taste in art is highly individual, that one person’s opinion is as good as another. However, the literature on art and art education usually reflects the assumptions and values of the established authorities—art critics, historians, and aesthetic philosophers. The adult education specialist, David Jones (1988), provides this interpretation of similar behavior in the arts in general:

A cultural hegemony exists within the compulsory sector of the education service, and maybe in the country at large, which perpetuates a set of values rooted in what we have come to call high culture. ...In a perverse way they are persuaded it is of value, even though they themselves derive no pleasure from it. They are persuaded that their lack of sympathy stems from their own educational inadequacy. High culture is still believed to be superior, even though the majority of the population feel no sympathy for it (p. 23).

It is assumed that, “With varying degrees of success, schools and colleges pass on a set of cultural values which reflect the dominant culture of society...” (Jones, p. 135).

Other institutions, such as museums, also promote these values. However, Johnson’s study of socialization in art museum tours found that docents and visitors both emphasized the validity of personal preference. One docent explained, “Ideas of why you like it are absolutely as valid as anybody else’s. And there’s, you know, there’s [sic] no law that says that you should like this kind of art” (Johnson, 1981, p. 62).

The Class Field Study

A course, Art/Art Education Ethnographic Studies Investigation, was attended by fourteen graduate students and one undergraduate at The Ohio State University. The course focused upon the design of ethnographic studies that were examined as they related to the fields of art education and art. The ethnographic approach to research in these areas was investigated through literature and direct experience with naturalistic observation techniques and interviews with subjects. From the literature, students developed rationales for conducting a qualitative field study using ethnographic methods to collect information. The time constraints of the quarter system prohibited the students from each carrying out their own field studies. Instead, the class conducted a joint study on a topic they developed as a group: Our Neighbours’ Understanding of Art. The purpose of this group’s study was to determine how “ordinary” people understand art, through the analysis of a collection of interviews. Each student chose a person from the neighborhood in which they lived to be a participant in the study.

Methodology

Popkewitz’s and Tabachnick’s (1981) explanation of the ethnographic approach to research relies partly on direct naturalistic observation and interviews with the subjects. Direct naturalistic participation pertains to the researcher’s role as a spectator entering the subject’s physical environment in a manner as unobtrusive as possible, while sensually and cognitively recording what is going on. This approach to research was applied when the class conducted its study.

The questions and questioning strategies were devised collectively by the group based on Spradley’s (1979) The Ethnographic Interview. After a discussion of this book, each member of the class produced a list of questions designed to reveal a neighbor’s understanding of art. The class then compared, discussed and voted on the composite list of questions to determine the eight that were most appropriate to be used in their interviews. The eight questions were:

1. What do you think of when you hear the word “art”?
2. What is art to you?
3. Describe an early experience with art.
4. What makes something art?
5. How is art a part of your life?
6. Would you describe your preferences in art?
7. Who determines what is art?
8. Where might you find art?

Spradley suggests that the information that a subject offers should be rephrased and repeated to the subject to check for correct interpretation, and that the native terminology and vocabulary of the subject be utilized in this process. The interviewers’ stance was autocratic in the sense that they acted as independent agents, using the results to serve their purposes (Spradley, 1979).

The students tape recorded the interviews with their neighbors. After a critique of the interview by the instructor, a few students chose to repeat their interview with another neighbor. Each student transcribed his/her tape and analyzed the interview in accordance with Dobbert (1982), who...
said that analysis is an ongoing process which attempts to fit data “into the conceptual scheme on which the study was based and to answer the basic research questions” (p. 271). He/she then wrote up the findings supporting his/her work based on the course readings and discussion. The microethnographic studies were then shared with the class through verbal reports.

Description of Subjects

Students were also required to describe their neighbors in the manner recommended by Spradley (1979). A neighbor, for the purpose of our study, was defined as a person living on the same block as the interviewer. All were residents of Columbus, Ohio. All of the subjects had been educated past the high school level, so our ordinary neighbors were not so “ordinary” in that regard. There were twice as many women interviewed as men. Most of the neighbors were chosen because they were at home during the time that the interviewer was able to do the interview. Some of the neighbors were known to the interviewers before the interview. The subjects ranged between the ages of early twenties to early seventies. Their occupations varied: housewife, university student, physical therapist, and Assistant Attorney General of the state. An example of the kinds of description students provided about their neighbors are presented by Michele:

My neighbor is a soft-spoken man in his late 50’s. He has a delightful sense of humor and has been my friend and neighbor for eight years. He grew up in the heyday of Reynolds Tobacco Industry, home-based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In the course of telling his tobacco stories of a bygone era, he may touch on his original family’s conversations about the Civil War. He says that today his 97-year-old mother discusses Civil War controversies as if it were yesterday. My neighbor is an attorney in Columbus and has lived here since 1967. Despite my novice ethnographic tendency to lead, give answers, and play the expert role, my neighbor, a fellow of solid opinion, surfaced as a person of keen insight into many areas of art (Darling, 1988).

Deborah provided another example:

The informant’s name is Rita. Approximate age, early 30’s. The date is May 14, 1988. The location is Columbus, Ohio. For this first interview, the surroundings changed from an outside back porch to an inside sewing room as the evening got darker. A large tree full of leaves encloses a corner of the porch where the interview begins. Metal and cloth porch chairs are sandwiched by black tables where ferns are placed in a corner arrangement. Cricket sounds are abundant. Rita appears to be a little uncomfortable, yet excited when we begin the interview. She has on a plaid dress with tailored silver earrings which can be seen under her cropped brown hair. Her deep brown eyes and small hands move expressively when she speaks. By the time we finish the first side of the tape, it is dark. And Rita suggests we go inside to her work room. The room is bright yellow and white with hints of mint green accents. The furnishings are modest. There are various levels of light sources. Shelving and framed needlepoints are strategically hung on white walls except where there are windows trimmed with lace curtains. The immediate reflection which enters my mind is that I have seen this room, even before, maybe in one of mother’s home furnishing books. The room, even though lived-in, via the sewing projects on a table, is remarkably clean and picturesque (Ramage, 1988).

Data Gathered From Interviews

The initial information the class decided to elicit from their neighbors was concerned with their informants’ early enculturation and socialization concerning art. Enculturation was defined as the process of acquiring the characteristics of a given culture, simply by living and participating in its everyday life and by becoming familiar with its language and symbols. Socialization was defined as the general process of learning to function as a member of society by learning its rules, values, and social roles such as: mother, husband, student, child, and occupational roles such as teacher, the president, plumber, artist, etc. (Miller, 1979). Socialization in the dominant American culture usually implies formal schooling, but can be taught through other institutions, churches, family and informally through the media.

The class decided to first ask their neighbors to “Describe an early experience with art.” The interviewees’ initial responses tended to be descriptions of positive or negative enculturation experiences centered around their homes and families. The most frequent early enculturation experience mentioned by several of our neighbors was drawing at home.

Deborah’s neighbor, Rita, described an early positive enculturation experience concerning music:

...my mom would buy me these little Golden Records at the grocery store. I was allowed to have one a week. And, I would memorize all the words. I had a little record player and I would play those songs and sing them (Ramage, 1988).
A negative aspect of this experience was also relayed:

Oh, and my dad one time when I was six... he stopped at the record store to buy me a record and they didn’t have any Golden Records, so he did come out with this Nutcracker Suite thing. It had part of the Nutcracker Suite on there, which scared me because it had a picture of the Rat King fighting with the prince on the cover. I never played it because I thought it was scary music (Ramage, 1988).

There were a few other negative enculturation experiences discussed. One neighbor prefaced her discussion with, "I grew up in rural Ohio. Rural Ohio is not big on art." (Shaw, 1988). Jeff’s neighbor discussed the frustration she felt because she constantly compared her art efforts to those of her younger sister, whom she reported to be "gifted in art" (Leptak, 1988). Her sister, she rationalized, went on to become a fashion designer. Another negative experience recounted was one of being exposed to country-western music by parents.

The participants generally described their early school (socialization) art experiences as very important. Most of the school experiences were positive. The most frequently referred to experiences were art classes in grade school in which they participated in activities such as drawing, painting or making crafts. An elderly neighbor woman described her art experiences: "...in grade school we cut out pictures of famous paintings and memorized them, then we were tested on them" (Tizzano, 1988).

Our neighbors also discussed art classes beyond primary and secondary art instruction in which they drew and painted from figures, models and nature (Miranda, 1988). One informant discussed a college course in which students "...talked about shape and color" (Getton, 1988). All of these positive schooling experiences referred in some way to the values of the high or fine art world as defined through the established hierarchy of the dominant culture art world and reproduced through public schooling.

The socialization experiences our neighbors discussed that did not take place in the schools were: participating in plays in the community and at church; touring Europe and visiting the Louvre and other museums "...where they collect what people collectively consider 'good' art" (Shaw, 1988), and being exposed to parents’ friends who enjoyed and played classical music (Ramage, 1988). The only negative school experience was attributed to a grade school teacher who told one of the neighbors, when she was seven, that all trees must be colored green (Leptak, 1988).

The next questions asked of our neighbors were, "Would you describe your preferences in art?" and "What is art to you?" Their responses were remarkably diverse. Most of the informants first discussed art as they had been taught to in school, in terms of the fine arts. Many preferred realistic paintings, such as landscapes and natural scenery, while two mentioned Western art specifically. Several named traditional fine artists as examples, such as Millet, Remington, and Russell. Although most seemed to assume this question referred only to painting, one person was quick to explain that art is all encompassing, including dance, music and opera.

After reciting their formal art schooling version of what is fine art, they revealed other very personal and idiosyncratic statements concerning art(s). Discussing "painting and sculpture and things on the wall," one person added, "I think I see art in other places, but it's what I think art is [emphasis added]" (Leptak, 1988). Their expanded explanations were often prefaced with condemnation of the socialized versions of fine art they had previously discussed. Several people thought immediately of Picasso whose works, they said, were incomprehensible and overvalued.

Many people accepted everyday sights as art, such as commercial signs, sidewalk paintings, subway graffiti, blonde wood furniture, refrigerator child art, needlework, T.V. and even an austerely shelf with a plant on it. One person suggested "European posters" (Leptak, 1988), apparently thinking that domestic posters are less artistic.

There was disagreement about whether nature is art. One neighbor pointed out that art is "not things that nature does, but that people have done—and that hang in museums" (Shaw, 1988). On the other hand, another responded, "I like to appreciate trees and flowers and I think they are the arts' created by maybe God or somebody." (Miranda, 1988). Two persons seemed to have found a middle-ground, offering bonsai trees and Japanese gardens as examples of art, both instances of nature modified by some human creator. It is interesting to note that European, not American posters, and Japanese, not American gardens were considered art, which seems to suggest that for some individuals, an element of mystery or rarity is necessary for art. The commonplace does not count.

To describe their preferences, some people also identified general characteristics of art, such as "visually pleasing," which was the most common response, with one person defining "pleasing" as "relaxing" (Miranda, 1988). Several thought that art required "greater contemplation" (Leptak, 1988), pleasing both eye and mind. It is unclear whether they thought art could evoke both relaxation and contemplation at the same time. Other characteristics named were beauty, creativity and uniqueness, "something quite special that is quite different from the normal objects we use in our everyday life" (Miranda, 1988).

Many informants seemed to find it easier to discuss art in terms of the artists' attributes. One person explained that, "somehow, an artist sees things differently than we do and then has the physical skill to put it down [in art media]" (Shaw, 1988). Many informants emphasized the importance of the artists' "talent" and "technical skills," meaning mastery of the medium. However, more than technique is necessary for true art, according to some. One person criticized technicians who lack "substance or guts" (Ramage, 1988), while another person, unimpressed by classic art, admitted that although the Old Masters had technical skill, they lacked creativity. Several maintained that art is expression by artists, revealing their feelings through their artwork. Only one person distinguished between artists who create "artwork" and artisans (or craftsperson) who create "products" (Darling, 1988). The difference was clarified with an example of a musician who performs as an artist, but who makes French horns as an artisan.

When asked, "What do you think of when you hear the word art?" again the neighbors first named things associated with fine art. Some of
their responses were: Venus de Milo, abstract art, Rembrandt and Rubens, paintings and crafts, old paintings, 19th century Impressionist landscapes, big museums such as The Met, The Louvre, The Chicago Museum of Art, and things in a museum such as paintings, sculptures and things on a wall. Their references also were directed to the “fine art(s)”: classical music played with a full orchestra, dance such as Swan Lake music and architecture.

After the perfunctory lists of “fine art(s)” were presented, our neighbors expressed more personal explanations of what they thought of when they heard the word art. Some of the examples mentioned were from a more popular realm, such as jazz, bluegrass, cooking, fashion design, and somewhat facetiously, Ronald Reagan’s speeches. According to Mary, the arts are “things that are creative. You can be a chef and be creative. I could make a plate of spaghetti and present it attractively.” She added that “...art becomes art when it is appreciated,” adding that “...appreciating is a matter of personal preference” (Darling, 1988).

For many people, mentioning art automatically evokes a negative reaction, sometimes in response to what others have approved as art. Rita first responded, “you say art and I think of this real, real pretty statute,” but she then proceeded to criticize other images of art acceptable in some parts of society, but not to her. For her, the archetypal modern painting, mentioned repeatedly, was a white dot on a red background, which she found to be unmoving and in fact, unartistic. She also argued that jazz is merely “a tool,” country music is “mediocrity personified,” and twentieth century music is “unorganized” (Ramage, 1988). Departing from the majority opinion, Mary eschews the Old Masters because their works are too representative, thus lacking creativity. Warhol’s soup cans, she believes, are equally deficient in artistic quality.

The neighbors were polled for their responses to, “What makes something art?” All of these responses tended to incorporate personal aesthetic opinions and judgments. Gary’s neighbor related the following answer to this question.

Some sort of consensus by people who know art, that is art—which is a circular way of figuring out what art is. I would assume there are mathematical proportions that make things visually pleasing—and so when people make their art with these proportions, colors, and those things that balance each other would be judged to have art. Somebody finds it to be visually pleasing, wanting to look at it, and calls it art, therefore it is art (Shaw, 1988).

This neighbor’s reply was typical of many of those interviewed. He expressed a sense of mysticism and faith in a scientific paradigm about what makes something art. There also appeared to be confusion about who made this determination and how this was accomplished. Other neighbors suggested “...art becomes art when it is appreciated” (Darling, 1988) and “...art doesn’t always make me happy, but it moves me in some fashion” (Ramage, 1988). Others expressed that art made something pleasant to the eye which adds character to your home, work place, community or college campus. Most agreed that art is an expression of people, yet this was often contradicted by individuals who said that it is not art, unless it is new and improved. Some complicated this further by suggesting that we return to “classical values” (Ramage, 1988). A quality which was suggested as essential to the make-up of art was the expression of feeling.

In answering “Where might you find art?”, our neighbors’ responses fit into three categories. The first were the locations where one might find fine art such as museums, galleries and schools. Included in their responses were also public and private locations in which one might find art. Private locations included: clothing you wear, “…but not if they were bought at K Mart” (Ramage, 1988), at work, at home, cars, doctors’ offices and homes. Public locations in which they believed art could be located were: houses or buildings, natural surroundings of various historical locations, churches, sculpture gardens and “everywhere” (Shaw, 1988; Molaeb, 1988).

The question “Who determines what is art?” seemed to elicit some of our most interesting responses. Many were couched in negative terms. The answers fell under the headings of institutions and people. The most frequently mentioned institution was the gallery where “Art is shown and that is what makes it art” (Tizzano, 1988). In a few cases the institutions were spoken of in disdain, such as “…schools pushing thoughts about art…or maybe it’s the media!? ...Museums in cahoots... with secret meetings going on” (Ramage, 1988).

Most of the interviewees stated that art experts decided what art is: “museum personnel who select works” (Tizzano, 1988), “people who collect and pay for it” (Shaw, 1988), “people who write books” (Ramage, 1988), “art historians…people who criticize the objects” (Miranda, 1988). One individual credited “society” with making the determination of what art is (Gatton, 1988). A popular answer was, “People dictate what is art, but individuals determine for themselves what is good art” (Darling, 1988). This sort of statement indicated a contradiction in thinking. One individual dispensed with the notion of a grand arbiter and simply stated that “viewers” determine what art is (Tizzano, 1988).

Other negative comments made when discussing the cultural determiners of art were: “I don’t understand the big push to make people understand things they don’t care for...No opinions are allowed...It’s like The Emperor’s New Clothes” (Ramage, 1988) and “Suddenly there are these critics, telling you what is good and what isn’t good...Who died and appointed them God?” (Leptak, 1988). Ironically, the neighbor who made the latter statement is among those who listen to the critics. For example, she admits, “The Campbell soup can, to me, is ridiculous. But I’m not going to question these people” (Leptak, 1988).

The last question asked of our neighbors, “How is art a part of your life?”, initially evoked answers which described “fine art(s)” activities they were involved in. This list included: piano playing, attending Music-in-the-Park Series, attending Columbus Symphony Pops, attending Marine Band performances, going to museums when travelling and listening to classical music on the radio.

After the expected accounting of high art experiences, the neighbors...
then went on to relate more personal and popular types of art activities they enjoyed. “I enjoy art in the work environment, the layouts, the landscape to some degree, the building architecture is art; working in the yard to some degree is art, arranging flowers, flower garden, has some art to it; arranging a house, decorating it, involves art” (Darling, 1988). A few mentioned personal sketching activities such as doodling on class notes and drawing little pictures on their birthdays and greeting cards. Others mentioned the decoration of their homes as a form of art involvement: “The art over my fireplace...” (Shaw, 1988), “The art on my walls” (Tizzano, 1988).

The “How is art a part of your life?” question also exposed positive and negative aesthetic preferences. Examples of positive preferences were: “I like pretty things, graceful lines” (Tizzano, 1988), “…white and blond wood type of things” (Leptak, 1988), “I like real traditional classical lines” (Ramage, 1988), “I do like Georgia O’Keeffe, whatever kind of art that is” (Shaw, 1988).

Some of the aesthetic criticism voiced regarding music were: a disdain for 20th century music which is usually loud and disjointed, loud boom boxes, and loud music of any kind. A few unfavorable comments regarding the visual arts were: “Creativity, is not in classic art” (Leptak, 1988), and “I don’t like modern art, like abstract or surreal” (Tizzano, 1988).

Generally, the aesthetic experiences our neighbors thought should be valued were those taught in schools. However, their deepest personal aesthetic preferences were collected during their everyday lives, and they reflected upon and expressed these with gusto and intensity.

Class Discussion of the Study

Genuinely surprised by their research findings, the class was particularly amazed at how uniformly most of their neighbors responded to the questions. The fact that fine or high art and its accompanying worlds were always mentioned first, followed by discussion of more personal, lived aesthetic values, they felt was extremely informative. Many commented on how effective the aesthetic enculturation and socialization process in the dominant culture is (especially in schools) regarding the fine art world, despite the fact that we often hear statements to the contrary.

The art education students felt they learned the following from this study: 1) they should be more aggressive and open in allowing for an expanded definition of art; 2) they should be more considerate of the importance of this revised definition of art in their students’ lives; and 3) they should be aware of the need to encourage these views in preparing students for employment in art education. It was also suggested that teachers and students should be encouraged to share their personal aesthetic experiences and preferences in art learning situations. Challenging and questioning the validity of the tenets of the dominant cultural ideologies on aesthetics was also seen as a positive concept to be employed in teaching art.

The students in the class were forced to confront their own art biases and reassess their roles as art experts through the research experience. The biggest shock to the class was that the questions, which they thought were narrowly designed to ascertain their neighbors’ understandings of the visual arts, also drew out their neighbors’ understandings of other fine arts: music, dance, drama, and literature.

Almost all of the students found that being neutral and not playing the part of art experts was very difficult. The neighbors often put their interviewers on the spot by asking them for their opinions on the questions. It was difficult for the novice interviewers to maintain that they were only interested in their neighbor’s understanding of art, and for that reason should refrain from a discussion of the questions. For some of the student interviewers, the temptation to act as experts in the area was too much. They often broke down and expounded their words of wisdom, blasing their research and requiring additional interviews.

Conclusions

In deducing our neighbors’ understandings of art, we concluded that these understandings exist on multiple levels. Based on class reports, a hegemonic structure to the values and belief systems of the neighborhood interviewees in regard to their understanding of art was determined. Their understandings revealed both social and personal concepts of art. The social concepts, based in the dominant ideology of the established art world and its marketplace, had been learned through enculturation and socialization processes. These social concepts of art were valued above their own personal aesthetic experiences, which differed significantly and idiosyncratically from the social concepts. Often, conflicting notions between personal aesthetics and social aesthetics were expressed. This conflict appears to reflect the irrelevance which the established art world’s values, based on the monetary estimation of art works and artists in the marketplace, held in their daily lives. Our neighbors expressed a more inclusive, rich and democratic view of what is to be understood and valued as art.

Adult educator Malcolm Knowles (1980), has commented that people in his field often discover the “deuterolearning” or “secondary outcomes” of previous education. While learning specific facts or skills, students also acquire values which “may well be the most important product of a learning experience” (p. 212-3). Our class field study was to some extent an investigation of “secondary outcomes” in art education, and we think most art teachers would be surprised to see what values the students have actually acquired, in contrast to the stated goals of the curriculum. To avoid undesirable deuterolearning (i.e., negative attitudes about art), we think it is valuable for art-teachers-in-training to see the full range of their potential effect upon student learning.

