The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education

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The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education (JSTAE) is a publication of the Caucus on Social Theory & Art Education (CSTAE), an affiliate of the National Art Education Association. Its editorial policy is in compliance with the CSTAE's constitutional mandate:

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, book and exhibition reviews, and 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. 14 is April 15, 1994. Send relevant articles to:

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Contents

JSTAE Number 13  1993

Michael J. Emme  5  Editorial
Elizabeth Garber
Charles Wieder

Kristin G. Congdon  13  Art Teaching for Peace and Justice

Charles Garoian  57  Linear Perspective and Montage: Two Dominating Paradigms in Art Education
jan jagodzinski  87  The War of Labels: An Art Educator in Search of a Sign
On The Cover: Darwin Perez (front cover, photographer unknown) and Sabrina Brown (back cover, photo by Marjorie Greathouse) Students at Howard Middle School in Orlando Florida with masks they produced in an after school arts program that blended the visual arts and drama. The program was lead by Steve Lotts and organized through the Community Arts Program of the University of Central Florida.

Editorial(s)

Michael J. Emme
Elizabeth Garber
Charles Wieder

When trying to express to students some of the challenges I experience when working with collage as an art form, I suggest that each element or bit torn out of a magazine has a voice. When you place two elements beside each other you have a potentially complex visual/cultural conversation. The collage projects I experienced (usually in an English class) in high school typically involved collecting dozens of marginally related images and pasting them on a single page. The processes involved were certainly a pleasant alternative to more routine activities, but the final product was always a frustration. I have since come to realize that what I had created in those first experiences with collage were the visual and narrative equivalent of a room full of people each talking at the top of their lungs with no one listening. Occasionally, mostly by chance, moments of coherent dialogue would rise above the din, but soon enough those little islands disappeared.

On many levels JSTAE 13 is an attempt to build a meaningful collage. In replacing Harold Pearse as editor, the decision has been made to try a collaborative editorial model using an editorial team that includes Elizabeth Garber, Charles Wieder and me. Hence the editorial itself will be in three parts and three voices. The process of reviewing manuscripts has been shared among the three of us, with the result that all of the
work in JSTAE 13 has been read by at least 5 or 6 people. Naturally we didn't always agree on the merits of particular submissions. Diversity involves constant negotiation and occasionally even real compromise. As the person who laid out the final publication and wrote the 75 or so letters involved in maintaining lines of communication, I have been given the top perch on the masthead this time, but our hope is to rotate that lead position through the team over the next several issues of JSTAE. Our further hope is that each member of the editorial team will have the time and opportunity to identify a theme for the issue where they lead the team. The theme for JSTAE 14, ECO • TECHNO, is spelled out briefly at the end of this editorial and represents an attempt to bring seemingly diverging voices and visions together.

Although JSTAE 13 was not built around a theme, there are, nevertheless, some common threads running through the journal. The theme of diversity, and diverse understanding, represents the continuity between issues of JSTAE. Several of the articles in JSTAE 13 represent that moment of shock we each experience when we hear a voice for the first time though it has been around us all along. In diverse ways each of the articles calls for an openness to reassessing our understanding of 'the obvious' that is so often discussed — worked on at least one of us. The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education was the Bulletin, in a spiral bound form but nevertheless noteworthy articles that I had to borrow from my professors since the library did not subscribe. To my thinking, this issue of the Journal continues those solid beginnings.

The articles that make up this issue are varied in both content and style. Content includes educating for peace and justice (Congdon), consumer culture (Jagodzinski), issues of censorship and feminism (Lang, Helgadottir, Blakie, Tarlow-Calder), montage and linear perspective (Garoian), and developmental assumptions behind research in art education (Hamblen). As those readers who persevere will see, the styles range from personal to more academic. The variety is important to me (and, I think, to my editor-colleagues, Mike and Charles). It indicates the breadth of social theory and its relevance to the many voices and actions we take as art educators. It represents that there is, in our midst, a polyphony (a word I used in the title to my dissertation study on feminist art criticism; a word that I continue to want to use).

There is, in the breadth of current cultural studies (including feminism, poststructuralism, etc.), an ongoing distinction between social deconstruction and reconstruction, between analysis and the construction of change. Often, analysis and deconstruction are criticized for what they don't do—reconstruct. But these voices, of course, help us to "understand" (a dirty word in some circles) the "what" and the "why" (that sometimes includes "when" and "where") of reconstruction may turn in circles or race completely chaotically. The articles that comprise this issue of JSTAE can be understood along these "lines;" I find each article makes a contribution relevant

or him (even if it's just fifty people, I remember his saying, fifty is enough). The Caucus sounded like a group of people I wanted to be involved with. It was and is. (The name of the organization—so often discussed a few years ago—worked on at least one of us.)
to social theory and change in art education at this moment in history.

Finally, on a personal note, I would heartily recommend our experiment in editing to any energetic souls who have inclinations to editorships. Of course, I have a thick folder of correspondence between the three of us (as main switching center, Mike’s must take up a file drawer—thanks Mike, for your boundless energy, ever thoughtful responses, and good humor), but then we all have the benefits of prolonged exchanges (that eventually included reviewers’ comments as well) on each article and the collaborative experience/product. In many cases I remember having an “ah-ha!” over some insight Mike or Charles made. The structure of collaboration encourages each of us, more than ever, to put aside our initial reactions and listen, reconsider, rethink, and stay open. In this world today, this is an important skill. So the journal you cradle in the palm of your hand is polyphonic and also, underlaid with poly-thinking and poly-listening. And to pick up on a note I dropped in the first paragraph, might we encourage you to suggest a subscription to your local library? Happy reading.

—E.G.

Editors are unavoidably critics, and literary critics at that (even when what they’re editing is an academic journal). The work involves judging the significance and the pertinence of ideas, and how well formed and informed they are. This journal of the Social Theory (etc.) Caucus is itself largely about criticism, social criticism. So what sort of criticism is done by critics of social theory criticques?

In the case of JSTAE, one common approach to editing that’s ruled out is the traditional presumption of authoritative connoisseurship. Our social theory roots preclude such pomposity. What editorial non-canons, then, was our editorial approach based on, making our selections and going about the business of editing? This, in fact, was the very concern raised at the outset of our work on JSTAE 13. Our long deliberated approach basically came down to this: a) to continue our dialogue, working closely with one another about our choices, our differences, and our editorial approaches, and b) to make every effort to work sympathetically with those writers on art education social theory who send their work our way, toward helping them develop their work on its own terms.

And that’s what we did, rather diligently. As noted above by Emme, added to our editorial reading and writing chores was an awful lot of correspondence. Tiring though the work often was, no part of it was unfulfilling. In our three-way long-distance give-and-takes, whether over differences or re-evaluations of earlier discussions, if not always reaching consensus, connections were always made—senses of personal closeness developed. Even amidst scurrying about to send off materials or communique’s that were almost always past due, space would be made for personal notes and expressions of concern. Shared beliefs as well as respected differences became the basis for personal attachments.

That feature of our editorial method—a commitment to communication and feeling of personal attachment—I would define as caring—caring about work, the people doing it, and the people the work is about. It is that quality of caring that I think distinguishes this journal, and the Caucus that gave birth to it. The questions we raise matter to us, as do our methods of inquiry. A sense of social import underlies our efforts. Research “findings” mean something—to be adopted or questioned or tested. In other words, the hypotheses in these pages aren’t null. And because our questions aren’t the easy ones and the methods rarely tried-and-tested, the writing and the dialogue were never dull.
Editing, consequently, was rarely a straightforward process. Even the simplest criticism requires interpretation. Inherent in what the Caucus is about calls for regular cross checking of one's methods, assumptions, and tolerance level. We called upon each other as translators of differing methods of inquiry that were unfamiliar to one of us. In one instance we might grapple to explicate a taken-for-granted assertion that sounded out of tune; in another case try to put an author's impatient tone into scholarly prose; or to find a way to underscore without overstatement a passionate plea for a radically different sort of educational approach. These weren't the simplest sort of translations.

What did we end up with for your study and critique? There is Hamblen's discussion of schooling as an agency for reproducing in unwitting students their caretakers allegiance to modernist formalism. The paper is not a prescription for appeasing your local school board or principal. There is Congdon's call for "teaching for peace and justice"—which is not the least bit like a lesson plan for decopaging the door to your classroom. Nor is Jagodzinski's discussion of the untoward consequences of a hidden curriculum of pop culture imagery to be taken as a campaign guide for gaining two minutes more 2nd grade art every other week. Nor is Garoian's paper a high school project on linear perspective or montage. Nor is the series of feminist perspectives on censorship by Lang, Helgadottir, Blaikie, and Tarlow-Calder a recipe for quieting a squeeky artcart. Nor is there advice on how art teachers can join forces with the marching band to wow the PTA while at the same time raising test scores.

What these articles do take on is a very different order of business—namely, questioning the very subject matter of the arts, raising the most fundamental questions of meaning and methods of study—questions concerning who education is for and for what purposes. Like the artist stepping back from a work in progress to see what needs refinement and what's better left alone, the authors of the pages that follow have taken pause to study what's not working in art education, or is working badly. It's not business-as-usual around here. If you'd rather not know what's wrong with how you were taught or are teaching, this is probably not the journal for you. But if you sometimes dare to ask why your teaching isn't working as you once hoped, or why the work has become less gratifying, you may well find some leads in the pages that follow. I have.

-C.G.W.
A CALL FOR IDEAS • A CALL FOR IDEAS • A CALL FOR IDEAS

The prefixes 'eco' and 'techno' are clearly linked to a whole series of oppositions such as romantic/classical; male/female; artistic/scientific; but these oppositions simplify complex relationships that have profound implications for social structure and through that for art and education.

JSTAE 14
(proposed publication date-Summer 1994)

will aim to function as a forum for both words and images exploring the problem of reconciling ECO • TECHNO in art and education.

MANUSCRIPTS • should be submitted following the guidelines listed at the front of JSTAE 13.

IMAGES • Working under the assumption that art can function as basic or applied research whose findings are visual, any visual works submitted will be adjudicated by a jury for their relevance to the theme ECO • TECHNO. Works by you, your students, or colleagues which are selected will be reproduced photographically and included as part of a gallery of images in JSTAE 14. Please submit reproductions in slide form. Make sure all works are clearly labelled and limit your submissions to 3-5 works.

All submissions should be sent to:
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Art and Teaching for Peace and Justice

Kristin G. Congdon

Abstract

The social goals of peace and justice are not removed from art processes and products, and especially not from curricula in art classrooms. In this article, six topic areas are suggested for the art educator which further the causes of peace and justice: 1) Appreciating diversity; 2) Understanding that art creates individual and group identity; 3) Encouraging collaboration in art processes; 4) Working respectfully with the earth's ecosystems; 5) Analyzing art which deals specifically with war and violence; and 6) Promoting peace and justice through art.
ECO • TECHNO
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Art and Teaching for Peace and Justice

Introduction

In the fall of 1991, I was asked to be a committee member on a project to find ways to relate the issues presented in two Shakespearean plays to our contemporary lives. The two plays were the upcoming season performances for the Orlando Shakespeare Festival. The group, comprised of a mathematician, a minister, a lawyer, a therapist, a criminologist, and an artist, as well Bruce Gagnon, the Director of the Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, met to explore issues in the plays which would generate public discussions on a series of panels titled “Shakespeare in Context.”

As we began discussions the first night, I remember being somewhat puzzled by Bruce’s position. Although I am a child of the 60s who participated in peace demonstrations, decades later I couldn’t help but wonder what he did each day. I was puzzled by the overtness of his title; I wondered who funded his organization, and what his routine activities might be. I expressed my confusion, adding that I believed that I too worked for peace and justice, but that my title was Professor of Art, so I taught about peace and justice through art. I was surprised that others also responded in a similar manner: The lawyer said he worked for peace and justice (as a lawyer), as did the therapist, the artist and even the mathematician. We all seemed to feel, as much as we could make out, that peace and justice were our primary missions in our respective professions. How, we all wondered, could one work for peace and justice these days without some kind of other categorical catalyst? To be the Director of a Coalition for Peace and Justice seemed so direct, so obvious in a world which demands that you interpret or read into what is presented. Bruce explained to a somewhat embarrassed, stunned audience that he saw working for peace and justice more holistically. He worked politically, culturally, economically, educationally and so on. He coordinated protests in the ’60s fashion and he organized trips to Washington, wrote and distributed flyers, and initiated group meetings. But he also lobbied, educated, and worked to influence people in any peaceful way he could to further his Coalition’s goals. He added that he was tired, admitting that there were days he went home and isolated himself from the difficulty of his position and the challenge of his work. After the formal discussion, Bruce and I talked briefly about power structures and people who worked both inside and outside established organizations such as schools, courts, treatment centers, and churches. He made me rethink several issues about protest, change, subversiveness, and morality which I had not explored for many years.

Soon after that meeting, Bruce Gagnon gave me a call and asked if I would teach a workshop session in December for a statewide conference he was coordinating. It was called: “Teaching Peace: Resolving Conflicts Non-Violently.” I figured that if I was right when I told him that basically I was a peace worker hiding under the title of Professor of Art, I’d better not complain about being too busy to fulfill his request. After all, I should have all the materials already developed; I would simply have to pull them together and be more explicit about the connections to the goals of peace and justice. I presented my workshop twice. It helped me formalize what it is I spend my days doing. Hopefully, this article might help other art educators explore how they too are ultimately involved, or can be, in issues of peace and justice. It will focus on how to organize the study of art in a way that teaches (about) peace and justice.
Peace and Justice

I envision six general areas in which an educator might organize his or her curricular materials. They are: 1) Appreciating diversity; 2) Understanding that art creates individual and group identity; 3) Encouraging collaboration in art processes; 4) Working respectfully with the earth's ecosystems; 5) Analyzing art which deals specifically with war and violence; 6) Promoting peace and justice through art. These categories are, of course, interrelated and should build on each other in ways that enhance the teaching of each particular point. No less is at stake than preparing citizens to live responsibly and take part in the kinds of problem solving that have become necessary for our survival. To live in a world where peace and justice are more commonplace, actions must continually be taken on many fronts. The concepts of peace and justice are complex as is the world in which we now live. To live peacefully is to feel secure that justice is a valued goal which will be ensured by the consistent acts of defining and redefining what living peacefully means and how justice can manifest itself in our small communities and our globally interconnected world.

Appreciating Diversity


Unfortunately, while more and more art educators agree with the goal, its translation into classroom practice has been difficult.

In 1984, I wrote an article which was published in the Journal of Multicultural and Cross-cultural Research in Art Education, addressing the benefits to cultural awareness of utilizing a folkloric approach to studying art. My foremost interest in folklore was always the methodology used to appreciate an art work, with its emphasis on storytelling, process and context rather than any kind of categorization for so called high and low art. Years later, I continue to acknowledge the folkloric approach as beneficial for understanding not only that which has been called folk art but also that which many refer to as fine art. The folkloric approach can be very helpful in recognizing the power of images which Freedberg (1989) says we have intellectualized away, notably with our 20th century emphasis on formalism where the consequences have been dire. By not allowing ourselves to recognize the many functions and meanings of these images, we have lost the ability to fully understand the potentially powerful consequences of art products and processes.

The benefits I listed in my 1984 article result from an approach which incorporates a variety of perspectives inclusive of the appropriate cultural context: a) Learning to value all people and their art; b) Reducing limiting stereotypes; c) Responding to art as it functions in varying cultures; d) Viewing connections and expanding interests related to other disciplines; e) Studying art relevant to students; f) Encouraging democratic participation in the arts; and g) Expanding the notion of creativity. If art were taught with an emphasis placed on the idea that all good art functions successfully in particular settings for a variety of reasons (not solely "art for art's sake"), the values, ritual processes and life-values associated with the art objects would be appreciated.
This approach would allow us to acknowledge that people often have different creative responses for making sense of similar life quandaries, such as seeking answers to the purposes of our lives, the need for belonging, a striving for a sense of place and identity, gaining a sense of spirituality, balancing one's needs in the world, and finding acceptable avenues for exploring that which is otherwise forbidden.

In order to demonstrate that art functions in diverse ways and that individuals and groups express themselves differently, often to answer or make sense of the same basic needs, the teacher must show examples of a variety of art works and the ways they function in different societies. It can, for example be acknowledged how art objects change when placed in a foreign context, as when Native American masks are placed in Anglo-American museums when a tribe feels they are ceremonially secret and sacred, or what happens to Australian Aboriginal paintings (Dreamings) when they are seen through the eyes of (for example) a long-time New Yorker.

By engaging in a sincere effort to appreciate the art work of diverse groups of people, we may accept them by making better sense of who we are and who we want to be in that relationship. A more sensitive, developed sense of oneself, conveyed through this approach to art, should create a student and a citizen who is secure in welcoming differences, is flexible in problem solving to incorporate change and variety, and has the ability to seek, more effectively, that ever present goal of justice in our difficult world.

Understanding That Art Creates Self-Identity

Although it can be seen that art plays a major role in self-identity as a function of appreciating diversity, it is also important to recognize that art promotes the clarification of who one is in a communal sense. We cannot all identify equally with the same art works. Appreciating and responding to art is an intensely personal activity. It would be wrong to want every student to react to an art work in the same manner, just as art educators have traditionally argued against conformity in the "art making" projects of elementary students.

Unfortunately, students in elementary and secondary schools (perhaps I could include universities as well), are used to trying to find the "right" answer which will please a teacher and result in a good grade and academic acceptance. This may be more difficult for the new Haitian immigrant student in Florida who is used to revering voodoo flags, sequins and sewing, or a Mexican American friend of mine who wonders why people in Orlando seldom adorn themselves in special party dresses and dance to her native music. When I teach folk art classes at the local Elderhostel Center, most often to Anglo-American students, I show them many examples of Anglo quilts, which they readily respond to, but I also show them African-American quilts which are often different in the way the colors are chosen, the design is constructed, and the stitching is completed. My senior students appreciate the different quilt approach only when it is placed into the context of improvisation, color preferences and transplanted and assimilated African values and beliefs. The more complete understanding of the art works assists students, confirming who they are as separate or similar to others in aesthetic preferences. One can better understand that many loggers carve wood because they know the feel and smell of wood; or some South Carolina African Americans make sweet grass baskets because their mothers and grandmothers did so; or a
Hmong refugee continues to sew story clothes because it is important for them to tell their history. For those of us who are not loggers, African-American basketmakers from South Carolina, or Hmong refugees, we might respond: I have always loved the repetition of a carver's knife on wood because it reminds me of my love of the mountains and the peacefulness of summers spent there; or I like to think about continuing the traditions of making sweet grass baskets because it reminds me of the lace my Swedish grandmother used to make and how important it was to her that we not forget our roots; or when I think about a history of a people being recorded so prominently in embroidered cloth, I wonder if I might think differently about how my own history is recorded. One could, of course, expand on any of these ideas without trouble. Students should be involved in discussing similarities and differences and the differences which are noted should be presented in an atmosphere which will allow for values clarification (Simon, Howe & Kirschenbaum, 1972). For example, if a white Elderhostel student decided she didn't like African American quilts created in an improvisational style, it would be important for her to know why. Is it the large stitches, the clashing colors, the boldness of the design which is disturbing, or is it too different from what she knows about quilts to be acceptable? Could it be that the student might have a deep seated racism which is reflected in her judgment? These issues are important.

A sense of personal and cultural identity can be understood as a respect and connection to a local place, gained over time (Ferris, 1982). Artists increasingly are inspired by regional activities, and many utilize the materials found in their areas such as grasses, bamboo, subway cars, or so-called junk for collages. Artists who create earthworks or environmental sculptures attempt to draw a community's attention to the land, the sky or ways in which they can better congregate and understand their connections to the spaces in which they live (Lippard, 1983). Identification with and discussion of varying kinds of architecture, from trailers and rolling homes associated with the west and people who grew up in the 60s, to hogans and long houses, to skyscrapers and penthouses, can also be very useful.

It is important that children and adults understand that art, other human made objects and environments, as well as nature helps form our identities which, thankfully, vary. This does not mean that we have no choice in creating and re-creating that identity. The goal of this kind of understanding is to create a sense of understanding and acceptance in classrooms and communities across the country. The result, hopefully, will be students who feel more secure about their abilities to effect change in peaceful ways. With the growth of gang warfare, and new memberships in hate groups such as the KKK and neo-Nazi groups, the youth of America desperately need socially positive ways to feel powerful and to find positive identity. These avenues are clearly not available to the degree necessary to promote positive secure participation in their communities in order for them to form appropriate identities. Teaching for peace and justice can relate to teaching about art and its power to create an appropriate sense of identity which can be a healing force in a community. In order for this goal to be reached, an educator must help facilitate art dialogue which enhances a positive self-identity.

Encouraging Collaboration in Art Processes

Art therapists have often used collaboration in art because they understand that the process of working artistically with other people can be useful in helping them learn from each other, not only artistically, but behaviorally (Feder & Feder, 1981; Kwiatkowska, 1978). Women artists, especially those aligned with a feminist approach, often value and utilize a
collaborative approach to creating art (Cheatham and Powell, 1986). Judy Baca creates murals with participants of color, often Los Angeles gang members, which helps them appreciate and understand each other as they work side by side. Judy Chicago’s Birth Project brought women together to describe and share what it means to give birth, and women all over America still congregate to collectively quilt and share stories. Tim Rollins and Kids of Survival have effectively collaborated on art work in the Bronx for many years. Any teacher who has ever coordinated a class mural knows that new challenges arise when students are faced with issues of consensus, collective timing and sharing. These are situations which need to be created and dealt with successfully in school. Students can not be expected to become participating community members without the skills that these processes demand. When collaborating on art, value issues are more likely to arise than would occur with other subjects. It becomes appropriate to discuss controversies with public art and how to successfully avoid trouble by inclusion in decision making. One may need to negotiate with another’s color choices which are culturally based, as well as different choices of symbols and political content. Students should learn that there are times to lead and times to follow and that they can and should develop the skills to do both successfully.

Fruitful collaboration is not always easy. But the process teaches us that we must chose our times to compromise and elect our times to stick to our beliefs, hoping that we can elicit some convert. We need to teach our students to engage in debate in ways which do not demean others and to compromise gracefully without a loss of integrity. These valuable life lessons, played out in the collaborative art process, can provide hope for children, youth, and adults. It teaches respect for differences. We need to teach our students to become people who work diligently to understand, accept and incorporate varying world views, experiences and histories. When art curricula fails to address differences, it fails to acknowledge the existence of certain cultural groups, often women, and almost always lesbians and gays. Many ways of creating and approaching the world should be presented and discussed in order to teach students skills in team work, consensus and compromise, as well as giving them the opportunity to choose varying new ways of living their lives.

Working Respectfully With the Earth’s Ecosystems

Several art educators have reminded us repeatedly of our responsibility to the environment and the earth (Jagodzinski, 1987, McFee & Degge, 1977). Wendell Berry (1987) explains how our choices, including those about the creation and appreciation of art, affect ecological systems. He believes that art is part of a larger system which includes that which is biological and geological, and that our judgments about art will have long range ramifications for the earth. If this is so (as many non-western cultures have believed for centuries) it is important to teach our students about these connections and the consequences of our artistic actions.

Many Native American artists easily connect their art to ecological systems (Steltzer, 1980), often gathering bark carefully at the proper time and in the appropriate amount so as not to damage a tree or a forest, or utilizing the sun to dry wool and natural dyes to color fibers. Australian Aboriginal artists paint Dreamings which are closely connected to the land, acknowledging and encouraging a close connection with plants, animals, and seasons (Sutton, 1988; Premont & Lennard, 1988). Many artists such as David Butler from Louisiana who uses old weathered roofing tin for his sculptures recycle
materials (Baking in the Sun, 1987), or Howard Finster who has created a Paradise Garden in northwest Georgia with (he says) one of everything humans have discarded (Finster & Patterson, 1989).