The class also learned that cooperation in a research study could be beneficial. When no one really owns the study, a far more critical stance can be taken by all of the researchers. It is also an advantageous way to conduct research when time is short. One final value of the study was that it gave all of the students a chance for hands on experience in conducting research employing ethnographic methods.
References


Acknowledgements

The authors are indebted to the following individuals for the collection, transcription, and discussion of the data: Mohd Aldoyhi, Carol Cruickshank, Michele Kaye Darling, Shawn Galton, Paul Hooge, Donna Long, Motepele Malebana, Camille Miranda, Jamil Molaei, Janet Montgomery, Deborah Ramage, Gary Shaw, and Carol Tizzano.

Popular Culture's Revolt Against the Normalizing Consequences of Tradition

Pat Rafferty

For several years there has been an ongoing debate regarding whether street art (graffiti) qualifies as art or could be more aptly described as vandalism. While this paper does not claim to resolve the issue, a discussion of the corollary of that - the extent to which we are willing to tolerate divergence from normative expectations, lends insight into the topic of the means and limitations of what is representable as art.

An attempt will be made to look at social processes by which active relations of domination and subordination are made manifest in the context of accepting and rejecting art. Street art will be described as one aspect of popular culture that has contributed to an active reworking of the means to and the boundaries of what is representable as art.

While faceless persons who leave unsolicited messages in public are seemingly despised, they attract a following who see promise in such initiative; for them the act reasserts the importance of alternative forms of human expression and regional differences in art. The act signals a kind of emancipation of the creative spirit away from the lifeless values of an overly prescribed mainstream art deemed as antithetical to the artist as an independent thinker.

The work found in Vancouver, British Columbia reveals several different subcultures linked by significant crosscurrents. In the late seventies, a series of provocative little remarks began to appear on downtown walls in that City. They taunted the pedestrian in a playful yet provocative manner: "Free Love: Can you afford it?" "Despise Authority" and "Post-Atomic Cow: Precooked." The work was socially as well as visually provocative - a level of sophistication that dispelled any notion of graffiti as banal messages suitable only for washroom walls. This kind of street art (after this graffiti) exudes social and political satire and as a tradition it can be traced back to the early seventies.

Concurrent with this, a proliferation of a second kind appeared and was labelled Tag Graffiti by its makers. Interpreted earlier as an outright assault on the urban architecture of New York, it spread to Vancouver with local teenagers writing their aliases in highly stylized form on every available surface in the downtown core. Making your signature visible around town seemed to help establish the identity of an individual or gang.

A third kind of graffiti grew out of a sustained interest in Tag Graffiti. As signatures were drawn increasingly larger and the artists became more adept at using spray paint. Diagonals, dots, arrows, spirals and highlighting techniques gave character to scaled-up letters creating an overall razzle-dazzle of vibrant colours appropriately labelled, "Wild Style."
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Social and Political Graffiti

During the early seventies a loosely woven network of aspiring artists and writers made a break into the public venue by raising graffiti to a new level of significance. These people would demonstrate - more than any of the other local graffitists before them - a sense of precision regarding the process and its utility.

Whatever their differences, by choosing graffiti as a means for expression and circumventing the whole question of what is and what is not art, these young initiates acquired direct access to the public. As 12 Midnite explains, "Graffiti is the best way to advertise an idea." In reclaiming responsibility for art making as a lifestyle, these artists were assuming control over the means for reaching their audience - thus reaffirming the particularity of their own personal vision of art as an integral part of everyday life. Feeling betrayed by institutional constraints that limit access to conventional channels of communication, they turned to the streets for access without censorship. By nature they were too energized to get stuck on reduplicating the achievements - methods and icons - of past artists.

Lincoln Clarke, Richard Hambleton, Ed Varney and Michael de Courcy were part of a growing number of artists who came to be known as "illegal street artists." They seemed undaunted by the consequences of being perceived as vandals and they moved in and out of the urban alleyways, leaving behind a wake of paper paste-ups, freehand drawings, photos and stenciled images.

Part of the reason why I started doing stencils was because of the neatness of the idea. It's so neat. It's concise. It's quick. You can't miss making your point. It's there! It's discreet.

(12 Midnite, 1988)

Skillfully engineered, this kind of graffiti had the authority of a corporate logo repeated in rapid-fire succession all over town. Stencils, freehand painting, photos and paper pasteups were used to create multiple images giving the appearance of small advertisements. In an ironical twist - they set in use the very tactics of a system they felt had been ignoring them. Mimicking symbolic techniques of the advertising trade - its style, strategy and form - their work was as purposeful as any advertising executive charged with accelerating an image flow. They were sarcastic enough to deliver contradictory messages in an agitative manner that mimicked the language and visual form of mass media promotion, thus luring the spectator into reaction. Urban shamans of sorts, they purposely mixed messages by masquerading subversive ideas in the symbolic paraphernalia of high-tech graphics. Leaving the message insinuated rather than obvious, they knew full well that such a potent combination was liable to drive the passive urban eye into a state of culture shock. A public constantly bombarded by advertisements for Trident Mints, Wonder Bra, Pampers and Ex-Lax is going to wonder what the inducement is in a message that reads, "1984: Coming Soon."
Lincoln Clarkes came to Vancouver from Toronto in 1979 with a portfolio of photographic scenarios, collages, paintings and sculpture intended to jar the public by defacing what we take for granted. He soon turned to graffiti.

Nobody knew it was me in the beginning, because I wasn’t signing my work. It wasn’t for about a year afterwards that I started signing my paintings. And when I started doing my stuff I did so much of it that everybody started talking about all this stuff that was creeping up around town. I can remember going to Hamburger Mary’s on Denman Street, with Ann, and we’d just spent a few hours zipping around town spray painting and we went to this hamburger place and ran into some friends, a group of four artists. Bob Alexander is a 45-year-old sort of older artist that’s been around for years and is pretty well known in the art circles and he was talking about these spray paintings that were creeping up. I was talking to them and said, ‘Yeah, I seen those things all over town, they look quite neat’ and all those people started talking. They didn’t know that it was me and I didn’t tell them and I just thought, ‘Oh my god they’re talking about me, and didn’t even know it.’ That was the first time. It was a real turn-on! (Clarkes, 1985)

In the mid-eighties, Clarkes had settled into a sort of patriarchal figure and his work shifted away from graffiti to more commercial photography. He became a mentor to young graffiti artists seeking him out:

N: Probably, he is one of the outstanding fathers of graffiti in Vancouver. Lincoln was military—he’s a big figure there—he must be so knowledgeable... so well informed. He gives me simple quotes, and said, ‘Why isn’t it up there?’ (N. 1984)

Several of the social and political satire graffittists gambled on making the leap from fame as a graffitist to the realm of art on their own terms. The prestigious Heffel Gallery in Vancouver held a one-man show of Clarkes’ work but it did not sell. Unsurprisingly, the developmental aerobics required to meet gallery demands proved to be overly constraining for a kind of work that received its essential vitality on the street.

Big Dada a middle-aged working man with a family prompts the question of what motivates a person to do graffiti art.

There are a number of things. On a personal level, it is fun. It’s a little bit dangerous because you can get caught. That flirting with danger is fun. It brings you immediately into the present where your major concern is how you are going to accomplish this without getting caught. It forces you to become hyper aware of your surroundings. I’ve always been a little naughty. It perpetuates this image of me. And I feel that I am doing a service, I am getting a cosmic message out without the overlay of the ego... I started doing graffiti in the early seventies. For $1.99 you could get a few words cut on stencil paper at Hewitts and I’d walk around with a can of paint and do what I called Commando Art. Most graffiti is very concise. Often it is very directed politically but there is no way of finding out who is doing it. That’s why I say that it rises out of the cultural consciousness, it’s like the walls are expressing themselves. It isn’t selling anything except a world view. Anonymity is important because it keeps you from getting caught and it keeps the messages universal, sourceless. It draws its power from its aggressiveness and its accessibility.

After graduating from the Emily Carr College of Art and Design 12 Midnite spent some time exploring urban centres in California that had an impact on his frame of reference in art.

I moved down to California hoping to pull it off that way. And then I thought, well, this is scary. This is bad news. I can’t walk down the street without the police talking to me or someone taking a picture of me or someone asking me to buy drugs or someone asking to sleep with me — to pay me, to buy me or to have them buy me. I realized that god this isn’t the place to be and so I came back. And then all of a sudden I got on to the statue of Liberty.

I said ‘That’s it! That’s our symbol!’ Because it’s been so bastardized and everything. What a great idea, freedom for everybody — but it didn’t work for me down there. It wasn’t freedom for me down there. And it came down to the fact that liberty is enforced by power and by guns.

I am trying to save the world. By going out there and saving Canada at least. I am trying to open people’s eyes by using the best method available to me. It is not just what I think is going on. It is going on. Its the annexation of Canada into the United States and the disintegration of our country. I don’t agree with violence, I don’t agree with drugs or religion and I deal with those things through my art.

Thomas Anfield, alias Pablo Fiasco regularly shows his work at the Jacqueline M. Gallery in Vancouver. He is a graduate of the New York Academy of Art and approaches his neoexpressionistic portrayals of the human form in a very disciplined manner.

When I started I wanted the public art to be decorative and lighter than what I was doing at home on canvas. I started to do them on little pieces of canvas and I put them up...
around town but they got ripped off so fast that I started to paint them directly on the wall... You know my reason was that I was an artist and my work deserved to be seen. So, I took my art to what seemed to be the logical place to take your art at the time which was directly to the public, especially in Vancouver. Art galleries don't have much life here. Its a very small percentage of people who will venture to the art galleries. Which is like any city I guess.

When people introduced me as Pablo Fiasco it rubbed me the wrong way. I just hated it! Well, it is a double edged sword, because I never tried to get rid of it because I was quite aware of the value it had. I don't know if you saw that I was in Vancouver Magazine this month. There is a perfect example. There's no way that they would have said 'Thomas Anfield he's not a bad painter. Let's put him in this Magazine.' Forget it! It's useless. But, Pablo Fiasco, to them—the media, is a very interesting thing. So, as I said it is a double edged sword. Here you are in the art world trying to get respect for what you do, to make a decent living to pay the rent, you've got to say to someone 'Pay a thousand dollars for this canvas,' so you don't want to be associated with something less serious like the kid on the street with the spray can. So, it has been very useful. There's no way that I would have been in that Magazine if it weren't for Pablo Fiasco.

Toby is a young graffiti artist who achieved a bit of transitory fame when he was fined $200 for painting a series of figures on the sidewalks of Stanley park. A developer became interested in Toby's ambition to take his art to the people and offered him space on a hoarding on Robson Street with the intention of auctioning off the work at the end of the project. None of the works sold. Toby was discouraged by the outcome and left for Toronto.

When I go down and paint on the sea walls, I feel that I am doing cave art and I almost feel myself back in the caves painting on walls. There, I'm painting Michaelangelo's on canvas and I can sense what it must have been like to paint all those frescoes. You have a link with these artists so that you become a part of that level of art, and you can go right back to the days of the Egyptians and you can feel that art. And you're a part of that—you've never really died. You know what I'm saying? and you've never really been born, you've just always sort of been here. This life that you're living now is a physical manifestation of that.

I was painting apartment suites and I had started to earn enough money that I had a single little apartment and a studio down in Gastown. So, I could go work in my studio, I could do bigger paintings, and I had my living quarters separate from my studio which was so nice because I could have a nice, neat, clean apartment to live in, and a place to work. It was wonderful! Then, I lost my job, so I went on UIC. I ended up living in my studio and I did that for awhile. Then I moved out of my studio and into this place. I got another job working in a massage parlor. I was like a desk clerk in a massage parlor. That was part time, and that allowed me enough time to work, go to work, earn enough money to pay my rent and so on, and do all the things I wanted to do. and that's when I started doing street art, I had to do something, because if I kept going the way I was going, it was going to be rotten—you know, work at a job then go home and work, and then you don't have time to get your work outside your apartment. So I figured, I've got to do something now. If the galleries won't take my work and I can't get anywhere, then I'm just going to give it to them free. And the best thing I can do is just take it on the sidewalk.

Wild Style and Tag Graffiti

In the early eighties the then forward looking social and political graffiti of Vancouver was rivalled by a new kind of work on the streets called Wild Style. This unique form had grown out of the Hip-hop movement which originated in New York in the early seventies. The movement is an authentic aboriginal street culture inspired by the youth of New York who use the city as a backdrop for its manifold forms—break dancing, rapping, scratching and graffiti. It emerged as an alternative to gang warfare—a level of violence among youth that gripped that urban community between 1968 and 1973. Wild Style began as Tag Graffiti—the signing of an alias on the city walls.
The sole motivation of the tag graffitiist seems to be focused on a “hit and run” tactic for marking territory. The idea is to take an alias — Risk-e Cazal, Bozo, Jimbo, Misty, Style (2), Zephyr, Rip - and with it achieve a style which when repeated communicates one’s presence and “everywhere-ness” without fear of retaliation. For the pedestrian who has no access to the game or its players the marks mean only the defacement of property or an act of empty conformity. Of the several different kinds of graffiti, people have the least regard for tagging — the police, other civic officials, downtown merchants and more importantly other graffitiists lament a growing interest in tagging.

Wild Style evolved out of the practice of tagging. The label ‘tag’ refers to a group of highly stylized letters in a format that makes the end result appear much like a commercial logo when indeed it is publicizing the assumed name of a graffitiist. Wild Style emerged as tags became more complex in design. Making the letters larger and filling in the space in each letter with dots and diagonal and zig-zag lines produced highly-spirited orchestrations of color and form undulating in a rhythmic pattern that made the untrained eye go crazy. The early balloon-shaped exaggerations were called “bubble letters” encouraging a style that became so convoluted that they defy any amateur’s attempt to read them. A secret code had been established that only the informed could unscramble. Hence the name Wild Style came into its own.

The style exudes a warm sentimentality and egocentrism absent in social and political satire graffiti. While the initial impetus to copy the New York style was instrumental in the expression becoming widespread, there was little impetus for it to continue and thrive. Continuing to mimic the Wild Style beyond the level of curiosity which had initially set it in action came to a dead end.

Insight into the question of whether graffiti is art or vandalism might be gained by considering its corollary — the extent to which we purport to tolerate divergence from normative expectations. We might begin by addressing the expression of these young people as more than an impetus to create an unsettling effect. That is, an understanding of the importance of diversity to the process of change might be achieved by scrutinizing taken-for-granted ways of bringing about cohesiveness and sense of community in society — ways based on a prefigured sense of uniformity, linearity and permanence, which might no longer be effective. Habermas (1983, p. 9) suggests that the project of modernity formulated in the 18th century was an ambitious effort to develop objective science, universal morality, law and autonomous art as an all pervasive rationality freeing each from the burden of a seeming indeterminacy. He goes on to suggest that the extravagant expectations of such an imposition that promised to promote not only the control of natural forces but also understanding of the world and of the self, moral progress, the justice of institutions and even the happiness of human beings failed to deliver its promise. The evolution of each over time has come to mean self determined segments of a rationality detached from each other and everyday life.

Modernity generated in the 19th century a taken-for-granted notion of artist’s behavior as idiosyncratic (art-for-art’s sake) and this was tolerated as a phenomenon contrary to the status quo. Artists, it seems, have always suspected a great hollow in this faith wherein they are positioned both outside the constraints of survival while simultaneously being invited to adopt the conditions of status as “professional” artists. This control of the conditions for doing art has enabled institutions of dominant cultural production — museums, universities, galleries (Gablak, 1984) to attempt to secure and legitimate the means and limits of production in art. Recognition of the weaknesses inherent in such intentions does not mean to suggest the need to abandon established traditions, rather, it invites us to scrutinize a faith that has become overly cautious in respect to how it deals with displays of contraries and differences. It would seem that differences that fly in the face of what tradition holds to be true, that set up situations of opposing tendencies require an arena in which to be heard and responded to in reciprocal terms. This seems to suggest more reflective attention be given to those conditions favouring association, unification and containment in the context of tendencies toward flux, unrest and resistance. What we speak of here is the inevitable presence in action and interaction of opposing tendencies continually in a state of creative flux wherein some contextually conditioned elements exert an influence over what we come to accept as real. Thus, the actualization of a state of difference in any context may be regarded as a healthy form of dialectic and in the larger scheme of things it should not necessarily mean the collapse of order into perpetual chaos.

Institutional ideals which promulgate what art is by measuring the fit of an act and the ensuring artifact with “the facts” have, it seems conveniently ignored some contingencies while reifying others. There seems to be an assumption that communication among members of a collective can be underscored by a valid, shared-in-common belief about art that’s transmissible as such from one member to another. The dynamics of any occasion that invite people to enter into communication on this premise can also be seen to operate by setting up sanctions for normative control and empowerment.
It is in this context that we begin to see street art as an attempt at the reappropriation of the representation of meaning away from institutional control. Street art stands in an active relationship of acceptance and rejection when it exposes institutional attempts to precondition what gets done as art. It is not the artifact that is the exclusive focus of this active reworking of the ground. As we witness the drama that is played out when commercial galleries invite street artists to come inside, there is the realization that the real artistry is as much in the drama of acceptance and rejection as it is in the residue left on walls. The residue left as a mark on walls merely signals that the play is in progress.

Street artists interviewed over an extensive period of time talk about how their work is indeed an active reworking of the grounds of acceptance and rejection with individual difference in mind. Firstly, doing art in unconventional places establishes the act as a possible criminal offence resulting in a rush of adrenaline and a creative high that comes with working in risky situations. Second, the possible condemnation of the act as criminal, with a threat of arrest, has come to be seen as a way of promoting the work of the artist by publicizing that expression is not the property of institutions, and third, subversive messages in street-smart graphics, utilizing corporate advertising gimmicks marks a reflexive harkening back to the task of reconciling art in the context of present day culture.

What is becoming obvious is that modernity's rational modelling of conditions for art, where only certain phenomena get sanctioned, has in the hands of the street artist drawn us into a drama that, however inadvertently, stands to rework what is representable as art.

References


MEN IN FEMINISM

On Tuesday, April 11, 1989, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. in the Wilmington Room of the Sheraton Washington Hotel, a National Art Education Association (NAEA) Convention session titled "Men in Feminism" was held. This event was coordinated by Doug Blandy and Kristin G. Congdon, and the session included a panel whose members were: Georgia Collins, Clayton Funk, Heather Anderson reading a paper by Karen A. Hamblen, Jan Jagodzinski, Ken Marantz, and Amy Brook Snider. An introduction was given by Doug Blandy, and Kristin G. Congdon made concluding remarks. Approximately 60 people attended.

Following are the statements by the session coordinators and by each of the panel members in the order in which they were presented. Sara Snowden contributes a synopsis of the comments from the attending delegates. This synopsis is based on the notes that she took during the session at the request of the session coordinators.

Panel Coordinators:
Kristin G. Congdon, University of Central Florida
Doug Blandy, University of Oregon

Panel Members
Karen A. Hamblen, Louisiana State University
Amy Brook Snider, Pratt Institute
Ken Marantz, The Ohio State University
Georgia Collins, University of Kentucky
Jan Jagodzinski, University of Alberta, Edmonton
Clayton Funk, Teacher's College, Columbia University

Synopsis of Delegate Responses:
Sara Snowden, University of Oregon

INTRODUCTION(S) TO MEN IN FEMINISM

KRISTIN G. CONGDON & DOUG BLANDY

Kristin G. Congdon

In the Spring of 1988 I received a note from Doug Blandy asking if I wanted to co-ordinate a panel on "Men in Feminism" with him. The idea of men working with feminist ideas was not new to our discussions. When we worked together at Bowling Green State University, we often wondered (and indeed frequently laughed) at how gender related the reactions of our faculty and students probably were to our successes and failures.

Shortly after I agreed to coordinate this panel with Doug, I attended a conference in the Pennsylvanian mountains in "Women, Art and Society." This was my first major conference exclusively designed for women dealing with women's issues. It felt different; and it felt good. The first full day, at lunch, a woman I did not know took a seat by me and we readily struck up an active conversation based on the morning's events. We talked about men's place in feminism. Before too long, with anger and disgust, she said to me, "Did you know there is even a book out now called Men in Feminism?" Her inference was that this was women's territory; men did not belong.

That afternoon I head a panel talk about contemporary feminist writers, and the idea of writing with white ink — symbolizing mother's milk — rather than viewing the pen as phallic symbol which negates women's ability to create literature. Women are talking about writing through their bodies. During the discussion, an audience member, who taught Women's Studies courses, talked about how a man in her university was now teaching classes in her department. She said she was trying to accept his position there, but she could not tolerate him telling her to try writing through her body — thereby owning, acknowledging, and thrusting upon her the current feminist theory which she felt strongly belonged to her.

On my way home from this conference I had a long, conflicting dialogue with myself about my participation in the creation of this panel. I strongly believe, as do many other feminists, that feminism — both as scholarship and as activism — is the most exciting, hopeful, revolutionary and viable movement of our times. By creating this panel, by raising this issue, am I in danger of having men take away and distort what belongs to women? And is feminism really a woman's fight anyway?

I wrote Doug about my concerns. What follows is an excerpt from my letter, reflecting on the Pennsylvania conference: "I am coming to the conclusion that clear distinctions need to be made — and I am not yet sure how to make them or where the boundaries seem to lie — but I am ... convinced that men can not (develop or create) feminist art — or feminist theory. They can, perhaps, learn from it and practice feminist perspectives to the good of
their gender — and maybe that is what I was / am responding to as a result of the panel. I feel men should respond to feminism — responsibly. But the boundaries must be drawn in so far as exploitation is a real possibility — once again."

The responsibility for men art educators I refer to is to actively respond, by asking, listening and hearing women speak about: 1) what pornography in all categories of visual art does to us; I do not ask for censorship; I ask for sensitive education; 2) to recognize that pluralistic approaches to educational programming can result in new ways to pay dues; I ask that men actively Feminist theories for the betterment of humankind. or triarchy. My wishes cannot be amandate; the years simply an opinion their place to address issues re. gar ding men as an individual, I have found it more "helpful and think. and re-think my position on this issue (April , 1989). I would like to thank Doug for initiating this panel which has made me think and re-think my position on this issue (April, 1989).

Doug Blandy

Kristin and I assume that the feminist movement is a socio-political reality that has been initiated by women to shape consciousness and thus transform societies and cultures that discriminate against women. We concur with Daly’s (1987) position that the feminist movement is successfully exposing “the basic model and source of all forms of oppression” (p. 75). Like Daly, we also see the feminist movement successfully initiating a change in consciousness and motivating “moral outrage on behalf of women as women” (p. 75). It is this assumption that motivated our “Men in Feminism” proposal to the 1989 NAEA Convention Planning Committee. This proposal was also motivated by a recognition of problems within the field of art education involving the neglect of women and gender issues.

For example, Sacca (1989) testifies to discrimination against women in art education. She reports that prior to 1977, only one article was published in Studies in Art Education on gender differences. She reports that this neglect was attended to in 1977 with a special issue of Studies in Art Education, edited by Packard and Zimmerman, that included seven articles on the topic of gender differences. However, over the next decade, Sacca reports that only eight more articles in 32 issues appeared on gender differences. In her analysis of this research, Sacca concludes that there is evidence that suggests male art educators working in higher education are the primary recipients of status and recognition.

Another example is the NAEA 1989 Convention program (The Board of Directors of the National Art Education Association invites you to attend the 1989 National Art Education Association invites you to attend the 1989 National Art Convention, April 8-12, Washington, D.C., 1989), of which this session is a part. The guest speakers invited to this Convention are a distinguished group. However, of twenty-four guest speakers listed, only five are women. Of the twenty guest speakers pictured, only four are women.1 The speakers who are men represent a diverse group of artists, critics, publishers, administrators, editors, and educators. Only one of the women is not an art educator. It is impossible for me to believe that the Planning Committee could not find women from outside the field, as they were able to find men, who could share their wisdom with the Convention. In addition, the Convention’s Special Events listing includes myriad museum and gallery opportunities. These opportunities draw upon almost all of the major museums and galleries in Washington, D.C. However, the National Museum of Women’s Art is not among them. In addition, the Convention’s study tours ignore women and art as a specific topic.

Feminists within the art education profession are addressing problems such as these, but so must men. This panel is a beginning attempt to clarify and suggest what role men can or cannot, should or should not, have in the feminist movement within art education.

As members of the Art Education profession, we are involved in political work through the choices we make in our professional lives. We will bring to our professional life the authority and power that is inherent in our activities and the activities of our professional association. I concur with Lentricchia’s (1985) position that scholars are most affecting when pursuing political work integral to what they are prepared for and in those arenas in which they work.

Consequently, this session can be seen as a political event. Kristin’s and my purpose in coordinating this event is to provide a forum in our professional association for the participation of art educators in the continuing discussion that is occurring nationally and internationally on the relationship of men to feminist visions and agendas. I am personally indebted to Jardine and Smith (1987) and the example they have set for scholars through their work within the Modern Language Association on this issue. Hopefully, discussions such as this one will contribute to the policies and activities of our Association. Our discussions within art education must include, but not be limited to, the continuing rediscovery and inclusion of contributions by women artists and art educators in research and teaching; and the acknowledgment that gender issues will pervade our thinking on the cultural, biologic, historical, political, economic, and psychological foundations of art education. Feminism will also assist us in our consideration of groups that we might usually think of as being subordinated and victimized. Instead, we can see such individuals as active resisters as feminist historians instruct us in the ways women have resisted (Keniston, 1968).

Over a decade ago, Skouholt (1978) described the impact of feminism in men’s lives. His research suggests at least two options that are available to art educators who are men as they encounter feminism. We can see our options diminish as the options of our women colleagues increase. We can
react with increased competitiveness, desiring to maintain superiority. The much more compelling option, the option with which I am working and the option that also motivates my participation in this session, is to acknowledge responsibility for discriminatory practices and environments, work with women and men for better options for women, and contribute to the critique of masculinity and the male socialization process that contributes to discriminatory practices and environments. Fortunately, we will be supported in this second option through research like Skouholt’s (1978), scholarly responses like that of Jardine and Smith (1987), and professional organizations like the National Organization for Changing Men (NOCM) which sponsors conferences and symposia on the topic.

Footnote

1 It is also important to note that there are also few people of color and other minority group members among the Convention guest speakers.

References


A MODERNITY-POSTMODERNITY DIALECTIC ON MEN IN FEMINISM

KAREN A. HAMBLEN

In my discussion of men in feminism, I will focus on this topic in terms of art educators employed in higher education. My comments are based on the assumption that feminism and its attendant values, attitudes, and behaviors are seen as something that men, in some way, react to, adjust to, or, just plainly, take into consideration at this time in history. An ostensibly neutral stance is not possible-ignoring feminism is itself charged with value judgments. Questions, however, arise as to how an optimum state of sex equity and gender consciousness might occur and what relationships men would have toward feminism given the current character of academia and, specifically, of art education faculties. I will use the terms adaptive, separatist, and androgynous as descriptors of how women relate to male-dominated academia. Conversely, these same descriptors also provide perspectives on how men relate, or could relate, to feminism.

In an adaptive approach, women attempt to be more like men in their professional behaviors, attitudes, and values, and, by acquiring such characteristics, women accept recognition for achievements commensurate with those of their male colleagues. In the adaptive relationship, women try to buy into the patriarchal system of hierarchical power and decision-making - to a great extent this is what women in higher education have traditionally tried to do (Rush, 1987). The second relationship, separatist, exists when women develop their own community of feminist values, attitudes, and behaviors, and work toward getting the administrative hierarchy to consider feminist issues and values as legitimate in their own right. Needless to say, women who have ignored or directly confronted the system in this manner have met with less than optimum success. For example, women who have attempted to receive tenure on the basis of classroom teaching and community service can readily attest to the lack of recognition given to such so-called female activities. A separatist approach does not mean equal consideration. The third way in which women relate to male domination in higher education is through the integration of feminist values with the most desirable values of traditional patriarchies. The results are assumed to be the best of the two worlds of male and female and has been considered androgynous in nature (Collins, 1977).

Adaptive Approach of Men to Feminism

The adaptive approach, wherein feminism would constitute the operative system, appears to be preferable from a feminist viewpoint. If men were required to adapt to feminism, this would constitute a so-called
react with increased competitiveness, desiring to maintain superiority. The much more compelling option, the one with which I am working and the option that also motivates my participation in this session, is to acknowledge responsibility for discriminatory practices and environments, work with women and men for better options for women, and contribute to the critique of masculinity and the male socialization process that contributes to discriminatory practices and environments. Fortunately, we will be supported in this second option through research like Skouholt’s (1978), scholarly responses like that of Jardine and Smith (1987), and professional organizations like the National Organization for Changing Men (NOCM) which sponsors conferences and symposia on the topic.

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The adaptive approach, wherein feminism would constitute the operative system, appears to be preferable from a feminist viewpoint. If men were required to adapt to feminism, this would constitute a so-called
paradigm switch from hierarchical, individualistic power relationships to a communal sharing of decision-making options. This appears to be an attractive alternative to patriarchal modernism, and it has been couched in terms of a change in world views.

An adaptive approach may go beyond feminism per se to an embrace of postmodernist ecological sensitivity, social pluralism, and collectivism. Parallels between feminism and postmodernism are fairly obvious. There are, however, differences that quickly become evident when examined in lived experiences. Postmodernism does not, ipso facto, grant sex equity. The high contextual specificity of postmodernism is all-too-evident in "Good Old Boy Networks." In-crowd, male sources of departmental and higher echelon decision-making at universities are very much based on tradition, personal contacts, and nonrationalized (and nonpublic) actions. Decision-making and the distributions of power and recognition is nonpublic and nonlegalized. As many to-be-tenured women can attest, it is in the high context, personalized enclaves of informal (and nearly invisible) networking that professional decisions are made.

An adaptive relationship also portends the very real danger that men will co-opt feminism. Feminism, in some academic circles, has become an intellectual commodity, wherein feminism makes the form of an intellectual exercise that only finds public expression in journal articles, books, conference presentations, and other traditionally rationalized formats. In this sense, it is very possible that men could come to control definition and directions of feminism. Men are in key positions to influence the shape of feminism that will be given academic credence.

Separatist Approach of Men to Feminism

The separatist approach offers little towards the movement of men in feminism. Separatism allows men to ignore feminist concerns. Women in art education can contribute to the development of programs, serve on committees, counsel students, create their own art work, and receive little recognition for their activities. Since university structures are built along the lines of male hierarchy, and merit is given for conformity to its values, a separatist approach by men to feminism only reifies the status quo.

Androgynous Approaches to Men to Feminism

A combination approach to feminism, wherein there is, to use Collin's (1977) term, an androgynous model for professional action, appears to be the most viable option, among the three relationships of men to feminism discussed in this paper. Androgynous art education university professionals would encompass the best of the male and female worlds, and decisions would be made on the basis of mutual benefit and equity.

Unfortunately, in a sense, we already have a distorted androgynous model in place at this time, with the characteristics of high context decision-making now used to obscure where power resides, and rationalizing processes used to subjugate women and distance them from meaningful input. We have, in effect, an androgynous model that is schizophrenic, with women never sure whether feminist values or male domination rules are operative.

Summary

One needs to assess whether feminism is used as an intellectual rallying point or whether it is part of lived decision-making. Feminism, as an intellectual exercise, can be cloaked in the obscure and alienating language of the academic and of the published research article which do little to change the lived realities of the female art educator. In many respects, feminism itself has become rationalized and objectified in entering the arena of academia, and it could easily become part of contextualized networking that excludes women from participation. Also, men in feminism portend the very real danger that men are being looked to for validation. Women could become disenfranchised from how feminism is defined and interpreted in academic settings. Since men have usually acted as administrative and intellectual leaders, a natural extension of their power could be to co-opt feminism, or, at the least, the outward trappings by espousing feminism through publication, conference presentation, etc.

Will men in art education academia ever be perceived as successful to the extent that they embody feminism? The answer to this, I believe, is that feminism will be prized and legitimated in academia to the extent that a new world is legitimated. Postmodernism offers some incentives for a sharing of power that extends beyond the specific concerns of feminism to include democratic participation, cultural pluralism, ecological responsibility, validating nonrationalistic modes of knowledge, a cherishing of tradition. However, a gender equitable situation requires that aspects of both modernity and postmodernity are validated. The rationalizing processes so dear to modernity and patriarchal hierarchies provide the legislation for equal opportunities. Rationalizing processes bring in outsiders and are subjected to the politicized processes of university decision-making. For example, it has often been the rationalizing processes of legal mandate and formal guidelines that have come to the aid of women employed at universities. It is unfortunate, but equal treatment and equality of opportunity must be legislated.

In curing some of the ills of male domination and modernity rationalism, feminism should not be considered as a panacea or as immune to its own particular set of misinterpretations, abuses, and misuses. The less desirable characteristics of high context values and of post modernity have always been present in university/departmental politics, and they need to be considered in any attempt to promote feminism on the coattails of postmodernity. Moreover, as postmodernity values begin to infiltrate into university power structures and decision-making, it is highly possible that feminist issues per se will be obscured. For men to be in feminism and for feminism to be an active part of art educators' professional lives, new definitions and configurations of power will need to be operative - configurations that encompass some of the safeguards provided by current rationalizing processes, as well as some of the pluralistic decision-sharing that postmodernity promises.
A Personal Addendum

At various conferences, when my mind begins to wander, I often contemplate how individual women would be regarded if they took on the characteristics of some of our male leaders/speakers. What would happen to individual women who would take on commonly accepted male manners of arrogance, abrasiveness, and conceit? Men in feminism raises the converse imaging of how men would appear in the world view of feminism. That requires much less of a stretch of one's imagination.

References


Feminism as Metaphor

Amy Brook Snider

When I was first invited to be on a panel discussing "Men in Feminism," my only thoughts on the topic were, "Sure, we need men in feminism. Feminism is a way of looking at the world, so why not!" But then I continued to myself, how could I be a spokeswoman for men? Maybe only men are in a position to talk about the subject. Perhaps if I read the book, *Men in Feminism*, the selection of presentations from two sessions of an MLA Conference in 1984 which inspired this panel, I'd have more to say about the topic...I did have more to say, although it was not at all what I had expected.

I had an immediate reaction to this sampling of feminist literary criticism. These essays were *about* feminism, but the style and syntax of the language and the insular nature of the discussions seemed inconsistent with feminist values. It was difficult to get to the question of men in this (un)familiar and (un)feminist forum.

My ideas about feminism were shaped during the early 1970's, in one of the consciousness-raising groups spawned by the Women's Liberation Movement. The values which shaped, in some measure, the content and structure of our meetings have been delineated by Kathleen Weiler in her recent book, *Woman teaching for change: Gender, class and power* (1988) as:

- an emphasis on lived experience and significance of everyday life. This is expressed in several different ways: by an assertion that the personal is political; by a rejection of positivism and an interest in phenomenological or social interactionist approaches; by a new definition of the relationship between woman researcher and woman subject (pp. 58-59).

The values which have come to be identified with feminism are certainly not new nor restricted to women. They define a way of being in the world - a way of thinking, seeing, understanding, writing, working, and so forth. I contrasted my understanding of feminism with a typical message from *Men in Feminism* (Heath, 1987, p. 27) which made me feel like Alice listening to the White Rabbit recite the nonsense poem as evidence during her trial. It was as if I had to stand on my head to penetrate the dense thicket of its verbiage. The sentences are long and convoluted with punctuation playing a major role in the communication of ideas. Certain code words laden with hidden meanings, are accessible only after a thorough grounding in the work of other literary theorists.
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But is there another way to write? Aristotle said, “To write well, think like the wise man, and speak like the common man.” The language of feminist literary theorists is not very different from the language of most theorists and critics, including male and female art educators who write for Studies in Art Education, Art and Learning SIG Proceedings, Visual Arts Research, and The Journal of Aesthetic Education, male and female art critics who write for Art in America and Art Forum, and male and female art historians who write in the Art Journal of the College Art Association of America and comparable professional journals. Often the language of theory and criticism is not rooted in actual lived experience. It is abstract, hermetic, self-referential, and inaccessible to the uninitiated. Why, when ideas are difficult, use language to compound the difficulty? Ironically, those who write about practice usually do write clearly but don’t often draw conclusions about their practice. In our field, teachers who write articles in School Arts and Arts and Activities, and to some extent, in Art Education, often describe without reflection, explanation, or commentary. While the language is not convoluted, there are rarely connections made between a particular practice and some other practice or concept. The writing becomes reportage.

What kind of writing should we aspire to in our professional lives? Can this language be shared by practitioner, theorist, and critic? In the next section of my paper, I used passages from the writings of Ernst Gombrich, Sergei Eisenstein, John Berger, and Roger Shattuck, “male” scholars and theoreticians who are models for such “feminist” discourse. These scholars are theoreticians who write in a clear, accessible style, using devices like metaphor, popular references, repetition, and examples from a variety of sources (often outside the boundaries of their discipline), to ensure their communication with the reader. Although I realize that feminist literary critics believe that we can no longer frame our questions and critique in a language that is patriarchal in structure and vocabulary, I am not sure that their strategy will help the majority of practitioners who are unable to participate in their discourse.

Carolyne G. Heilburn in Writing a Woman’s Life (1988) has similar qualms about the literary disciplines of biography and autobiography:

Yet there is a real danger that in rewriting the patriarchal text, scholars will get lost in the intellectual ramifications of their disciplines and fail to reach out to the women whose lives must be rewritten with the aid of the new intellectual constructs. I mean no anti-intellectual complaint here. Without intellectual and theoretical underpinning, no movement can succeed; the failure of feminism to sustain itself in previous incarnations may well be attributable to its lack of underlying theoretical discourse. But we are in danger of refining the theory and scholarship at the expense of the lives of the women who need to experience the fruits of research (p.20).

It is not just women writing about their own lives and lives of other women who need to experience the fruits of feminist and other theoretical research. As teachers who write, we need to begin to use our language to bring together the theorist and the practitioner both within and outside our own discipline.

References


"QUEEN-OF-THE-MOUNTAIN:
A GAME I CAN PLAY"

KEN MARANTZ

From the top, let it be known that I was dragged into this arena, persuaded to participate only out of friendship for the organizers. My avowed reluctance was a function of genuine puzzlement about my ability to add anything of substance to an already overloaded panel (I objected to the number of panelists, concerned about front-end overload) and to concerns which to these simple-minded ears are far too academic for me to understand.

As I gathered clippings, cartoons, conversations, and correspondence, my initial blushing reticence (a female characteristic?) gradually turned to bullish resistance (surely a male characteristic). I used such stereotypes consciously to point out what I've found to be a flood of discourse based on prejudicial generalizations, creating straw men in order to emasculate them. In such an arena, I'm tempted, like the ancient Roman gladiators, to put on my brass knuckles and grab a spear.

In the Women's Caucus, "A Call for Action," there is a public challenge which I can readily rise to, to help explain my current quandary about my role in an alien organization. While Professor Kristin Congdon, the author of this public document, has no doubt that the Women's Caucus "has been a strong force in creating positive change in the NAEA," I remain more doubtful. But we all need to believe in something if we're to get out of bed in the morning. Her point #1 asks for guidelines for non-sexist language. With so much being done in the outside world to pervert our language, what could our tiny art education family add that would make any difference? I, for one, would be happy to totally feminize our language by using "she" except when there is an obvious reference to a male. But, more practically, who will develop such a list and how will it differ from those already in print?

Point #2 asks that we "promote affirmative action guidelines" for NAEA. Again, I question the arrogance of this suggestion in the face of scores, nay thousands, of such well-honed guidelines from the Federal government to local school districts. Anyway, why should this Caucus take on guidelines for that wonderful hermaphroditic "she/ he"? If I want your help, I'll ask for it, thank you.2

The third point deals with sexual harassment on the job. So much stuff is out there, but the Caucus could reinforce the agencies by "developing an information sheet" - a checklist of actions that "constitute" such deviant behavior.

Point four DEMANDS facts - I've been told that this attitude is a male thing with the implication that it's bad. Somehow the general claim that we "recognize the fact that women at all educational levels . . . are not getting hired and promoted as often and as quickly as men" is political cant. My counterclaim is that our field is becoming feminized. The elementary school has fallen long ago, and secondary schools are fast following. Soon even the last bastion of the "Old Boy's Club" (higher education) must cave in to the female forces. Further, I suggest the point should be to examine the quality of the lives of women art educators, not the statistics of their employment alone.

The fifth point, to "act to disseminate information on scholarships, etc. for women, is, indeed, very much the business of the Caucus, Bravo! It is timely, a la number six (which "invites the Caucus on Minority Affairs to respond to the Women's Caucus" goals and directives, helping to delineate future directions), for any self-identified groups with grievances against the MANstream, to get together to form a phalanx for more effective action. Each special interest will have to give up some autonomy; they may have to make compromises they don't like, however.

How far we want to stretch our necks out into fields like toys and TV (point seven) is surely a matter for the NAEA as a whole to discuss. I want our field to get involved with the world of political action. Someone else feels that we can contribute to sex education. How thin do we stretch ourselves? What is our research that can be used "to promote peaceful, cooperative, quality learning processes in all aspects of the media"? Where is it? How good is it? And, for this panel, why THIS Caucus?

Finally, point #8 - and here I sit on nails, fully attentive as a student in order to be shown (don't tell me to read another book, please) "female ways of learning and understanding knowledge" (is there a difference?); for me, the crux of any claim to special gender treatment rests on making this case. Of course, it may take one to know one - i.e., how can I, with my limited male ways of knowing, possibly understand how a female learns? Is there a danger that in promoting such fundamental differences, the case for parity, for equality, may be eroded? "Equal but separate" seems a slogan which may be reborn with a similar nasty result.