Many artists are combining ecological activism with artistic practices. Durland (1989) has stated that Greenpeace is perhaps the most successful guerrilla theater which exists today. Greenpeace participants know how all-important an image is. “One of Greenpeace’s more potent images was created in England in 1985 where internationally known photographer David Bailey directed a sixty-second film showing a glamorous fashion show in which one of the models comes out in a fur coat which suddenly begins spurring blood until the whole audience is splattered. In the final shot the model exits the ramp, dragging her fur coat and leaving a wide swath of blood behind her. The last image has also been produced as a billboard with the caption, ‘It takes 40 dumb animals to make a fur coat. But only one to wear it’” (p. 36). Many people have reacted strongly to this film as they have to many of the other Greenpeace images.

A recent article by Robin Cembalest in Artnews (1991) entitled “The Ecological Art Explosion,” highlights several artists who work to balance the earth ecologically. These artists include Buster Simpson who uses Puget Sound’s sewage as the glaze for his pottery plates, Agnes Denes who planted wheat on Manhattan’s Battery Park landfill, and Joseph Beuys who planted 7,000 oaks from 1982 to 1986 in Kassel, Germany. These artists counter the notion of art (only) for art sake, and they encourage our participation and broaden our ecological sensitivity.

If we do not take the time to teach our students to respect the plants, animals, spaces, earth, waters, and skies around us we can not expect our students to have much of an understanding of the inherent issues involved in creating a peaceful and just world. Artists have not ignored ecological issues; art educators should make sure they too see this as an important area to study.

We must also question whether acquiring and preserving so much art is in the best interests of all cultures. For example, Northwest Coast Native American totem poles were meant to decay and return to the earth (Jones, 1986). This decay created a need for new artists to be educated and available to make new poles; this process ensured the renewal of the cycle. When western collectors place the totem poles in museums to prevent their decay they interrupt the ecological process. New kinds of questions must now be asked and answered if we are to think and act more ecologically.

Analyzing Art Which Deals Specifically with War and Violence

It is unfortunate but true that our world believes it can solve problems with violence. Wars seem almost commonplace. We need to know what war is, its reality, so that citizens can make better decisions about problem solving in the future. War is not just about the soldiers who come home, hug their family members, and walk down the streets of our cities and towns in welcome home parades. It is not just about watching television in celebration of our technological ability to accurately fire a bomb onto a chosen target, like a sanitized video game. It is much, much more deadly. Children who live in impoverished inner-city areas of our country live with warlike violence every day and have an understanding of the destruction of war. It is family members killed and dismembered, it is fear to walk to school, it is family and community futures shattered, and it is hopelessness because there often is no way out.
Teachers need to acknowledge that (governmentally declared and undeclared) wars are going on all the time. Working for peace is a constant struggle in a world where human rights are continually violated, hunger, homelessness, and poverty are pervasive, and racism and sexism are status quo. Sometimes those who see and experience injustice fight wars in non-violent ways. This is the kind of activity and community participation teachers, certainly including art teachers, should encourage. Teachers can encourage students to identity systems which create possible violent producing behavior (perhaps grading systems) and ask them to consider nonviolent actions to deal with their own situations. When students are able to effectively deal with issues in their local communities, they can begin to deal with more global issues. One issue might be the AIDS epidemic.

Greyson (1990) calls the fight against AIDS a war which has resulted from "government indifference, medical negligence and right-wing opportunism." He further states that, "AIDS is an epidemic of sexual intolerance" (p. 60). Artists all over the country have responded to the destruction of the disease and the suffering of its victims at the hands of both the virus and humanity's neglect (Grover, 1989) and art educators are beginning to see the importance of dealing with the issue (Schellin, 1990). Thousands of individuals have participated in the NAMES Quilt project commemorating and celebrating the lives of those who have died from AIDS (Ruskin, 1988).

Many artists have dealt with issues around violence and war: Kaele Kollwitz gave us images about the tragedies of war, insisting that her art have a social function; Nancy Spero deals with the violence of male patriarchy (Chadwick, 1990); Sue Coe paints about homelessness and the unreasonable torture of animals (Coe, 1988); and many artists, such as Faith Ringgold and Betye Saar, bring racism to our attention in their art.

Our students, especially children, need to be shown examples of the work of artists, art historians, curators, and arts administrators who coordinate, develop and create projects and programs which support the goals of peace and justice. It should not be too difficult to find examples within one's own community which is always a good place to start. Students also need to see how they can become a part of a state, national or international community with their participation, thereby expanding on their communicative abilities to affect change.
and promote their values. One could easily write a book on all the artistic efforts which are currently in progress. Following are but a few examples:

Annie Cheatham and Mary Clare Powell (1986) recently traveled 30,000 miles to document the lives of over 1000 North American women, many of them visual artists, who are working toward a more peaceful future. The works that they describe such as murals, performances, communications, support groups, and quilts can all be used as inspiration for a class or designated group to create and coordinate their own projects.

The United States Society for Education Through Art and the International Society for Education Through Art regularly sponsor children's exhibitions which focus on peace through cultural exchange and understanding (see for example USSEA Newsletter, June 1991). Other examples of successful children's artistic exchanges include the Banner of Peace which was sponsored by the United Nations during the International Year of the Child. It was hosted by the International Banner of Peace Assembly in a movement fostering the creative development and accomplishments of children reflecting the motto of "unity, creativity, and beauty." This was an extremely successful effort which involved 116 countries with over 25,000 works.

The Bread and Puppet Theater in Vermont gears performances around issues of peace and justice (Shumann, 1985). The coordinators believe that the creation of bread is like the performance of theater and the making of puppets. It is all a necessity. This group creates its puppets anew each year. They are used to educate and involve the public in issues regarding peace, ecology and cultural diversity. Students in elementary and secondary schools should become aware of the importance of art as it has been used in peace movements, free speech efforts, and other debates which directly and indirectly affect our lives.

Along with the Quincentenary, many issues about colonialism and oppression are continuing to surface. Exhibits which exclude, debase or debilitate Native Americans and Chicanos are being questioned. Native Americans have organized around this issue, informing us that this is a "teachable moment." Art students should be involved in discussion of what there is to celebrate, if anything, and how such a celebration should take place (see the Networking Magazine, Indigenous Thought, March-June, 1991).

Art students can help change perspectives which have historically marginalized and destroyed individuals and groups. Students can and should make informed choices about interpreting history, critiquing art, and creating works which do have consequences in our world. If we teach our students that art exists apart from life and history we miseducate; we also disempower them from making change. Students should have the freedom to chose values and form and reform their identities as they grow.

Conclusion

Clearly, there are artists and art educators who feel that the creative process and product reflects either directly or indirectly issues related to peace and justice. Segregating art from the rest of life, its joys, challenges and responsibilities is irresponsible art educational theory and practice. We are long past the time when art and art study is, should be, or can afford to be solely about formal analysis. Because art deals with values, cultures, contexts, and both individual and group work, we must involve ourselves and our students in understanding art in its broader scope (Becker, 1982). Art is about aesthetics, but it is also about living in the world, problem solving, and valuing. So too, is the work involved in creating peace and justice.
An Afterword

Several years ago, I read Virginia Woolf's book, *Three Guineas*, which centers on the question of what a university would be like if it worked for peace instead of war. Woolf concludes that women must be involved with a re-structuring of the college (or university) and because women are different, our help will be different. She says, speaking to men, "We can only help you to defend culture and intellectual liberty by defending our own culture and our own intellectual liberty" (p. 88). And further:

Let us then discuss as quickly as we can the sort of education that is needed. Now since history and biography—the only evidence available to an outsider—seem to prove that the old education of the old colleges breeds neither a particular respect for liberty nor a particular hatred of war it is clear that you must rebuild your college differently. It is young and poor; let it therefore take advantage of those qualities and be founded on poverty and youth. Obviously, then, it must be an experimental college, an adventurous college. Let it be built on lines of its own ... Let the pictures and the books be new and always changing. Let it be decorated afresh by each generation with their own hands cheaply. The work of the living is cheap; often they will give it for the sake of being allowed to do it. Next, what should be taught in the new college, the poor college? Not the arts of dominating other people; not the arts of ruling, of killing, of acquiring land and capital. They require too many overhead expenses; salaries and uniforms and ceremonies. The poor college must teach only the arts that can be taught cheaply and practiced by poor people; such as medicine, mathematics, music, painting and literature. It should teach the arts of human intercourse; the art of understanding other people's lives and minds, and the little arts of talk, of dress, of cookery that are allied with them. The aim of the new college, the cheap college, should be not to segregate and specialize, but to combine. It should explore the ways in which mind and body can be made to cooperate: discover what new combinations make good wholes in human life. The teachers should be drawn from the good lives as well as the good thinkers. (pp. 33-34)

Perhaps we, as educators, should start to consider how we should transform our schools to be places of peace work rather than places of war.

References


Developmental Models of Artistic Expression and Aesthetic Response: The Reproduction of Formal Schooling and Modernity

Karen A. Hamblen

Abstract

Developmental models of artistic expression have had a major influence on research and curriculum in art education. The purpose of this paper is to examine the characteristics and assumptions of artistic expression and aesthetic response developmental models. It is proposed that developmental models purported to be descriptive and to have widespread, if not universal, application are socially embedded and prescriptive of outcomes that are highly consistent with characteristics of formal schooling and with the values of modernity. Information for this theoretical study is based on selected literature on the following: (a) developmental models in art education, (b) characteristics of modernity, and (c) everyday/local art experiences.
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Research on children's work in art has been influenced by fairly well-established developmental models on stages of artistic expression (Chapman, 1978; Eisner, 1972; Kellogg, 1969; Lansing, 1969; Lowenfeld, 1947). With current instruction extending children's classroom experiences beyond studio work to areas of aesthetics, art history, and art criticism, we are now also beginning to see discussions of children's stages of aesthetic understanding and response (Greer, 1984; Parsons, 1987; Wolf, 1988). If aesthetic response models follow a pattern of research and implementation similar to what has occurred for artistic expression, we can expect to see aesthetic models exerting major influences on research investigations and on newly designed instructional programs. Recent models proposed on aesthetic response consist of stages that begin with a recognition of children's spontaneous verbal responses and age-based preferences, leading toward an eschewing of personal preferences and contextual cues, and culminating with responses based on perceptual qualities, formal relationships, and acquired artworld knowledge (Parsons, 1987; Wolf, 1988; also see Parsons, Johnston, & Durham, 1978).

In this paper it is proposed that models purported to be descriptive and to have widespread if not universal application may actually be prescriptive of outcomes that are highly consistent with and reproductive of characteristics of formal schooling and with the values of modernity. The purpose of this paper is to examine the assumptions of developmental models. This will be done by examining artistic expression and aesthetic response developmental models as they (a) relate to the characteristics of modernity and as they (b) differ from current theory and research on everyday/local cognition. In addition, brief reference will be made to information on gender consciousness and multiculturalism inasmuch as research in these areas provide nondevelopmental interpretations of human behaviors and responses.

Information for this theoretical study is based on selected literature on the following: (a) developmental models in art education, (b) characteristics of modernity, and (c) everyday/local art experiences. The objectives of this research are to present information on the social embeddedness of developmental models whereby art educators will consider whether these models might have some applications, they might be modified, or they might be essentially replaced by nonhierarchical and nondevelopmental constructs that relate to children's everyday, informal art experiences.

Background

Since the last part of the nineteenth century, children's graphic expressions have been collected, analyzed, and categorized into stages that relate roughly to age-based development (Chapman, 1978; Eisner, 1972; Lansing, 1969; Logan, 1955; Lowenfeld, 1947). Changes in children's art work are seen as paralleling emotional, conceptual, perceptual, social, and technical/dexterity development whereby relatively simple global responses and artistic behaviors become increasingly differentiated, individually identifiable, and pictorially illusionistic. For example, it is believed children become more adept at conveying spatial relationships as a result of increased emotional and social maturity, because of overall cognitive development, as a matter of perceptual learning in the "real" world of experience, due to an ability to make increasingly sophisticated aesthetic choices, and as a result of learning culturally important artistic conventions (Kellogg, 1969; McFee, 1970; Wilson & Wilson, 1979). While Kellogg (1969) emphasized
the aesthetic choices children exercised in their work, Lowenfeld (1947) looked at the same type of work and saw the self-agency and emotional content expressed by children. McFee (1970) placed Lowenfeld’s (1947) stages within a framework of cognitive learning styles, personal experience, and cultural learning and values; Wilson and Wilson (1979) have discussed and critiqued Lowenfeld’s stages from the perspective of children learning culture-specific artistic conventions. In other words, the stages exist in our research and theoretical literature, with a range of interpretations as to why they exist and with qualifications to explain deviations from stage-specific characteristics. In the history of art education, one can identify child psychology, perceptual psychology, philosophical aesthetics (and the aesthetics of fine art culture), and formalistic art values as contributing toward the character of developmental models and their interpretations (Logan, 1955; Moody, 1992).

Although there are well-articulated debates on the descriptive power and merits of developmental models (Goldsmith & Feldman, 1988; Lewis, 1982; Wilson & Wilson, 1981), once established, these models have tended to exert a tremendous influence on theory, research, and practice (Johnston, Roybol, & Parsons, 1988). If nothing else, in research on children’s art, some stance must be taken toward these models and some reference must be made to acknowledge their existence; once constructed, developmental models must be given some due, even if that “due” is critical. More often, however, stages have a taken-for-granted aura of an overarching framework with assumed wide-ranging explanatory power. They appear in most art education teacher preparation books and constitute the framework of major textbooks for children (Chapman, 1986; Hubbard, 1987; Moody, 1992).

Developmental models in art have in common certain characteristics and are based on some shared assumptions. First, and foremost, these models present a developmentally progressive view of human behavior in the visual arts. Change is inherent to these models’ descriptive being, with the underlying assumption that over time, as the individual “develops” via either creating or responding in the visual arts, there is an increase in complexity or a greater sophistication of expression and response. Although developmental descriptions of children’s art may have been originally intended to validate whatever children produced at given periods of time, characteristics of early stages are often discussed as something to overcome (Feldman, 1980), and a language of deficiency is used to describe differences from desired stages and, especially, from a model’s endpoint. For example, it is commonly stated that children’s early drawings show little concern with or lack accurate perpendicular relationships. Trees on a hillside are drawn at right angles to the slope of the hill rather than to the larger gravitational, perpendicular relationship that objects have to the earth. The child’s journey from dealing with specific objects to that of drawing objects in relationship to other objects and to the physical laws of the larger environment is carefully followed in developmental theory literature. With the exception of researchers such as Kellogg (1969), who looked at the aesthetic qualities of children’s drawings rather than their accuracy to perceptual or conceptual knowledge, each succeeding stage is seen as a developmental improvement over the characteristics of former stages. One might note that in a somewhat similar manner, adult artistic styles have traditionally been presented in art history texts as a succession of improvements, e.g., impressionism replacing and improving on various forms of idealism and realism, only to be supplanted by the new and improved styles of post-impressionism, fauvism, abstractionism, and so on. In modern interpretations of artistic
styles and of children's expressions and responses, development indicates change, and change is equated with progress and improvement (see Bowers, 1984, 1987). Even "Age of Crisis" or "Gang Age" stages of early adolescence, although representing a so-called lull in creative activity, are seen as stages leading toward greater and more encompassing artistic expression and understanding.

Second, it is assumed that developmental models convey a universalism, i.e., there is the assumption that descriptions of stages are just that—objective descriptions. Despite acknowledgements that collected child art examples rarely conform precisely to a given stage — children's work overlaps stages and may jump stages (Feldman, 1980; Wilson & Wilson, 1981, 1982) — it is assumed that described stages are descriptions of what most children do. The stages exist, they are described, and only due to deprivations or untoward experiences will they be expressed differently by individual children. Again, this does not mean that deviations are not acknowledged, but rather it is assumed that the modal characteristics of these models represent universal norms. Behavior designated as naturally occurring implies that nothing can or at the very least should be done to divert the developmental journey; however, at the same time, deviations from prescribed outcomes are considered behaviors to overcome. This is especially true for lower or initial stages. However, as Feldman (1980) has pointed out, the fact that higher stages or endpoint stages are not always achieved is a clue as to the socially prescriptive nature of these models.²

Third, existing developmental models are teleological in that they have prespecified, preferred endpoints. Not just any outcome will do. When linked to change, improvement, and universalism, the endpoint of a model takes on the legitimacy of a socially preferred, artistic "ought." Developmental models do not typically provide a branching endpoint of possibilities or choices.³ Most often, they prescribe what is considered desirable, based on the professional, adult behaviors of artists, art critics, and aestheticians who are part of the recognized, fine art world of experts. In general, models prescribe outcomes that relate to some form of illusionistic picturing for artistic expression (based on socially defined artistic conventions) and to some type of formalism for aesthetic response (based on conventions established by activities of professional art critics and aestheticians).

Modernity Values

Developmental models of artistic expression and aesthetic response embody the worldview of modern industrialized societies. Modernity is characterized by a high regard given to the rationalization of human thought and behavior, formalization and systemization of diverse information and phenomena, identification of universally applicable rules, change equated with progress, decontextualized learning, asocial and context-free information, expert-originated knowledge, and abstract and theoretical information and constructs (Apple, 1982, 1990; Bowers, 1984, 1987). These characteristics and values are expressed in art through, among other things, formal analysis, credence given to the opinions of art experts, and positive values placed on artworld-specific knowledge. Developmental models of artistic expression and aesthetic response, as currently presented, conform to the values of modernism inasmuch as they are prescriptive of decontextualized, individualistic experiences with endpoints or final stages that emphasize formal relationships, art-specific knowledge, and analyzable information. In this sense, art-related models are prescriptive of social "oughts" and normative art behaviors; they are, in effect, social models, embedded within the particularities of time and place.
Modernity lends itself to model building and to hierarchical constructs; these are evident throughout modern society in the organizational structures and lines of command in government, business, industry, and education. Hierarchical, developmental constructs or models are amenable to examination through rationalized systems of analysis and have the ostensible benefit of providing clear-cut steps for personal and social thought and action—with prespecified outcomes. In education we have “big theory,” “big idea,” overarching models to explain major human behaviors (identified, defined, and promoted as major through the models themselves). Some areas of study, such as educational psychology and gifted education, are specifically known for their prolific generation of models to describe and prescribe learning and teaching, e.g., Piaget’s stages of cognitive development (see Piaget, 1977; Piaget & Inhelder, 1956), Kohlberg’s (1981) structure of moral decision making, Bloom’s hierarchical taxonomy of learning (see Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956), Guilford’s (1967) structure of the intellect, Rensulli’s (1977) triad for gifted education. The volume of research literature resulting from these models attests to their perceived importance and perceived explanatory power.

Questions arise as to whether models describe important behaviors, give importance to otherwise existing but ho-hum behaviors, or give us ways to consider important but overlooked behaviors. Not surprisingly, there is conjecture that the value of development models may hinge on their being broad-based generalizations and summations that provide a convenient way to deal with diverse phenomena. Until discipline-based art education (DBAE) theory was identified with its emphasis on instruction beyond studio work (Greer, 1984), children’s responses to art had relatively little importance in art education research and model building priorities; we did not have models to describe these behaviors although they certainly were occurring in some manner within the art classroom and beyond.

In this sense, models give visibility and validity to selected types of behaviors and specific instructional content. Responses to art that occur within aesthetic inquiry and art criticism processes of DBAE will undoubtedly take on greater importance as they are given visibility in developmental models and in the research that models generate.

Everyday/Local Art Experiences and Knowledge

In this paper, everyday/local art expressions and responses are used to describe art experiences and responses that are not part of formal school instruction or part of school culture—and that deviate from developmental model characteristics. That is, children engage in art activities very different from formal school instruction and from developmental model descriptions (Efland, 1976; Wilson, 1974, 1985; Wilson & Wilson, 1977, 1979). Aspects of everyday/local art experiences and knowledge will be described to indicate that artistic developmental models may be mostly descriptive of institutionalized/school art experiences. In this paper it is proposed that models tend to be prescriptive of art learning that conforms to the values of modernity, to the characteristics of a hierarchical society, and to the institutional needs of education.

Researchers have described the many art forms that are not included in most art curricula. They have suggested that art educators look to the aesthetic potential of the built and natural environments, folk arts, popular arts, commercial arts, etc. (Blandy & Congdon, 1987; Duncum, 1989, n.d.; Hobbs, 1984). Researchers have also described differing ways children make and respond to art outside the art classroom. Wilson (1974) and Wilson and Wilson (1977) documented the themes and artistic strategies of children drawing in nonschool situations.
settings. For example, sexual fantasies, scatological images, and cartoon figures are common in children's nonschool art. Duncum (1989) recorded the depiction of violence and “gross” subjects in children’s work which, needless to say, are usually discouraged, if not forbidden, in school art contexts.

Formal art instruction reifies developmental models, i.e., developmental models fit the requirements of “schooling” and vice versa. For example, studio art instruction commonly involves exercises dealing with overlap, linear perspective, center of interest, shading techniques, ways to show perspective, and skill in various media techniques for purposes of increasing technical facility for various types of pictorial illusion. These are skills that conform to or support the developmental changes specified in existing models.

Much school art is taught to overcome art learning from other contexts and, in particular, the contexts of the popular culture and out-of-school learning. School contexts provide the learning of rules and deductive strategies whereas everyday problem-solving is context-specific and opportunistic. According to Lave, Murtaugh, and de la Rocha (1984), problem solving in everyday/local contexts is practical, concrete, and personally motivated (also see Brown, 1989; Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff & Lave, 1984). In everyday/local contexts, children will draw on lined paper, scrap paper, their own bodies, and walls and sides of buildings. They use ball-point pens, rulers, and erasers; they copy, trace, and use stencils. These materials, tools, and techniques are discouraged in school art and result in art not usually collected for research studies and for analysis of stage-based, developmental descriptions.

What is Studied in Research Studies

Researchers have tended to focus on art activities that require little supervision or management and that are not “messy.” Research art is produced within specified time limits and within school or controlled environments. Most children's art that has been studied is based on traditional school media and occurs within the assumptions of what constitutes valued school art experiences, e.g., art that is not copied, not based on popular media, not on taboo subject matter, and not from collaborative projects. The types of experiences and products studied and the conditions under which responses are made and recorded in developmental research studies conform to the assumptions of modernity and to conditions that will fit the desired outcomes of developmental models. For example, to record stages of aesthetic responses, individuals were asked to discuss examples of fine art, such as Ivan Albright’s painting titled “Into the World Came a Soul Called Ida” (see Parsons, 1987). This and the other works are clearly within the general category of Western “fine art.” Although Albright’s work is certainly worthy of study, it is also a work upon which many artworld (fine art) experts have expounded and a work upon which favorable judgments have been made. This and other art works used to elicit responses in aesthetic response studied are executed in traditional media, and they conform to recognized fine art formats, media, and genres. This does not mean that other types of art expressions and responses are not studied by researchers, but rather that, they usually are not part of developmental, model-producing studies.

Art criticism instruction is traditionally structured so that students will avoid personal associations, and they will reference their analysis to the perceptual qualities of the object (Feinstein, 1983, 1984). Likewise, aesthetic stage models place a formalistic, decontextualized appreciation of art as the
desirable outcome of development (Parsons, 1987). Within aesthetic response models, students move from personalized, global experiences to depersonalized and analyzable understandings of art that communicate relevant, professional artworld artistic conventions (see Parsons, 1987; Wolf, 1988). Such a developmental scheme is biased toward modernist interpretations of artistic meaning and response—and against, for example, traditionalist, postmodern, and feminist interpretations. In other words, our models for appropriate or desirable art behaviors support the characteristics of school art learning and the larger mission of schools to educate individuals to live in a modern, industrialized society wherein expert-based, specialized knowledge is the accepted standard.