If, as my biased mind perceives the scene, we are engaged in a power struggle, a sort of queen-of-the-mountain game, I'm not at all interested in giving away anything. You want it, then come and try and get it. I am a touch offended that my belief in the value of human beings per se should be questioned by one segment of that population. If the Women's Caucus is essentially for all human beings, its current role as Amazon warrior belies such a claim. The strength of the Women's Caucus seems to lie in its role as information generator (points 2, 3, and 5) and promoter of constructive actions to bolster the position of the female art educator. From my perspective today, it seems as if I must desex myself if I'm to play a role in your club.

Please teach me how I've misunderstood your request that I join.

Footnotes

2. Upon reflection, some months after the Convention, I find my vehemence ill-founded. The Caucus can indeed serve us by policing existing guidelines and by coaching interviewees.
THE NOT SO MYSTERIOUS WAYS OF MYSTIFICATION

GEORGIA COLLINS

According to my reading of Men in Feminism, in the Modern Language Association, male interest in feminist issues is already considerable: MLA men lecture and write in the feminist mode; want to be acknowledged for doing so; and ask that discussions of male responsibilities and roles be placed on the feminist agendas. The task of defining roles for sympathetic males in what is otherwise understood to be a woman's "do-it-yourself" movement may be a real problem for our MLA sisters. But back in the NAEA, we have a different set of problems and, I would submit, a unique opportunity for men to join with women - not as "helpers," "honorary feminists" or "sympathizers" - but as co-equals working together to liberate ourselves from the mystifications of membership in this low status, feminine-identified field we call art education.

The first step in any genuine movement toward the liberation of self and others from the oppressions deriving from group membership is a heightened awareness, a "click," or what is known as a raised consciousness. In this sense, consciousness raising can only take place among individuals who are in fact members of the group in question. As art educators, regardless of our sex, we would seem to meet this minimum requirement. If to work in a low-status, feminine-identified field is to share, on some level, the oppression experienced by women in our society, it also makes us vulnerable to the mystifications that tend to plague members of any stereotyped, low status, or oppressed group. (What is mystification? A mystification is an interpretation of a problem which does not really get to the source of that problem and which, if acted upon, will probably intensify, but in any case certainly not solve that problem.) Drawing for the purposes of analogy on my own pre-feminist experience, I find many signs of mystification in myself as well as in the expressed thoughts and behaviors of other art educators, both male and female. And why not? We know that individuals belonging to low status groups tend to internalize this status and suffer from a lack of self-esteem. If women tend to feel inferior to men, why shouldn't art educators tend to feel inferior to artists (and maybe soon, if DBAE is successful), inferior to art historians, art critics, and aestheticians as well? But feelings of inferiority hurt. We seek relief from them. We devise clever methods of escape which avoid, because this, too, will be painful, the raising of consciousness with regard to our shared situation as members of a low status, feminine-identified profession. In the spirit of consciousness raising, then, I will quickly suggest a few of the mystified and mystifying escape games some of us have played as women and some of us, both male and female, now seem, to be playing as art educators.

Reactive Stupidity

Women know how to play dumb, taking advantage of, rather than challenging a stereotype that is used to justify our oppression. As a ploy, it can get us out of a lot of work and can be used as a cover for subversive activity aimed at undermining authority. If women are supposed to be dumb at math, then YOU can balance the checkbook; if we aren't mechanical, then YOU can fix that flat tire. JUST SO, if art educators, male or female, are flaky, then we can close the classroom door and do our flaky thing. The stereotype anticipates our inability to master bureaucracy and we will be understood, if not entirely forgiven, for our late or inadequate lesson plans, our failure to evaluate student progress, our forgetfulness with regard to filling out these tedious forms.

The Double-Bind

We feel damned if we do, and damned if we don't. Women who play the feminine role to perfection, are viewed as poor candidates for public leadership positions. Exhibiting behaviors that would qualify us for such positions, we find ourselves pitied or suspected for being unnatural, unnatural. JUST SO, art educators, male or female, who devote themselves to being good art teachers often find they are held in contempt as failed artists. When we set up our easels in the classroom and go to work in earnest on our painting, we are criticized for neglecting our students.

Super-Woman

To avoid the frustrations of the double-bind, the super-woman takes on both the feminine and masculine roles, striving for perfection in both. Thus, I might hold down a demanding job, then come home and wash, cook, clean, and nurture as if I were a full time homemaker. JUST SO, we super-art-educators, male and female, try to perform at high levels of excellence, not only as teachers, but as artists, as researchers and maybe even homemakers as well. Having risked our health and sanity as super-art-educators, we can, in good conscience, begin to regard ourselves as ....(yes).

Exception to the Rule

Women who feel like exceptions to the feminine stereotype, often claim they don't like women and find men's companionship more stimulating. We exceptions learn to listen to mother-in-law jokes without feeling insulted. Through heroic efforts we feel we have broken the stereotype (at least for ourselves) and would like to put as much distance as possible between ourselves and women who reinforce that stereotype. JUST SO, those art educators, male or female, who aspire to exceptionality in art education, must learn to listen to sneering remarks about our field without flinching. We must learn how to be "present-company-exception." A few years ago at an NAEA conference, an art education graduate student told me her thesis director and would-be mentor advised her that AE was a
rinky-dink field and that if she wanted to be a big frog in this small puddle, she need only publish and present at conferences in more prestigious fields. Last week, a friend of mine in art studio confided that she was puzzled to find the work of a printmaker from a big name art school so tight, so unimaginative, so 20-years-behind-the-times. She said, she discovered why when she talked with him over lunch. In the past, he had earned an EdD in Art Education from XYZ State. To her, this artist, even still, was just an art educator.

Blaming the Victim

If women get raped, it is their fault for being in those places, at those times, wearing those outfits, etc. JUST SO, male and female art educators who are exceptions to the rule, will claim that only incompetent art educators who are exceptions to the rule, suffer from problems related to low status. "My principal knows I do a good job and I get all the money that I need for supplies. What's the matter with you?" Blaming the victim in art education can be one way of expressing our exceptionality. Because I am an exception to the rule, I can, with impunity, make fun of Mickey mouse art education courses; holiday based art projects; the art of the art teacher; (you name it). If once in a while I meet someone who hasn't heard about my exceptionality and I get treated as if I were just another art educator, than I will know who to blame. Not you, not me, but all those art educators who fit the stereotype. But still, life in art education can sometimes seem bleak even for us exceptions. Occasionally we may indulge in a day dream or two.

The Cinderella Fantasy

Mystified women dream of being rescued from their degraded and powerless positions and rewarded for their passive beauty and goodness. They don't dream of being rescued by other women but by a powerful member of the dominant class. Other females will either support us in this fantasy or be regarded as potential competitor; after all, there aren't enough Prince Charmings to go around. Like it or not, some of these other women will have to be wicked step mothers, ugly stepsisters, or fairy god mothers. JUST SO, the Cinderella fantasies of art educators, both male and female, have been recently stimulated by the Getty courtship. Will we be saved from who and what we are? Are some of us, even now, being cast as the impotent father, the wicked step mother, the ugly sister? Are some of us standing in line to be glass-slipper-fitters? Are others of us busy as fairy god mothers preparing to transform art education, to make it attractive and worthy of the great rescue? Is someone watching the clock? (I don't think we could take seeing another band-wagon turn out to be just the old, familiar pumpkin ...)

These are the ways of mystification. For art educators as art educators (male or female) the only known antidote is a raised consciousness of our shared group membership - and all this has meant and might yet come to mean.

ON THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF MEN IN FEMINISM: TAKING A HESITANT STEP THROUGH THE MINEFIELD OF PHENEMINISM IN ART AND EDUCATION*  

JAN JAGODZINSKI

The relationship of men in feminism is an impossible one. On the one hand, the "proposition" of the preposition is intrusive; it signifies break and enter with all the multiple meanings that this entails, from virginal to criminal reproachment. On the other hand, the "proposition" of the proposition is an illusionary one, both in its flirtatious invitation to men and in its very non-existence of being, for there is no inside nor outside. Men are "implicated" in this relationship by virtue of both their difference and indifference which lie on either side of the "membrane" that separates the sexes. In other words, men have already committed the crime but are unaware of it. In the former sense, the crime of indifference, offers the contradictory discourses of woman as 'essence' as opposed to woman as a social cultural construction. Hence the Lacanian question arises: "Does the Woman exist?" In the latter case, with the crime of indifference, the matter is facilely resolved as: the Woman does not exist! She is absent, the male's Other who lacks the Phallus.

If these are the politics of location, or should I say dislocation, as a mail/male, how am I to be delivered? First in indifference. Let me begin by quoting a recent analysis of feminist aesthetics by Rita Felski (1989), who, in my opinion, has danced through the minefield brilliantly. She writes:

"It was argued earlier that no convincing case has yet been made for a gendered aesthetics, for the assertion that men and women write in distinctively different ways or that certain styles or structures in literature and art can be classified as inherently masculine or feminine (p.156)."

This is particularly annoying for a feminist politics unless a strategy can be found: 'to be' or 'not to be' a woman, that is the question! and for this question to be answered depends on the contextual signification which is site/sight/cite specific. Let me explain.
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The earliest liberalist feminist ruse, adopted by middle class white women, was to claim equal status to middle class white men who essentially were the guardians of the Canon, overlords of the cultural heritage. Pejoratively stated, Old Mistresses were resurrected to stand up to Old Masters. The weddings took place in the same cathedrals, the great exhibition halls where Leyster wed Hals, Gentleschi wed Caravaggio and so on. There were even squabbles over property rights. Who owned the portrait of Charlotte du Val d’Ognes - David or Constance-Marie Charpentier; his studio counterpart? Incestuous relationships, illegitimate births, and property rights, metaphorically speaking of course, became issues amongst feminist art historians which repeated patriarchal and capitalist attitudes to ownership of commodity goods and to custody of the Name. Marietta Tintoretto, to give one example, was given back her offspring - Portrait of Marco dei Vescovi and Grandson, which had wrongfully been attributed to the “hand” of her father, Jacob Tintoretto. It was soon discovered, however, that the occupation of genius had already been occupied (Besetzed). It seems that only men with “feminine sensibilities” possessed such a gift, which was vividly on display through the masterful strokes of their hand. Such strokes, could easily be distinguished by connoisseurs from similar attempts by dilettantes and amateurs. The ejaculatory force, energy and vitality just wasn’t “present” in these inferior works. Elizabeth Battersby (1989:3), in her brilliant analyses of the Romantic male genius, had put it this way: “A man of genius was like a woman ... but was not a woman.” Acts of genius were confined to the contexts of the Academies. This location assured men of their privacy so that history painting might be “made” over the bodies of women. The nude, as sir Kenneth Clark, that connoisseur of flesh reminds us, was “invented” by the Greek male “mind” in the 5th century B.C. What Max Headroom is to the simulacra of the high tech market today, the idealized, measured nude was then to history painting. Her representation was now literally in the hands of men, for women were excluded from Academic classes in “life” drawing.

Women have had to learn to appropriate this game of “both being and non-being” for themselves - to become “masculine women” in order to gain access to male domains, by writing under pseudonyms, dressing like men or wearing a mask. When they found becoming like a man failed in their bid to effectively change the historical artistic canon, they became women, arguing for perceptual difference, especially in the rendering of content. Artemisia, to take a typical example, was claimed to have represented Susanna and the Elders from a women’s perspective in contrast to the voyeurism of her male painter counterparts. Content, rather than style, became the issue. Broude and Garrard, as editors of Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany (1982), were representative of this development. Yet it was Svetlana Alper’s essay on Dutch painting, in that edited edition, which put the entire argument of a distinct female perception to question. In her account of the difference between Northern and Italian painting (now a full length book, Art of Describing, 1983), she claimed that Vermeer’s use of the camera obscura had eliminated the spectator from a specific viewpoint. He represented women in their ordinary duties in the Dutch home and had not idealized them, as had the southern tradition. These women, through their painted letters, revealed their elusiveness.

Vermeer’s women were a world apart, inviolate, self-contained, but more importantly - self-possessed. Such a vision was the antithesis of the Italian gaze which coveted the woman as object. Alper’s concluded her thesis in this way: “To want to possess meaning is masculine, to experience presence is feminine... It was not the gender of makers, but the different modes of making that is at issue” (p.198). Despite Alper’s analysis, her voice was ignored. The feminine essentiality of perception was argued on many registers. On the high end of the spectrum, feminists of a liberalist persuasion, like the literary critic Elaine Showalter (1979) had coined the word “gynocriticism” to identify this movement. Casandra Langer (1988) followed suit by calling it gynerealit art criticism. Such claims rested on that well known turn of phrase, “equal but different,” a phrase which was like a moebius strip, continually twisting in the paradoxes it created. It “twisted” the opening of a door’s frame for the identification of a unique female iconography, equal but different from that of men.

Hit Them Where It Hurts

Feminist iconography played itself out on many discursive registers. The strongest forms, were of course the malignance of the phallic in whatever imaginative way possible, such as Lynda Benglis’s pose in the 1974 Artforum where she appeared as a pin up with a huge latex dildo protruding from her genital area, symbolic of her missing phallic. In the late ’60s and early ’70s, Louise Bourgeois’ hung sculpted penises and made breast sculptures which resembled some form of tuberous plant. Then there was Mary Steen’s “Big Daddies,” usually military men “dressed up” as erect penises with army or hard hats perched on top of their heads. The most extreme case of male bashing might be the shooting of Andy Warhol by Valerie Solanas as part of her S.C.U.M. Manifesto. Here, the hate focused on the symbolic phallus was turned toward the entire fetishized “live” male body, reversing the sex-roles of “snuff” films, if you will.

Art, concerning women’s iconography, first and foremost, was manifested through the display of the body; the mildest forms being women represented in active roles in all possible locations where they had been previously excluded, for example - as manual workers, or as professionals, and executives, but it was the vulva and vaginal iconography which gained prominence. The full exposure of the genital area, the vulva becoming iconic of vagina dentata, the toothy female genital mouth with teeth said to swallow a man and reduce him to nothing, played on the male’s fear of castration. It was a further reminder that man was born of woman. As the castrated mother, she was someone to fear. The flower paintings of Georgia O’Keeffe were quickly appropriated as antecedents to this tradition, while Judy Chicago’s The Dinner Party, became the monumental and definitive work of this genre of the ’70s.

Women art educators in the NAEA Women’s Caucus went along with a similar liberalist critique, taking a similar posture, the difference being that their statement was an entire decade late, riding on a well established tradition of feminist art works which had been developed in the early ’70s.
This should not be surprising, given that education as practiced today is a very conserving-socializing institution. Women, Art, and Education (1984) under the editorship of Georgia Collins and Renee Sandell, identifies both trends discussed above. First, an achievement roster is evident. A list of women art educators, all white I believe, are given a paragraph each in recognition; second, the admonishment of sexism and the desire to achieve sex equity appears throughout the book. Equity rather than equality is the significant word, suggestive of difference and the needs of redress. There are echoes of Germaine Greer’s (1979) "obstacle course" thesis. Currently, the Women’s Caucus of the National Art Education Association regularly nominates a woman educator of the year award; the Aafa Rouse Award ensures recognition of the roster’s status. Although there are women art educators who are aware of other developments, Elizabeth Garber (1988) has consistently presented the liberalist stance during NAEA Conferences, it appears that a liberalist base remains fundamental to the Caucus. I would argue that in art education, that these same liberalist arguments are furthered by detailed studies of the autobiographical lives of women art educators: how they came to art (Korzinek, 1985), who they studied with, what their art was like and the lives they led as art educators. This seems inevitable, despite the critiques of such psychobiographical endeavors (Krauss, 1985; Barthes, 1977; Pollock, 1980), since a liberalist feminist position continues to be the one most equated with feminism; it has received the most media coverage over existent controversies. The equal rights legislation and civil liberty issues provide a clear basis for women to argue against discrimination in areas where they feel males have a “monopoly.” It is precisely this liberalist tradition, with its (white) heritage of Suffragette activism, claiming that women are as rational as men, that has gained the most ground. The fight for equal pay, daycare, pregnancy leave, just hiring practices, fair treatment for rape victims, equal job opportunities—an endless list of inequalities can be identified which require constant vigilance for change since virtually all institutions are in the hands of men.

The eventual elimination of the differences between men and women so that an “androgyneous society” might emerge is naively appealing and fuels the desire for liberal change. The term “person,” a neutral word, would replace the extremes of man and woman as gendered subjects with equal characteristics in a ‘sexless society.’ This elimination of specific gender roles has led to much in-fighting, both from feminists who wish to preserve a difference, and from women who shun away from being burdened by yet another label. They are resentful that they must now wear yet another hat in addition to that of the traditional housewife, i.e. the ‘working woman’ who is now expected to compete on male terrain in the workforce — thereby giving up part of her autonomy in her traditional space of the home. As “Virginia Woolf noted in A Room of One’s Own (1929:102) - when a writer like Coleridge insisted that the mind of a great artist was androgyneous, he certainly did not mean that such a mind had any specific sympathy with women. Nor did he mean that a great creative artist is female” (in Battersby, 1989:7). The Romantic androgyne had male genitals with a ‘feminine’ soul. Battersby goes on to point out that the same logic repeats itself in Jung’s view of the androgyne. The woman can only inspire the man to greatness. These problems with androgyne are only a very small part of the controversy. A devastating critique from a psychoanalytic point of view has been brilliantly argued by Facteau (1986). The androgyne can only exist in fantasy life as the phallic Mother. Once the overlays of color, class, age, ethnicity, and ideology are added to the difficulties of the liberalist discourse, feminism can become a morass of “contradictions of oppression.”

These contradictions are made even more problematic when socialists feminists examine the liberalist feminist art history and its forms of gynocriticism. The best known American social feminist critic continues to be Lucy Lippard, who, throughout her writing career, by and large, present a marked contrast to Linda Nochlin. Lippard’s recent book, Get the Message (1984) presents a review of politically socially active women in performance, video and in more acceptable studio activities. British feminists have had a more ingrained socialist tradition than that of the American context. Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock’s Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology, written in 1981 from a social feminist point of view, in my opinion, further puts to flight the question of a distinct feminine aesthetic. In their first chapter, “Critical stereotypes: the ‘essential feminine’ or how essential is femininity,” the authors chart a strategy which preserved the question of women’s art, but did so by examining the way history was written and the way women were recorded and described, positioned by and in it; the relationships between women artists and institutions of art and ideology as they appeared historically in their shifts and changes were examined discursively. “The concept of ‘Woman,’ they write,” whose history we have been tracing is not based on biology or psychology, but is rather a structured social category - a set of roles prescribed for women, ideologically sustained and perpetuated by being presented as descriptions of women” (p.113). By this they mean a linguistic signifying discourse which pre-exists as a “series of historically reinforced codes, signs and meanings” which could be manipulated and even transformed, but which could never exist outside of that particular “text.” Griselda Pollock (1988), in particular, continues this influential examination of women in art history, developing the notion of woman as ‘sign.’ I shall come back to this ‘post-structuralist’ position later, for now there is need to comment on the pronounced emphasis on ‘individualism’ as developed in the modernist bourgeois context.

Germaine Greer’s The Obstacle Race (1979), and more recently, Borzello and Ledwidge’s (1986) Women Artists (1986), present a residual sense of idealism which is characteristic of the bourgeois liberalism. The social is now defined only in terms of obstacles, or “barriers, beliefs, prejudices,” (Pollock, 1988:144) placed around an individual’s freedom of action; the implication being that such obstacles, the result of false consciousness, can be dispelled by an act of will alone. The contradiction of this idealism,...
ACTING OUT CARING: AN ANDROGYNOUS TRAIT

CLAYTON FUNK

A problem in gender studies concerns frequent critique of sex-role stereotypes. But how often do we analyze characteristics that men and women have in common? The notion is doubtful that women must be essentially nurturant and empathic, and that men must be analytical and assertive. The strongest educators possess the best of both, no matter the gender, and are usually capable of modeling a sensibility of caring about learning.

Caring has been discussed psychologically and philosophically. In the psychological sense, Sandra Bem’s theory of “psychological androgyny” views masculinity and femininity as two logically independent (orthogonal, perpendicular) and linear, bipolar ends of continua, thus reflecting the concept that one can be both masculine and feminine (Bem, 1976, p. 49). On one end of this scale are the masculine characteristics, one of which is the intellect. On the other end are feminine characteristics, one of which is empathy. Bem might argue that an educator, aware of the tension between intellect and empathy, usually behaves in psychologically androgynous ways. Male or female teachers who can be both analytical and empathic are the most effective.

Just as the above apparatus of androgyny helps us understand intellect and emotion, in a philosophical sense, it is arguable that a complete education balances one’s knowledge with one’s emotional responses to temper ones “know how.” In other words, “know how” or skill informs our decisions, and that knowledge is tempered by an awareness of feelings. This tension is cultivated by educators whose plans usually consider both. Content is stored as knowledge, while empathy and judgments direct the making of choices (Martin, 1981). These informed, careful choices affect the welfare of others and can be generalized as caring. In terms of sex role characteristics, such caring is often seen as a feminine trait, attributable to women alone. However, the acting out of caring is more androgynous; it involves the memory of caring in tension with the spontaneity of sensing when to care.