Alternative “Models”

For art criticism instruction, Congdon (1986) has provided rationales for giving educational validity to everyday/local art speech and informal analyses of art. Statements made by children, laypersons, and folk artists indicate that highly complex art concepts are often part of everyday/local speech. In recording spontaneous, everyday comments made in response to less traditional (not fine art) art forms, Congdon cites statements that are personal, related to concrete experience, communally understood, spontaneous, ostensibly unfocused (in the traditional sense of a developmental “focus”), and specific to the time and place in which the art form is discussed. Statements on how art functions predominates rather than statements on its perceptual qualities such as occurs in formalistic analysis. Everyday talk about art, however, has usually been dismissed as uneducated, inconsequential, or merely a step toward more appropriate speech (Hamblen, 1984).

In describing traditional studio-based art instruction, Efland (1976) has bluntly stated that such art “doesn’t exist anywhere else except in schools” (p. 519). Likewise, dialogues recorded by Parsons (1987) and by Wolf (1988) that form the basis of their aesthetic stages are not the way people ordinarily talk about art. Such research-recorded talk occurs within controlled conditions and serves, perhaps, as exercises toward later, more broad-based and wide-ranging experiences and understandings of art. One might also note that even art experts do not discuss art in this manner. Barrett (1989, 1990) has compared art criticism instructional formats in art education to the writings of professional art critics and found them to differ in a number of significant ways, e.g., art critics do not necessarily follow a predetermined structure, they tend to mix evaluation with description and interpretation, and they provide numerous contextually referenced statements that link the art object to personal life experiences, social interactions, and so on.

Art education research has tended to focus on how school learning is preferable, with nonschool art knowledge and responses considered “unschooled,” i.e., criteria for success is set up in terms of school art learning (see Duncum, 1989). In a tautology of school learning related to school success, student assessments are based on how well students perform on tasks learned in school. Much school-based art is devised to wean children away from their everyday/local responses and behaviors. The culture of schools and the culture of children-as-students are characterized by individual cognition, an emphasis on abstract symbol manipulation, adherence to explicit rules, and context-free generalizations. These are the types of learning characteristics promoted and rewarded within modern industrialized societies that are based on hierarchical systems of organization. In contrast, learning in everyday/local contexts tends to be experiential, collaborative, situation-
specific, and involve the manipulation of concrete materials 

(Brown, 1989; Lave et al., 1984; Rogoff & Lave, 1984).

Studies of how adolescent males and females make moral decisions illustrate dramatic differences between modernist, school-based learning and everyday, locally-based responses. Gilligan (1982, 1990) found that when presented with a moral dilemma, males often apply abstract rules that have been previously learned whereas females tend to base their decisions on the specifics of the dilemma and on how their decisions will influence the relationships of the people involved. Gilligan indicated that gender was not considered when models of moral behavior were constructed (see Kohlberg, 1981) with the result that girls' decision making is often construed as illogical, deviant, or an indication of wrong thinking. Likewise, studies of minority students suggest that learning does not always "progress" according to prescribed models (Stokrocki, 1990). It appears that many students do not naturally or readily accommodate themselves to school-based forms and sequences of instruction.

Whereas art behaviors within schools and within developmental models fit and promote school culture, everyday/local art expressions do not. Duncan's (1989) study of children's images of violence indicated that teachers are often uncomfortable with such depictions and consider them to be pathological in nature. In nonschool contexts, children produce art that is personal, autobiographical, and fanciful—and often socially irreverent. Their art is not necessarily created to be publicly displayed or publicly critiqued—or analyzed by researchers. Although creativity and art have been equated in much of our thinking about art instruction, it is a polite rendition of creativity that is allowed in school art contexts. Controversial subject matter, experimental art, and innocuous, but messy, art do not fit the requirements of the school context. The art that occurs within developmental models provides order and predictability. It is supportive of the value system and institutional character of the school context and, as much, supports and perpetuates school culture, values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Conclusion

In this study it is suggested that current developmental models have application primarily for the study of art within modernist frameworks of formalism, individual expression, fine art conventions, and traditional school settings. Developmental models have prespecified, preferred outcomes, with other outcomes considered deviations from the norm or a result of instructional failures. Developmental models tend to be selective and conform to and support the preferred behaviors and values of the society in which they originate and in which they are educationally applied.

With reference to the diversity of aesthetic experiences available to children outside the confines of formal/school art instruction, it is proposed that our developmental models present limited and limiting approaches to artistic expression and aesthetic response. As Gilligan (1982, 1990) has noted, many of our social and cognitive models have served as prescriptions for behaviors and thinking that have little to do with how many people understand and experience their personal and social worlds. Not surprisingly, many students are alienated from school activities and find few connections between academic learning and everyday experiences of personal and community life and of vocational requirements (Brown, 1989; Efland, 1976; Sternberg, 1982). Developmental models need to be considered as having applications for certain outcomes and for certain contexts rather than being used as standards for desired behaviors and for all contexts. From this perspective, art instruction is not aligned with developmental models.
study, it would appear that modifications of and alternatives to current developmental models are appropriate. In particular, this researcher believes that we need to have an understanding of the social embeddedness of our models so that instructional possibilities can be developed that allow for greater experiential and cultural diversity in visual art expressions and responses.

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Footnotes

1 In this paper, artistic expression refers to studio work or the making of art. Aesthetic response refers to verbal statements made during processes of art criticism and aesthetic inquiry.

2 Feldman (1980) placed development or change within the discipline under study rather than within the individual. Therefore, how a discipline is defined, how it is studied, and what is studied will greatly influence what type of "disciplinary development" occurs. To date, the developmental character of art as a discipline is described as: the entry of unschooled or "naive" individuals who are expected to learn (develop toward) the endpoint of the knowledge possessed by the "sophisticated" expert of fine art culture (Feldman, 1980; Greer, 1984). The possibility that there are developmental (or nondevelopmental) journeys for other art forms or for other art cultures (e.g., within quilting or basket making circles) has not been broached in research on models.

3 See Parisner's (n.d.) discussion of possibilities of multiterminus graphic development based on Wolfe and Perry's (1988) finding that children use different visual systems depending on context and purpose.

4 Behaviors and lifeworld experiences that occur outside the formalized institution of school have been variously described as child culture, situational learning, situated knowledge, contextual knowledge, local knowledge, everyday cognition, community subcultures of learning, informal learning, and nonschool domains of knowledge (see Brown, 1989; Lave, Murtaugh, & de la Rocha, 1984; Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff & Lave, 1984).

5 In addition to "school art styles" (Efland, 1976) and "children's art styles" (Wilson, 1985), we perhaps also need to identify and study "research art styles."

6 Just as color wheels and value charts serve as exercises toward broader applications in the making of art, it is suggested in this paper that many art criticism and aesthetic inquiry activities might be thought of as exercises toward other ends rather than as being considered sufficient in-and-of themselves. However, developmental aesthetic response models based on research comprised of verbal exercises imply that these activities constitute bona fide art criticism and aesthetic inquiry.

Linear Perspective and Montage: Two Dominating Paradigms in Art Education

Charles R. Garoian

...every picture is an ideological work, independently of its quality. In this sense the world that it reveals is the world of an ideology, regardless of how realistic the painting may be for realism is only one of numerous visual ideologies.

Nicos Hadjinicolou
Art History and Class Struggle

Introduction

As a former public high school art teacher, I was always puzzled by the common belief held by my students in what they referred to as the right way to represent images and ideas in their drawings and paintings. After years of producing art work during early childhood and that appeared to be uninhibited, they claimed that I had ruined their creative instincts by teaching them "the right way to do things." This is a problem of instruction, for it must confuse students to teach them that there is a right way to do things in art. Students are sometimes given the impression that art has a single mode of presentation.
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in their expressive qualities, their world view in adolescence had shifted dramatically towards a preoccupation with photographic representation—realism.

In addition to rendering images with photographic likeness through the use of linear perspective, my students were also infatuated with the radical juxtapositions of surrealism. The principles of surrealist composition—its radically juxtaposed imagery and multiplicity of vantage points—are grounded in the montage experiments of the dadaists. The familiar world of linear perspective space is made strange, overturned through montage and surrealism. Its absolute conditions are distorted and its images are represented in a dream-like state of suspended animation.

Today, coopted versions of linear perspective and surrealism pervade contemporary media and, in their appeal to adolescents, they have become the principal means by which images are represented in genre such as Music Television. MTV is a major cultural idiom commanding its own international network with adolescents constituting the majority of its customers. The dialectical opposition between the "real" and the "surreal" on MTV seems to stir the imagination and reflect the cognitive capabilities of adolescents just as linear perspective and montage did for students in my art classes. Through the former, linear perspective, they were able to objectify their world—to gain control of it. Through the latter, montage, they subverted the perceptual conventions of that world in order to create their own.

The historical and philosophical foundations of these adolescent obsessions are deeply rooted in the linear perspective and montage traditions of western European culture. The desire to draw and paint based on the principles of linear perspective and the surrealist principles of montage begins in the formative years as young children are taught how to see their world by such ubiquitous technologies as family photographs, television, motion pictures, magazines, newspapers, and in school by textbooks and the chronological presentation of history. By the time adolescence begins these underlying perceptual constructs employed by the media have been assimilated to the degree that they serve as dominant cultural paradigms by which adolescents objectify their world.

How do the linear perspective and montage cultural paradigms function as devices for visual communication? How did they come to dominate as western European models of perception? What are their similarities and differences? How do these models affect the way children learn to view their world? These questions will be the focus of my discussion. The ideologies implicit in these perceptual constructs will be discussed according to three aspects: linear perspective as a master narrative; montage and its paradoxical narrative; and, montage pedagogy in contemporary art education. In doing so, terms like "perspective," "montage," "mapping," and "camera obscura" will be used metaphorically to represent models of perception in which their technological and ideological functions are dialectically intertwined.

Linear Perspective as a Cultural Paradigm

In his book, Technology as Symptom and Dream, psychologist Robert D. Romanyshyn (1989) identifies the discovery of linear perspective as the birth of a perceptual technology that has dominated western European culture since the Renaissance. He argues that the window-like view of the world constructed through linear perspective "establishes as a condition for perception a formal separation between a subject who sees the world and the world that is seen, and in so doing it sets the stage, as it were, for that retreat or withdrawal of the self from
the world which characterizes the dawn of the modern age” (p. 42).

The imposition of linear perspective space as a dominant cultural paradigm that promotes a particular way of seeing is a perceptual construct that is familiar to most art educators. Invented in 1425 by Filippo Brunelleschi and later published in 1435 by Leon Battista Alberti in his De Pictura, linear perspective codified a means of representing the world that diminishes, separates, then assaults the viewer with a hierarchy of conditions, images and ideas contained within its pictorial space.

Romanyschen further describes the construct of the grid within linear perspective space as a “map” [whose] “scientific attitude, ... in its mathematical character, sketches in advance of our experience of things the conditions according to which things will appear” (1989, p. 51). The implications of such a map is all encompassing as we can see in Albrecht Dürer's woodcut, Draftsman Drawing a Nude, 1538 (1989, p. 116, figure 4.5). Here the grid functions on two levels: first it serves as a perceptual device—a simulation of the human eye—that enables the artist to objectify, survey, and map the proportions of the female body; and second, it serves as a conceptual model—a construct or an “attitude”—by which to order and make judgments about world. In the second instance, the grid manifests itself as an instrument of culture—a form of cognitive patterning—that precedes our experience of things by “replacing” those experiences with what Jean Baudrillard (1991) refers to as the “simulacra” where the actual world “no longer precedes the map, nor survives it. [Instead,] the map precedes” the actual world (p. 253).

This compulsion to map through linear perspective is further discussed in The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century by art historian Svetlana Alpers. Alpers (1983) describes the work of Dutch painters as follows: “Like...mappers, they made additive works that could not be taken in from a single viewing point. Theirs was not a window in the sense of the Italian model of perception but rather, like a map, a surface on which is laid out an assemblage of the world” (p. 122). This art historian’s comparison distinguishes between the mapping impulse of Dutch artists influenced by the invention of the microscope and camera obscura, and the window of linear perspective used by Italian painters. She claims that the Dutch model enables a representation of perceived phenomena that are “seen” and “witnessed,” whereas the Italian model represents things as “dramatized events” (p. 68). Alpers' characterization of mapping as “assemblage,” points to the representation of coexisting phenomena requiring perception from multiple vantage points similar to montage in the twentieth century. She describes David Bailly’s painting Still Life, 1651 (1983, p. 84, plate 1) as “an assemblage of materials made by nature and worked by man” (p. 103). It is a virtual catalogue where “the traditional reference [is] made by almost every object (candle, bubbles, hourglass, skull, jewels, coins, books) and the inscription at the lower right to vanity and hence to the transience of all human endeavor and particularly of life itself” (p. 106). This perceptual movement from one object in the painting to another is suggestive of the multifarious nature of montage to which Alpers makes a direct link. By including Jasper Johns’ Map, 1961 (Alpers, 1983, p. 125, figure 69) as a cognitive pattern—a geographical construct existing within the mind—she reveals the potential in Dutch art to represent a diversified pictorial condition from which a master narrative can be constructed. Like linear perspective, the dialectic of mapping disparate objects and images enables a critique of vanity and materialism on the one hand while it represents a hierarchy of selection and ordering on the other.
Hausman defends Bullough's assumptions about psychical distance in spite of two main objections by postmodern critics. One objection represents psychical distance as an "old-fashioned essentialism" and "aestheticism," [that] "eliminates moral sensitivity and our disposition to respond to things morally" (p. 2). Hausman counters this objection by arguing that psychical distance "is simply attending to the qualities of an object...If anything distinguishes an experience as aesthetic rather than moral or scientific, etc...it is to be found in one's motives or reasons for attending to the object" (1992, p. 6). Herein lies the power of psychical distance to serve an ideological purpose similar to that of linear perspective. That is, psychical distance, like linear perspective, is not synonymous with any particular ideology except when individuals or groups of individuals assume positions of power by assigning it one.

Another objection to Bullough's assumptions argues that "if one assumes psychical distance, one will be wholly detached from the things of which one is conscious" (p. 10). Again, psychical distance is not inherent in the experience itself, but in those aesthetic and moral attitudes that we assign to the experience. In his defense, Hausman states that aesthetic detachment "can be deplored when it is adopted in morally sensitive situations, not because it goes with aesthetic experience, but because we believe that certain human conditions are at stake and that these override purely aesthetic considerations" (p. 12).

Aesthetic detachment through the psychical distance created by linear perspective has contributed to the perception of natural and human resources, other than the Eurocentric male dominant one, as exotic entities. Through the moral imperative of manifest destiny, this detachment has led to the deplorable marginalization, subsequent exploitation, and in some cases the depletion of these resources. Western
colonialism’s effects on native African and American cultures serve as prime examples. As previously indicated, the technology of linear perspective, which contributed greatly to this cultural imperialism, found its apotheosis in the industrial age where machines provided a modern means by which to attain aesthetic detachment. The application of structural and moral precepts of linear perspective, however, first began with the work of Renaissance artists and scholars in the fifteenth century.

In one of its earliest examples, the young Leonardo da Vinci produced The Annunciation, 1472 (Wasserman, 1984, p. 55, plate 4), an oil painting with a Christian theme whose spatial configuration is carefully composed according to the principles of linear perspective laid down by Alberti just forty years earlier. In the painting we find a division of “sacred” and “profane” areas and a hierarchical ordering of images and ideas within those areas that represent the predominant values of the Christian church in the fifteenth century. For example, as we follow the diminishing scale of objects, from the foreground to the vanishing point on the horizon line in the background of the painting, we become aware of the mechanics of linear perspective as well as its ability to establish a hierarchy of order.

The sacred space of the painting is made evident by the placement of the Virgin at the threshold of an architectural space—a temple of God—on the right hand side of the composition. It is further implied by the vanishing point from where all things originate and to where they eventually will return both literally in the visual rendering and symbolically. To the left side of the vanishing point and composition we find the Archangel Gabriel in the act of genuflection humbly announcing to the Virgin that she will give birth to the son of God.

The Archangel has entered the profane world as a messenger of God—a world or order that, as the “temple of nature,” consists of flora and fauna and is composed according to God’s “immutable laws” (Edgerton, 1975, p. 30). By association with Church canon, the device of linear perspective takes on a divine significance that proclaims its hegemonic status in western culture. As a dominant western European cultural construct, its mathematically delineated space is created in the service of an ideological project that represents a particular world view. In doing so, it extends the sacred pictorial territory in a work of western art to the viewer who inhabits the profane world. The ideological implications of hierarchy notwithstanding, there is a simple, yet profound truth claim that we accept in Leonardo’s image. Its dependence on linear perspective claims, crudely, that the world depicted by Leonardo “could have existed” or “continues to exist.” Thus, by accepting linear perspective as a model for representing their world without questioning its ideology, my students recognized and accepted that claim.

The writings of René Descartes provide a philosophical parallel with this codification of linear perspective in the visual arts. When in 1637 Descartes declared “Cogito ergo sum” (“I think, therefore I am”), he established a dualistic condition—the famous “Cartesian split”—between mind and matter, the perceiver and the perceived. This deterministic view, based on reason, echoes the objectification of human experience from the world through the linear perspective paradigm. Moreover, the objectification of nature by Descartes and the determination of its laws based on cause and effect led to a mechanistic view that he described in his Discourse on Method (1637) where the workings of the human body and the universe were found to be synonymous with the workings of a clock. In similar fashion, linear perspective provides a mechanistic means by which to step back from the world in order to see how it works.
Thus, as in the example of linear perspective, Descartes' metaphor of the machine provided a philosophical model by which to "drive" its precepts towards a position of cultural dominance. Ironically, two hundred years later in the nineteenth century, Descartes' metaphor "was dramatically transformed by the advent of the modern motor, capable of transforming energy into various forms" according to historian Anson Rabinbach (1990, p. 2). Taking their cues from the industrial environment, these forms represented a modern vision of culture based on the potential energy of the human and social motor—a scientific vision, not unlike linear perspective, that imposed a position of power and justified the exploitation of human and natural resources in the name of progress, profitability, and capitalism.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the metaphor of the machine had "fused the diverse forms of labor in nature, technology, and society into a single image of mechanical work, universalizing and extending the model of energy to a nature conceived of as a vast, unbroken system of production" (Rabinbach, 1990, p. 25). The pervasiveness and scale of this rapid growth of scientific and technological progress inspired French author Charles Péguy to write in 1913 that "the world has changed less since the time of Jesus Christ than it has in the last thirty years" (Hughes, 1991, p. 9).

The impact of machines in the landscape was immediately felt by visual artists. From the beginning of the industrial age artists like William J. Turner, John Constable, Honoré Daumier, and the French Impressionists began to familiarize themselves with machine images by including them in their art works. Turner, for example, painted one of the earliest representations of the new technology. In The Fighting Temeraire, 1838 (De la Croix and Tansey, 1970, plate 16-4), the English Romantic painter depicted this majestic sailing vessel being towed out to sea for burial by an ungainly steam vessel on the left side of his composition. On the right side, the ambiguity of the sun's position suggests both dusk and dawn; that is, the passing of one era and the dawning of a new one.

The nineteenth century saw the development of three significant "technologies" that were to influence the western European art of the next century: photography, chronophotography, ergography, and their impact on Taylorism as a mechanistic explanation of work. First, the invention of photography and the camera in the 1830s enabled a mechanical device, functioning similarly to the human eye, to be used to capture and record light on film. The etymology of "photo" is light and of "graphy" is drawing. This transformation of light into matter constituted a form of scientific materialism—a cultural construct that represented the use of nature's unseen and ephemeral properties as sources of perceptible information and energy.

The medium of photography inspired further investigations by the English photographer Eadweard Muybridge and the French physiologist Etienne-Jules Marey, both of whom revealed information about discreet increments of motion that were hitherto unknown. Muybridge's studies (Muybridge, 1955 and 1957) were conducted with a line of cameras whose shutters were cabled across to a gridded wall. As human and animal subjects moved down the line, they tripped the cable of each camera and, in doing so, recorded the sequence of locomotion that took place at each juncture.

Whereas Muybridge's photographs deconstructed locomotion, Marey's images documented intervals of time through a process he called "chronophotography," the second significant technology (See Rabinbach, 1990, figures 10-14). "Chrono" is time and "graphy" is drawing—thus transforming time into matter. Influenced by Muybridge and astronomer Pierre Jules Janssen's astronomical revolver, a photographic
Garoian

apparatus that Janssen combined with a telescope to produce as many as seventeen images on a single glass plate, Marey built a photographic rifle (figures 5 and 6) that contained a device functioning similar to a clock whose luminescent dial (chronometric dial) located at the front of the camera obscura. "The chronometer signified the complete integration of time into the study of motion," according to Rabinbach (1990, p. 107). The discoveries of both Muybridge and Marey played a significant role in the development of the motion picture industry.

The third technology, the ergograph ("ergo" is work and "graph" is to draw—thus transforming work into matter), was developed by the Italian physiologist Angelo Mosso. Mosso's ergograph (Rabinbach, 1990, figures 17-19) consisted of a device that was tied to the fingers of the hand and, when exercised, measured exactly the mechanical work of the muscles and produced hundreds of graphic representations of fatigue, or "fatigue curves," which plotted the rate of fatigue in different individuals and with different weights" (Rabinbach, 1990, p. 134).

The aforementioned technologies—photography, chronophotography, and the ergograph—were to have their greatest influence on the development of Taylorism. A form of "scientific management," Taylorism was developed by the American engineer F. W. Taylor to provide new information about the energy and fatigue potential of the human body as motor that, when applied to social and cultural conditions enabled a "maximization of output—productivity—irrespective of the physiological cost to the worker" (Rabinbach, 1990, p. 117). Whereas the human body was perceived as a machine, Taylorism applied the metaphor to industrial work places which functioned as social and political organizations in order to minimize fatigue, waste, and to stimulate production through an efficient structure of work. In doing so, Taylorism provided a context for efficiency that led to the prolific output of modern industry—a realization of Romanyszyn's dream. The symptom, or dark side, of this modernist phenomenon was the management of workers as component parts of a labor machine which could be conformed to a particular corporate or cultural ideology.

Thus, according to Rabinbach (1990), Taylorism, like the human motor, became an exploitative metaphor that "ended the skilled laborer's monopoly on expertise, dissolved the traditional foreman's authority over the shop floor, weakened the power of unions to control wages, and gave management a powerful method of exercising control over the entire production process" (p. 239). In doing so, the modern machine, like linear perspective during the Renaissance, became the utopian ideological metaphor that paradoxically promised a better world to live in, while creating the hegemonic conditions that gave rise to the oppressive conditions of corporate capitalism and Soviet communism in the twentieth century.

Today, lured by the virtual realities depicted in photographs, films, television and computers, junior high and high school-aged students, learn to identify with and to accept these technologies as the utopian metaphors by which to represent their world. Their preoccupation with realism and their desire to use linear perspective as a dominant cultural paradigm, is an indication that adolescents are influenced by these technologies. Lacking the knowledge to critique the ideological conditions of linear perspective and the systems of the mass media by which it is delivered, adolescents easily conform to this cultural paradigm. In doing so, they become blind consumers who continue its tradition as the dominant perceptual construct by which to represent the world.
Montage as a Paradoxical Cultural Paradigm

It was not until just after World War I that the term montage was invented by the Berlin Dadaists to describe the fragments of photographs introduced in their works. According to art historian Dawn Ades (1976), "Montage in German means 'fitting' or 'assembly line,' and Monteur 'mechanic,' [or] 'engineer'" (Ades, p. 12). Dadaists like Raoul Hausmann, George Grosz, John Heartfield, Johannes Baader, and even Hannah Höch actually dressed in workmen's overalls while producing montage works of art to demonstrate their commitment to the modern age of mechanization.

Although this image-making process originated in the nineteenth century, montage can be linked to the use of the camera obscura in the seventeenth century—the historical antecedent to the modern camera whose roots lie in linear perspective. According to Svetlana Alpers' theory, previously discussed in this article, the camera obscura was used by seventeenth-century Dutch artists to produce montage-like multiple perspective points and to represent a montage-like assemblage of Dutch material culture in their oil paintings. However, unlike these paintings that were valued for their uniqueness and originality and collected by the wealthy, modern montage works depended on mechanically reproduced photographs as the principal resource from which to appropriate their component parts. Through mechanical reproduction, photographs were available to a broader range of consumers as compared to oil paintings.