Defined in many ways, caring is evident in traits, like integrity, self-respect and self-criticism, which are usually difficult to explain, yet are considered vital to education. In some settings, such as classes in morals and ethics, these traits are emphasized formally. In other more informal settings, the modeling of these character traits compose the classroom atmosphere. Modeling in this way is a “carefulness” about teaching and learning. Through it, we sharpen our concern for learning. Caring augments our judgments about ourselves and others. To care about a person, or the craft of one’s painting involves attention and sensitivity. The caregiver may choose to carry out or to ignore the claim of the Other.

Nell Noddings (1976) argues that direct, externally observable action is not always necessary to caring. The complex delicacy of human empathy can either enhance or annihilate classroom climate. If it does not fall in student’s best interest for teachers to draw on a student’s drawing, or tell the student which color to choose, then too much involvement may rob a student of their power of decision making. However, if the teacher decides to be patient and allows the student to risk an artistic experiment, then allowing the student to decide is an example of caring that seems appropriate. A quiet discussion afterwards on the consequences of the decision relates the outcome to the student’s coping with success and failure later in life. In this way students are afforded a chance to structure solutions to problems for themselves.

Taking the time to deal with basic and vital issues of character promotes caring. As Ryle (1975) has observed, we are often reluctant to, accept in theory an idea which we accept unhesitantly in daily life, ... that people can ... learn to want things, ... admire things, ... care about things, learn to treat things seriously in word, deed and tone of voice, learn to be revolted ... to respect, approve and back things, ... scorn and oppose things and so on (p.52).

Such reluctance stems from over-emphasizing abstract thinking or doctrine. Becoming immersed in theory and doctrine distances one from practice and the risk of becoming empathetic with other people. Learning is driven by caring to learn; taking risks heightens our care about what is done. Such qualities are difficult to convey without the teacher’s own modeling of caring and critical thinking. So, we can begin to understand why it is so difficult to teach pupils to be critical.

Finally, when we are the least aware, we often choose to act carelessly, and constantly obstruct the pathways through which empathy builds into learning. Caring, as complete and varied as it is, carries forth empathy which is central to trust of feeling and thought, both of which impinge on the risk of learning. Caring is difficult to define as a single quality, and yet its absence is vivid. Both men and women act out caring. The degree to which individuals are aware of their positive androgynous traits is the degree to which they are conscious of their caring towards others.
References


Selected Delegate Responses to "Men in Feminism"

Sara Snowden

In response to Ken Marantz’s remarks, one woman questioned whether he was really “challenging us [women] to knock you off the mountain” because his own academic record revealed an acceptance of women. “This isn’t a power struggle,” Marantz replied, but added he thought women could be revolutionaries, “otherwise they won’t change the [power] structure much.”

Mario Asaro complained that he felt like he was in church listening to sermons. He said there should have been an open discussion involving the audience; the panel members spoke for 80 minutes before there was a chance for dialogue. He felt there was a need for the panel and audience to reflect upon and discuss relevant points after each presentation. Panelists’ points were “excellent” and “well thought out,” but the delivery was dry and sometimes hard to understand, he added.

However, Linda Ettinger of the University of Oregon thought the presentations were “catalysts for thought,” with each statement reflecting the character of the panelists in a way she had not seen before. She thanked them for conveying their “passionate” feelings about the topic and responding on a personal level. A second audience member added she too liked the diversity of thought reflected in the panelists’ statements and would like to see them published.

Jan Jagodzinski then said that personal discourse often fails to historicize, remaining instead at a phenomenological or interpretive level. He said he wanted “to continue to problematize the discourse of feminism,” whereupon an audience member asked what he mean. Amy Brook Snider suggested “we speak so we can all understand.” Jagodzinski countered that “difficult arguments can be slowed down by clear, easy language.”

Another audience member wanted to know if competition is an issue with feminism, considering how pluralist theories open new ways of problem-solving, according to Kristin Congdon. Heather Anderson responded, “I’m not an Amazon or competitive; I only want some equality.”

An audience member said he was disturbed that the panel had not expressed a more global outlook in their comments. But Jagodzinski said he thought that Karen Hamblen had addressed global concerns in terms of “eco-feminism.” Marantz objected, saying the NAEA is an American institution which has a lot of problems, and “no way” can it begin to solve problems globally in a pragmatic way.
References


Selected Delegate Responses to "Men in Feminism"

**Sara Snowden**

In response to Ken Marantz's remarks, one woman questioned whether he was really "challenging us [women] to knock you off the mountain" because his own academic record revealed an acceptance of women. "This isn't a power struggle," Marantz replied, but added he thought women could be revolutionaries, "otherwise they won't change the [power] structure much."

Mario Asaro complained that he felt like he was in church listening to sermons. He said there should have been an open discussion involving the audience; the panel members spoke for 80 minutes before there was a chance for dialogue. He felt there was a need for the panel and audience to reflect upon and discuss relevant points after each presentation. Panelists' points were "excellent" and "well thought out," but the delivery was dry and sometimes hard to understand, he added.

However, Linda Ettinger of the University of Oregon thought the presentations were "catalysts for thought," with each statement reflecting the character of the panelists in a way she had not seen before. She thanked them for conveying their "passionate" feelings about the topic and responding on a personal level. A second audience member added she too liked the diversity of thought reflected in the panelists' statements and would like to see them published.

Jan Jagodzinski then said that personal discourse often fails to historicize, remaining instead at a phenomenological or interpretive level. He said he wanted "to continue to problematize the discourse of feminism," whereupon an audience member asked what he meant. Amy Brook Snider suggested "we speak so we can all understand." Jagodzinski countered that "difficult arguments can be slowed down by clear, easy language."

Another audience member wanted to know if competition is an issue with feminism, considering how pluralist theories open new ways of problem-solving, according to Kristin Congdon. Heather Anderson responded, "I'm not an Amazon or competitive; I only want some equality."

An audience member said he was disturbed that the panel had not expressed a more global outlook in their comments. But Jagodzinski said he thought that Karen Hamblen had addressed global concerns in terms of "eco-feminism." Marantz objected, saying the NAEA is an American institution which has a lot of problems, and "no way" can it begin to solve problems globally in a pragmatic way.
One audience member identified herself as a high school teacher who had come to the session hoping to gain some direction for how her culturally diverse students can break gender barriers and be full human beings. She was seeking illumination, but after this presentation "I'm still just as much in a quandary."

"It's a paradox... in order to end oppression of women, we write about it and therefore celebrate it," another person in the audience said. But Kristin Congdon disagreed. In viewing feminism as a pluralistic approach, the first step is to acknowledge oppression, and then to value women's ways of problem-solving and creating within their limitations.

One self-described "action-oriented" listener thought the NAEA planners needed to be convinced that the imbalance of male and female conference presenters should change. But Marantz said he felt like an oppressed minority when encountering the "old-girls' club" that has existed within the NAEA in the past.

An audience member said the panel should have considered class issues, not just gender, which is only one aspect of a total problem of oppression. But another individual challenged her, saying that oppression of women occurs worldwide in all classes.

Audience members were all given questionnaires which asked for responses and suggestions to current feminist issues within the field of Art Education.

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**Examining Environmental Advertising Imagery Through Art Education**

**TOM ANDERSON**

This is an examination of advertising imagery in the United States, with particular emphasis on outdoor advertising, and a proposal for an art curriculum focused on advertising awareness. The method is socially-oriented art criticism funded by some history of advertising and the psychology and philosophy of persuasive, manipulative, and pecuniary symbolism. The intent is first to "decode the aesthetic environment" (Barbosa, 1988) and then present a structure that helps art students to do the same. The examination begins with the object and returns to the subject for validation (Ecker and Kaelin, 1970), but "ends with an understanding of personal experience, values, and social attitudes" (Nadaner, 1985, p. 12). It is what Jagodzinski (1983) calls making the unconscious conscious.

A goal of art education is to foster general adult life competence (Broudy, 1987). This is partially accomplished through image literacy (Rush, 1987), not just of the so-called "high" or "fine" arts, but of all forms of human-made objects. In light of this goal, examination of the omnipresent commercial image is an appropriate task. Most people, including most art professionals, live most of their lives in the common realm of everyday life outside their specialized areas. It is this in-common everyday life which is most widely experienced and shared (Maquet, 1986). As an aspect of this shared experience, commercial images may, in fact, be more important to attend to than the traditional arts normally examined in the art curriculum. This view encompasses what Eisner (1985) would call the "social adaptation and reconstruction" view of curriculum development. The point is that through critical attention to what exists, students are empowered to act upon the world in an intelligent fashion, rather than being pawns, acted upon by the forces of their times (Freire, 1973).

**Advertising and the Built Environment**

The question to ask, from an aesthetic perspective, is why the built environment looks as it does. If the aesthetic is a significant factor in urban design why is Wilshire Boulevard (Tennessee Street, Biscayne Boulevard,) filled with such a jostling, crashing, brash, competing jumble of signs that have no integrative aspects or subtlety? Obviously something other than a traditional aesthetic sensibility is at work, or some other philosophical underpinning is dominating the aesthetic. Possibly it is both of the above.
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The signs, like other forms of human communication, must be seen as having some specific and understandable end-goal. That end-goal, obviously, is the selling of goods and services. The centers of our towns and cities, and the "strips" with their neon façades are a testament to the capitalist system and the pecuniary philosophy underlying it. Whether one sees the neon jungle as an aesthetic wasteland or an aesthetic feast depends on the underlying philosophy to which s/he ascribes. Commercial images are instrumental in purpose. Whether they are beautiful, repelling, abrasive or innocuous is only vehicular to their primary purpose of selling goods and services. The only point of a sign is to sell something. Form falls in line behind that function.

Symbolic Communication and Pecuniary Philosophy

Symbols are arbitrary marks or forms which are agreed upon as representing some meaning beyond themselves. They are concrete manifestations of the all-at-once human capacity to function emotively, intellectually and intuitively in the manner we call metaphor. In giving form to metaphor, and in being agreed upon, symbols are intrinsically cultural in their genesis, use and understanding. As goal oriented communication, symbols represent the values which underly them (Gordon, 1971). This is what makes a dollar worth more than its ink and paper. The power of symbols, then, lies in their metaphoric ability to stand for an intrinsically unrelated phenomenon through transmission of a culturally agreed upon emotional substratum on which they feed. That is why a swastika means one thing to a Polish Jew and another to an Indonesian Hindu.

Advertising's use of symbolism is based in what Henry (1963) calls pecuniary philosophy. Every philosophical system has foundational truths and a logically integrative self supporting conceptual structure. The foundational truth in pecuniary philosophy is money. Statements and symbols which contribute to making money, then, are true pecuniarily, whether or not they are true according to traditional standards. An example of pecuniary pseudo truth is examined in the second critique later in this article. In order to validate the truth of pecuniary statements and symbols, pecuniary philosophy must develop its own integrated universe which is consistent within the cultural framework of pecuniary goal directedness. Thus pecuniary symbol use fulfills all the requirements of symbolic communication in general. It is goal oriented communication transmitting the substratum of emotion, the meaning of which is agreed upon by a given cultural group.

The problem is, that the pecuniary symbol is a form of propaganda. That is, it has a concealed purpose which is predetermined and manipulative (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1986). It is not transactional for the purpose of mutual communication. The ends are always predetermined to serve the advertiser's best interests, and these ends are obscured or concealed toward the goal of manipulation of behavior.

This does not imply quite as much freedom as it may seem at first for the advertisers to say whatever they want in the pursuit of sales. Although the economic institutions are dominant, they are not all-powerful. Other powerful social institutions, such as formal education, continue to exert the influence of more traditional values. If pecuniary philosophy gets too obviously out of line with the value systems espoused by the rest of the culture's institutions, it will of course create conflict in the potential consumer. This conflict would result in loss of institutional trust and probably a loss of sales. In effect, by blatantly going too far, advertising would negate its raison d'être. Methods of circumventing traditional values and standards have to be invented. The next section will look at the development of some of these methods.

Historical Perspective

It is claimed that the first bona fide use of outdoor advertising goes back to an Egyptian ruler who put up a poster for the return of a runaway slave (Gowans, 1974). In Babylonia, merchants put up signs outside their shops to draw attention to their goods and services. However, it was the Romans who were to make the first widespread use of outdoor ads. The Romans are also credited with being the first to develop logos, or standardized, non-word symbols, used for the purpose of commercial identification. A good example of this form which is still used today is the pawnbroker's three-balls sign. The reason for the development of logos was, of course, that very few people could read.

There was little real change in format or usage of outdoor signs until the nineteenth century. Then, in the 1870's machines were introduced that could crank out standardized ads by the thousands. With this change came the repetitive symbol. This standardized symbol is more specialized than the pawnbroker's balls in that it represents only one brand of pawnbroker. Examples of the standardized symbol of this sort in use today include the chevron used by a gasoline company or the Rock of Gibraltar used by an insurance company.

Along with all these standardized ads came the need for their display. Enter the advertising agency. Advertising agencies were formed in the 1870's for the prime purpose of constructing billing platforms, or billboards, which they then rented as a service to those companies who wanted to advertise. Thus the modern system was born.

P.T. Barnum is credited as being the first major user of modern advertising in North America (Gowans, 1971). He utilized the standardized symbol and the repetitive technique, in conjunction with the compulsive format. Barnum's obvious success with these techniques demonstrated such a system worked. By the 1890's the use of the repetitive, standardized symbol in a billboard format reached a point of excess. One could not go anywhere without seeing a billboard for Pers's Soap, including the deserts of Nevada and the Sudan. At this point, citizens' groups formed in protest and a great number of billboards came down.
This was not a great setback for the billboard industry. They had already recognized that the repetitive symbol on billboards was becoming less and less effective. There were two reasons for this: (1) the increasing sophistication of the consuming public, and (2) the fact that everyone in the mercantile trade was using the technique. Thus, the individual symbols were simply getting lost in the clash and clamor. Because of the advertising industry's awareness of these factors, work had begun on new techniques even before the billboard slowdown.

One of the techniques that evolved has become known as the psychological hard-sell. According to Gowans (1971), this is advertising based on shame and envy. It appeals to:

- ruling interests and motives—the desire to be healthy, to hoard, to possess, to wear smart clothes, to get something for nothing, to be more like the privileged and successful classes. It is not suggesting how good a product can make your life, but how miserable your life will be without it (p. 45).

Pelfrey and Hall-Pelfrey (1985) suggest that this psychological hard-sell technique plays not only upon shame and envy, but upon every human emotion that can be exploited: love, hate, pride, sex drive, death anxiety, family, religious and other loyalties, and so on, ad infinitum.

The advent of the psychological hard-sell is probably a prime factor in the new-found power of the mercantiles to create needs through advertising. They have developed the ability to manipulate consumer tastes to make the consumer feel that he needs certain products: he needs a new car, he needs an underarm deodorant, and so on (Nicola, 1983; Olsen and Reynolds, 1983; Stokrocki, 1988). By suggesting that the elite do not do without a certain product, the advertiser implies that only a common person, a basically unsuccessful individual who cannot afford the product, does without it. The consumer's (substitute 'person's') motivation to buy, then, is not primarily economic, but social. People are not buying Fords, fedoras and football tickets, but social security.

The technology responsible for the proliferation of outdoor advertising, and for the advances in advertising technique, now manifests itself in more powerful advertising media such as television, radio, magazines, and newspapers. This technology also allows advertisers to employ sophisticated marketing which focuses on so-called target groups of consumers (Meyers, 1984). Advertisements are directed toward a particular group who will be watching a given television program, or reading a certain magazine, or even a certain section of the newspaper. Advertisements are carefully crafted in style and content to appeal to white females aged fifteen to twenty-one, yuppy moms, or black middle-class males who make over $30,000 a year. While these more efficient ad media have not eliminated outdoor ads, they have relegated billboards and on-premise, point of purchase displays to supporting roles.

Billboards particularly play a secondary role now. Whereas they once served as the primary medium, their present role is one mostly of memory jogging and keeping the pressure on, of keeping Coca-Cola or Marlboros fresh in the consumer's purchasing consciousness. Since the main message has been delivered via television or some other medium, and since the message is universally standardized, all it usually takes is a little billboard jog, a short phrase maybe, no more, to keep the current ad theme in the viewer's mind.

The Psychological Setting

Psychologically, contemporary advertising presents a manipulative view of humankind. People are seen not as self-directed or as having needs other than the material. Rather they are viewed as "brain boxes" to be filled with "memories of cereals and beer and razor blades" (Leavitt, 1960; Meyers, 1984). The primary agenda in advertising is attaining a state of need arousal in the potential consumer (Alwitt, L.R. and Mitchell, A.A., 1985; Olson, J.C. and Reynolds, T.J., 1983). Supporting concerns are convincing the consumer of the availability of the goal object ('Now! You can afford a Cadillac'), its value relative to its difficulty in being attained, and all those values of rightness and wrongness perceived by the consumer in the ownership of the object (Meyers, 1984).

A national advertisement incorporates as many of the above motivations as possible using a variety of sophisticated techniques. One technique, embedding, uses emotion-laden words or symbols embedded in the ad so that the perceiver will be consciously unaware of them (Weinstein, S., Drozdenko, R., and Weinstein, C., 1986; Key, 1972). According to Freudian and Jungian psychology, about 90% of sensory input comes in at the subconscious level (Key, 1972; Jung, 1974; Packard, 1957). This cognitive unexamined sensory input then has the potential to effect later decision-making without the individual's being aware of the reasons for the choices made. Clinical testing has proven the effectiveness of subliminal cues in promoting buying behavior (Weinstein, Drozdenko, and Weinstein, 1986). Thus, in advertising, the object is to arouse emotions subliminally, avoiding the conscious decision-making process. This embedding technique allows this emotional arousal to attach itself to the product in question when it comes time to buy. According to Wilson Bryan Key (1972), sex is the most frequently embedded word in the American advertising industry. Multi-dimensional printing techniques permit advertising artists to plant taboo emotional words dozens of times in a single layout (p.109).

Archetypical forms (Jung, 1964) as well as words are embedded. Common symbolic archetypes found in national ads are the apple, the dog, the snake, the sun, the moon, and all sorts of phallic and vaginal forms.
Symbols are poor specific communicators but very effective in communicating the substratum of emotion. For the advertiser's purposes this is an advantage, not a drawback. The idea is only to arouse emotions, not to deliver the message in this mode. Often the more unspecified the arousal in the consumer, the better, it is easier for the advertiser to give direction to that emotion on the conscious level.

In short, the advertising industry long ago realized that at the conscious level we have the power to decipher, weigh, and possibly reject. At the unconscious level, the brain apparently resists little, if anything brought in by the precursors. Thus it is logical that most marketing appeals are directed toward the unconscious. Advertisers want to develop a predisposition toward their product and for it to stay in the subconscious until it comes time to buy.

The question which arises at this point is, how do they get away with it? Why does the public put up with embedding and other subliminal techniques? The question has been partially answered. The ad industry is sneaky, it manipulates its way through the world of traditional values trying to legitimate its own view with all of its considerable resources. The other reason advertisers get away with what they do is that, as in any functional society, Americans have been enculturated to trust their institutions. This trust is precisely what the ad industry plays on. In the words of Key (1972):

Merchandiser's illusions depend upon consumers who cannot be certain whether the SEXES are their own creation or that of the merchandiser. As long as the consumers are uncertain should they detect subliminal stimuli they will logically assume they are imagining things and pass off the notion without a second conscious thought.

Critiques

A good example of the technique of irrational association is represented in Figure 1 (p.149). If one looks for a moment at the picture, s/he will see a very attractive woman of maybe 20, with the desired 1980's body type. Also pictured is a young man in his prime, also very attractive. That they are in a private pool is implied by the diving board and the fact that she is lying on it (one does not lie on the board of a public pool). The two of them seem to be in a world all by themselves, and obviously they are enjoying each other very much. In fact, there seems to be strong sexual attraction indicated by the girl's teasing actions, her curled toes, and his obvious delight. Also they both have scrumptious looking concoctions to help them enjoy their pleasurable situation. But nowhere in the picture does one see anything that is clearly milk. The only place one is directly informed that this advertisement for milk is in the caption: "Cool It...With Beautiful Milk."

This particular ad is very good in that it follows the rules of irrational association: (1) It uses a strong picture to captivate and pull one into the ad (just imagine yourself in such a situation!). (2) It does not even try to rationalize a tie between the caption and the picture. For the association of unrelated, irrational ideas to work effectively in selling a product there must never be anything which ties the two elements concretely. The trick is to persuade by insinuation alone. In effectively using this technique, the advertiser relies on the audience to transfer ideas and emotions from one part of the total image to another. The audience does this (subconsciously) because both images, though unrelated, are in the same physical context; our biological/cultural adaptation has taught us to regard parts of one thing as unified purposefully (Arnheim, 1986). According to Gowans (1971), "the more irrational the association of ideas the more effective it is likely to be" (p. 392). He adds that the idea is to "discourage logical thought altogether. The successful advertisement is one that makes an irrational association instantaneously, before customers have any time to reflect."

Looking at the milk ad again, one can also see the psychological hard-sell in the private swimming pool, seemingly endless leisure time, idealized youth and beauty many of us do not have. These are the kind of people who drink milk. Obviously, one of the ways we can be like them (while we save our money for the pool) is to drink it too.

A good example of pecuniary pseudo-truth is shown in Figure 2. (p.150). In the traditional sense, it would be absurd to say that "Winston is taste." Winston is a cigarette brand, not taste. In terms of the appeal to ruling interests (status, class identification), as found in the psychological hard-sell, however, the words "Winston is Taste" take on a new meaning—actually several new meanings. The advertiser hopes to make Winston cigarettes synonymous with taste (as in taste buds) and with taste (as in Ming Dynasty vases on one's mantle piece). In this particular ad, the designer has been quite successful in achieving this goal. It sells Winstons, and, thus, in pecuniary terms, it is quite true to say that "Winston is Taste."
The Aesthetics of Outdoor Advertising

Any element in an ad which does not contribute to the goal of selling goods and services is dysfunctional. The first job of an ad is to attract the perceiver's attention. Entire volumes are devoted to understanding the means of getting the consumer's attention and understanding his/her processing strategies. In Alwitt's (1985) advertising terms, any element of the ad not contributing to this goal is unesthetic. Secondarily, the visual elements must communicate something specific to the potential consumer. To eliminate the dysfunctional in this context means to dispense with whatever does not contribute to the specific message the advertiser is trying to communicate. This naturally excludes all decoration for its own sake in advertising art. Decoration communicates nothing specific, thus in pecuniary terms, it is a useless art form because it does not pay its way.

In its structure, advertising design deals with the same elements and principles as other art forms: line, shape, form, color, texture, movement (implied and actual), rhythm, balance, proportion, unity, and variety. Proportion of the advertising image in relation to the other environmental factors is also a primary concern. Obviously, the larger the object, the more of one's field of vision it will include, and the more likely it is to be seen.

Since clarity of communication (of intentionally fuzzy concepts) is of central importance, ad design naturally takes simplicity as another of its essential structural parts. A good ad is direct, with a minimum of clutter and confusion. In billboard advertising, for example, it is generally accepted that large, minimal shapes are the ideal, and that more than seven words are too many. The reason is that the advertiser wants the consumer to "read" the board in six seconds or less (which is the time they have estimated, from their research, it takes for a motorist to get from where s/he first sees the board to where s/he goes past it.

Another intrinsic factor in advertising aesthetics is movement. Movement attracts more attention than static forms. When it is not possible to include movement in a sign, the suggestion of movement is an effective substitute, many advertisers will stop a person (or some other entity) in motion.
It cannot be stressed enough that in all these processes the advertiser does not want the viewer to critically step back for an objective look. A billboard is not trying to bring the consumer to any kind of heightened awareness. Rather, it is attempting just the opposite. It is playing on the emotional/intuitive self to try to make the perceiver one with the collective image of the culture as formulated by the ad medium! The advertising aesthetic is not personal or idiosyncratic as a medium. Rather, it is the same sort of collective or tribal image Edmund Carpenter (1974) depicts in preliterate societies. Advertising might be said to be the cave painting or the “graven images” of modern society. In any case, we are dealing again with a less than fully conscious interchange on the part of the perceiver. The advertising industry, is the shaman who creates magic the public is not supposed to understand and likes it that way.

Toward this end, in the design of most ads, there is the striving for what could best be described as an all-at-onceness. That is, the advertiser is interested in unity which strikes the observer with an immediate impression. None of the elements can be entities in and of themselves, and so detract from the all-at-onceness. Details are designed not to be consciously picked up by the consumer but to contribute to the global impression which is the ad’s overall goal.

Other aspects of the advertising aesthetic are appropriate for discussion here. For example, the industry contends that shape has sexual identity and connotations. Round shapes and almond shapes are feminine, while angular and squarish shapes are masculine. Through the use of either masculine or feminine shapes exclusively, advertisers try to promote each product as either masculine or feminine. Every nationally advertised product is of a definite gender in terms of its advertising. In standardizing the image of a product, the lettering also plays an important role. Obviously, the strong square letters used in a Michelin tire ad would be out of place in an ad for Chanel #5.

However, the aesthetic elements also contribute to the ideational vagueness of an ad. The picture should not be too well-defined ideationally. This allows the greatest possible number of people to project themselves into the situation in that picture, and thus, of course, to be empathetic to the product which that picture is trying to sell. Ittleson, Pronshansky, Rivlin, and Winkel (1974) state that “the greater the ambiguity or lack of structure or clarity of the object, place or event to be observed, the greater the influence of inner or behavioral determinants on the precepts that emerge” (p. 86). The element of ambiguity is particularly important in outdoor advertising in that, unlike other advertising forms, it does not direct itself to a specific audience. Advertisers know that an ad in Woman’s Day will be read by a different type of reader than one in Playboy, and they direct their efforts accordingly. However, the whole of the heterogeneous population circulates around billboards.

Color in advertising is also used primarily for its psychological, manipulative value. According to Steven Baker (1961) “...each color has values in and of itself.” Blue is a cold color, red is hot. Blue is calm, slow, relaxing, while red is stimulating and time-shortening, and yellow is ambiguously energetic. In addition, color is often used to appeal to people on the basis of their sex, or of their age group. For example, advertisers have determined that children tend to prefer yellow, while older than middle-aged people almost always prefer blue. Violet tends to be a very non-commercial color as opposed to the primary colors which are very commercial. The simple “colors” sell.

Advertising and the Environment

Two types of signing are on-premise and off-premise. On premise refers to shop signs, distributor signs, and product or service origin signs. Off-premise consists of space rented by a mercantile to promote a product or service (See Figure 4, below). Other common forms are transit advertising and point of purchase displays. Billboards are far and away the dominant environmental advertising medium. The common billboard size is twelve feet high by twenty-five feet wide. Since the point of advertising is to get attention and communicate a message, every ad is in competition with every other ad and with stop lights, street signs, buildings, and so on. The dominant aesthetic mode, then, is one of big, bright, simple forms placed in a position of relative environmental dominance. This aesthetic sets the stage for the environmental clash and clamor we all know.

If “symbol clusters reflect and reveal a civilization’s philosophy” (Gordon, 1971), and the built environment has a symbolic meaning as a whole, then, a materialistic ethos as represented by commercial signs is the dominant value represented on American streets. The nature of billboards as a standard medium also says the United States is a society on wheels. In addition, competition is personified through the advertising on our streets. Where pecuniary dominance is absolute dominance, a bigger sign and better location are indicative of a more successful company. Furthermore, commercial images exist as symbolic of Americans’ willingness to take much of what they buy and how they live at a superficial level. Commercial images refer the perceiver to jingles and contrived circumstances that have little to do with traditional notions of real content, truth, value, or substance. Finally, in the face of the plethora of outdoor advertising, one may ask the
question, what is the most desirable use of the public's space? Who has the rights to public space and the power to influence its appearance? Maybe, as Edward Hall (1969) would have it, due to heightened schedule needs, Americans do not have clearly defined space needs. Private property is almost sacrosanct in our culture. Do the economic institutions take advantage of this unfairly?

All of these are questions which cannot be answered here, but which could serve as a nexus for the development of a curriculum examining advertising images not only as formal constructions, but as carriers of societal mores, values, and assumptions. The crucial point to remember is that in commercial images one is dealing with economic, not aesthetic issues. Aesthetic factors either support a pecuniary agenda or they are eliminated.

Questions and Issues for Curriculum Planning

Questions to be discussed in relation to critiques of advertising imagery might be structured around 1) the nature of one's response to that imagery; 2) a descriptive analysis of what qualities in the image conditioned that response, including description of forms, thematic content, and formal relationships; 3) interpretation of images and 4) evaluation using formal and societal criteria. Issues would rise out of critiques and discussions such as examination of cultural and economic presuppositions embedded in advertising and the history of advertising, its philosophy, psychology, and ethics including techniques for making a sale. The aesthetics of advertising in an environmental context could be examined in relation to symbol making (its nature and forms), advertising's repetitive symbols, standardization, technology, idea association and emotional arousal through formal qualities, compositional features and style, embedding, and the meaning advertising has to individuals and to society. Examination might also include outdoor advertising's effects on the environment, and the nature of that built environment as a reflection of held values, mores, and beliefs. The heart of such examinations could be a critical method (Anderson, 1988) which consciously incorporates contextual funding into the critical process. Studio activities might include redesigning the "strip" to reflect a non-pecuniary philosophy or at least an honest, mercantile sensibility, or redesigning an advertisement to reflect honest claims, forms and values. Once students understand the "sleuthing" nature of this unit, student-generated activities can be developed.

Conclusions

Paolo Freire (1973) says, "Perhaps the greatest tragedy of modern man is his domination by the force of...myths and manipulations by modern advertising, ideological or otherwise" (p. 6). Furthermore, if these manipulations are successful they will result in the loosening of the associational structure of society in the face of symbols (Gordon, 1971). Civilization is a cultural manifestation of making and acting upon symbols. Symbols' dis-

References


SANDRA ROWE:
ANDROGYNY AND THE JANUSIAN SPLIT

CHARLES GAINES

The work of Sandra Rowe cannot be understood within the specific concerns of social/political discourse alone. Indeed, her subject matter suggests a deeper, more complex polemic. Rowe is interested in the postmodern controversy surrounding the nature of the subject, i.e., she is not only questioning the centralized and linear notion of subject as constructed by modernist discourse, but in fact positing an abstract notion of the subject, a theory of "lack" or "absence" that stands as the privileged object of her investigation. The issues raised by her work are not important because of their social commentary alone, but also because they constitute (as controversies) a polemical structure. The subject is not simply a character but instead a dialectical framework through which the subject is realized. Contrary to some critical commentary assigning Rowe's work to feminist and/or ethnic concerns (1), Rowe attempts to transcend feminist and race specific discourse. In this way she seeks to unite opposites and contradictions. Here we find a specific contradiction in that this gesture can be interpreted equally as feminist and anti-feminist. This contradiction gives rise to the possibility that the object of Rowe's narrative is not only the affirmation of specific social positions and concerns, but contradiction itself, which could, on a connotative level, stand as a commentary on issues of race-difference and sexuality. The difference, however, is that the meaning of the commentary is determined through interpretation (2) and not ruled by the artist herself (3). This means that since the representations are ambiguous in their signifying functions, there is no denotive reading of the text that could stand as its single focus. Margaret Lazzari missed the boat when she commented...

...In the beginning we were nothing like we are now. For one thing, the race was divided into three...besides the two sexes, man and female, which we have at present, there was a third which partook of the nature of both...and such (was) their arrogance, that they actually tried...to scale the heights of heaven and set upon the gods. (Zeus decided to) cut them all in half... Now, when the work of bisection was complete it left each half with a desperate yearning for the other, and they ran together and flung their arms around each other's neck, and asked...to be rolled into one. Zeus felt so sorry for them that (he) moved their private parts round to the front...and made them propagate among themselves...So you see...how far back we can trace our innate love for one another, and how this love is always trying to reintegrate our former nature, ...and bridge the gulf between the human being and other (7).

Instead of a positive theory of (s)he, the story builds a notion of pure absence. (S)he is seen as a lack and thus a process, not a thing. Androgyny is the attempt in part to synthesize the masculine and feminine into one being. Also, it is inextricably tied to sexuality, it is connected to birth, death and rebirth. Androgyny represents the desire for wholeness. It is the process of a realization of wholeness fueled by "lack."
We find the representation of the androgynous form in Jonathan Borofsky's work, particularly My Male Self and My Female Self, 1977-79, and Dancing Clown at 2,845.325, 1982-83. We also find it in many of the "Dream" works such as, I Dreamed I Climbed A White Mountain...at 2,206.312, 1975. The male figure is represented as featureless (asexual) except for the autobiographical reference. However this makes it a parody of the male designation. (See pp 15-16). Returning to My Male Self and My Female Self, Borofsky said in describing the work:

There is a skull balanced on a rope that two figures are pulling that implies some sort of birth, death, rebirth...There are also the shoulders and neck of a new figure at the top, a blending of my male self and my female self into a new form...I want to...make a statement about us all (8).

The part male, part female image is used by Borofsky as an expressionist gesture (9). This concerns the expressionist interest in myth and autothony. We can conflate Rowe's androgynous image and her painterliness in order to discover the conditions of expressionism. The androgynous image is rooted in mythology. This then encourages the expressionist underpinning. In South America (the Amazon) we find both the Anaconda (10) and the Cayman (both reptiles, the Cayman is an alligator, the Anaconda, a snake), (11) each a mythic representation of the masculine and the feminine principles. Concerning the cultural mythology of the Amazon, specifically the Jaguar and the Dragon as reptilian representations of androgyny,(12) Peter Roe points out that the positive principle is considered masculine, while the negative principle is considered feminine:

The two key figures of the model, (the cosmological model of androgyny)...the Jaguar-Dragon opposition, a positive and negative manifestation of the Jaguar is created and opposed to positive and negative aspects of the Dragon...This produces a continual process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (creating a) dynamic scheme of endless ramifying transitive relations (13).

Peter Roe mentions that the life-death theme is connected with sexuality. This same theme shows up in Borofsky's work and in the work of Rowe (See Sticks And Stones). We find the use of the androgynous image and the (s)he designation in Rowe's work, (S)he Thought The Sky Was Falling, as well as other works such as, Same Day Relative to the Same Day, (S)he Remembering (S)he, (S)he With With (S)he, (S)he With Green Square, and (S)he With White (S)he. In each case the subject (s)he is realized as having the characteristics of both genders. In the last case, the subject is both black and white.

(S)he Thought The Sky Was Falling was originally an outdoor work that has been rebuilt as an interior installation. It consists of two constructed walls and a constructed ceiling that stands for the sky. A wooden cut-out figure that looks neither male nor female hovers above the two walls. On the floor is a mirror that reflects the image of this androgynous figure. The shadow of this figure is also reflected onto the walls.

The scission implicit in the idea of androgyny seems to find its representation in the existence of the androgynous cut-out (itself a gesture of displacement). The cut-out is featureless, there are no gender-specific or race-specific icons. The image's reflection in the mirror and its shadow construct a redundancy that reinforces the ambiguity of the cut-out. Every person is a schematic representation of a concept. The idea of person is transformed into the idea of every person (gender neutral), which is actually an impossibility because, as Lacan says, sexuality defines our notion of self (subject) (14). Thus we have through the shadow and the mirror a splitting of an image that represents the gender split. (In the first case, the cut-out is a splitting because androgyny assumes having the characteristics of both genders as a synthesis, this defines the implicit scission, androgyny depends on a binarism. And second, a reflection of this already split representation splits it again dialectically).

There are important similarities between the idea of subject in Rowe's work and the Lacanian subject. Lacan explains the development of the subject as the child's movement from a pre-Oedipal stage where there are no recognized boundaries between his self and the external world to a stage of differentiation.

The partitioning of the subject begins...The child's body goes through a process of differentiation, whereby erotogenic zones are inscribed and libido is canalized (i.e., encouraged to follow certain established routes). Specific somatic areas are designated as the appropriate site of pleasure...the mouth, the anus, the penis and the vagina...By indicating the channels through which that libido can move, the mother...assists in the conversion of incoherent energy into coherent drives which can later be culturally regulated (15).

When the child is able to differentiate its body from the external world it has entered the "mirror stage." At this point it constructs a concept of self as other. The psychological drives that find their representations through the mother is done by the use of rhetorical structures and tropes, (condensation, displacement, metaphor, metonymy). These drives find their representation in what Lacan calls the Symbolic Order through structural and tropic redundancies (16). Julia Kristeva discusses the idea of subject in a similar way when she mentions that the body orifices that control pleasure experiences (mouth, anus, penis, vagina), (17) establish through rhetorical structures, symbols of the other. These symbols constitute our language system. The discovery of the other forces the child to lose, what Freud calls our "oceanic-self," the non-ego Self. This loss causes the child to suddenly see itself in a place in space and in a moment in time. It thus becomes the fragmented self. The subject is defined as a process, the process of splitting from the whole to the fragmented, creating the desire to be whole again.

Through her narrative, Rowe's androgynous image becomes a symbol of the self described by Lacan and Kristeva. It is a split representation (male/female); thus it is implicitly contradictory. It denies sexuality and...
confirms it simultaneously. It denies narration and at the same time participates in constructing the very narrative it denies. It introduces ambiguity to any text of which it is a part.

Rowe's narrative splits apart. One part, the part that produces conflict and ambiguity (referents are obscure), is metonymically related to the "oceanic-self." The other part, the linear narrative, has the same type of relationship to the fragmented self (the self realized through alienation). These two parts feudicate each other producing the subject. Androgyny claims to mediate the masculine/feminine split, but this claim is duplicitous and subversive because it can never deliver what it promises. In Rowe's Relationships, Lies, and Truths, the subject is a function of the ambiguities of the text. It is not the subject of the Cartesian ego.

We shall see that when the speaking subject is no longer considered a phenomenological transcendent ego nor the Cartesian ego but rather a 'subject in process/on trial,' deep structure...(is) disturbed and with (it), the possibility of semantic and/or grammatical categorical interpretation" (19).

The subject in Relationships, Lies, and Truths cannot distinguish between fact and fiction. We find that the subject is defined by the statements and visual imagery and since the imagery is ambiguous and vague, so is the subject. This work is a second version. The installation consists of three large walls framing three sides of a cubed space. At the site of the open end stands a eight foot androgynous figure. Rowe says that the figure is actually a large book consisting of visual and textual images narrating the subject of relationships. On the left wall is another eight foot figure. This figure is repeated for a third time on the back wall. Two small panels with the words "lies" and "truths" are located on the remaining wall.

Some of the small painterly sketches located on the front figure contain statements such as, "I will love you forever," and, "Late at night everything is clear." "I know you," is said by a blindfolded figure. Rowe regards these as statements that people in relationships say to each other. As the blindfolded figure suggests, however, these statements may be lies or truths. When statements cannot be empirically connected to proofs, there can be no difference between a lie and a truth. Rowe said in an interview that a truth is a belief and not a fact. Death is a fact; a truth can be repeated for a third time on the back wall. Two small panels with the words "lies" and "truths" are located on the remaining wall.

I am interested in general psychological conditions that threaten the sense of self, psychological well being, survival. The early work was autobiographical, things were not going well and I used art to address these conditions. But in the last several years I learned to let those things go but remained interested in the psychological condition. I am interested and fascinated by things that are psychologically stressful because I think they equalize everyone. It goes beyond race, sex, etc" (23).

How are we to interpret this statement? Is Rowe actually involved in a narrative that claims that psychological conditions are fundamentally universal and are not race and sex specific? If so, then we have replaced one social/political narrative with another. This substitution does not satisfy the problems raised by Lazzari. Although Rowe states that her concerns go beyond race and sex, how do we reconcile this claim with her obvious use of both as the subject matter of her narrative? In what way does she transcend race and sex? Before answering this question, we should spend time examining the issues of race-difference and feminism, specifically those parts of the theories that pertain to our investigation.

The claim that one can go beyond political and social content suggests the affirmation of the modernist notion of absolute knowledge and pure aesthetics. However, many postmodern theorists argue this point.

What does it mean to go beyond social/political content? Victor Burgin said,

...during the time of conceptualism and of political art in my work I was quite convinced that the form of painting was inherently reactionary; I'm not sure anymore. In fact, I'm quite sure that you can't claim that a form has any inherent political inscription in it. Those things are always conjecture" (24).

Burgin's quote seems to suggest a return to the modernist values of universal aesthetic. Since criticism and theory have traditionally operated within a binary framework, that is, either meaning is universal or relativist (the dichotomy of the synchronic and the diachronic), we are hard pressed to interpret Burgin's statement in any other way. One way out of this is through the postmodern theory of interpretation; the image's interpretation is not rooted in any specific discourse that goes beyond the influential of history. In this way meaning is determined within a paradigmatic and syntagmatic framework. Burgin may be suggesting that a painting form is subject to the same conditions of interpretation that Barthes says about text, that it is open to "free play." Other theorists believe that this "free play" is simply another way of naming the modernist universal aesthetic.

A critical debate was established among Black critics and writers as early as 1861 that challenged the idea that work can move beyond political and social meaning. This challenge actually established the earliest attack on what was later known as modernism. (Some of the earliest postmodern
arguments were made by Black artists and writers principally because they were traditionally not included in the mainstream of modernism. Frances E. W. Harper and at a later date Heywood Broun (1925) argued against an art that claimed to transcend social and political issues (25). Other critics of Black literature, like Stephen Henderson, believed that the art of Blacks should express Blackness, images that communicate the "Black truth" (26). Representations of the "White" culture had to be rejected, and the key to this was the embracing of social/political and historical ideas that reflected Black culture.

The theories of modernism and postmodernism, according to Cornel West, (27) are actually social and political theories that are unrelated to the issues of being Black in western culture. The modernist notion of universality, Kant's theory of pure reason, the Cartesian ego, are attacked as social and political doctrines representing the values of western culture (28). In Kant's aesthetics of the sublime, it is argued that Blacks are self-evidently stupid. He believed the sublime is a type of understanding that is not expressible or accessible through material manifestations. It is the key to his theory of Pure Knowledge which exists at the core of modernist thought (29). But what a fallacy it is when a limited social and political orthodoxy such as the superiority of white intelligence can be claimed to be self-evident. It raises questions about the legitimacy of the thesis. Not even Kant is omniscient enough to comprehend the political limits of his thoughts. The modernist notion of universality is ultimately a political positioning reflective of the relative concerns of a particular culture.