The camera's portability and instantaneity enabled the photographing of a variety of subject matter that heretofore were considered too difficult and often inaccessible to easel painting. The convenience of the camera further made it possible to photograph any given subject from a number of vantage points. These conditions, and a growing availability of photographic images, provided the bases from which to expand on the singular vantage point of the camera through the multi-perspectival space of montage. In Metropolis, 1923 (Ades, 1976, p. 98, figure 117), for example, Paul Citroën has cut images of metropolitan buildings from their original photographs and pasted them together within a single frame. In doing so, he has created a complex pictorial condition where the converging lines of each building contradict those of the buildings that surround it—a visual condition that metaphorically represents the complexities and contradictions of living in a large city. By repeating singular vantage points mechanically, Citroën's montage simultaneously pays homage to the tradition of linear perspective while it parodies the limitations of its construct.

The process of montage involved the appropriation, assembly, and gluing of fragments of images and texts into abstract compositions of component parts that functioned visually as powerful machine metaphors as illustrated by Hausmann's Tatlin at Home, 1920 (Ades, 1976, p. 29, figure 27). Similar metaphors are present in modern literature of the period. According to literary critic and historian Cecelia Tichi, "the gear-and-grinder technology summoned new literary forms suited to its perceptual values. The novel and poem, like the automobile and bridge...exhibited formal traits of this technology. Fiction and poetry became recognizable as designed assemblies of component parts, including prefabricated parts...The author's role in this technology was to design, even engineer, the arts of the written word" (1987, p. 16).

Assuming the role of engineer, the visual artists of the historical avant garde transformed their studios into "factories" and "manufactured" works of art representing utopian visions of the modern world. In doing so, they were able to subvert the traditional assumptions of art that dictated the role of the artist, the nature of artistic production, and the function of the art object. In the process, the inventors of montage became
aware of its most significant allegorical function: the ability of the artist "to speak publicly with hidden meaning," in response to the prohibition of public speech" (Buchloh, p. 43).

In his seminal essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin (1968) characterized twentieth century art as being increasingly dependent upon mechanical reproduction. Through mass reproduction, art lost its aura of uniqueness, which defined its original existence (p. 221). Removed from its original context, its aura is no longer connected to its original function, but to that of commodity and politics (p. 224). The machine aesthetics of montage, predicated upon the appropriation, displacement and subsequent subversion of images and text, ranged from a "meditative contemplation of reification to a powerful propaganda tool for mass agitation," according to art critic Benjamin Buchloh (1982, p. 43). Elaborating on Buchloh's notion, four distinct guises of montage aesthetics can be characterized: as fantastic imagery; as social and political criticism; as propaganda; and, as non-objective art.

First, as fantastic imagery, montage-making resembles the dynamics of dream-logic. The "disorienting power of combined photographic images" inspired dadaists like Hannah Höch to construct absurdities such as Cut with the Cake-Knife, c. 1919 (Ades, 1976, p. 18, figure 14), that would bring into question modes of representation found in the tradition of oil painting. In addition, certain surrealists such as Max Ernst simulated dreams or altered states of consciousness, as in Here Everything is Still Floating, 1920 (Ades, 1976, p. 112, figure 136).

Second, as social and political criticism, montage could be used to reveal the mechanisms behind class structure and totalitarian ideologies. The montage works of John Heartfield, for example, demonstrate how images and text can be assembled to subvert social and political agendas. In Hurrah, the Butter is Finished, 1935 (Ades, 1976, p. 56, figure 62), Heartfield parodies a quote from Hermann Goering's Hamburg speech that "Iron always makes a country strong, butter and lard only make people fat." In this work, Heartfield has cut parts from photographs and assembled them to depict a German family and their dog dining on a large bolt, a motorcycle chain, bicycle handle bars, and other machine products made from iron—this to criticize the absurdity of Goering's remarks and the severity of Nazi propaganda. Ironically, this method of subversive criticism is easily coopted by an opposing side.

Thus, the third characteristic of montage, as propaganda machine, can be used to extol the virtues of a political ideology as in Gustav Klutsis' The Old World and The World being built anew, 1920 (Ades, 1976, p. 68, figure 73) where Lenin is placed in a constructivist composition between two circular forms representing the dynamics of the Soviet Union's past and future histories. Finally, as non-objective art, the fourth characteristic, montage functions as a formalistic design as in Laszlo Moholy-Nagy's Structure of the World, 1927 (Ades, 1976, p. 146, figure 183) and Man Ray's Rayogram: Kiki Drinking, 1922 (Ades, 1976, p. 148, figure 184). These machine-metaphors consisted of disparate images and text that were assembled to create dynamic new patterns of line, shape, texture, value, and space.

The machine age generated an artistic revolution that had profound effects on art and language. According to Tichi (1987), "Mixed metaphors of nature and machines abutted each other...whose themes were antitechnological...Suddenly loosed from their separate categories, technological, and organic figures of speech seemed to jostle each other, suggesting the tensions that invariably arise in times of rapid sociocultural change, when old order seems to vanish in the onrush of the new" (p. 18).
After realizing the linguistic potential of montage, dadaist Raoul Hausmann remarked that “the image would tell in a new way” (Ades, 1976, p. 20). The cognitive functions of this “new way of telling” with montage can be illustrated with Arthur Koestler’s (1975) notion of bisociation where “two habitually incompatible matrices [result] in an abrupt transfer of the train of thought from one associative context to another” (p. 59). Koestler (1975) uses a pun to describe this transfer as “two strings of thought tied together by a purely acoustic knot” (p. 179). Characterized as “underground games,” bisociative patterns of thought function as the “grammar and logic of dream-cognition” (p. 179). Psychologist Albert Rothenberg (1979) characterizes these creative contradictions as “Janusian thinking” after the Roman god Janus, who was able to look in opposing directions simultaneously. Unlike dialectical and dualistic thought, Janusian thinking does not involve a synthesis. On the contrary, all opposing concepts coexist in the same cognitive space. Like Koestler, Rothenberg also uses the dream process as an analogy. He states that Janusian thinking functions as a conscious means of setting up conceptual contradictions characteristically found in dreams “for the purposes of abstracting, conceptualizing, and concretizing...In contrast to dream thought, which produces confusing, chaotic, and manifestly illogical images and sequences, the creative process [Janusian thought] produces order and meaningful images and metaphors, as well as tight conceptualizations” (p. 410).

Thus, predicated on dream processes, the theories of both Koestler and Rothenberg suggest a semiotic dance taking place within the mind whereby signifiers, upon disembarking from their signifieds, arbitrarily collide with one another and, in their contradictory juxtapositions, subvert their traditionally assumed functions. Puns, paradoxes, and other conceptual bipolarities serve as illustrations. These metonymic functions of the mind, manifested visually in montage works, serve as metaphors or allegories of dream logic, as well as the complex and contradictory conditions bestowed by the modern industrial environment. According to critic Craig Owens (1983) “the avant garde sought to transcend representation in favor of presence and immediacy; it proclaimed the autonomy of the signifier, its liberation from the ‘tyranny of the signified’; postmodernists instead expose the tyranny of the signifier, the violence of its law” (Owens, p. 59). The implications of “presence and immediacy” can be interpreted as a form of cultural imperialism on the part of the avant garde; one that exploited the traditional assumptions and establishment of art as well as the resources of the modern industrial environment.

The dream-logic metaphor of montage further represents the dream of modernism whereby the revolutionary avant garde characterized linear perspective and its window-view of reality as the signified and sought to overthrow its tyrannical rule in order to liberate the signifier “art.” Revolutions served as the violent “means” by which to supplant these traditional assumptions of art and the “ends” as the avant garde established a modern form of tyranny, a fascistic rule that created a mainstream art world wherein its “cutting edge” ideas and images dominated. Thus, under the banner of progress and originality, the artists of the avant garde forged ahead with their manifestoes in one hand and tools of modernism in the other. In doing so, they created a mainstream condition, the effects of which dominated the history of modern culture for decades. One object of post modernism has been to deconstruct and to expose this mainstream cultural montage in order to reveal its violent and exploitative nature, and to identify hitherto disenfranchised groups whose artists have been hidden in its wake.

As Owens further suggests, contrary to its exploitative nature, montage can also be used to liberate the viewer from the tyranny of the signifier as previously illustrated in John
Heartfield's critique of Hermann Goering's speech. When used as a procedure for social criticism, montage can raise the public's awareness and appreciation of cultural differences. Herein lies the paradox of montage, on the one hand we have propaganda and its step-child advertising and, on the other, social criticism. Thus, montage can be used to impose the will of a particular ideology or, conversely, can be used to critique that same ideology.

Anthropologist Michael Taussig's (1987) studies of cultural montage in southwestern Colombia provide examples of how montage has been applied both as a form of critique and imposition of power. He claims that the collision between colonial culture and that of natives has produced a rapid and dramatic change in both cultures. Ironically, "while the European surrealists were condemned by their society and its traditions (including its traditions of revolution and rebellion) to clumsily manipulate and juxta pose incongruent imagery, laboriously constructing outside realities, in the European colonies and ex-colonies something like surrealism was inherent as a deeply embedded social practice in everyday life" (p. 201).

To overcome or to heal the inconsistencies produced by this collision, both cultures were driven toward the use of montage as an attempt to control their own understanding of change and also to respond to what was being imposed upon them. We have two choices, according to Taussig, one is to interpret cultural differences from a preconceived cultural bias, and the other is to prevent a colonialism of information by accepting differing bits or remnants of culture and to allow them to coexist without melting them down into some homogeneous dominant point of view.

MTV is an example of where montage appears to engage cultural differences, yet is responsible for a colonialism of information. The mass consumption of MTV by adolescents today represents what I experienced with my high school students—a desire to use a montage/surrealist motif in order to make the familiar world view of linear perspective strange, to overturn the tyranny of its construct. However, the implied critique of the linear perspective world view and its replacement with a montage of music videos by MTV is an example of one dominant ideology supplanting another. The tyranny of MTV lies in its inability to engender a critique, to educate adolescents about its own ideological structure.

Thus, with montage as its principle motif, MTV represents a revolutionary form of programming that subverts the visual character of conventional television programming whose roots lie in linear perspective. In doing so, MTV replaces the familiar ideological content of the linear perspective paradigm with that aspect of montage ideology whose principle purpose is propaganda—not social criticism as in the example of the montage works of John Heartfield and other dadaists. Attracted by its visual polemics and unaware of its exploitation, adolescents comprise MTV's principle audience. They are the consumers of its music videos and the products of its corporate sponsors.

In the next section, the social critical aspect of montage will be discussed as a form of pedagogy in art education whereby high school students can learn to critique the hegemonic aspects of linear perspective and montage in order to engender a broader appreciation of cultural differences.
Montage Pedagogy in Contemporary Art Education

Thus far, I have discussed the dialectical conditions of linear perspective and montage ideology that enable a critical awareness of experience through objectified points of view on the one hand and an alienation and subjugation on the other. As Hausman suggests, ideological content is not an inherent part of these constructs, but the result of our intentions to aestheticize and moralize.

The ideologies of linear perspective and montage frame a dialectical condition similar to Paul Ricoeur's (1976) notions of "distanciation" and "appropriation." Addressing the hermeneutical problems inherent in reading and writing, Ricoeur states "To appropriate is to make 'one's own' what is 'alien.' [And] distanciation is...the dynamic counterpart of our need, our interest, and our effort to overcome cultural estrangement" (p. 43). Thus, in an educational context, distanciation represents the endeavor of students to "overcome" master narratives imposed upon them by cultural constructs like linear perspective and montage. Through appropriation they are able to make these narratives their own.

The conditions of distanciation and appropriation can be identified within the context of educational practice through Benjamin S. Bloom's (1973) differentiation between an implicit and explicit curriculum in the schools, a "null curriculum" according to art educator Elliot W. Eisner (1979), and David Gordon's (1981) notion of a "hidden curriculum." Bloom characterizes the explicit curriculum as one that is "visible; it can be documented in many ways; and most of the resources and personnel of the schools are dedicated to the students' learning of some variations of this curriculum" (p. 140). He further uncovers the invisible character of the implicit curriculum as "the curriculum that teaches each student who he [sic] is in relation to others. It may also teach each student his place in the world of people, ideas and activities" (p. 140).

In Eisner's 1979 publication The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs, he presents the thesis that "what schools do not teach may be as important as what they do teach" (p. 83). In doing so, he exposes an implicit hierarchy in the schools where performance-based subjects like music, art, and dance are discriminated against in favor of discursive subjects like reading, writing, and arithmetic. The impact of the null curriculum is so significant that students perpetuate the tradition of academic hierarchy throughout their lives, and in doing so, pass it on to other generations.

In similar fashion, Gordon criticizes the special significance given to the arts as a subject that is "doomed to failure." He argues that the "school is an institution whose nature militates against achieving the aims of aesthetic education" (1981, p. 51). The fate of aesthetic education is determined by the "hidden curriculum"—an implicit form of discrimination against the arts presented in the guise of advocacy. The "unintended learning outcomes" of the hidden curriculum are more pervasive and consistent than the intended ones according to Gordon (pp. 56-57). Thus, despite their compulsory status, the academic emphases given to the arts is rendered insignificant by comparison to those given to other subjects in the school curriculum.

What Bloom, Eisner, and Gordon render is a critique of academic hierarchy—one that falls short of identifying how children's cultural differences are marginalized by the explicit or manifest school curriculum. Ironically, the three are guilty of committing the very same mistake as the institutional practices that they criticize. Like the implicit, null, and hidden curricula, what they fail to address in their theses is as significant as in where they succeed. That is, the academic
marginalization that occurs through these veiled curricula in the classroom is compounded when students from other than mainstream western European cultures learn the implicit, null, or hidden lessons of cultural hierarchy.

The disguised academic prejudice that Bloom, Eisner, and Gordon uncover in their characterizations of school curricula are not context specific. The lessons of hierarchy learned in one situation can be easily transferred to another inasmuch as students learn to discriminate between culturally appropriate types of study in the schools as well as culturally appropriate types of people. The most insidious form of transfer occurs when students from diverse cultures assimilate the values of a dominant culture. Once they do, they become carriers who take the dominant ideology back to their respective cultures and create a condition whereby cultural difference is nullified.

What educators must understand is that a universalizing of classroom experience—lumping the inherent interests of academic hierarchy with that of race, sexual preference, ethnicity, and gender issues—produces a leveling effect where the significance of all things is either assumed, considered equal, or thought too complex to deal with. From an educational perspective, however, the critique of the explicit and implicit dimensions of curricula creates a paradoxical condition wherein students from culturally diverse backgrounds are left in the lurch. There is a need to transcend this realm of “binary oppositions” because that form of logic “appears to have become an obsessive fatal attraction,” according to educator Henry A. Giroux (1992, p. 23).

In his book Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education, Giroux (1992) presents two basic assumptions about critical education: “One, there is a need for a language of critique, a questioning of presuppositions...the second base assumption of radical education is a language of possibility...[which] goes beyond critique to elaborate a positive language of human empowerment” (Giroux, p. 12). Giroux grounds his educational theories in a critical discourse that deconstructs hegemonic ideologies. He proposes a “border pedagogy” whereby students are allowed “to write, speak, and listen in a language in which meaning becomes multiaccentual and dispersed and resists permanent closure. This is a language in which one speaks with rather than exclusively for others” (p. 29). Thus, border pedagogy decentralizes the gaze of linear perspective and the bombardment of montage that claim dominion over students’ cultural identities and their individual potentialities. Instead, Giroux’s radical border pedagogy empowers students “to engage the multiple references that constitute different cultural codes, experiences, and languages. This means educating students to both read these codes historically and critically while simultaneously learning the limits of such codes, including the ones they use to construct their own narratives and histories” (p. 29). What Giroux is suggesting here is a deconstruction of master narratives that, heretofore, have been sanctified by historical constructs like linear perspective and montage. Furthermore, he calls for a pedagogy of inclusion whereby students’ critiques of their own cultural experiences provide them with an awareness of their own significance—their voice—in the cultural politics of the classroom.

However, awareness alone does not make for cultural collaboration, for it is merely the first step in a process of political and social empowerment in students. According to Giroux, awareness left to its own accord “often degenerates into a form of narcissism, a cathartic experience that is reduced to naming anger without the benefit of theorizing in order to both understand its underlying causes and what it means to work collectively to transform the structures of domination responsible for oppressive social relations” (Giroux, 1992, p. 80). What is required then, is an action that transforms
students from passive and manipulable subjects into individuals who are actively involved as “cultural workers” in a “radical democracy [that] continually reevaluates and produces new forms of civic life” (Trend, 1992, p. 7).

One such endeavor significant to the field of art education is the 1990 publication Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America by art critic Lucy Lippard. In her book, Lippard recognizes artists that represent a range of American cultures that, heretofore, have been ignored by mainstream critics, gallery dealers, and museum curators on the basis that their work does not measure up to the hegemonic standards of western European culture nor that of their ancestral homelands. On the basis of being Mexican-American, Chinese-American, African-American, etc., these artists represent hybrid cultures within the United States that, until Lippard’s book, have yet to be recognized by the dominant culture. Lippard identifies shared characteristics found in the work of artists who are “different,” “other,” and in the “minority.” Those characteristics include: a “naming” process whereby artists like Margo Machida in her painting The Buddha’s Asleep, 1985 (Lippard, 1990, plate 3) and Linda Nishio’s Kikoemasu Ka (Can You Hear Me?), 1980 (Lippard, 1990, p. 18, figure 1) accept and claim through their art their cultural identities; a “telling” process of producing art like Betye Saar’s Mii, 1973 (Lippard, 1990, plate 11) and Faith Ringgold’s Bitter Nest Part II: Harlem Renaissance Party, 1988 (Lippard, 1990, plate 14) that involves biographical storytelling and a transmission of history; a process of “landing” where art works like Jaune Quick-to-See Smith’s Osage Orange, 1985 (Lippard, 1990, plate 19) and Luis Jiménez’s Southwest Pietá, 1987 (Lippard, 1990, plate 20) show geographical and spiritual roots; a “mixing” process like Martin Wong’s Attorney Street: Handball Court With Autobiographical Poem by Piñero, 1982–84 (Lippard, 1990, plate 32) in which the artist explores a coexistence of diverse cultural perspectives with equal rights through works of art; and, a process of “turning around” where artists works like Robert Colescott’s Knowledge of the Past Is the Key to the Future (Love Makes the World Go Round), 1985 (Lippard, 1990, plate 38) and Adrian Piper in her Vanilla Nightmares #8, 1986 (Lippard, 1990, p. 237, figure 28) use ironic juxtapositions to provoke viewers through humorous and shocking imagery. Mixed Blessings provides a positive view of the individual cultures that represent the American montage as a polyvocal condition. Lippard has treated the work of each artist with respect to their own cultural orientation and, in doing so, has “co-authored” the book by representing each artist’s work as well as the written and spoken comments that they have provided about that work.

Yet another example that relates to a montage of border pedagogy in art education is the exhibition The Emperor’s New Clothes: Censorship, Sexuality, and the Body Politic, 1990 (Trend, 1992, p. 139) created by artist, writer and critic Richard Bolton. As described in critic David Trend’s book Cultural Pedagogy: Art/Education/Politics (1992), Bolton used his installation, which consisted of photographs and text that juxtaposed “three categories of erotic photographs: ‘Art, Fashion, and Pornography’” (Trend, 1992, p. 138) to engage a public debate on censorship between such prominent opposing personalities as Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association and censored artist Andres Serrano. In addition to these responses on the topic, the written comments of gallery viewers were included on special display panels. Bolton’s installation, unlike traditional art exhibitions which provide a public forum on a socially and politically charged subject, “relied from its inception on a multiplicity of voices to analyze the issues at hand” (p. 140).

Using Lippard’s and Bolton’s works as models, a radical pedagogy can be developed through a collaborative decision-making process as high school art teachers and their students explore and discuss montage as a cultural metaphor. In doing
so, montage can be used to develop four aspects of an art lesson: as the guiding principal by which the teacher and students identify cultural diversity in their classroom; as the principal that they use to inquire about their own cultural backgrounds; as the structure by which to organize a large-scale installation, a public montage, comprised of the cultural works produced by each individual in the group; and, the structure to organize a forum within the installation where discussions about the represented cultures can continue and within which the public can participate. This use of montage, both as a curriculum metaphor, an art making process, and as community outreach empowers students to bring their own cultural experiences to bear on the cultural politics of art education and the limitations of its two dominating paradigms—linear perspective and montage. As suggested by Giroux, such cultural experiences can provide the foundation from which students can learn both the historical and critical significance of these paradigms.

Although the characteristics of Lippard's book and Bolton's installation may be criticized for their politics, they nonetheless, serve as examples of Giroux's radical pedagogy where art students learn to "critique" the assumptions of dominating cultures and, through a "language of possibility," they learn how to create a diverse cultural condition in the classroom wherein each student's voice has the possibility of being heard. In doing so, each site, each classroom, provides a new opportunity—a different context—within which to critique and from which to tailor a specific pedagogy determined by the participants within the cultural montage of the classroom that each student represents.

References


The War of Labels: An Art Educator in Search of A Sign

jan jagodzinski

I recently had the occasion to go shopping with my twelve year old son Jeremy who is now finishing grade seven in a Canadian public school. He had somehow (mysteriously) saved twenty dollars and was determined to buy a T-shirt. Coming from the boomer generation, T-shirts for me where either those funny Stanfield undergarments that my dad wore under his dress shirt (to absorb the sweat during hard work, I suppose?) or what gang members with duck-tails in the '50s wore under their leather jackets to look cool - like the 'Fonz' of Happy Days. During my college art school days, the days when you had to 'smoke' to find yourself in your art, the T-shirt changed into psychedelic colours as we flower children began to tie-dye them. They became a sign of protest against the plastic world, hand made and, of course, "authentic." From that point on, T-shirt culture seemed to have vanished from my consciousness. I was dimly aware that they were worn with all kinds of humorous sayings, or by runners who unwillingly wore all kinds of sponsor logos on the sleeves and backs of their 'free' T-shirts. And, oh sure, grade school art students would often paint their own designs on them; you know, the usual album
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cover paraphernalia or comic book hero characters. A white or black T-shirt without a logo was almost a novelty. It either looked cheap or dressy depending on the material it was made of. But apart from that, a T-shirt was just a T-shirt. (A friend of mine recently told me that T-shirts of the late '60s can be read as graffiti and vandalism, a form of non-membership and anti-establishment in contrast with the days when "bomber jackets" became stylish. The bomber jackets were an extended identification of the pilots with their planes; their plane's name appeared on the backs and sleeves of their jackets. Both motorcycle jackets and T-shirts poached this style.)

After an hour and a half of walking through the mall I was becoming tired. At first I walked briskly with Jeremy, side by side, thinking his shopping wouldn't take long. But, in a very short time, I realized that it was going to be very hard to please him. He went from store to store, checking here, checking there. I soon fell off pace and began to walk behind him, protesting loudly (but not in anger) that he should make up his mind. Nearby shoppers snickered at this. Obviously this is a common experience for many parents. It didn't take long before I was envious of those seniors who were sitting on benches, asleep or mesmerized by some distant memory as they stared into space. Eventually one store looked very promising. (We were to return to it three times.) The first time I pointed out T-shirts which were a little over twenty dollars. I told him I would throw in the extra couple of dollars just so that we could leave. It didn't work. The "Guess" T-shirts were too common. When I asked, "what's the matter with them?" he told me I wouldn't understand. His eye then caught the Mondetta T-shirts. I looked at their price tag, a whopping thirty-seven dollars! Their label had been embroidered with silk, embossed. It felt bumpy to the touch. Mondetta, written three different times with three different colours appeared on the front. Would I give him the extra seventeen dollars? he pleaded. He would do anything for those seventeen dollars - wash my car, rake the lawn for spring - anything. I was firm. "No, Jeremy. I can't afford that." We left for home, Jeremy mumbling something about needing to save up more money.