A similar debate goes on in feminist theory. Patricia Waugh refers to the psychoanalytical theory of D. W. Winnicott and the aesthetic theory of Adrian Stokes to suggest a feminist aesthetic. Also, drawing from the psychological theories of Melanie Klein, Waugh states that women writers have developed an aesthetic based upon merging and connections rather than separation and fragmentation, the aesthetic doctrine of modernism. She explains that this aesthetic is a response to the economic and cultural situation. We find that women more than men are subject to "dependency, insecurity, vulnerability to criticism or attacks on the 'self'" (30). Although Waugh explains that these representations develop from the pressures of a patriarchal society, Michele Montlerey makes the case that female sexuality is unrepresented in our culture. Silverman states about Montlerey's theory, "...repression involves the setting in place within the unconscious a representation which structures sexuality in a particular way. Censorship, however, excludes without representation, and consequently has no structuring effect upon sexuality... Female sexuality is censored rather than repressed by the phallic... For that reason it remains a 'dark continent'... which threatens to submerge not only the female subject but the entire order of signification (31)."

Let us return to the question mentioned earlier, how does Rowe's work address the questions of race-difference and feminism? Although Rowe states that her concerns go beyond race and sex, how do we reconcile this statement with her obvious use of both as the subject matter of her narrative? Let us say that race difference and sexuality are either unrepresented in culture or represented as an "other." Either or both themes are represented by the androgynous figure in Rowe's work. Thus she introduces these conflicts within the fabric of her narrative. The androgynous figure, as the voice and body of the narrative, conflates the different issues making it the site of sexual identity and race difference. The complex issues of the Lacanian subject is merged with the feminist subject. It also collapses into the racial subject adumbrating the schisms of universality versus relativism, race (Whites versus Blacks), gender (female versus male), and politics (feminist versus black).

Rowe's work, She With White She, bifurcates the alliance of feminism and race difference. The subject in this work is "racially androgynous." This idea is an oxymoron because a racially mixed person is always defined as non-white, but the sexually mixed (androgynous) person is never considered non-male or non-female exclusively, but a synthesis of both. (This shows that race difference and sexual difference are not perfectly homologous notions). Rowe's subject cannot identify with the issues of feminism without subverting its social identity as Black. (Although her status as a female is never in question, except in the manner that this identity is complicated by the androgynous image, I refer here to Montlerey's theory of the difference between sexual structuration and gender roles). And similarly, it (Rowe's subject) cannot raise issues of race difference without raising questions about the political feminist discourse even though there is similarity between the politics of race and the politics of feminism. The social agenda of feminism still leaves intact the agenda of "white," (feminism still deals with Blacks within the framework of cultural/social institutions as "black," not as "just another person"). Feminism would like to see race as neutral (the issues of feminism are the same as the issues of race difference). But this is a hopeless wish. As long as there is race difference, the dominant culture will always perceive the minority as the "other." The cultural experiences of Blacks are different than those of white women, and indeed the experiences of black women are not the same as those of white women. The liberal political agenda that black and white women share is not enough to neutralize race-difference, for the black feminist will always see the white feminist as white, and vice-versa. Can anyone conceive of a race neutral person? No. Adrian Piper addresses these issues of race difference by showing us in a very confrontational way that we cannot get beyond the need to make racial "others" out of difference (32).

Race difference is always defined by the dominant race and the minority race is always in reaction. The dominant race constructs a notion of the minority as "other" and although this "other" is not defined by the libidinal pre-Oedipal drives, it is a symbol whose syntactical structure has a homologous relationship with the "other" of Lacanian psychoanalysis. In this view, a one race world can never really exist. Race difference is rhetorically tied to sexual difference, it is another manifestation of the construction of the "other." It happens in a patriarchal society that female representations are mostly negative, but they don't have to be. If these representations were positive, sexual difference would still remain. It is a matter of the particular structure of the Symbolic Order. Similarly there does not have to be a political schism between races, but the lack of one
doesn't obviate race difference since it is so intricately tied to the realization of the "other" through sexuality. Miscegenation still remains one of society's greatest taboos. The sexual split that causes the forming of the "self" establishes the structure and pre-exists racial difference. Sexual difference, therefore, establishes the construction of other differences in culture such as race difference (I am not speaking of biological difference alone, but also the culturally defined representations of difference).

The representations in Rowe's work can be defined as tropes. These tropes elevate the rhetorical level of her text, and consequently undermine any consistent and truthful relationship between the signifiers and their referents. Thus Rowe views her representations as the "site of an ambivalent and problematic relationship between referential and figural meaning" (33).

However, unlike the deconstructionist, Rowe is not interested in the loss of the referential text in the free play of hermeneutics. She is actually interested in constructing a narrative commentary. Tropes and codes do not serve as their single purpose the responsibility to deconstruct the text, but instead to signify ambiguity as a way to engage the viewer in a hermeneutic enterprise. One might say that Rowe uses rhetorical structures to signify a meaning for the subject that is based upon the Lacanian notion of desire. In this way she proposes a justification for her idea that her work goes beyond race and sex, ultimately reaching for a synthesized and universal subject, but not getting there. It is a process, a desire, an activity of moving beyond race difference and sexuality. Desire instructs the active subject. Androgyny signifies the desire for unity. But, as in the Lacanian "other," the more one reaches for this unity, the greater the chasm becomes (the Janusian split).

Now, if the subject of Rowe's work is not a commentary on race difference and sexuality, then she is using that commentary in order to realize a series of tropes that frame the postmodern theory of the subject. The Androgynous figure is the privileged object in the work, and to the degree that it is used to posit notions in the work, it is its subject. It is this figure who is acting and being acted upon. It is this figure who turns every referent into a heteroglossia (34). The androgynous figure is the postmodern subject, and as such (s)he becomes the agent of the obscure, the ineffable. (s)he releases the sign from any specific referent but does not release it from signification (35). The contradictions that I have said lie at the bottom of sexual difference, race difference, and the differences between Black and feminist political discourse define Rowe's subject as a continuous process of "ramifying transitive relations" (36).

The final issue I wish to raise regarding the work of Sandra Rowe is parody. Parody is the rhetorical gesture of copying or imitating. It is an act of doubling that has the consequence of privileging the rhetorical text through redundancy and repetition. In so doing it introduces a "double-voiced" text that integrates the rhetorical structure of the text and its meaning in such a way that they influence each other. An example is pastiche. Parody is one manner of dwelling on the margins of discourse. It is a trope of repetition and revision. The postmodern theory of appropriation is a form of parody exemplified in the work of Sherri Levine. Linda Hutcheon discusses the issue of parody influenced by Bakhtin's theory of Dialogism (37).

It is Bakhtin's theory... that allows for looking at parody as a form of "double-directed" discourse... (38) Parody is one of the techniques of self-referentiality by which art reveals its awareness of the context-dependent nature of meaning, of the importance to signification of the circumstances surrounding any utterance" (39).

*Sticks And Stones* uses 36, eight foot posts, each a different color. Each color represents a social pathology: red = sexism, purple = mismeasure, yellow = racialism, blue = exclusivism, silver = racism, turquoise = terrorism. These posts are laid out and stacked on the gallery floor. There are six cement slabs hanging on the wall. Drawn into the cement while it was still wet is an androgynous figure standing on the neck of another reclining androgynous figure. This drawing is repeated exactly on each slab.

Although parody points to rhetorical structures and semiotic ambiguities, it does not disconnect its dependency on the pragmatics of the text. In order for the parody to exist it must be a comment upon meaning. This fact makes a parody not only the custodian and preserver of meaning (by analogizing it) but it becomes a generator of new meaning by creating the intertext (40). We find the use of parody in *Sticks And Stones* through the repetition (41) of the representations on the slab and in the use of the androgynous figure. Sexuality, sexual roles and beliefs find themselves floating within the confines of the work because androgyny is an attack on sexuality, making it a double-voiced representation of both the masculine and feminine principles. *Sticks And Stones* began as a performance. In a wooded site, Rowe had six people each carry a different color post to a pit. The posts were stacked in the pit and burned. The ashes were collected and included as part of the gallery installation. Rowe's face was painted in stripes following the established color code (42). Even though each post represented one of the social pathologies, the participants were never informed of the symbolic meaning. This made their participation purely formal, but within the context of the installation the participants became metaphors for androgyny.

Rowe's use of parody not only reinforces her interest in tropes thus establishing a hermeneutics, but it also supports her interest in the social aspects of the narrative suggesting an integration of structure and meaning. The parody achieves this because, as I mentioned earlier, in order for it to exist (parody) it must be a comment on meaning. Parody preserves this through analogy. V. N. Volosinov supports this idea when he says,

Not only is consciousness a distinctively social product, but, as social, it is a distinctively semiotic product...individual consciousness is...only a tenant lodging in the social edifice of ideological signs. Once again the science of signs and the science of subjectivity intersect (43).

In Lies And Truths the installation not only exists as a rhetorical edifice, a semiotic structure constituted of tropes and figures, which produce a kind of meta-narrative, but the tropes fold back on themselves, as the meta-narrative is absorbed into the social framework by virtue of the technique of parody.
The installation consists of a six foot egg shape form with a television monitor in a hole and a peep hole that allows the viewer to see a fabricated tree about ten feet away. Behind the tree there is an 8 ft. by 12 ft. wall. Live trees are placed around the wall. The work is aggressively painted with intense colors. Also, it is lighted to enhance the intensity of the color. The video is a looped tape of a tree. Rowe said about this work,

I am playing lies against truths, real things against fake things (real tree/fake trees). The distance between the (big) tree and the peep hole is a metaphor for the mind. The space between distorts the reality (44).

The fake to real as a parody reinforces the social commentary of the work causing fake versus real (which is a binary opposition, thus a trope), to become "re"-realized as a narrative commentary. This is what a modern poetic text usually does. But in this special case, the text is absorbed into the idea of the installation, textualizing the visual representations within the framework of the object of art (with its own unique formal concerns) thus escaping the limiting lexical concerns of the poetic text.

We see in the work of Sandra Rowe a narrative art whose semiotized text produces a subject that signifies both the issues of race difference and feminism and transcends those issues resulting in a second voice that is commenting on the mythic "everyperson" (this term is used for its archetypal implications). The subject (androgyne) exists as a trope, on the one hand, and the psychoanalytical subject, on the other. This ambiguity signifies its transcendence over race difference and feminism; however it is a double-voiced message whose second voice firmly states its social/political commentary. Thus we have the postmodern subject situated in the theatrical environment of the installation. This reflects Rowe's belief that the human conditions in her narrative are not specific to any particular person or group, but are simply human; conditions that I believe pre-exist the individual and are found in culture as the "grand text" that we as characters live out.

Footnotes

1 Lazzari, Margaret. Artwek, Vol. 19, No. 28, Aug. 30, 1988. "Rowe's work is feminist in the social agenda it proposes and the form it takes... The modifying adjective of feminist and Afro-American define the work as splinters from art as minority planks." Lazzari goes on to explain that this stereotyping of race and gender roles raises questions about the motivation of the (male) art world that finds it necessary to isolate the art of women and Afro Americans. I agree with her, but I also wish to point out that although Rowe is deeply involved in those issues, she has a further interest. She is also raising contradictory issues for the purpose of positing a postmodern subject, which is feminist but also goes beyond issues of feminism and race difference.


3 I am suggesting that in view of Bakhtin's double-voiced sign, and Kristeva's intertext, a sign can produce connotations beyond the intention of the artist. However, when the artist specifically produces an ambiguous signifier one can claim that the ambiguity is the intended referent. I suggest here that both operations are functioning in Rowe's work. I was told that there was a student in a studio course who appeared to be schizophrenic. Everyone someone asked her if a certain image meant this or that she

responded, "I don't know". Finally, after about an hour of this, someone asked if she was using her evasiveness as a strategy in her work, she responded, "I don't know".


7 ibid., p. 152. Quote taken by Silverman from, "The Symposium," in Collected dialogues of Plato, ed., Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, pp. 542-44. Silverman uses the quote to introduce Lacan's theory of the subject. She says, "...the division suffered by the subject was assexual in nature that when it was 'sliced' in half, it lost the sexual androgyny it once had and was reduced to the biological dimension either of a man or a woman.


9 ibid., Essay by Mark Rosenthal, p. 27


11 ibid., pp. 200-201. "The Cayman is sexually ambiguous (even if highly sexual) just like the other big devouring-penetrating reptile, the Anaconda." These mythic animals are considered to have both the masculine and the feminine principles...[they are not neutral]...which explains their active sexuality.

12 ibid., p. 308. The dragon is believed to be the Cayman since the Indians consistently used real animals. The term dragon seems to be the "westernization" of the Cayman.

13 ibid., p. 308. Androgyne is distinguished from neuter. The neuter has no sexual organs. The androgyne figure has the characteristics of both sexes. Rowe is dealing with androgyne.

14 Silverman, Kaja (1983). The subject of semiotics, p. 153. "Lacan tells us that the only way the subject can compensate for its fragmentary condition is by fulfilling its biological destiny...by forming new sexual unions with members of the opposite sex. It is by means of such unions that the subject comes closest to recovering its wholeness."

15 ibid., p. 155.

16 ibid., p. 155-58. "This self recognition is, Lacan insists, a misrecognition; the subject apprehends itself only by means of a fictional construct." (in language)

17 Kristeva, Julia (1994). Revolution in poetic language, pp. 28-29. Displacement and condensation, as well as metaphor and metonymy, organize the "drives" (this is what Kristeva calls the semiotic). The child connects through metaphor and metonymy the parts of the fragmented body to each other: "The connection between (the glottal and anal) sphincters in (rhythmic and international) vocal modulation," and also to external objects and subjects which are not yet constituted as such, "sphincters and family protagonists, for example.

18 See page 3, Roe quote on androgyne and process.

19 ibid., p. 37.

20 Eco, Umberto (1979). A theory of semiotics, pp. 38-59. Eco suggests that in a theory of codes, which constitute the referent for the signifiers, don't have to be true in any empirical sense. The semiotic process requires that a sign has a referent. I do not require that the referent has to be true. Eco says, "Everytime there is a possibility of lying, there is a sign-function...A theory of codes must study everything that can be used in order to lie."

21 My interview with the artist. Rowe said, "I want the viewer to sense the peripheral tension created in the distance between the two eight foot figures."


23 My interview with the artist.

24 Magnani, Gregorio, Interview: Victor Burgin, Flash Art, p. 120.


26 ibid., p. 32.

27 West, Cornel (1989). Black culture and postmodernism. West finds that the postmodern discourse, like the modern, leaves out the true voice of ethnic minority cultures. Blacks still exist as an other in postmodernism.
References


Black and White Images
In The Grey Chain of Being.

Jim Paul

A preamble: A Clue! A SIGN of the TIME(S)?

It is interesting how the numerical demarcation of a decade spurs one to reflective stock-taking and visionary social trends. We know that the beginning or termination of long-term social trends do not "naturally" fall into neat groups of tens. Still, as empirically-entrenched and categorically-minded consumers we must quench our never-ending thirst to link events until we have reduced them into man's "ability." We are more at ease when we can name where we have been and visualize where the future will be.

I recently read a newspaper article which provided name suggestions for the 80s. The suggestions include: The Retro Decade: with the return of Stones, the Who, Batman, Woodstock, Cher, Hoffman, and Nixon: The Sleaze Decade: with Tammy and Jimmy, Pete Rose, Swaggart, Hart, and North; The Media Decade: featuring Letterman, Gumbel, Geraldo, Oprah, Koppel, and Rather; The Ignore Decade emphasizing a "what me worry" attitude about: the deficit, arms build-up, race-relations, the environment, poverty, AIDS, and drugs; The No Decade: with no smoking, no drinking, no red meat, no abortion, no snuff, no unprotected sex, and no fun;

The Lite Decade: as applied to beer, cigarettes, sugar, coffee, and gas, and finally The Disaster Decade: featuring Chernobyl, Valdez, San Francisco. But what is interesting in this quest to name the decade is the absence of any recognition of libertarian women's movements in the 80s. If we trust our eyes, a reading of Madison Avenue advertising indicates the named libertarian women's movements of the 60s/70s are in recession. The pulp and electronic advertisements intimate the byword of the liberationist movement in the 70s as 'Wanting It All' has become deflected, in the 80s, into the action of 'Doing It All.' For the 'average' woman 'doing it all' translates into a full day at the work station, then, after stopping at day care, and doing the shopping, heading home to begin the night-shift.

TIME magazine (December 4th, 1989) speaks to this transition in a cover story entitled "Women Face The 90s." The authors ask the survey question: 'Are you a feminist?' Women in the 20-30 age range provide responses which umbrella under the descriptor 'the NO, but ... generation.' The same question to women in the 30-40 year range results in the banner-label of 'the YES but ... generation.' The TIME authors conclude what women moving into the 90s have learned from libertarian women of the 80s is to direct their primary focus to changing the workplace and to press for child-care benefits; that is where the push should be made, and not in the realm of more polarizing liberationist issues of abortion or lesbian rights. But this re-focused push is not organized as a visible liberation women's movement. Most of the surveyed women seem to believe that male attitudes are becoming more feminized, and in the 90s as the workplace changes for women and men the home-life-world will have to change accordingly. A "silent revolution in male attitudes" is occurring because "the more 'women's work' men perform, the more respectable that work becomes" (TIME, p. 61). Less men are likely to take women for granted. "If men start taking care of children, the job will become more valuable," insists Gloria Steinem (TIME, p. 61). TIME presents, in hindsight, a gage at women of the 80s, and projects a fore-sight vision for the 90s. But as the rocker Neil Young sings, "there is more to the picture than meets the eye." A question then is: What exploration is possible of a desire to name and envision a world; how does this inter-play shade our language-images of gender?

Some Background: A Sign Language?

To define signs, to explore what they mean, how they generate meaning and how we use them is a subject for extensive study. It is not the intent of this exploration to trace its complex history. From Ferdinand de Saussure's analysis of linguistics, to the philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce, and later to the explorations of signs by Roland Barthes, I seize the basic working definition that "SIGN" are anything which may be used to stand for something else. Extending this elemental definition Umberto Eco (1984) claims if signs cannot be used to tell a lie, they conversely cannot be used to tell the truth; they cannot then be used 'to tell' at all. It is in exploring this interesting DOUBLE VALENCE of signs which frames this exploration of gender — as words and images.
A PERSPECTIVE: Signing In!

We are all born into a revolving/evolving/constructing world. Call this motion 'culture' or 'society' — the dizziness of the life-world reflecting the inter-play between past, present and future. A child born into this co-motion, in a short time, obtains an abundance of skills and pieces of knowledge, learns to make sense in a more or less pre-determined world. A foundation of this pre-determined world is that as participants in a Post-Freudian society we continually seek to explore influences or structures which revolve around the basic instinctive acts of desire, compliance, exclusion and repression. We know that the excluded, although out of sight, does not disappear but remains to eventually destabilize that which we construct to domesticate societally-chosen unwanted(s). As such, our Western culture lives a double valence. In the signs of our worlds there exists this inter-play of polarities. Our inherited logic and metaphysics is entrenched in binary oppositions. Specifically in the realm of gender the struggle of dichotomies for supremacy has long dominated, differentiated and perpetuated a vision of the differences between men and women. We live a gender dualism within a historical/cultural weight"T"ness which attempts to perpetuate a vision, through our institutions (school, church, family), that only one 'real' narrative exists. And that 'reality-story' is one of patriarchal logocentrism and phallocentrism. As social/cultural beings born into this constructed dominant narrative we quickly become subjected to the force which drives this (loc/o)motion — language. David Levin (1988) framing this bipolar existence writes:

In our culture, a binary logic of oppositions has long differentiated men and women, and their respective positions within the prevailing sex-gender system have been pervasively determined according to dualisms established long ago. These dualisms are codified in our metaphysics, and veiled in false justifications. The one is identified with activity, the other with passivity; the one with mind, the other with body; the one with sky, the other with earth; the one with ego, the other with libido; the one with order, the other with disorder; the one with maturity, the other with its absence; the one with reason, the other with passion; the one with clarity, the other with obscurity; the one with the light, the other with the dark, one with culture, the other with nature; the one with spirit, the other with matter; the one with forms of consciousness, the other with the mysteries of the unconscious; the one with the making of history, the other with fate. Since men have occupied the dominant positions in these bipolar structures, the institutionalization of dualisms has functioned to subordinate and exploit women (p. 282).

Does this DOUBLE-vision seem possible?
Can we SEE this?

A METHODOLOGY: Give Us a Sign!