I came home the other day from university. "Like my shirt?" Jeremy asked. "It's a Cross shirt." "Very nice," I said, not knowing what a "Cross shirt" was. In the past years I had been subjected to his Varnet and Chip and Pepper T-shirt craze, his "Guess" jeans and "Gap" clothes and, of course, who can forget "Doc" shoes and the "pump" basketball shoes that made him look like he was wearing shoes which were four sizes too big for him to give others the impression that a seven foot 2" giant rather than a five foot 1" 'midget' occupied them (all parents of pre-teens and teens must know this by now). Almost all junior high boys now wear their pants below their hips, as if they are almost falling off. (I asked my "informants" from where did such a fashion statement start? One twelve year old girl insisted it was Madonna who started this fashion by wearing her jeans as if they were bikini bottoms. Whereas Jeremy insisted it was Kriss Kross who had started the style; they had even worn their pants backwards!) Hats, displaying every known football, baseball and ice-hockey team imaginable, have become such a sign of resistance now that most schools have forbid them. Last year a doctoral student and I interviewed both Jr. and Sr. high school students about their locker spaces. We found Calvin Klein advertisements by the bucket loads. The "Poison" perfume advertisement appeared everywhere. But a "Cross shirt," that's a new one.

My shopping experience with Jeremy is certainly not unique and his fashion statements are certainly not unique. What was unique is the changed cultural scene/seen from the nostalgic anti-consumerist "hippie" days of my high-school to the avid consumerism of today. It has been pointed out, quite recently, that a tremendous "gap" (allusions to the clothing chain aside) exists between the baby boomer and baby buster
generation — both physically and mentally. While my parents could still halfheartedly simulate (fake) doing the "twist" and gyrate their bodies to rock 'n' roll music so that they could feel somewhat contemporary and "not out of it," few forty year olds today have the ability to sustain the high energy style of hip hop. They do feel "out of it" on the dance floor. Now it's their turn to sit down, like they sat down when a waltz, tango or a fox trot was nostalgically played for their parents. While they ski, their sons and daughters snowboard down the hill, and while they madly pedal on their bikes (stationary or otherwise) to stay fit, their sons and daughters are skateboarding and mountain biking (literally). While many of us baby boomers were from a pre-TV and pre-computer generation, our children have been raised in an electronic age where video games and video rentals are a weekly meal of visual digestion. While art educators continue to teach a gaze aesthetic, praising the distinction between "looking" and "seeing" in their classrooms, reminiscent of the time and space of their generation, the baby busters live with a glance aesthetic, a continuously changing kaleidoscope of ideas and fashion which are analogous to the "continuous flow" of television. The "look" that catches the audience's glance is what is important — all surface and no depth. This generation gap between the baby boomers and the baby busters has been widely explored and theorized (Howe, 1992). The anxieties of the baby boomer generation are played out during this postmodern moment as different attitudes towards sex, feminism, and authority continually challenge their status quo leading to conservative educational proposals.

The consequence of this has a great deal to do with the crisis of (art) education. It is quite possible to make a case that the standardized print culture that solidified itself in the nineteenth century (i.e., standardized dictionaries, objective knowledge, reproducible books and images through lithographs) has been undergoing a continuous change, replaced right under our very eyes by new means of communication based on the circulation of signs. This shift can be identified from the fin de siècle of the electric age to the fin de millenium of the electronic age. The first half of this century ushered in modernism and the avant-garde while the second half has been characterized by the melancholia of postmodernism and a post-avant-garde (Jencks, 1992). Parents and baby boomer teachers alike find themselves involved in cultural wars (Hunter, 1991) which they believe they can win by going "back to the basics" or "back to the future" as in the case of Discipline Based Art Education. How far the means of communication have changed can be quickly illustrated by comparing advertisements at the turn of the twentieth century, which were usually filled with all sorts of printed information — the image playing a subordinate role — to a recent Benetton advertisement of a computerized image of the Queen Elizabeth of England, appearing as if she were "Black"! with lips thickened, hair just a little bit more curly, and her skin a shade of brown-black. Remember, Benetton engages in no production directly, but operates simply as a powerful marketing machine, which transmits commands to a wide variety of independent producers; the only "true colours" of Benetton are the green of their profit dollars. They advertise no product, only their name through controversial images which gives them a multiplier effect because they tap into the most controversial social issues: racism, AIDS, abortion, pollution. Their image of the "Black Queen" is a telling commentary on Britain's population. With a little photographic digitalization, the question of what is a "true" image quickly emerges. Is this hype up image of the Queen more "real" than the "real" Queen, given the changed social conditions in England? In other words, is her doctored up ironic image more representative of the changed "reality" in Britain than the image which appears on British currency? By presenting a fictive world of computer generated photographs the modality of the referent is put into question.
Not only do bodies and heads change places, as in the recent *Pretty Woman* incident where Julia Roberts' head appeared on someone else's body, but it now becomes possible to "fake" photographs and films, literally creating fantasy representations which are easily mistaken to be "real" or "true." Children at a very early age are able to distinguish modalities (Hodge and Tripp, 1985). The nightly news, for example, is more "real" than say, *The Cosby Show*. Children can easily decipher "real" violence from "fake" television violence. The violence of an abusive household can always be separated out from any countless number of simulated deaths on television or film. (The exceptions to this are the pathological individuals who are unable to do this. They take media violence literally.) Yet, introduce a series like *Top Cops* and all of a sudden the codes are flipped around. Children's certainty levels are put on a holding pattern. "Postmodern" wrestling is another example. With its carnivalesque cast of characters, they look like they can do real bodily damage. For kids (and many adults), wrestling is "real." Not everything is "faked" in that business. Wrestlers do get hurt, adding to its viewers confusion over whether to remain believers or dismiss it as just another form of entertainment. In Brazil, where television is still perceived as a magical box by many farmers living in outlying regions, there is no differentiation made between the soap star and his or her character. The modality there is indistinguishable (Vincent, 1993).

The problem of what is "real" has become the question of the referent. Just where is the line to be drawn between reality and illusion? When so much of our knowledge comes at us vicariously, in a mediated form, and not directly, we can never be certain. To say that all knowledge is constructed has become a truisim. Teresa de Lauretis (1984) provides an interesting example concerning the woodcut print of a rhinoceros drawn by Dürer. Most art educators know it; it appears in Gombrich's *Art and Illusion*. The image is of a beast, its skin rendered as if it were a series of heavy armour plates. Dürer never saw a rhino. He drew it from tourist reports. Now a curious thing happens when the daguerreotype process provides the possibility for a photograph of a rhino to have wide distribution. Guess what happens? The European populous believed that Dürer's representation was closer to what the creature actually looked like. So who has the "real" representation of the rhinoceros, Dürer or its first photographer? The importance of modality goes far beyond this curious example. Modality, as the social definition of the "real," is decisive in the battle for social control when it comes to deciding whose definition will count as "truth" and "reality." My questioning of the integrity of the label throughout this essay is an issue of modality and its referent. The importance of modality for ideology is obvious since it points to the social construction or contestation of knowledge-systems. Modality is one of the crucial indicators of political struggle, a central means of contestation, negotiation or imposition of ideological systems. As such, it is a crucial component of a complex process that establishes a hegemony through the *active* participation of social agents (see Hodge and Kress, 1988, esp. Chapter 5).

Questioning the referent brings about two well known concepts that are often discussed in postmodernity: Baudrillard’s well known concept of the *simulacrum*, the copy of a copy, and the question of hyperreality. To illustrate this, a recent example from a television ad is useful. To promote their "new and improved" sharpness of definition of Sony television, a television set is seen standing on the outer edges of the Grand Canyon. A boy comes over and turns the set on showing us, the viewers, another picture of the Grand Canyon. The family gathers around this television and the son says: "Look dad, it's the Grand Canyon!" suggesting that the television's picture is more real than real—better than the 'real' thing—hyperreal. So where is the referent, "Grand Canyon," if you have never been there? After such hype, often when we
visit the actual site/sight/cite we are totally disappointed. (I remember this happening with my first visit to Stonehenge. It had been exaggerated, hyped up to spectacular proportions.) We, the viewers, staring into our own television sets are seeing an endless reflection of mirrors, a surface intertextuality that has received wide attention in postmodern thought.

If so much of our knowledge in this electronic age comes this way, vicariously, mediated, what special problems does this bring for the educator? For many students history is the white washed or reconstructed film biographies of JFK, Chaplin, Ghandi, Hoffs, Malcom X. The electronic age raises many difficult questions for the art educator. Being “critical” in the old sense of “false consciousness” seems singularly inappropriate as we are faced with questions of representation whose purposeful construction is no longer “hidden.” In a sense, all “lies” (pun intended) on the surface for us to read; no “hidden meaning” behind the text, or buried in the mind of the artist; no “deep message” we must hermeneutically decipher. The messages are all exposed. They are there to be played with. If you have seen Robert Altman’s The Player, you will know immediately to what I am referring. Ideology is worn on the shirt-sleeve, blatantly displayed, and that is its great strength. It can be paraded right under our noses, right in front of our eyes, and like a magician’s sleight of hand, the product can be sold to us as we revel in its pleasure. Give me a news headline, says Hollywood – tragic or comic – it doesn’t matter, and we’ll script it as entertainment. Not all films play with this obvious self-referential construction of artifice. Reception aesthetics has shown that there is a broad range of interpretations of any given film. But the obvious display of artifice in such films further blurs the assurances of our referent. What is really “real” if we only know the world through our technologically mediated constructions of it? This applies equally well to “documentaries” which have been regarded as more “real” than images from drama and fiction texts (Nichols, 1991).

I suggest we have entered into a war of labels — sign wars. By which I mean to become players we had better start learning how the game is played — from our students, from our teenagers, for ourselves. So here I am, a parent, an art educator, a Leftist baby boomer, three points which handicap me from accepting the possibility that there is more resistance and agency in consumerism than I thought possible. I still believe that consumerist Global Capitalism is an insidious system which is slowly s(t)inking like its (br)other, Communism; whose days, in its present form, are numbered as the Pacific Rim, along with China, begins to marshal a change to the global balance of trade and power. Now asking myself how to become “a player!” I pick up the “Cross label” Jeremy had discarded and thrown on the couch. (He never picks up after himself! One of the most non-anal retentive kid I’ve ever met. His teachers called him messy. I wonder where he got that from? Certainly, not from me!) I read the label. It has three equal bands of colours – red, black and green— with a white circle in the middle. Inside this circle is yet another. “Cross Colours” appear within this rim. Below in capital letters it is written: “CLOTHING WITHOUT PREJUDICE.” The more interesting part appears on the back cover where “THE DEFINITION” of Cross Colours is given:
CROSS COLOURS: /kros/ kel-ers/
concept. 1. the art of being able to clearly see the world through more than one colour. 2. a prodigy owned by African-American Designers, Carl Jones and T.J. (Thomas) Walker, launched in late 1990 as a means of establishing a legacy and a message of peace and unity among all people. 3. an act beginning with the love for one’s self. For within the African-American race alone, there are many different shades of colour over which a single message of togetherness must first soar from one people in order to overcome barriers of hate and prejudice. also 4. KNOWLEDGE, self respect and love, Peace.

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Jeremy tells me a lot of kids are wearing these T-shirts. Ring up thirty-two dollars. He told me that these shirts are against prejudice and that he was aware what the T-shirt stood for. For me the question becomes, “should I remain skeptical?” Is this just another scam to sell T-shirts? Are they just another Benetton? Is this company serious? or are they playing into the youth like the good multi-national capitalists of the record industry, mostly men, who see yet another big market to exploit? In this market, it’s not sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll that sells, but the discourse on racism. And where do I stand on issues like Michael Jackson’s campaign to save the “children of the world” when a gigantic Pepsi can always appears behind his back whenever he goes about “saving” children? Such confusions and ambivalences point to the contradictions of transnational capitalism where “progressive” elements swim together with “regressive” ones, like “ecocapitalism,” a form of merchandising with a green patina.

Generation “X”

Spike Lee’s Do the Right Thing (1989) is a brilliant film, and it too is about racism. It is also about the discourses surrounding the representations of three iconic black men: Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Michael Jordan. It is about a Brooklyn, Italian American Pizza owner, named Sal, who refuses to put their pictures up in his own “Hall of Fame,” amidst Rocky Marciano, Sylvester Stallone, Robert De Niro, Frankie Vallie and Frank Sinatra (Denizen, 1991). Lee deconstructs the binaries of racial violence and non-violence in the enigmatic space of an ethical act which simply tells us to “do the right thing,” another instance of undecidability. On one side lie the non-violent protests of Martin Luther King, Jr., while on the other, the violence of self-defense as advocated by Malcolm X. Somewhere in-between is a playing surface where African American ball players appear whose court prowess signifies the Black male’s struggle for recognition and self-esteem in what was a white man’s game. But Do The Right Thing is also about a T-shirt war, T-shirts that carry the names of Bird (Larry Bird of the Boston Celtics), Robinson (Jackie Robinson of the Dodgers), and the “X” in Malcolm X. Spike Lee provides his viewers with a political economy of the sign (Baudrillard, 1981) and its multiplicity of racial meanings. It is a study of the symbolic meanings conferred on the heroes of young and old Italian Americans and African Americans. The T-shirt wars chart how cultural heroes are appropriated by racial and ethnic groups as signifiers of repression and control: so while the baby buster generation celebrates Malcolm X’s violence, the baby boomer generation still believes in the non-violence of Martin Luther King, Jr.
Do the Right Thing is also a clash of signifiers at the level of popular culture between white and black America in the late 1980s. Baseball, basketball and hockey cards are not just images; they stand for the complex game of racial and cultural politics. In Canada, identity politics is played out primarily through the exchange of hockey cards: the already complex differences between English and French speaking Canadian players are further complicated by other differentiations which help to distinguish Canada from the United States. The dressing up of the national-ethnic-racial self is a hypercomplex process which no sociological study can ever hope to capture without reduction. As Denizen (1991) writes:

The T-shirt, as such, is a multiple thing: an utilitarian, mass-produced, outer- and undergarment; a simulacrum of the hyperreal, prideful racial identities of the black male which are attached to supporting idols and teams...; a fluid, expressive, problematic, visual icon...which challenges the viewer. ...Its wearing embodies the attempt to capture a piece of the “real” as part of the persona of the person wearing the garment. The T-shirt stands for the racial self.

Denizen’s insights into T-shirt culture provide a hint about Jeremy’s desire. The T-shirt is not a direct index of his experience. I'm sure Jeremy’s understanding of racism isn’t sophisticated, rather it references experiences he hasn’t yet had, but symbolically identifies with. (The population of African Canadians is very small in Edmonton compared to large American cities.) This is unlike myself who wears T-shirts that commemorate the road races in which I have participated. The signs on today’s T-shirts embody dreams and fantasies that attach themselves to cultural idols. The status to wearing a Cross Colours T-shirt connects Jeremy to the community who

are “in the know.” It expresses his personal choice whether he is or isn’t fully cognizant of racism. But all this doesn’t escape the contradictions that come about in this hypercomplex play of identity formation. There is currently a lawsuit filed by Malcolm X’s legal wife against Lee for having appropriated the “X” for commercial ends. Lee has also been criticized for selling tennis shoe commercials with Michael Jordan. The prize of owning a pair of top-of-the-line basketball shoes has caused “swarming” raids where teenagers rob and kill one another for such shoes by ganging up on those who possess such items.

The well-known justification for such “semiotic” dressing has been advocated by cultural critics who claim that irony and parody function today in this war of signs as the new politics of postmodernism. A Canadian, Linda Hutcheon (1989), has fingered such a posture as “dedoxification,” a form of self-reflexivity which plays on difference and ex-centricity. It now replaces homogeneity and centrality as the foci of postmodern social analysis. To “de-doxify” is therefore to de-naturalize representation. According to Hutcheon, there is no effective theory of agency that enables political action as it was once theorized, identifying a specific historical agent as the motor of change, i.e., the proletariat, student movements, intellectuals. What is left is a “paradoxical postmodernism of complicity and critique, of reflexivity and historicity, that at once inscribes and subverts the conventions and ideologies of the dominant cultural and social forces of the twentieth-century western world” (p11.). Such a state of affairs makes it difficult to ascertain what are the emerging new forms of political agency (my personal dilemma). It is just as easy to be deceived as surprised by the ingenuities of the resistances in everyday life, so well described by Michel de Certeau (1984) and John Fiske (1989a,b) in their writings on popular culture and its practice in everyday life. Here the fundamental agency of human resistance is given center stage: popular or profane culture is pitted against high arts, its well defined Other. The pleasures
of textual poaching are constantly at play. Paul Willis (1990) describes such “common culture” as the operation of symbolic work for youth identification. This is a politics, to be sure, but the gnawing question remains for me: is this merely a “romanticized resistance”? Not hard hitting enough, not emancipatory enough, still caught within consumerist ideologies? Have I come full circle — as a middle-aged hippy having forgotten his own rebelliousness?

I point to the vehement writings of Zavarzadeh (1990, 1991, 1992; Zavarzadeh and Morton, 1991) who has absolutely no use for such deconstructive play. As a member of the Old Left, Zavarzadeh wishes to return to the emancipatory potentials of critical theory. Like Habermas, the enlightenment project for him remains unfinished. In contrast I point to Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) position, which is a left critique of Marxism. They embrace poststructuralist philosophy (Derrida, Foucault, Wittgenstein) to rethink political action. They argue that all objects are constituted discursively and therefore affirm the material character of every discursive structure. Language and action create its objects. They renounce a general theory of politics, placing their democratic hopes in the new social movements like feminism and ecology movements who do not become transcendent guarantors of liberation like the rhetoric of emancipatory education (i.e., especially Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren). If their social linguistics are taken to be a possible direction for democracy, then the discursive language game of labels can act as a force for both resistance and change. But the instances of where that happens need to be contextualized and argued. Signs are put to use for both conservative and radicals ends, conflated with other discourses so as to eliminate their radical force. If we return to Spike Lee perhaps the issue might present itself more sharply.

Spike Lee’s characters are said to play this ironic game that mocks contemporary reality through T-shirts. So when

Mookie, who works for Sal in the Pizzeria, wears a T-shirt with his name on it advertising Sal’s Pizzeria, it is said to “confuse and conflate the signifiers of whiteness and blackness” (Denizen, 1991:132). This statement isn’t far from Jeremy’s Cross Colours T-shirt.

These contemporary sign functions of the T-shirt point to the evocative, elusive, floating, adrift racial signifiers which define the age of the simulacrum. A sign no longer refers to a thing, but to another sign. ... They allude to a loss of meaning and permanency in the current age. ... The T-shirt presumes that voyeurs everywhere will read the signs of the racial self that are announced by the shirt that is worn on the person’s body. The sign has replaced the person. (Denizen, 1991, p.132)

These are harsh words: Jeremy replaced by the signs he wears! from the bottom of his Kross (Ewing) black basketball sneakers to the top of his Miami Hurricanes hat. Is he a walking corporate billboard, like those company men who wear their corporate logos on their hats? Should I be worried? Do I accept postmodern irony as the “new” style politics?

I can’t help thinking how much of a fad tattooing has become in our high-schools and colleges. Ceramic branding has really taken off. In junior high I often see girls with rings through their noses, earrings through their cheeks and eyebrows. It’s as if they require such reminders of pain to assure themselves that they are still capable of feeling, a rather sobering Nietzschean thought: we remember the pain more than the good times. Yet, I must agree with Susan Willis (1993) in her assessment of hard-core subculture in America:
Subcultural groups may appropriate, use, recycle, and redefine cultural commodities, but their practices don't change capitalism as a mode of production. The spectacular designates the difference between cultural practice as a response to capitalism and political practice, which might have cultural dimensions but doesn't aim at the transformation of capitalism (p.366).

Said in another way, subcultural oppositional styles are responses to the shrinking middle class and the emergent youth as a lumpen class distinct from a traditional working class—the Generation “X”. I think this is it, and I can see Jeremy caught up in this recycled world. Many of his friends already earn pocket money, working by delivering flyers, refereeing hockey games, and eventually nailing down McJobs so that they have money to spend. (By the way, the number of BNEs—break and entering—by youth is staggeringly high.) In a way, Jeremy attempts to get in on the latest fashion statements, to be part of the crowd, to have status, to keep “up,” to duel with his own set of heroes. He knows which caps are “in” and “out,” which T-shirts are hot. But it’s a tough pill to swallow to say that this is an ironic postmodern gesture and it’s even a bigger pill to say that my son is a walking billboard.

There is a fine essay by Kobeena Mercer “‘1968': Periodizing Politics and Identity” (1992), which attempts to show how difficult identity politics is today. The challenge, according to him, is to go beyond any simple “essentialist logic of “identity politics” in which differences are dealt with only one-at-a-time and which therefore ignore the conflicts and contradictions that arise in the relations within and between the various movements, agents, and actors in contemporary forms of democratic antagonism” (p. 425). Spike Lee’s films are a good example of this radical pluralism which presents new difficulties when deciding what is or isn’t progressive.

According to Mercer, new social movements structured around race, gender, and sexuality are neither inherently progressive or reactionary. “Just like everyday people, women, black people, lesbian and gay people, and people who worry about social justice, nuclear power, or ecology can be articulated into positions on the right as much as they can be articulated into positions of the left” (p.426). By this Mercer means that “no one has a monopoly on oppositional identity.” Political identities, as antagonistic elements in ideological struggle, appropriate and articulate different meanings out of the same system of signs. The construction of an oppositional social identity does not neatly fall into the left or the right camp. Various social issues can and do divide both factions. If you follow this “deconstructive” logic, then the either/or positionality of political left and right break down and the indeterminacy and ambivalence that inhabits the construction of social identity comes into play. For Mercer, this leads to what he calls “the challenge of sameness.” Because the meanings of keywords that signify the things that really matter are never fixed, but are constantly subject to efforts of articulation as different subjects attempt to hegemonize discourses to support their versions of each signified over alternative versions proposed by adversaries and opponents, there is, quite literally, a war over labels. It is no surprise then that “Cross Colours” states its definition of racism and meaning of “colour.” Racism is the multi-accenual keyword of its identity politics. Mercer also develops how the “struggles over the sign” can lead to changes in perceived reality. He shows the changes that the signifying chain, nigger/Negro/Black/Afro-American/African-American has undergone and how these “imaginary forms of identification” in maintaining a black consciousness (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) are central to such changes of representation. Yet, often, contestations over keywords lapse into strange coalitions between left and right. The rhetoric of being ideologically “right on” or “politically correct” often leads to confusion and counter-productive measures,
highlighting the challenge of sameness (see footnote 3 for an example).

As in the signifying chain that Kobena maps out, in education the labeling of children is a key sociological insight. There is now a large body of established literature by both feminists and educational critics alike (Katz, 1968, 1971; Spring, 1968, 1972; Bowles and Gintis, 1976) who argue that the “factory” sense of linear chronological time has been the basis to categorize and sub-categorize our “exceptional” children. “Brightness” is a function of how quickly a concept is understood. Being a “slow learner” automatically places you at the bottom of the class. Skipping grades, being a genius, having a high IQ, are all judged on a relationship between mental and chronological age. The signifying chain of /idiot/ imbecile/ mongolism/ Trisonomy 21/ Down’s syndrome / mentally retarded / physically and mentally challenged is a social record of the struggle for definitions that are against the dominant discourse of how we label our children. Labeling a child Mongoloid or Trisonomy 21 doesn’t seem like much of a difference, but clearly these definitions support different discourses, different attitudes, different social relationships educators have with these children. Being called a Mongoloid groups the child in a racist category of belonging to the Mongolians, an Asian people who inhabit Mongolia in Central Asia, said to be ‘primitive’ in the Darwinian anthropological discourse which differentiates between the civilized and the primitive (savage). And while Trisonomy identifies the child in a genetic discourse (problems with the 21st set of genes), it also objectifies the child as a ‘freak’ of nature, a mutant of some kind. Down’s syndrome begins to personalize the child at least by providing a name in “honor” of its discoverer, yet it covets a paternalistic attitude towards such children. Only by representing them as “challenged,” comparing them to themselves, are they given dignity. When such children are shown fighting their own struggles through various television series and films, a new discourse with new social relations has been achieved. As can be seen from this example the struggle is for representation. Each discursive formation constructs its object with a political and ethical intent. Exceptional children, race, gender formations, AIDS and so on, do not exist apart from the practices that conceptualize them, represent them, and respond to them. By knowing and analyzing these discursive formations, control can be wrestled away, in other words — sign wars.

I now come back to Jeremy’s T-shirt. If Jeremy’s comments are any indication of the raised consciousness of racism through Cross Colour T-shirts, hats and jeans, the answer has to be a lukewarm “yes” to the label’s impact in intervening the discourse on racism — pointing to the differences of color which exist amongst African American themselves. But it’s more the case that it is simply popular to wear them in school to be part of an “in” group. My skepticism remains. On another level, I recognize that the new definition of “colour” which is being promoted supports Jesse Jackson’s “Rainbow Coalition” which, I would argue, is a further advance on both the black/white and white/other binaries that dominate racist discourse. There are degrees of understanding and internalizing this racial issue, as with any other form of politics. Some high school students, I am sure, are fully conscious of why they wear the Cross Colours label. But I imagine that they are a minority. Critical educational discourse has not been successful in understanding the changed politics of identity of sign wars. Questioning popular culture in an art class almost seems to be a contradiction in terms. As soon as you question it, it no longer is popular. (Jeremy guards what he says to me. “Why are you asking all these questions?” he asks. He wishes not to be identified with an adult world and wants to be different from his father.) There are, of course, the constipated and turgid writings of Henry Giroux, which attempt to explain this changed reality, but these hover in the clouds of academia and present
the type of discourse that promotes academic elitism of the worst kind. (Henry is always trying to have the “last” word on any “critical” topic that might emerge, promoting transcendental educational assurances under the rubric of emancipation.) And, on the whole, educators—including art educators—have not embraced popular culture in any critical way to provide insight as to how these labels are being played with, unlike the well known French sociologists, de Certeau and Bourdieu.5

Jeremy has recently organized a chocolate drive in order that the soccer club is able to purchase Umbro shirts, shorts and bags. Obviously the Italian sounding label carries a great deal of prestige, like the Mercedes, BMWs and Porches of the adult world where labels have become just as important, and company loyalty an obsession. At the same time, it was his design that appeared on these shirts—a creative act of appropriation. Yet it is his uncle’s business which is promoted. Now, is Jeremy using the label or is the label using him? The symbiosis of such an event, for a leftist like myself, is surely a perplexing one to answer. Perhaps the coalition works in this case. Umbro is advertised, his uncle is advertised, and the team feels good because they have “sharp” outfits to wear. It sounds like I am cheering for the workings of capitalism until I see another team come onto the field with flimsy T-shirts and running shoes (and they win!).

Mondetta T-shirts and made some inquiries. I should have known. Their slogan is: “A spirit of unification;” a chance to reunite the world under the Mondetta label. I immediately thought of the Tyrel Pyramids in Bladerunner. I was informed by the young sales clerk that it was possible for me to request any country’s flag I so desired. All she needed to do was phone the central warehouse to see if it was possible. Italy, Australia, Great Britain, Canada, Kenya (by the way, Kenya only came in black), Germany, and Israel are readily “on line” and available. Their flags appear on the T-shirt sleeves. Again, all I can do is maintain a healthy skepticism.

What I have said here in this essay has been said in different ways by Situationists, post-structuralists, deconstructionists of every persuasion, and any other new labels that might be found. Each has made a proposal how to theorize these fractal spaces of the postmodern. In the end, the complexity of it all is rather astounding, as can be gleamed from Soja’s (1989) deconstruction of Los Angeles. In this essay I have tried to show the undecidability of a politics that is swallowed up within the mass media. In the critical postmodernism of Jenny Holzer or Barbara Kruger the problem is no different for there is no objective platform to step onto. Their signs jostle and compete amongst other public signs; their statements oscillate between the political and apolitical despite their radical intent. Many viewers simply do position themselves in the anti-patriarchal space provided for them. In the politics of postmodernity sometimes the issues seem very clear to me—as in the case of AIDS representation, exceptional children and questions of color. But, in other cases I’m not sure. I think that is the challenge opened up by the spaces of undecidability. It seems decidedly non-propagandistic. Given this hypercomplexity it seems I should now market a T-shirt which scrabbles all the labels together, conflating them into one impossible moment in a Scrabble game when everything about language has been sucked into a black “worm hole.”
Who knows what new language will eventually emerge on the other side to help us understand this postmodern moment?

**Voices Cited**


A number of feminist writers argue that shopping for women can be a subversive activity. Historically the shopping mall was one of the few places women could go and feel safe (see Gaines and Herzog, 1990, for such arguments). There is also Fiske’s (1990) recent reading of the consumerism by women in patriarchy as a resistant pleasure in quiz shows (i.e., The Price is Right). His argument is that the distinction between work and leisure, set up by capitalist practice, is inverted by women shopping for themselves or displaying their consumption skills on The Price is Right. I personally find such arguments unconvincing. But certainly they present another example of undecidability.

2

Footnotes

1 There is a wide literature now concerning the inadequacies of DBAE written by many members of the Social Caucus. I do not wish to rehash the points of this critique, but perhaps add that postmodern as a pastiche style is alive and well in our schools. Here the canon of Western is recovered through ingenious new ways such as quoting from past styles, poaching images and transporting them into new contexts so as to help identify famous work of art, i.e., the picture of Michaelangelo’s David now appears in strange environments or the Mona Lisa is (re)presented as a paint by number project, or projected as fat, thin, androgynous. Another favorite exercise is to cut out a jigsaw piece from a famous print. This is then blown up and painted with the ‘original’ as its reference. Students must then identify the famous print from which it came. As this essay develops, I raise questions about the use of such parody and irony. My purpose for dwelling on popular culture, rather than art education per se, is because popular culture is high or elite arts Other and does not find its way into our classrooms in any significant way. It is experienced in spaces outside official school settings: in school lockers, in films, music, in clothing styles. However, both “school art” and popular art are conflated by this postmodern moment by the larger issue of representation.

2

3 Kobenna Mercer (1992) provides an example. During the, 70s the animal rights movement extended the concept of democratic rights on the grounds that animals were enslaved and exploited “just like blacks were enslaved and exploited. The conflation of race and animal rights continues today with the way black males are systematically disadvantaged as a distinct group within the urban underclass as an “endangered species.” In the first case the progressive potential of the discursive rhetoric is cancelled by the assumption that black people were non-human or at best bestial in nature. In the second case, the black male is perceived as a victim and cancels out the issue of human agency.

4 This remark, common in cultural studies on popular culture, is aimed at the distinction first raised by Michel de Certeau (1984) who made a differentiation between “tactics” and “strategies.” Tactics refers to subversive practices used by subordinates for their own resistance and pleasure, as opposed to strategies which refer to policies by those in power in order to remain in control. Popular art for de Certeau is not a domain of texts or artefacts, rather it is these tactical practices (stuggles over the sign) performed on texts or text-like structures. If these tactics are appropriated they no longer become “popular.”

5 Although Jack Hobbs has championed the need to turn to popular culture, as did Vincent Lanier, I would argue their attempts, while valuable and noteworthy, were
not informed by poststructuralist theories that opened up issues of ideology and complicitness in a much more profound way.
not informed by poststructuralist theories that opened up issues of ideology and complicitness in a much more profound way.
Introduction

The following four papers were written as a panel presentation for an art education conference. Each paper is independently authored with no aim to present a consensus on the issue of censorship. The authors reached consensus on the format of the panel presentation which was to move from philosophical questions on the issue of censorship in the first paper, toward art education classroom practice in the last paper.

The topic is timely as censorship and the fear of censorship harrors the arts community as well as institutions of education. It has always been a sensitive issue in education as the educator mediates between the values of conformity to community standards and the assertion of individuality for his/her students.

The authors hope to draw attention to insidious as well as explicit forms of censorship. The word censorship evokes images and sounds of book-burning, red tape, blocked parts of images and text and the beep that replaces offending speech in electronic media. While these are explicit forms of censorship, there are other less visible but just as effective methods of censoring. Through omission and devaluation there is refusal to name or acknowledge the worth of an act or artifact.

The purpose of Kirstie Lang’s paper is to explore the concept of liberty, as understanding of liberty informs understanding of censorship. Isaiah Berlin has distinguished between two types of liberty: negative liberty is freedom from obstruction in doing what one wishes; positive liberty is the power to control or participate in public decisions. In the realm of speech acts the former is the right to free speech, the latter the right to censor. This distinction is useful in examining a) the contradictory values propelling the debate between free speech and censorship, and conflicts within censorship; b) this debate in the context of feminism and c) the way in which feminism, art and education can appeal to different values and one particular liberty over another.

Gudrun Helgadottir takes one event as a concrete example to illustrate the clash between claims to negative and positive liberties and ensuing censorship in the context of feminism. Feminists have collectively faced censorship in the mainstream of philosophy and politics. This external pressure, or lack of negative liberty, has led many feminists to assume a need for a strong, collective voice. As feminism includes diverse and competing philosophical stances this quest for unity results in an internal censorship. Dissenting and marginal voices within feminism are appropriated and silenced by the assertion of positive liberty by those who are empowered. The existence of censorship challenges individual and collective liberty and forces a re-examination of the values of sisterhood.

The exploration of censorship continues in Fiona Blaikie’s paper where she examines the visibility of art and craft focusing on gender, culture, and class. The objectifying and distancing of views not held in common in effect renders the holder of these views alien. Individual and group ontologies, images, and voices are at times made visible, at other times silenced and/or marginalized, creating polarization between universal and diverse, mainstream and hidden, high and low forms and experiences of art, craft and design. Problems with and connections between these otherwise polarized positions are explored.
The last paper, by Pamela Tarlow-Calder brings us even closer to art education classrooms. The paper includes a discussion and investigation of the inclusion/exclusion from educational consideration of a wide range of disturbing, controversial and invisible imagery relating to gender issues. The author advocates a critical-reflective stance for practitioners. A critical-reflective approach to inquiry will not only allow teachers and students to analyse an expanded range of visual imagery, but allows for a social reconstructive curriculum.

As a collective these papers draw attention to art, education and art education as well as feminism as political phenomena. An expression always implies underlying values in some way, thus referring to our existence as individuals and members of communities; to that which is truly political.

**FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND CENSORSHIP**

Kirstie Lang

Censorship is commonly posited in opposition to free speech. However, censorship can also be understood as a kind of freedom, one which enables us to participate in collective decisions to control speech. Social and political theorist Isaiah Berlin has written of these two kinds of liberties as integral to liberal, democratic traditions which, problematic though they sometimes are, continue to inform the foundations of policymaking in Western, post-industrial democracies (Berlin, 1969; Dworkin, 1991). In this paper I describe these two forms of liberty as interconnected by democratic theory, but as simultaneously contradictory given the values that support them. Doing so can provide a context for the value clashes that give rise to censorship. I then explain three kinds of censorship and conclude with various ways a liberal concept of freedom is being challenged, as well as reasons why it can inform the inevitable tensions that arise when dealing with art, education, and feminism.

**Negative and Positive Liberty**

Berlin’s concepts of negative and positive liberty seek to explain the political freedom of the individual in relation to government and society. Derived from the work of John Locke and J.S. Mill, liberal freedom or “liberty” is a lack of constraint on one’s actions, maximised when collective decisions provide circumstances in which that freedom can be realized, and adjusted to the competing demands of other collective values (Brenkert, 1991, p. 65). Negative liberty is the personal lack of constraint, positive liberty is access to political involvement which protects negative liberty.

These two forms of liberty, and their democratic relationship of interdependence, are evident in the following statements from the membership materials of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (1991):

[The BCCLA is] an organization that works to protect your democratic rights and freedoms... (p. 1)

Rights and freedoms we are not willing to fight for are rights and freedoms we don’t deserve. (p. 2)
It is virtually impossible for an individual citizen to force the government or private interests to conform to the law. It takes clout to do that. Clout in the form of intellectual resources, legal resources, and money.

Liberty in Berlin's "negative" sense is suggested in the first part of the quotation, referring to our basic "rights and freedoms." It is "negative" liberty because it is freedom from — from external interference, coercion, or enslavement (Berlin, 1969, p. 127). It sees human nature as oriented towards a quest for originality and independence, thought to be possible only under conditions of freedom. Consequently, the need for personal freedom is seen as inherent to our beings. Its origins are modernist, the ultimate social achievements of negative liberty being progress and advancement, and an even distribution of liberty — the equal opportunity to achieve one's ends without the assessment (or restriction) of those ends (p. 153). Speech rights that this form of liberty seeks to protect include privacy rights, such as the right to "remain silent" when placed under arrest, or the confidentiality of one's medical or criminal records. The rights to freedom of expression are also preserved; figures such as Robert Mapplethorpe, Madonna, and 2 Live Crew have for many tested the limits of this liberty with combinations of artistic, religious and sexual expressions. A liberal position embraces all expressions of choice and individuality on principle, but with some unease in cases where unjust social consequences are anticipated due to the content of those expressions. Hence, in the case of explicit sexual material, there is an instrumental distinction between pornography as expressing dominance, and erotica as expressing consent (Fox-Genovese, 1991, p. 90). The prevailing assumption, however, is that individual acts reflect attitudes and desires, rather than create them.

If the right to negative liberty is inherent, why must it be fought for, as the BCCLA suggests? While the principle of autonomy offers some benefits, the deficiencies of negative liberty point out the limits of individualist philosophies, as well as the need for a collective control of this freedom. In theory this freedom is absolute, while in practice it has contingencies, such as: the number, relevance, and social value of choices upon which to act; the actual sources and uses of autonomy; and the weight of authority one may have with this freedom (Berlin, 1969, p. 130). Human purposes and activities don't automatically harmonize with each other, and furthermore, they are often shaped by goals other than autonomy, such as justice, security, culture, status, community, and equality.

This takes us into the realm of "positive" liberty — the "clout" referred to in the second part of the quotation. It is the freedom of self-government, of participation in collective life. It is "positive" because instead of freedom from it is freedom to, to have rather than to avoid authority, to lead a prescribed form of life, and to shape the lives of others, in the interests of recognized goals such as justice and equality (p. 131). This freedom was founded upon the rationalist, Kantian notion of the self or state divided, between rational and irrational elements. It sees an empirical element, one which is vulnerable, highly adaptable, and recalcitrant, under the watch of a transcendant controlling element such that the whole may achieve its full potential (p. 132). This notion of self or social grouping can be seen as profoundly condescending, or charitable to the disempowered, depending on one's point of view. In the case of the individual, positive liberty is self-mastery, purpose and understanding; similarly, for a social whole, it means order, self-direction, and "reasoned" laws and justice. Corresponding examples include liberation through prayer or education, and on a larger scale, the right to enforce...
peace laws, mass education, or censorship to protect both individuals and collective values from the effects of free speech.

**Three forms of censorship**

An examination of the values behind censoring acts, according to Berlin's forms of freedom, reveals three prominent types of censorship. Positive liberty will legitimate censorship in the name of morality on the one hand, and in the name of equality on the other. Negative liberty is the realm in which self-censorship may take place.

An act of censorship to restore morality will often designate speech offensive on the grounds of obscenity, a manifestation of moral decay. Such speech acts are seen as threatening not only to a general standard of morality, but to the security of social and legal institutions that have tried to maintain this standard (Fox-Genovese, 1991, p. 90). Censorship occurs at the threshold between public and private realms, a boundary which identifies the powerful, defines the offensive, and protects the vulnerable. Inequalities are acknowledged, but vulnerability is seen as inherent and of little social significance; therefore it is the responsibility of the strong to protect the weak (p. 96). Examples of censorship in the name of morality have included an adult protecting a child from viewing pornography, and guards at Canada Customs "protecting" members of the public from access to gay and lesbian literature (BCCLA, 1992, p. 20). An example of censorship for security would be an army preventing journalists from publishing information which reveals its strategies or damages its national image, as was the case during the Gulf War and at a 1990 standoff at a Native reserve at Oka, Quebec.

Censorship to restore equality will designate speech offensive on the grounds of misrepresentation or devaluation. Such speech is considered to represent and actively contribute to existing inequalities, by inhibiting the free speech of the disempowered (Booth, 1992, p. 54). It threatens and addresses the individual by his or her association with an identity group, one formed through ties of race, gender, sexual preference, ability, economic status, etc. Here the distinction between public and private is replaced by one between community and society. Inequality is the central issue, and while "difference" can exist on either inherent or social levels, the power distribution based on those differences is attributed to historical contingencies. However, it is still the responsibility of the powerful to protect the disempowered, power in this case being political rather than moral. Examples of censorship for the sake of equality have included: a recent ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada that a Winnipeg video store owner's porn collection, seized by police on grounds of obscenity, be banned from public consumption on grounds of degradation to women (Ruby, 1992); and the firing of a New Brunswick teacher by his school board for his authorship of anti-Semitic publications (Borovoy, 1991).

Acts of censorship in the interests of morality and equality invoke the use of positive liberty; they depend on the freedom to participate in public decisions to restrict speech. A third form of censorship, self-censorship, calls upon negative liberty, the freedom to act without interference from others. It is censoring one's own speech (which poses a threat to standards of public values) to prevent others from exercising their positive liberty to censor it. The arena of action is the divide between public and private; the value appealed to in this case is choice. I anticipate the obstacles preventing my autonomy, but I exercise my choice to avoid these obstacles (Berlin, 1969, p. 136). This is the irony of "freedom through self-censorship": it is choice at the expense of autonomy. Cases in which self-censorship can occur: response to a boycott (as in the case of record numbers of subscriptions to Harper's magazine cancelled, after Sally Tisdale's account of her use of pornography); respect
for National Art Education Association language policies; and an acknowledgement of libel laws.

Conclusions — Working with or resolving conflict?

The point of defining censorship is that doing so helps us identify the freedoms and values upon which they rest. More importantly, it underscores the inevitability of conflict, given the relationship between negative and positive liberties; they represent mutually exclusive, and yet interdependent arms of democratic theory. Censorship is one response to resolving conflict, an act created and legitimated by this larger structure.

Art, education, and feminism are complex arenas of action that, individually and combined in varying circumstances, can appeal to different values and liberties; uniting them in a feminist art education results in tensions of all kinds. To take each element: freedom of speech is integral to artistic expressions; freedom to shape collective life breeds education; and values such as autonomy and equality, emerging from each of Berlin’s liberties, are at the heart of feminism. Each domain has witnessed its share of censorship, and the following papers in this collective article examine circumstances in which this is played out. I will leave it up to those writers to elaborate, but point out that the contribution immediately following this one, by Gudrun Helgadottir, vividly portrays an enactment of feminist theories and the forms of liberty and censorship discussed here. Generalizing from this account, negative liberty can be seen as the equal opportunity for women to behave and be treated like men; positive liberty in this case rests on the view that women are not the same as men, and must act accordingly to fully realize their potential. The event Gudrun Helgadottir describes typifies a challenge to the liberal split between public and private spheres, and consequently the actions of the participants are viewed as different forms of censorship.

We are at the point where the foundations of liberalism are under serious scrutiny across many realms of theory and experience. The status of concepts such as “freedom,” “individual,” “originality” and “independence” is faltering in increasingly contextualist public and academic discourses. The possibility of self-knowledge and the emphasis on motives versus consequences has been deconstructed in literary criticism and the fields it has permeated. The division between public and private realms of experience is a focal point of feminist criticism (Paternan, 1989). And we are realizing the less than democratic effects of “consumer choice” and technological innovation (Beiner, 1992). Such challenges to liberal theory often come from experiences beyond the democratic realm, where free agents oppress, privacy means alienation, choices are valueless or unaffordable. As educators we must recognize the limitations of liberalism, but also understand how it has informed our practices and shaped the content areas of our research and teaching. The paradoxes that become apparent can be of great educational value; let us pull them apart and try to see them for what they are rather than attempt “easy resolution” (Hamblen, 1985, p. 24).

References


Feminism and Feminisms: The Prospect of Censorship

GUDRUN HELGADOTTIR

Given the diversity and division of women according to class, race, ethnicity, religion, age and other social factors, we must expect and accept conflict and contradiction within feminism. I refer here broadly to feminism as a school of thought and as a political movement aiming to improve the lot of women (Black, 1989). Current theorizing about the social construct, gender, is inspired by the contradictions inherent in feminism (Scott, 1988). They fuel a constructive dialogue but they also contain the threat of censorship. There is the tendency to disregard the right to dissenting voices within feminism, to suppress internal questioning and contestation in favour of an appearance of consensus on a particular version of feminism. In bell hooks' words: "Feminism has its party line and women who feel a need for a different strategy, a different foundation, often find themselves ostracized and silenced" (hooks, 1984, p. 9).

Of course, such internal censorship is not a vice unique to feminism. It is a common feature of political life, theorizing included. Adherents of particular frameworks, theoretical and political, band together in parties, caucuses and schools of thought where the need for consensus, for a united front, is strongly felt. In the mainstream of politics and scholarship, feminism is often the target of censorship when establishments such as funding and research agencies exercise their positive liberty at the expense of the negative liberty of feminist scholars. This points to the flip side of the coin; feminism is diverse and divided, yet there is a modicum of consensus, a coherence that puts feminists collectively at odds with political and theoretical establishments (de Lauretis, 1986; Black, 1989; Hirsch & Keller, 1990).

Much ink has been applied to explore various ways of classifying feminists and examining the fit between feminism and traditional or mainstream political theories (Garry & Pearsall, 1989; Diamond & Quinby, 1988; Jaggar & Rothenberg, 1984; Snitow, 1990). In my own attempts to trace this fit for feminism, art and art education I found that the puzzle has various configurations. I chose the topic of pornographic representation of women in art to speculate on how different feminisms would manifest themselves in art education.
I took the categorization often used when an attempt is made to relate feminism and mainstream politics; liberal, radical, marxist and post-modern (Nye, 1988). Using this rather crude measure to gauge the responses according to categories, I wound up with glossy mainstream women's magazines and a lesbian artists' collective providing two examples of liberal feminist response. The basis for this is that they share an approach where pornography is not seen as inherently degrading but simply as lacking a female perspective (Helgadottir, 1991).

I often wondered how the categorization would change if the topic was different; for instance if it was "The male critic's right and responsibility to respond to female erotic art." The categorization would change pending the issue: Feminism is contextual. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (1989) takes feminists to task in her book Feminism without illusions: A critique of individualism. She charges that we coast between arguments based on the premises of individual rights and collective good without bothering to keep track of our movements. She argues that our reliance on individual rights arguments is often counterproductive, the tools turn in our hands.

I have to tell you a story to illustrate this point. The story unfolded for me on television news. This is a real life example of how all the fundamental issues in feminist theory; individual and equal rights, negative and positive liberty, objectification of women for the gratification of men, the male gaze, sisterhood, censorship and self-censorship are played out.

Last summer women across Canada planned a day of protest to show solidarity and sisterhood with a young woman who had been arrested and charged with indecent exposure when walking bare-breasted down town in a Canadian city. She argued in defense that she as an individual should have the same right as a male individual, to be naked to the waist on a hot day. The trouble with this claim to equal rights with men was painfully apparent in a small British Columbia town.