The intent of this exploration is to discuss with you, the reader/viewer, a representation of gender by exploring gender signs. This is an attempt at a speaking with, and a looking at, the language compartmentalization and subsequent blindness which the French Freud, Jacques Lacan implicates as that which imposes upon us a gender structure. These gender structures are seen as a seat (position), or a way of being, on the great Lacanian (CHAIN) TRAIN of BEING from which we view interactions with self and others. The repeated gesture of this exploration is to frame gender-appearance oppositions. Hopefully in the engagement between sign valency, some exchange is possible. There is no attempt here at mystically seeking to unite differences. As rough as it may seem the desire is CONTACT, and the continual calling into question one's identity. Why frame the exploration in this manner? Elizabeth Wright (1984) outlines Lacan's position regarding the importance of HOW/WHY we see our gender as we do, and writes:

desire is lodged to a degree in all that is seen, every observer taking his object-world for granted, but since the unconscious is inscribed in that desire there will be a mis-seeing, a meconnaisance. Unconscious and repression, desire and lack — this dialectic opposition is present in every visual recognition. ... (there is) a 'scopic drive' for this lodging of desire in looking, a subject's search for a fantasy that represents for him/her the lost phallic. ... The eyes, as one of the modes of access for libido to explore the world, become the instruments of the this drive. A drive is not just pleasure-seeking, but is caught up in the signifying-system, characterized by the subject's first entry into that system. ... This signifying process comes to affect all looking, every recognition at once a finding and a failure to find (pg. 116-117).

Elaborating further on this scopophilic drive Kaja Silverman (1983) explores Laura Mulvey's essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" which argues that classic film text dramatically differentiates between male and female subjects on the bases of vision, and she writes:

The former (the male) of these is defined in terms of his capacity to look (i.e. as a voyeur) and the latter in terms of her capacity to attract the male gaze (i.e. as an exhibitionist). This opposition is entirely in keeping with the dominant cultural roles assigned to men and women, since voyeurism is the active or 'masculine' form of scopophilic drive, while exhibitionism is the passive or 'feminine' form of the same drive. As a means of emphasizing this point, Mulvey describes the male subject as the imagined source of the gaze, and the female subject as the imagined recipient of the gaze (p. 222-223).
Finally, to place this exploration in perspective and to frame the dangers of LOOKING at particular meanings associated with images Peter McLaren (1988) writes:

there is always an overdetermined or 'preferred' reading of images within the dominant culture. To believe that one can escape this sovereign or imperial reading by an exercise of critical reflection alone also presupposes that people make choices only on the basis of semantic understanding, and not through either the mobilization of desire and affect or a form of deintensification of experience David J. Solle calls the 'spectacle stance of the audience'. In their engagement with forms of media-generated images, viewers become the most vulnerable to the political agenda behind such images precisely when they feel they can intelligently distance themselves from their discursive articulation and persuasive power (p. 68).

So welcome to an ENCOUNTER of the GENDER KIND. The desire present in this quest is as Joan Gallop (1982) writes, "if words there be or body there be, somewhere there is a desire for dialogue, intercourse, exchange (p. xiii). Initially this exploration begins with a brief over view of Lacan’s understanding of language and gender as framed through Gallop’s putting to question Lacan’s basic gender premises. Then, a presentation of several gender sign-frames — a text and an image — created from a random sampling of opinions of men and women, at the University of Alberta, by asking men/women to speak their understandings of gender. This exploration of the grayness of the black and white of gender requires you to participate in the SLOW DOWN through space provided at the bottom of each gender-frame. In the desire to respond an ALTERITY (the trying to put self in the place of other) sensitization may create an understanding that a text exists because it supersedes other texts. There is a need to look for the silences in the naming of sexual differences by opening up the narratives themselves associated with how we genderize our world-view.

Buffalo Springfield opens our journey:

Sign, sign everywhere a sign,
Blockin’ off the scenery, breaking my mind,
Do this, don’t do that
Can’t you read the sign?

So all aboard. Take your seats — MEN and WOMEN or is it as we have long been inherently taught:

MEN’ WHAT OTHER MEN!
Because of the rule of the signifiers over the signified, the two words 'LADIES' and 'GENTLEMEN',... constitute, by their very installation, the two doors, although, in some mystical prehistory prior to the signifier's arrival, the doors are identical. Similarly, it is not the biological given of men and female that is in question in psychoanalysis, but the subject as constituted by the pre-existing signifying chain, that is, by culture, in which the subject must place himself. A biological reading of Freud sees only the subject already inserted into his position of blindness without that chain, and does not see the subject's placing himself or the chain as chain. The first image of the subject is then very much like the first image above, the drawing of the tree: a one-to-one correspondence is assumed between, for e.g., the word 'woman' and a woman. By such a reading, the only delimitable 'thing' the signifier 'woman' could possibly 'mean' is the biological female. Whence springs the whole normalizing moralism of biological psychology (pg. 9-11).

But the rub is, as Gallop notes, that understanding the existence of the signifying chain does not mean it is possible to remove self from blind situations. By just knowing that a second rest room door exists somewhere beyond a range of seeing does not free one from the seat. She writes, "What Lacan has sketched in the above passage is a situation of desire. The register of desire is where the 'cessation of hostilities' is 'impossible'. Although one can hypothetically reconstruct a pre-linguistic, pre-cultural 'real' (posing two doors as originally identical, the human child as naturally bi-sexual), this mythical prehistory cannot erase the situation of desire which is the result of the preverence of the need by the signifiers presence" (p. 11). So what does all this mean? Gallop responds:

An exposition of the structure articulated of need and desire will not institute an idealistically utilitarian return to the need, to the biological, to the pre-perverted 'real'. As Lacan writes, 'far from yielding to a logicizing reduction, there where it is a question of desire we find its irredescibility to the demand the very energy that also keeps it from being collapsed back into need. To put it elliptically: that desire be articulated, precisely for that reason it is not articulable. We mean, in the discourse appropriate to it, ethical and not psychological.' The demand is made within language's imaginary register, where the first model of one-to-one correspondence is presumed to operate, and thus, the demand is assumed to be delimitable. Desire is that portion of the pre-articulate need which finds itself left out of the demand — the demand being the register of ethical discourse. Of course, Lacan can indicate the marginal place of desire, but he does this in the only way
possible — in psychological discourse. In ethical discourse, spoken from our place as subjects attempting to signify ourselves in the signifying chain, we are all sitting on one side of the compartment or the other; we are all subject to the blindness imposed by our seats in the compartment; there is no other way of being on the train (chain) (pg. 11-12).

Gallop believes that, to date, the feminist battle against the constructs of a male-dominated society seems entrenched in having us consider the entire structure which makes the realm of 'gentlemen' and 'ladies' appear defined and absolute as they do in the one-to-one correlation. To engage in this activity implies the feminist is somehow outside the structure. This positioning ignores "the subject's needs to place himself within the signifying chain in order to be any place at all. There is no place for a 'subject,' no place to be human, to make sense outside of signification, and language always has specific rules which no subject has the power to decree" (Gallop, 1982, p. 12).

Gallop's advice seems to both those language-labeled as 'feminist' and 'chauvinist', as bi-polar extremes, is that they must come to grips with their places (seats) on the train of life and the desire located in each place (seat). Desire especially cannot be banished from discourse. Attempts to do so, such as in empirical or positivistic narratives, results in a language which is irrational in its claims to rationality. Then the unconscious through lapsus, gaps and dreams manifests itself as a desire-disrupter, a desire-subverter of rationality.

So what is the question Gallop would have us face. It is a question such that "if patriarchal culture is that within which the self originally constitutes itself, it is already there in each subject as subject. Thus how can it be overthrown if it has been necessarily internalized in everybody who could possibly act to overthrow it?" (Gallop, 1982, p. 14). If as Lacan tells us we are born into a motion: into a language, and into a way of seeing and once entrenched into the conventions of this language are we then essentially over-determined by it. A struggle against this over-determination must be possible if 'reality' can be put to doubt. Reality being the stance, the perspective, the position, the seat we occupy as a result of what we behold. The question then is to question the signifier-signified relationship.

What follows now is a presentation of several gender-frames. Each frame contains an image and a text. The object of the frames is to SLOW (show) DOWN the train of Lacanian train of BEING. LOOK at them. REACT to them.

SIGNING OUT

This exploration was an attempt to stare back at our genderized culture where our authoritative language is essentially VISUAL. Our world narrative features the dominant positionality of maleness which fosters an eye-orientation and values spectatorship, objectivity, magnification and/or reductionism, and mastery; femaleness is the binary opposition adopting an ear-orientation and valuing participation, inter-subjectivity, emotional response, intimacy, involvement and collaboration. Perhaps attempts, at this point in our exploration of gender differences, to reduce the gaps between the bi-polar structures is an impossible project. To date approaches to do so seems to require the sacrificing of one pole to the other. An alternative may stem from the desire to TASTE, TOUCH, SMELL, HEAR, and SEE obliquely our gender differences first. That is to specifically explore the differences through an orientation to remembrance and to encourage the stimulation of sexual voices rendered silent by our patriarchal history and contemporary visual-technologically dominant narratives. We need a sensitivity to the fundamental ambiguity of all narrative as story. It is an ambiguity which must be understood not as pathology but rather as that which is essential to the very survival of speaking, thinking and acting.

Gallop makes note that in Lacan's train (chain) story the train is stopping. The framing of the rest room doors only comes into the children's vision with this slowing down of the moving train. It is then the two different signifiers — LADIES and GENTLEMEN become noticeable through the existence of a syntagmatic chain. This chain is represented in the story as if already constructed. Perhaps, this 'all-readness' is a natural-survival adaptation created as a result of the train's constant (loco)motion. It is in times of rapid motion when we seek that which is constant; even if only an illusionary stability. Gallop's challenge seems to be that we need to explore structural representations at a syntagmatic level. But can this be done at 'living speed', or can the shake up, of the dominant-subordinate relationships which one is born into and determined by, be sought to a greater extent when the train is slowed down. This 'slow down' quest could be a way to make contact and confront the desirable pleasure of the agreeing NOD. As the train rocks along, it is easy to slip into its sputtering, nodding rhythms. We feel secure in specific track-rhythms especially the ones we were weaned on. Once headed down the track a process of belief, amply reinforced, results in a certain solidification as we get comfortable in our gender seat. BUT although we may be rocked into a gender sleep, such slumber will eventually be eroded by that which has been excluded in the motion, noise and hypnotic gaze of the leading track as the rusting windows move us along our journey — that is the stillness; the silence, and the Other. Thus we need to see/smell/touch/taste/hear textual-frames which STARE back at us. That is, we should desire to slow the train down and let the landscape peer into our compartment. To do so may begin to flip our Being and our Reality. By exploring gender signs on textual/imagery levels, there may be a way to contribute to the revelation that we are essentially metaphorical beings — nothing more and nothing less than living displacements.
REFERENCES


Sometimes I feel we are living a myth. I mean why are looks so important?
THE NEED FOR OPENNESS IN ART EDUCATION

DAN NADANER

Can art education tolerate art? It looks more and more like the answer is no. Art requires imagination, play, openness and critical questioning. Art education, as an institution, tends to produce practices inconsistent with imagination, play, openness, and critical questioning. The dominant practices of the field tend to define, to reify, to certify, to enshrine.

The task of this paper is restorative, rather than indicting, so I will confine myself to a very brief evocation, in this paragraph, of what I mean by the anti-art tendencies of art education. Art education (the institution, not the concept in general or the practices of individuals) is increasingly concerned with systems, and disseminating those systems. Conferences are held to hear lieutenant experts discuss what the experts meant. Other conferences are held to package the understandings of what the lieutenants meant. Other conferences are held to make it law that classroom teachers should present those packages to children. In this process, art is reduced and often misconstrued. But even when it is well construed, it is reified, which is to say, turned into something definite when it is not something definite at all. This is the single greatest problem in art education: reification. Other problems are quite obvious as well, such as magnifying the misconstruals with the support of great centers of money and power. The centers of money and power can disseminate constricting ways of thinking. But reification is of the most crucial concern because it underlies all of these problems and consequences.

Reification is a habit of thought, and it is antithetical to the spirit of art. Artists practice openness, and when they encounter an institution (art education) which practices definition and closure (which is to say, reification), they tend not to sympathize with that institution. Thus the historic rift between art and art education.

It is disturbing and saddening that the rift should be getting wider at this time. One of the dominant trends in current art education, "Discipline Based Art Education," is adding to the rift, even though it ostensibly seems to bring art education in closer touch with the history and practices of art. In its most idealistic formulation, DBAE wants to be about "art," the sort of thing Rembrandt and Van Gogh did: not about "school art," the sort of thing done with sponges and macaroni on Friday afternoons. DBAE proponents—i.e., the Getty Foundation—have posited a concept of art as a "discipline," but they have failed to join that concept to a larger understanding of the spirit that art depends on. As a result, DBAE has contradicted its own purpose, producing some new school art experiences that are contrary to the spirit of art, and repressing some old school art practices that were not really so bad. "Aesthetic meaning," the cursory defining of design ele-
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ments, would be an example of the new practices; self-identification, Lowenfeld's blending of life experiences with art, would be an example of an old cherished practice. The new practice trivializes; the old one had both depth and authenticity.

The purpose of this essay is to attempt a clarification and restoration of the art spirit. It is hoped that the concepts that I present may be of some use in suggesting a path for art education that is more consistent with art.

Art education is a simple and generous idea. It is about sharing the experience of art with others. It thrives upon emotion and inspiration. It thrives upon good examples, in the form of inspired practices by committed teachers.

Art education seeks to engage others in their own experiences of art. It seeks to engage them in a way that involves them thoroughly in their own inspired inquiry, exploration, and creation.

Openness is a quality of art experience. Openness does not define the art experience; but the art experience can not be realized without it. It is implicit in inquiry, in exploration and in creation. The simplest summary of this essay is that art is about openness. Art is more about openness and less about reification than is typically evidenced in the practice of art education.

The identification of art with openness is a prominent idea in the literature of four separate fields: critical theory, studio painting, child art, and imagination and play. These are fields that rarely communicate with one another. Their ideas and their ways of expressing those ideas are very different, and so it is remarkable when a point of commonality shows up between all four of them. I would like to use the remainder of this essay to point to the several ways that these fields associate art with openness, and to use this commonality as a support for the idea that openness is so central to the art experience.

Critical theory has sought in the past twenty years to deal with its own tendency to put closure on a text. Traditional criticism applies a system to a text so as to extract a central meaning from it. Marxism, Freudian psychoanalysis, and formalism, each had their irreducible loci of meaning, those centers which held the "core" of the work's import.

Deconstructive criticism has called into question this quest for ultimate meanings. Deconstructive criticism celebrated the playfulness and ambiguity of art (Leitch, 1983). Does the color red mean revolt, bleeding, or intensity of emotion in the abstract? Traditional critical systems would each point in their separate directions. Deconstructive criticism, in the tradition of Derrida (1976), sees both the signifier (red) and the signified (revolt, etc.) as floating and arbitrary; that is, the signifier comes in many variations, and so does the signified. A further example: Still, Rothko, and Newman each made an all-red monochromatic painting, yet each was subtly different in form, and each referred to vastly different texts of philosophy and art history (Gibson, 1989). Neither the form they created nor the ideas to which the form refers are quite definable.

To the deconstructive critic, closure is to be avoided. Traditional criticism was betrayed by its logocentrism, its placing of its own reasonableness above the ambiguities of the text. Logocentrism supported the author, the voice, and the central meaning, and produced interpretations that arrested play while defining meaning. Deconstruction, in contrast, seeks to identify signifier/signified relations in the fullness of their manifestation in a text and in the relations of that text to other texts (i.e., the relation of a single painting to art history). Criticism uses its own forms of imagination to trace the imaginative play of the signifier. Criticism thus supports openness; it recognizes that "the image produces pleasure precisely where it fixes meaning least" (Rankin, 1987).

Even while it is obtuse, critical theory remains passionately involved with the practice of art in the contemporary lifeworld. Presumably, this is also the concern of artists, and their form of expression is in their art. Artists do not speak and write as a professional requirement, but when they do their words carry a special weight because we sense that their heads are thoroughly immersed in the realities of the art experience and not merely in fashionable academic discourse. Their observations, from Van Gogh to De Kooning, are often profound but also obtuse or disconnected in their own ways. There has not been a strong tradition of exchange between critics and artists, as each perceives the other to be speaking a foreign language. Among the valuable but most ignored products of artists are the teaching notes of the great artist-teachers (for example, Henri, Itten, Nicolaiades, Hoffman, Hawthorne, Shahn). Very often, these notes - see for example the Art Spirit by Robert Henri - are filled with detailed notes on brush sizes, anatomical consideration, and other technical concerns, concerns that seemingly place these notes in a technical genre and distance them from the philosophical concerns of the critic. Yet a careful reading of these notes reveals a second dimension, the dimension of experience. Because the writer is an artist, he stops himself from saying things that do not resonate with his own experience of art. He emphasizes exploration, not rules or systems. As Henri (1960) says, "there can be no set rule laid down for the making of pictures." The typical advice of great artist-teachers is to see art as a search, as magic; to bring all of yourself to seeing openly and creating openly; to make many studies, attaching yourself to the larger process rather than the smaller product; to be open to the work rather than bring it to a prefabricated idea.

The artist-teacher is close to the studio, to hearing her picture beginning to sing, to seeing her picture in a new way after turning it upside down. She is close to the fiddleness of the art process, to the surprising and floating connections between art and life. She brings a special kind of insight to art teaching from the immediacy of her observations, and from her prudence in avoiding simplistic descriptions of the nature of art. The best art teaching has come out of these direct experiences with art. The best art teaching has been open to a process, not tied to a system, and in this respect it has practiced an approach remarkably similar to that arrived at by the deconstructive critics.

From the 1920s onward, art educators have recognized the wonderful capacity of young children to be open in their art work. The child is a natural artist. In the language of the deconstructionists, signifiers and signifieds float freely - and more than that, they play, they dance. The child looks at a cloud and sees an animal, a circus. The child receives both the fullness of the forms and its possible meanings. Through art, the child lets
the brush play out its own life, and enjoys the free play of associations that
swirls and washes bring to mind. (That is why the wise art teacher engages
the child in a discussion of his work, but does not ask for a definition of the
subject).

Child-centered art education was solidly grounded in descriptive
studies as early as the 1930s, and in Viktor Lowenfeld, found a charismatic
theoretical guide. Rudolf Arnheim added corroboration of the validity of
child art from an additional theoretical perspective (gestalt). Millions of
imaginative and moving works of child art are a continuing testimony to the
value of expressive works by children.

Given the delight and importance of children's art, it is curious to see
how contemporary art educators have made child-centered art into a
problem, and even more curious to hear their explanations of why it is a
problem. In order to justify the more systematic side of DBAE (e.g., scan the
design elements in a Miro, then "make your own" Miro), art educators have
had to de-validate the Lowenfeldian connection between experience and
art. How can they do this? The argument seems to be that child art and old
master art share qualities of spontaneity, expressiveness, and creativity
only through a charming but meaningless coincidence. For a child to make
authentic art at eight is nice, the argument runs, but does not offer a base for
a lifetime of understanding of art. Which is rather like saying that you
shouldn't run fast at eight because you don't have Olympic form and you
will be walking at fifty anyway. There is not sense to it. It children's art and
master art resemble one another in certain respects (openness among them),
then they resemble them; there is no such thing as a false resemblance. And
it is one of the great joys of human development that it works out this way.

The experience of the critic, the artist, and the child all depend upon
a quality of openness. These three perspectives should strongly support an
approach to art education that also encourages openness. In educational
philosophy, the closest term to what I am talking about is imagination
(Nadaner, 1988). Imagination is a quality that attaches itself to and enlivens
all forms of thinking. Imagination is inextricable from the larger purposes
of education, which are to broaden horizons and create new possibilities of
action that make a difference in the lifeworld. The earliest sites of imagina-
tion are play and dream. Child art continues play and dream in the form of
visible symbols. Adult art and criticism keep play and dream alive in the
midst of the increasing weight of logocentric reasoning and constrictive
systems of thought. At the highest levels of education, artistic imagina-
tion is necessary to keep alive the connection between cultural production
and life experience.

There is a way, then, for art education to tolerate art. It is to return to
teaching art, rather than to the dissemination of systems. Art education
should engage itself with art and the art spirit, in its fullness of its openness
and ambiguity, for two reasons. One is that the disseminating of art instruc-
tion simply does not work. Proponents of hard-line DBAE argue that art
must be simplified for mass art education, and that approximation is better
than nothing at all. Thus impressionist paintings are seen as daubs of paint
that merge at a distance, squiggly lines are pointed out in Van Gogh, and
design elements are noted whenever possible. The problem with all of this
is that it misses the generative core of the experience, the passionate
curiosity about new forms (new to the artist) and their surprising relations
to the life of feeling. This is what comes out of reading Van Gogh or De
Kooning as well as looking at their paintings. This passionate curiosity is
what every human being feels in some measure, and it is with this
curiosity that art teachers have to work.

Systems of art education confuse parroting of master works with
getting at their core. An exercise in doing "something like DeChirico or
Braque" can produce an attitude of passive mimicry, not of imagination.
Artistic art is always imaginative, never passive. The second reason to
give art spirit is then, simply to bring out the authentic qualities of the
art experience. Art is like walking or eating, very difficult to analyze
but very rewarding when practiced. In the past, art educators have known
how to creatively work with the student to bring out the art spirit, but we
have stopped looking in the right places. This kind of teaching takes a
delicate knowledge, a knowledge of give and take and respect for the
student's own experience.

Closure, system and reification are not the way to go, because they
are endpoints. Imagination, openness, and authenticity are not endpoints.
They are engagements which make possible a future, which is what edu-
cation is all about.

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