There, a group of feminists had announced a rally down Main Street. Hours in advance men, boys and representatives of the media lined the sidewalks, parking lots and windows with a view of the street. Some of the men were equipped with cameras, camcorders and binoculars, thus joined with the media in a fraternity of the lens. They, and by extension those viewing the event through the eye of the media, all waited in eager anticipation. As one of the bystanders on the scene put it: If they'll show'em I'll watch'em. This was a real life manifestation of the male gaze if I ever saw one, both literally by the presence of the male bystanders, and figuratively by the view that I and other viewers were offered through the media.

Meanwhile the feminists discussed tactics, for it was clear that their planned action was about to be subverted. The issue of equal individual rights was not going to be the prominent issue. The individual rights argument had, in this case, left them open and vulnerable to objectification by the exploitative male gaze.

Another women's group had formed in response to the rally. These women were also present on the scene, carrying blankets, bed sheets and towels. They adamantly identified themselves to the media as non-feminist, concerned with common decency and family values. They vowed that if any one of the feminists made a move to expose herself, one of their group would immediately cover her. That is, they proposed an act of censorship.

Eventually the rally was under way, a tactical compromise reached by self-censorship. The feminists marched fully clad down the middle of the road. They were flanked by the women with blankets who were there to physically shield their
imprudent sisters from the exploitative male gaze of the bystanders, both those physically present and those gazing through the lens of the media.

I watched this display of theory come to life on my television with awe. I could not help wondering which group was feminist: those who insisted on being treated the same as men or those who walked to protect our female particulars. What divides feminists into meaningful categories is not so much allegiance to traditional political frameworks but these questions: Are our feminist arguments based on the notion that all women are a category, and if so that a) women are fundamentally the same as men, or b) that women are fundamentally different from men?

Although women appear as the key players in this story, the third group, the literal and figural male bystanders, while seemingly passive, acted upon the situation. We must realize, despite our reservations about essentialism, that the story unfolded in response to their presence. The story represents a clash between positive and negative liberties and shows the shortcomings of feminists' claims to negative liberties without regard to context.

Both groups of women could be viewed as feminist, based on their concern with the right and welfare of women (Black, 1989). The story illustrates the futility of posing feminists, let alone women, as a unified category, as sisters with common interests and goals (see Hicks, 1991). It is, however, an example of the precarious balance where conflict and contradiction lead to constructive confrontation. The women's conflicting responses and the ensuing compromise illustrate sisterhood in a more realistic way than we imagined in the days of second wave feminism when its power was commonly proclaimed.

Their uneasy sisterhood, the fact that in the end the two groups of women marched down Main Street side by side, albeit in tension, contains the moral of the story. I view the story as one of potential growth (not knowing whether this was borne out in the experience of the women involved). "If women always seek to avoid confrontation, to always be 'safe', we may never experience any revolutionary change, any transformation, individually or collectively" (hooks, 1984, p. 64). Sisterhood is not all harmony and understanding. It is as painful as it is powerful because it is fraught with tension and conflict as well as with care and concern.

ENDNOTE

When I first watched the newsclip on the local television station (BCTV) it didn't dawn on me just how important it would become to my understanding of feminism and censorship. If that insight had hit me I would probably have stopped folding my laundry and jotted down the name of the reporter, title of the story, and television station for future reference. Finding the reference to something I saw on TV proved a daunting task. First of all the staff of a television station, particularly the newsroom, are too preoccupied with today's news to care much about archival stuff, old news. Secondly, even when I had found enough information for a future reader to be able to follow up on the source, the APA style that I use didn't have an obvious way of writing the reference. There is no category for "seen on TV". Chicago style is a little more helpful in that they allow for reference to a program, but there is no mention of the news. This is an amazing handicap for researchers when you consider the influence that television and radio news have on our societies. So the story that is the centerpiece of my paper is not properly referenced, but believe me, I saw it on TV.
REFERENCES


to those with

VIABILITY AND INVISIBILITY IN ART AND CRAFT

FIONA BLAIKIE

The visibility and invisibility or censorship1 of art and craft is determined by individual and group ontologies. Their production has often been constrained and/or defined by gender, class, culture, race, religion, and politics. In this paper, I am concerned with the visibility of varieties of art, design, and craft. I will examine censorship based on three criteria: gender2, culture3, and class4, with the censorship of artwork because of gender being the dominant theme.

1 Clapp (1972) defines art censorship where "artists or artwork are restricted for economic, social, political, moral or aesthetic reasons by state and church officials, and also by citizens or other groups, individuals, or society as a whole. Incidents of censorship cited include any form of abridgment of "Artistic Freedom" (p.v). The definition of "Artistic Freedom" was constructed by the American Federation of Arts, on October 22nd, 1954, and asserts "the artist's right to create, exhibit, publish, reproduce, sell or otherwise use his work; and corresponding rights of institutions and individuals to use his work" (Clapp, 1972, p.v).

2 Gender here refers to varying degrees of polarization in the roles of men and women. This occurs in regard to all aspects of domestic, commercial, educational, political, social, economic and artistic life, both historically and currently.

3 Culture refers to the ontological and aesthetic understanding of a people who are members of the culture of a country, for example Japan, or an ethnic culture within a country, for example the Haida in Canada, or a subculture within a region as defined by group membership, such as the Hell's Angels.

4 Class here refers here to the differentiation of society according to power groups, moving along a continuum from those controlling politics, economics, and culture, to those with limited or no control. My conception of class is from a Western perspective.
I am interested particularly in the apparent polemic which has arisen around the issue of visibility, and the possibility that these divisions are actually both fluid and fixed.

Universality and diversity

Universal conceptions of what art is—ideas argued by Bell (1958), for example, have been connected to the high art tradition. But while there might be widespread consensus within the fine art world with regard to classifying certain artifacts on a stylistic basis—for example, classical Chinese pottery, or High Renaissance Italian sculpture, there is less agreement on broader questions, such as in defining art itself. This is because diverse beliefs and experiences determine varied conceptions and classifications of art, craft and design. This diversity is the outcome of religious, cultural, and individual ontologies resulting in social, political, religious, and gender biases which are contextually rooted.

Universalism here refers to those centralizing homogenizing forces in Western society which determine widely held values and beliefs about all aspects of existence. These forces are influenced greatly by a complex set of variables which are socially inculcated, such as Christian religious values (for example, the sanctity of marriage, the nuclear family, and heterosexuality); political hegemony in the form of capitalism and modified socialist-capitalism, and racist and sexist attitudes. Universalist values and beliefs are reflected in the media, in television programmes such as “Leave it to Beaver,” produced in the 1950s. Universalism has been a powerful force in art and craft in determining acceptable content and contexts of production. Lippard (1990) holds that universalism is linked to an ideal of aesthetic excellence, associated with fine or high art in the tradition of important galleries (p.8). Universalist beliefs can be linked with the tendency in the artworld to marginalize certain images, processes, people or cultures which are not acceptably mainstream. The result is a clear form of censorship according to gender, culture, and class.

Universalist beliefs have resulted in both covert and egregious censorship and suppression of the art, craft, and design works produced by certain groups or individual. Collins and Sandell (1984) identify this as forming the hiddenstream tradition.

The clash between the diversity of our beliefs and the continued institutional support for the concept of Universalism results in some work produced being considered objectionable, obscene, or offensive. Those seeking overtly to suppress or censor could be special interest groups, the public at large, government agencies, religious leaders, or oppressive regimes. The act of censoring, while it has many agendas, and reflects a broad range of values and beliefs is always an assertion of power.

A well known example, the 1989 Cincinnati exhibition of nude photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe, gave rise to court battles because of lack of understanding or acceptance of his art within the general community (Lucie-Smith, 1972 and 1991, p.266). According to Lucie-Smith, the rise to visibility of a previously hidden subculture concerned with the nature of homosexuality, as witnessed in Mapplethorpe’s work, paralleled the growth of a concern with the nature of being a woman in feminist art (p.266). The general community reacted in a similar way to feminist art as it did to Mapplethorpe’s work. In this regard, Merkel (1990) notes that often the first charge rallied at images or sculptures unpopular with the general public—or any other body—is that they aren’t art. She goes on to assert that even in arguments over art in public places and federal funding for the arts, where the question of what art is comes up, it is not usually central. The primary issues in those conflicts are “What kind of
In this matter, one might argue that those representing mainstream universalist ideas were seeking to suppress an artist representing the interests and values of a subculture within western society. While many of us might support Mapplethorpe’s freedom to represent himself and his values through the production of homoerotic photographs, public support of those values is a more difficult issue.

In another example of this public clash of values, Clapp (1972) describes a situation in which sexist bias was deemed offensive: a sculpture titled Civic Virtue by Frederick MacMonnies caused an outcry from women’s groups in March 1922 because it showed “a nude youth with a club on his shoulder vanquishing a recumbent female nude, representing the siren of temptation to political corruption” (p.210). Labelled “Fat Boy,” the sculpture was denounced by local women’s groups. The mayor of New York held public hearings regarding the statue, but in spite of great controversy, it was installed in the City Hall Park, on 20th April 1922. When criticism continued it was moved to Foley Square, and then to Queens City Hall (p.211). MacMonnies, the sculptor, claimed there was “no truth that man is trampling on woman”—the man’s foot was on a rock, not her back, he claimed (p.211).

In the case of the MacMonnies sculpture I would suggest that the artifact and sculptor represented the mainstream power base in terms of gender, class, and culture at that time. The nude youth “vanquishing” (that is, overcoming, conquering, or defeating) the nude “temptress” is charging women with responsibility and culpability for men’s sexual desires. Their bodies (which they have simply because they are women), are seen as sinful to the sculptor—and, by extension, to all men and women. Yet they are also desirable. This is a no-win situation for women. The outcome of this “temptress” who represents all women, results in no less than the corruption of all society and politics, controlled by men. The message in this sculpture is quite literal—it makes visible what could be termed a universal conception of women as not just morally inferior, but dangerous. The hearings and resulting relocation of the artwork are also aspects of censorship. Civic Virtue was made less visible, and thus marginally less offensive, but because supporters of the work represent the mainstream, the consequences of censorship in this case were relatively mild.

Cultural and political groups often appropriate art, literature, and philosophical ideas to establish a basis for their beliefs. For example, Clapp (1972) notes that Nazi art policy “favoured” women: “Germany forbids any work of art which does not render an object faithfully, or which derides such Nazi ideals as War and Women” (p.266). This was stated in official Nazi Art Policy as early as October, 1939 (p.266), and illustrates a sinister use of power in the representation of women. The Nazis operated from a position of power in order to promote a particular “womanly ideal.” This ideal was inextricably linked to theories of Aryanism, of a “master race,” and the “womanly ideal” which suggests women functioning as mother and wife, rather than in any other kinds of male dominated roles such as political leadership. The explicitness with which it defined universalist beliefs in terms of gender parallels the New York example, in which women are in a powerless position. That this powerlessness is real and not just aesthetic is evident in the inability of women’s groups to galvanize support for the complete withdrawal of the MacMonnies sculpture.

While these are overt examples of censorship, more subtle censorship takes place in many ways. Nochlin (1988) asserts that the experiences of women are not mainstream so much as dominated by the idiosyncrasies of individual and group
experiences. The art, craft, and design work of women, of some cultures and subcultures, have up until recently been significantly less visible, and have been considered lower in status than fine art in major galleries in the western world. Some argue that women’s approaches are more experimental, and less concerned with perfectionism (Congdon, 1991, p.17). Women’s art which becomes visible via the gallery system seems to be more contextually rooted, autobiographical, and more focused on the ontology of being a woman as, for example, in the work of, Mary Beth Edelson’s Blood Mysteries, or Judy Chicago’s Menstrual Bathroom.

Modernism, which has dominated 20th century western art, has codified visually universalist beliefs in formalist aesthetics where visibility has been given to work that places a greater emphasis on formal visual qualities and style rather than the context and purpose of production. In recent art criticism there has been a trend to dismiss formalism in art, because of its association with the universalist beliefs which discount contextual considerations. Many feminists who highlight meaning and context in understanding art, craft, and design have critiqued formalism and modernism as male dominated. They argue that it is impossible to understand artists, designers, and craftspeople’s achievements when they emerge from marginalized and difficult circumstances, without examining the conditions under which the work was realized, its functions, and immediate social significance. However, even those art works which are highly conceptual and metaphorical are concerned in some way with the formal qualities of visual structure. Certainly, many craft and most design works are concerned with visual structure. It seems to me that the problem arises when form is examined to the exclusion of context. It is important that there is consideration of visual structure, and of context and meaning, as these components are interconnected. Elements of design such as colour, pattern, tonal quality, and texture describe and define

the image both visually and stylistically, and are linked in an integral way to the experience of meaning and context. Form defines and delineates context; context determines form, and it is in this sense that I see links between these variables.

Form and context meet and are interdependent in Slatkin’s (1985 and 1990) description of the Minoan civilization on Crete, in the third century B.C. In this matriarchal theocracy “ruled by a queen-priestess” (p.13), there was high status for women. Slatkin notes that according to Vincent Scully, palace sites were selected according to the “body” of the earth mother—a valley with a particular geographic configuration which was determined by “proximity to the center of life and divine powers of the Earth Mother Goddess” (p.13). Thus the form—visual structure of the palace, is the body of the Earth Mother, and is in itself the context from which meaning and significance are derived.

Yet while form and context might be linked and interdependent, many art educators have charged that hiddenstream and low art traditions are, in essence, censored, due to the fact that visible mainstream high art is funded and controlled by the cultural elite (Blandy and Congdon, 1987; Bersson, 1987). High art has been associated with fine art, while low art has been associated with applied design and craft related enterprises. Lippard (1990) defines the situation as she sees it in North America:

Art in this country belongs to and is controlled by a specific group of people. This is not to say that there isn’t art being made and loved by other people, but it has not been consecrated by a touch of the Quality wand; many of those whose tastes or work differ from mainstream criteria are either unaware of their difference or don’t argue with the “experts;” others,
who devote themselves to dissent, remain largely unheard due to official and self censorship. (p.8)

Lippard alludes in the "Quality wand" metaphor to the idea of a universal ideal of aesthetic excellence, associated with fine art, or "high" art in the tradition of important galleries patronised by the wealthy and cultural elite. Lippard asserts that artists themselves have been appropriated and patronized in the negative sense, because they have become "separated from their audiences and controlled by the values of those who buy their work" (p.8). And the separation between high and low, male and female art, craft, and design work has been maintained, according to Congdon (1991) by the "established art world [which] maintains control, in part, by referring negatively to the majority of women's art as decorative, traditional and craft-like" (p.15). The "quality wand" through its function in controlling visibility and imposing invisibility in the artworld has been used to censor the work of women.

Finding connections

In spite of these examples of polarization, there appear to be grey areas between hidden and mainstream art, and in some instances a lessening of the divide. For example, Congdon writes that many women artists who are "academically trained," are incorporating "traditional decorative art into their own work" (1991, p.17), with artists like Miriam Shapiro and Joyce Kozloff breaking barriers between high and low art. Slatkin (1985 and 1990) writes that Chicago's Dinner Party exhibits an interesting combination of needlework, China plate painting, craft and fine art (p.186). In addition, she asserts that the works of Magdalena Abakanowicz "are one of the most persuasive reasons to abandon any inherent devaluation of craft from the 'fine art' of sculpture" (p.192). Although having said this, one reviewer of this paper suggested that having been sanctioned by the high elite makes this work, de facto, part of the high art tradition.)

Lippard (1990) demonstrates the kind of self-critical attitude necessary for cultural gatekeepers in a diverse society by asserting the right of artists to pursue their goals whether they are art, craft, or design centred, or aimed at high or low status traditions, by asking

who am I, after all, to imply that any artist who wants to shouldn't have a chance at "making it" in the mainstream? Doesn't the dominant culture already impose just such limitations? Is my wish to maintain a diverse practice just another sort of matronizing ethnocentrism? (p.156-157)

She notes that when a patronizing interviewer asked artist Basquiat "if the teeth and bones in his work related to [his] Caribbean culture, Basquiat looked exaggeratedly incredulous and said, 'What's that?'" (p.162). If the term "culture" is difficult to define, how much more difficult is it to frame the concept 'cultural diversity'?

Lippard also asserts the right of artists, designers, and craftspeople to choose to immerse themselves contextually and stylistically in visual traditions other than the one in which they grew up. Some art educators have supported approaching diversity through an integrative approach, in which there is a concern with making diverse cultural experiences artistically and contextually meaningful, so that they might become visible, appreciated, and understood by a much wider group of people (Bersson, 1987; Blandy and Congdon, 1987). Others argue not for integration, but separation—a kind of discrete pluralism (McIntosh, 1987). This position asserts that where experiences have been different from mainstream experiences, they should
remain separate, in order to retain their uniqueness and character without dilution, as in the case of feminist art history based on exclusively feminist criteria (Slatkin, 1985 and 1990, p.7). It is also argued that outsiders cannot understand because of their ontological separateness from the cultural context of production (Lippard, 1990).

The continuum between integration and separation is reflected in Judy Chicago’s descriptions of patterns in the lives of women artists she and Miriam Shapiro visited. There were those in isolation, “finding their content in their experiences as women, with little contact with the local art community” (Paterson and Wilson, 1974, p.136). Other women functioned through communication with the art world, “whose work was more neutralized as Mimi’s [Shapiro’s] and mine [Chicago’s] had been” (p.136). Clearly even if visibility and invisibility are options for artists, each choice also has consequences in terms of audience, rewards, and ultimately the meaning of the artist’s work.

Lippard (1990) answers problems of diverse understandings by acknowledging what she calls a “common anotherness” rather than a polarized view of self and other (p.6). Thus, she aims to focus on “the area in between—that fertile, luminal ground where new meanings germinate and where common experiences in different contexts can provoke new bonds” (p.9). Congdon (1991) states that

We are all so much part of the same air, water and earth that it becomes superfluous in many ways to determine with clear cut boundaries which parts of women’s cultures are ours and which are impositions placed on us. (p.16)

It is hard to know how best to “deensor” what was previously hidden, without neutralizing the work, imposing false interpretations, without patronage, and with sensitivity. In spite of these difficulties, and while, as Lippard (1990) states, the issue is “clouded by hegemony,” she is “convincd by the evidence of contemporary art that the hybrid experience can be a significant aesthetic factor” (p.144). Students need to examine specific cases and articulate historic and current criteria for censorship and visibility, as well as the desire for censorship. Examining the visibility and invisibility of art and craft in a manner that can make explicit our intersubjective understandings is worthwhile. It is in dialogue, in finding connections in the middle ground of our experiences as human beings—in Lippard’s notion of a common anotherness—that we can truly make visible, discover understanding, and legitimate the diversity of art, craft, and design.

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Censored by Omission:  
IMAGERY THAT IS EXCLUDED FROM THE  
ART EDUCATION CLASSROOM  

PAMELA TARLOW-CALDER  

There exists a wealth of imagery that is censored by  
means of exclusion from general art curricula. This imagery is  
often highly relevant to students and should therefore be  
addressed and examined critically in art education at all levels.  
In what follows, the practice of censorship by exclusion in  
relation to imagery available for classroom critique will be  
discussed; a critical-reflective approach to art criticism inquiry  
in light of prevalent social and interpersonal concerns will be  
advocate, and an example from classroom practice will be  
investigated.

Censorship and Imagery  

Censorship is a form of control which is exercised through  
expurgation—the removal of matter thought to be  
objectionable, seditious or offensive on grounds of obscenity,  
immorality, or as some other form of threat. Censorship of art  
is a process of restriction of the making and exhibiting of  
artwork. Reasons for censorship are economic, social, political,  
moral or aesthetic. State and church officials are commonly  
empowered to censor, but citizens or other groups,  
individuals, or society as a whole can also act as censors  
(Clapp, 1972). Matter can be suppressed in whole or in part—  
from books, images, plays, films, lectures, or other forms of  
display. Censorship can be practiced through acts of willful or  
inadvertent exclusion: a shutting out or disembarkment, an omission  
or neglect.

The exclusion from general art curricula of a wide range  
of visual imagery including controversial or disturbing imagery,  
but also including the artwork of those outside the artworld  
such as women past and present, is an insidious and effective  
form of censorship. This form of censorship is exercised both  
explicitly and implicitly within many educational institutions,  
including public schools. Imagery that can be characterized as  
controversial, provocative, confrontational, disturbing, or  
unimportant, such as the exploration of violence, sexism,  
racism, sexuality, women's equality, death, disease and war  
and peace issues are not commonplace classroom  
considerations. Personal reaction to images alluding to these  
topics is varied—we may avoid or ignore them, overtly censor  
them, be fascinated, saddened, alarmed, threatened, disgusted,  
frightened, uncaring or desensitized. Regardless of our personal  
reactions, these images often contain powerful messages—  
explicit or hidden—that serve to influence and help to construct  
our personal and societal value systems. In order for students  
to explore the complex ways in which these images operate
banned artworks—such as Jana Sterbak’s “Flesh Dress,” Robert Mapplethorpe’s photographs from the X and Z portfolios, Andreas Serrano’s “Piss Christ,” and the play “If Men Had Periods” by senior secondary student Kathryn Lanteigne; images of social protest—such as political posters by Käthe Kollwitz and New York’s Guerrilla Girls, public artworks by Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer, banners, performance art, body art and graffiti; art forms by artists from many cultures—for example, images of South Africa as seen by South African artists.

2. Pervasive Imagery: These are visual forms that are prevalent in popular culture. These may include images from popular magazines or comic books, newspapers, print advertisements, billboards, graffiti, record and compact disc covers, calendars, postcards, posters, body-piercing and pornographic imagery. They may also include moving imagery, as experienced in popular films, television movies, situation comedies, cartoons, video arcade games, and music videos. Specific examples of pervasive imagery available for classroom discussion may include: a “Missing” poster of a forty-three year old woman; an advertisement for nylon stockings displaying a woman’s legs with the caption “Panty-hose for Men;” the image of the Marlboro Man; movie stills from the “Friday the 13th” series; a magazine cover depicting the actor Demi Moore, nude and in her eighth month of pregnancy; a music video about a teen incest survivor who kills her father.

3. Visible Imagery: These are visual forms that are readily accessible and often utilized in the classroom. These may include reproductions of fine art exemplars, artworks collected and exhibited in the classroom by teachers or students; artifacts viewed in local museums and galleries, built environment elements, art history and other textbook illustrations, and student work. These images are typically employed as motivators for studio production, or use in art
criticism or art history activities. Some of the themes suggested in the invisible and pervasive image groups are also implied in many works by well-known artists, and may be found in reproductions or in traditional or contemporary art history texts, and could thus be considered "visible" within the classroom context. These may include: Michelangelo's David, Titian's Venus of Urbino, Edouard Manet's Olympia, Gustav Klimt's Salome/Judith I, Ivan Albright's Into The World There Came A Soul Called Ida, William De Kooning's Woman VI, Mary Cassatt's paintings, and Marisol's sculptures.

4. Possible Imagery: These are visual forms that may be created by students in response to critical investigations relating to an expanded range of imagery and concerning other artists' means of representation. These images would function as alternatives to what Efland (1976) termed the "school art style." Nadaner describes school art images created by students as having an "excessive preoccupation with materials, holiday art and an aesthetic view restricted to Nineteenth Century European painting and expressionism. Products... are typically materialistic [and] conventional" (p. 10). Possible imagery, free from conventions and stereotypes, has the potential to be created once students have examined and understood processes of representation through critical methods.

The willful or unintentional exclusion of invisible and pervasive imagery in schools attests to a need for expanded concepts regarding artmaking and artists' concerns in the art education classroom. The introduction of pervasive and invisible imagery would make possible the examination of the complexities of meanings, beliefs, and values associated with the production and use of various visual forms in our society. In our image-saturated society, it would be valuable for students to understand that all visual forms are not simply representations of culture, as Garber (1989) points out, but rather they are "signifying practices which produce meanings and construct images of the world that affect particular ideological representations of the world" (p. 25).

Guiding response to imagery that has been excluded from art curricula because it may be considered disturbing, sensitive, threatening or confrontational is a challenge for any art educator. The difficulties inherent in meeting this challenge can be alleviated through a critical-reflective approach to art criticism inquiry.

Critical reflection and the image world

A fundamental assumption of critical-reflection is that human life can and should be improved. Critical reflection is a tool for critical understanding of fundamental interests, values, assumptions and implications for human and social action (Aoki, 1978). This understanding emerges through a progressive clarification of issues, ideas and values suggested by the subject—in this case, the image under investigation. The process combines reflection and action. The underlying assumptions, ideologies, values, motivations, and perspectives that the viewer derives from interpretations of the image are explored and reflected upon, and implications for social action are suggested. Critical reflective inquiry is socially reconstructionist— it is inquiry that challenges and offers alternatives to traditionally understood frameworks and processes. Socially-reconstructionist curricula offer the possibility for students to openly attend to, take action against, and effect change regarding sexism, violence and inequity on a local and global level (Zimmerman, 1990b).

Prakash and Shaman (1989) point to a "natural tendency to avoid the discomfort of reflecting upon the ugliness of our own violent culture" (p. 21). Hence, there is a scarcity of available art curricula that are responsive to sensitive issues such as sexism, inequity, racism, and social violence. Images
that explore these issues by mirroring, confronting, or referring to social concerns should not be censored by art educators. It is the role of educators to help learners to become aware of the “ugliness” as well as the beauty within our cultures. Through understanding, there is hope that potential solutions for the betterment of society will be generated. The study of art work that depicts the anxiety, anger, fear, and sorrow that many may feel from the threat of realities such as violence towards and oppression of women and children, is a step towards understanding and action.

Social violence and oppression are issues that are eminently relevant to the everyday experiences of most school children. Children directly witness and often participate in violent acts. Schoolyard fights, harassment and classroom misbehavior are prevalent in the school environment. At home, children may experience family violence, in the roles of witness, victim, and/or perpetrator. As well, children are constantly confronted vicariously with images referring to these kinds of issues in the mass media. Duncum (1989) describes the situation of many children in western societies: “They are frequently threatened with deprivation and physical punishment, and all children witness much televised violence, both fictional and real. So common on television — our major communications system — that it might appear that society encourages violence” (p. 252).

Television and other contemporary mass-media forms are senders of imagery that is diverse and conveys conflicting messages and ideas. These powerful images serve to shape our emotions, beliefs, and attitudes about how we perceive ourselves and others. Blandy and Congdon (1990) explored the social and educational ramifications of this perspective with regard to gender imagery that could be considered pornographic. The messages received from these images teach that women are generally passive, contented victims who enjoy domination, and are identified by their relationships with men. Manifestation of power for men is depicted through images of violence, subordination, and trivialization of women. The authors advocate a critical approach to the study of imagery that concerns issues related to pornography; such issues may be analyzed historically, phenomenologically, and cross-culturally. Blandy and Congdon declare: “Through such analysis, we will come to understand our own values, attitudes and beliefs as compared and contrasted with the understanding of others. The result may be that individuals may change their behavior in accordance with their new understandings” (p. 14).

Given the power of images in contemporary society, the art classroom could become a significant locus of social reconstruction. In the classroom, students can explore and discuss resistance to violence and oppression, and can become aware of the ways in which contemporary mass-media images operate within their cultures, thereby gaining greater control over the ways in which they are either directly or indirectly influenced by the images. Art educators can nurture this awareness through critical-reflective dialogue and analysis in regards to imagery.

A critical-reflective approach to inquiry hinges on the art educator’s ability to include, rather than exclude, controversial and potentially disturbing imagery from the “invisible” and “pervasive” realms of the image world. In order to analyze messages conveyed and garnered from such images, it is valuable to study the images and their creators from within the contexts of their own time, experience, and culture. Simultaneously, the observer/respondent must also understand any response as placed within the framework of one’s own cultural consciousness. It is through becoming aware of multiple contexts, including personal contexts, that an image
can be analyzed in terms of the ways in which it remains influential.

In contrast to a critical-reflective approach to inquiry, many strategies for art criticism in the art education classroom have focused primarily upon neutral formalist elements within the image (Barrett, 1990; Nadaner, 1984). Strategies of this nature make little attempt to place expressive meaning within the larger realms of social, cultural, historical, political, and personal contexts. As Chapman (1978) states, "the analysis of an image is not simply a matter of decoding symbols and noting the observable properties of things" (p. 64). Though meaning and process are integrally related, deriving meaning through a concentration upon the external, literal and observable elements of an image may be insufficient and inappropriate for examination of the invisible and pervasive imagery addressed in this paper. A positivistic approach to art criticism, which is restricted to the discussion of formal relationships in the work, tends to depersonalize and de-emphasize the content of the work and its socially constructed meaning (Nadaner, 1984).

Critical reflection and controversy: A teenager’s and teacher’s experience

Recently, in an art education class, a small group of teenage art students were given an assignment to use readily accessible magazine images and newspaper clippings in combination with other materials to create collages concerning personally and socially relevant issues. In their collages, students dealt with a variety of themes relating to environmental concerns, television violence, feelings of personal alienation, war and peace issues, and gender representation in the mass media.

Emily [not her real name], a 15 year old student, made a collage entitled “Pornography or Art” which reflected some concerns and questions she had regarding the pervasive depiction of female sexuality encountered in advertisements in the magazines she examined. Emily wrapped and taped the collage surface with paper, alluding to the proverbial “brown paper wrapper” in which much pornography is circulated. On that surface, she glued several photographic images found in advertisements, of women in various states of undress and nudity. The images depict thin, Caucasian women in prone positions with faces obscured or averted, or show only women’s torsos with bare or semi-bare breasts. Over the surfaces of those images she glued individual “ransom note” style letters spelling out the words “PORNOGRAPHY OR ART.” Hand-written, on an adhesive address label, is the question “Warning: Adults Only?”.

As Emily worked, she spoke with her instructor and classmates about the images used in the collage, and together they discussed the following questions: Who is/are the maker/s of these advertisements? What products, if any, are these images supposed to be selling? Why are these depictions of women associated with those particular products? How do you feel when you look at these images? Why have the women been posed in these specific ways? What elements are emphasized in the images? How and why are they emphasized? What might the facial expressions, physical gestures, and placement within the space of the advertisement tell us about the women portrayed, about the photographer, and about the designer/s of the advertisement? Have you seen these advertisements before? What questions, if any, did you ask yourself about them? What more would you like to find out about the images? Do the images evoke a sense of responsibility? If so, what kind of action can you imagine taking? Have you created artwork in the past that reminds you of this image? How has the incorporation of these images in Emily’s collage
changed your view of the images? Are the images in the advertisements/collage pornographic? Are they artistic? Why or why not? Who do you think is the intended audience for the advertisements? For the collage? How do you think different viewers may respond to the advertisements? How might they respond to Emily's collage? What would you tell your family, friends, teachers, strangers about the original advertisements? What would you tell them about the collage?

All of the student collages were displayed together on the wall of a corridor in the school. Within a few hours of their display, the art instructor was approached by an administrator of the school who requested that Emily's collage be removed from display. The administrator offered the following reasons for the request: though several of the other student collages dealt visually with sensitive and potentially disturbing themes, Emily's collage incorporated imagery that graphically and overtly depicted sexual issues, and thus administration staff members were concerned that the nature of the imagery may offend other teachers and visiting parents; the collage imagery and topic were not appropriate for younger students to view and discuss without directed guidance; and that dealing with the topic of pornography through the use of imagery that could be considered "obscene" was inappropriate for classroom investigation within an art education environment. The instructor was then asked to have the student submit a statement regarding the reasons for the making of the collage. Though Emily felt strongly that her collage spoke very clearly for itself, she consented to write a brief statement:

The main reason why I chose to do a piece on pornography is because, to me, some photographs are considered art, then you compare it to another photograph which looks identical, and that's considered pornography. I don't get it. In art, you see pictures of the human body nude all of the time, the human body is considered art. In pornography and some advertisements, you see pictures of nude bodies of women, but all they are are sex objects. Just by making this piece, I have had so many comments about it. For example, "How can you do something like that? You're too young to understand!", "That's great, if people don't accept it, that means they're afraid of life!", etc. But it's true pornography does clash with art and we should be mature enough to accept it, and somehow learn that it is a part of society, and try to do something about it to change it. Anyone can see these types of photographs in any fashion magazine. That's not a problem. So why should my work be?

Emily's collage was removed from display in the school corridor — essentially censored by forceful and deliberate exclusion. Though difficult, confusing, and sometimes painful for Emily, other students in the class, the instructor and administrative staff, this act of censorship eventually served to initiate a constructive dialogue between those parties. In this dialogue, issues such as censorship and freedom of speech, pornography, sexuality and gender representation were openly addressed and discussed. The censorship of her work also provoked Emily to action that she may not have otherwise taken — she began searching for an alternative space beyond the confines of the school to display the collage, as she feels it is the most meaningful artwork she has created in school to date, and that it is important for people of diverse ages and backgrounds to view her collage and start thinking about the issue of pornography and its relation to images of women in advertisements and in art.

As is evident from Emily's story, student response to imagery that is either completely excluded or not commonly
introduced in the classroom can lead to studio work that is personally and socially relevant, in contrast to conventional studio products often produced in art education classrooms. According to Smith (1984), “Exploring events and experiences through visual models helps children to master reality; in the process they often create personal inventions that concentrate and enlarge experience” (p.154). The inclusion of imagery that may be considered disturbing, threatening or controversial in the curriculum provides students and teachers with alternative visual models. A critical-reflective approach to inquiry regarding those visual models provides students with a legitimate forum for a discourse that they are already engaged in, but is excluded from the art classroom. Critical reflection provides teachers with the opportunity to enter into that discourse and to offer guidance and support where it is urgently needed. By critically addressing invisible and pervasive imagery, the gendered nature of issues such as morality, ethics, socio-cultural conditions, socialization processes, and ways of knowing can be discussed in the classroom. That dialogic experience may then become “possible” imagery as it translates to narrative within students’ own artwork.

Through a critical-reflective approach to inquiry, students and teachers will be encouraged to relate diverse visual forms to challenging issues, concerns and understandings that are of profound significance to their own life experiences.

REFERENCES


REVIEWS and RESPONSES


Tom Anderson

His writing style is serpentine and torturous, almost as though he apprenticed at the knee of one of those magnificently opaque translators of German philosophy. And that’s too bad, because what he has to say is important, but not many readers will exert the effort it takes to get through this little book. C.A. Bowers, in *Elements of a Post-Liberal Theory of Education*, eventually posits a vision of post-liberal bioregionalist general education. But first he defines liberalism through describing and analyzing theoretical positions held by four great thinkers he picks as representing significant aspects of the liberal tradition: John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Carl Rogers, and B.F. Skinner. The astute reader will recognize that Bowers includes both a Marxist (Freire) and a traditional conservative (Skinner) within the framework of the liberalism, arguing that they share in the grounding assumptions of the liberal tradition as it evolved out of the Enlightenment. Bowers then discusses...
REVIEWS and RESPONSES


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pre-modern/pre-liberal indigenous traditional social constructs as well as the post-liberal constructs of Foucault and others. Finally, he applies this to what he feels is valuable in the liberal tradition to construct his vision of post-liberal education. What he comes up with is education directed toward the restoration of community. One hundred fifty-seven pages are devoted to this. As useful and informative as this is, it seems that the real heart of this book—what Bowers really cares about—is the fifteen page "Afterword", an argument for bioregionalist education. The whole of this dense little book leading to the establishment community-based education, is simply a foundation for the "Afterword".

Bowers sets the table, initially, by synthesizing the now well-known theories of Foucault and others, that culture, and particularly language, set the horizons of one's understanding. They do this by facilitating certain visions, perspectives, and approaches and limiting or eliminating others through providing selective screens or interpretive frame-works that influence what we pay attention to and what we ignore. This exposes, somewhat, the liberal conception of freedom of choice as a reification in stressing that the possible field of action is limited by traditional understandings or assumptions embedded in patterns of culture.

The four primary assumptions Bowers sees as grounding the great liberal tradition are progress, rationality, individualism, and emancipation. In the liberal conception, progress is inevitable and good. History is progressive. In this context the role of education is to recognize and facilitate progress, both social and technological. Second, social and philosophical authority are centered in the individual rather than in the group. The individual's power to rationalize and to make individual choices based on rationalization replaces an earlier collective wisdom. Thus, finally, it follows that a primary purpose of education in the liberal view is emancipation from traditional social constrictions through heightened individual consciousness. The "enlightened" individual's implied task is to continue to facilitate the escalator of progress. Also implied within this liberal vision is the idea of tradition, conservative in its essence, as undesirable, something to be overcome, something standing in the way of progress.

Conversely, Bowers argues that traditional conservatism of the ancient sort pre-existing the current liberal tradition offers valuable understandings for a post-liberal education. He believes that liberalism, in its emphasis on emancipatory progress through individual rationality, denies or ignores the collective wisdom inherent in group norms, social imbeddedness and communal authority. Bowers claims that it is neither possible nor desirable to "emancipate" oneself from one's culture. Again drawing on Foucault and other post-modern philosophers, Bowers de-centers the individual, and individual choice, in explaining that one's field of action is limited by culturally agreed upon discourse—language—which is the medium of societal cohesion and reinforcement. Thus he also claims that language must also be the means for individual negotiation within culture. So cultural imbeddedness not only limits the field of action, but facilitates individual manipulations within that context. In short, Bowers argues, we must accept society's collective legitimacy rather than individual rational decisions as the source of cultural authority. To do otherwise leads to an undesirable absolute relativity of values, and to anarchy and social disorder.

Bowers is not, however, in favor of abandoning liberal ideals en toto, but of integrating the most useful liberal conceptions with the most promising traditional conceptions into a post-liberal schema. He suggests that innovation residing in the individual as well as collective wisdom are both critical for a cohesive post-modern society. A collective grounding which allows for individual negotiation, along with the
development of communicative competence is the basis of Bowers’ concept of a post-liberal education.

Bowers’ goal for post-liberal education is the restoration of a now fragmented community. Community, as he sees it, has the important element of collective memory. It retells stories, both positive and painful, carrying forward a context in which people may see themselves and frame their individual and collective beliefs, goals, and ideals for the common good. Thus education becomes content-based as opposed to being grounded in generic strategies and technologies. It becomes a vehicle for conscious socialization communicating both what is and natural attitudes toward what is. Thus it demands instruction that critically examines cultural/belief paradigms, going beyond the taken-for-granted, and the liberal/positivist tendency of presenting information as fact or truth.

It becomes apparent, in the “Afterword” that the common good Bowers has in mind as the outcome of post-liberal education turns on an axis of radical bioregionalism. It turns out that the traditional values Bowers wants to see returned to the center are the ancients’ attunement to place, to the interdependence of species, and to the sacred sense of the earth which liberal belief and modern technology relegated to the past and to superstition. Bowers sees the degradation of the environment as the primary crisis of our times and thus the primary challenge of contemporary education. Attunement to place, which Bowers sees as a primary strategy in addressing this crisis requires a reassertion of oral and practical education equal to the current emphasis on literacy. Literacy, according to Bowers, encourages the attainment of secondary knowledge over engaging in immediate experience. In short, it is Bowers’ position that geographic, biological, and cultural rhythms must be actually experienced to be truly understood.

That is a challenging new paradigm, and one worthy of serious attention. My primary regret is that its presentation is not tuned to the cultural rhythms of most members of the academic reading public. After forced reading and forced discussions one of my doctoral students declared that she had finally found what she could call an affiliation, and declared herself a post-liberal bioregionalist. A breakthrough! But this student, and my other masters and doctoral students all wanted to quit reading long before the end, and would have done so without my threats and coercion. In fact I couldn’t help drawing a parallel to poor Patricia Hearst and the Symbionese Liberation Army. That is, I tortured these students enough so that they came around to the torturer’s position and thanked him for it. Which, ultimately, is to say that this book could use severe editing. Like the Communist Manifesto, if it were short and sweet, it could be a great book.

Susan Washam Witten

The title intrigues; the cover art compels (a woman artist!). In the introduction Bersson proposes a “Breadth of thinking and depth of looking” (p. vi) approach developed both chronologically and thematically. This seductive entry into Worlds of Art promises to break new ground. Unfortunately, appearances can be deceiving; as an introduction “to the diverse worlds of art that exist across artistic categories, cultures, and historical periods” (p. vi) it greatly disappoints. “Worlds of Western Fine Art” is a more appropriate title for this art appreciation text.

Bersson indeed covers a breadth of artists, art works, and socio-cultural information if the world of art is defined by Western-European fine art. As promised, interspersed throughout the text are in-depth analyses of specific works of art which are written by a wide range of contributors that include critics, art historians, artists, philosophers, art educators, designers, and philosophers. Bersson attempts to modify the Western-European emphasis by selecting women and minority artists and writers for these “appreciation” pieces. However, the inclusion of these frequently ignored artists would be more palatable if they were a main ingredient in the text rather than just a seasoning.

As a traditional art appreciation text, Worlds of Art has some merit. The integration of fine and popular arts, the inclusion of socio-cultural context, and the introduction of women and minority artists combine with Bersson’s breadth and depth approach to create a text attempting to touch contemporary society and make art accessible.

This clearly written and easily read text begins by providing the reader with a context for thinking about art, formalism, and contextualism, and offers models throughout for writing about art. Bersson moves into the visual world of the (western) reader through fashion, photography, film, album covers, posters, functional design, architecture, illustration, and advertising. As he describes both the formal and contextual aspects of these objects and images, he introduces fine art and creates connections between the worlds of the “ordinary...and extraordinary” (p. v). As the book progresses, increased emphasis is placed on fine art and less on the art of popular culture. By Chapter 8 Bersson has weaned the reader from the “ordinary” and returns to the Renaissance and immersion into the study of the Western-European tradition of painting and sculpture, “extraordinary” art. He concludes the text with a brief foray into the expanding boundaries of art and the growing influence of art by individuals and groups from outside the Western-European tradition. However the acknowledgment that there are (and always have been) diverse concepts of “art” seems shallow when balanced with the dearth of such examples in preceding chapters. The text reinforces the traditional and familiar concept that Western-European fine art is the standard by which all art objects must be compared.

The accompanying instructor’s manual does little to expand this traditional view of art. However, it provides the novice instructor with a clear and easy path through key points, lecture topics, teaching methods, exam questions, and additional resources relevant to the content of the book.
Bersson is on the mark. Enhancing the traditional survey approach by focusing on specific works of art and providing socio-cultural contexts makes the world of art more accessible to the reader. This fresh approach provides a natural structure for acknowledging the diversity of the art world. However, Bersson short-changes the reader; his fresh approach turns stale as he reverts to tradition. Worlds of Art is not global, democratic, or multicultural in either content or intent. Bersson has created a world of art as he sees it: narrowly defined.

Bersson Responds

Citing the mandate of The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education “to encourage debate and discussion,” Michael Emme, the JSTAE Editor, invited me to respond to the review of my book, Worlds of Art, in the current edition. For this opportunity, I thank him and hope that what follows will raise issues of general importance for Social Theory Caucus members.

Let me begin with a response to the reviewer’s specific criticisms and then build from those to general issues that concern us all. Put simply Worlds of Art made some promising steps in the correct direction but then committed certain inexcusable ideological crimes. Admitting that Worlds of Art is a “fresh approach,” the reviewer praises the book for its “attempts to modify the Western European emphasis by selecting women and minority artists and writers for [many of the book’s] thirty-seven ‘appreciation’ pieces” that focus on an artist and/or artwork in depth. The writer thereafter lauds the book’s “breadth and depth approach,” emphasis upon “popular culture,” “integration of fine and popular arts, the inclusion of socio-cultural context, and the introduction of women and minority artists....”

However, all of the aforementioned positive features are largely negated for the reviewer when, “As the book progresses, increased emphasis is placed on fine art and less on popular culture.” In spite of the fact that a large number of women artists and artists of color are featured in the fine arts unit, and in spite of the fact that the approach to the western fine arts tradition is critical, contextual, and actively inclusive—what is called the “new art history”—the reviewer judges the final unit of the book to be oppressively “traditional.” Sweeping charges are then made in the review’s conclusion that “Worlds of Art is not global, democratic, or multicultural in either content or intent.”

While Worlds of Art could go further in the direction of “global” inclusion of fine and popular art from around the world, it has gone quite a distance on the road to cultural democracy and multiculturalism. Previous reviews by Caucus members Robert Saunders and Sally Hagaman in the USSEA Newsletter and Studies in Art Education, and comments by Graeme Chalmers’ in Art Education emphasize that the content of Worlds of Art is far more “democratic,” “multicultural,” and “global” than traditional art appreciation/art history texts. The same holds true for its approach. Compared to the single-perspective “authoritarian” voice that rules the great majority of art appreciation and art history texts, Worlds of Art is radically democratic and multicultural, with the voices of numerous individuals of diverse background, social scientists, art historians, art educators, students—a—bringing multiple perspectives to the art at hand.
Why is the current reviewer's judgment so at odds with those of the previous reviews? The answer is clear: a violent dislike of the western fine art tradition, a distaste so great that it completely reversed the writer's appreciation of the first two-thirds of Worlds of Art. Quite simply, the final third of the book, dealing with the evolution of "fine art" from the Renaissance to the present, soured what had been a "fresh" and potentially "palatable" approach. The experience, writes the reviewer, "turns stale as he [Bersson] reverts to tradition."

Herein lie the major questions for Caucus members, many of whom, like myself, have some ambivalent, contradictory feelings about the western fine arts tradition. What place should the western fine arts—art created for ruling classes and cultural elites—take in a socially progressive, culturally democratic art/education? Is the answer, as the reviewer implies, to deemphasize such art in our classrooms and our texts? By extension, should nonwestern elite (i.e., fine) art created for Persian princes, Turkish sultans, Chinese emperors, or Japanese shoguns be likewise deemphasized? Or are Persian miniatures and Sung Dynasty landscapes somehow ideologically acceptable whereas Raphael portraits and Nevelson abstract sculptures are not? Moving a step further, should all fine art, western and nonwestern, be deemphasized in favor of the popular or oppositional arts of the respective cultures? The answer, I would argue, is not to censor the fine arts, but to treat them critically and contextually, all the while striving for inclusiveness of all the arts, fine, popular, folk, and applied.

By broad Caucus standards, an ideal art appreciation/art history introductory text might include proportionally equal amounts of fine and popular art, art by women and men, and art by people of every race, culture and class. The book might be organized chronologically, thematically, and/or by media. In approach it would be contextually and critically-oriented, and would be governed by non-doctrinaire, socially progressive values. I think both the reviewer and myself would like to see more attempts made in this general direction. Neither of us, I would insist, want to see the "world of art...narrowly defined."


Kristin G. Congdon

I have always wondered why public folklorists and art educators seem to have so little interaction with each other. Individuals from both disciplines study traditional art (folklorists more than art educators) and both groups of professionals present artists and art works to the general public. Yet it is all too rare that they share information and teaching methodologies. Consequently, when I was asked to review the anthology, Public Folklore, for the Journal of Social Theory in Art Education, I was pleased.

Most of the sixteen chapters came about as a result of a series of sessions presented at the 1987 American Folklore
Society meeting in Alburquerque, New Mexico. The editors correctly claim that the essayists reflect on the following questions: “Why and how should folk cultures be represented? Who has the authority to represent them? What are the ideologies that inform such representations” (p.3)? These are excellent questions which are often asked art educators, perhaps utilizing a slightly different language.

One of the most controversial chapters is the second one, written by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. Published previously in a 1988 issue of the *Journal of American Folklore*, the author challenges academic folklorists to effectively train public sector folklorists. She, and several other authors (notably Archie Green and Roger Abrahams), explore the reasons why there is such a split between the academic folklore world and that of the public sector folklorist. An art educator can hardly read this book without thinking about our own tired and continuing dialogue on the gap between theory (the academic domain) and practice (the day to day world of the art teacher). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett admonishes public sector folklorists for not being more active in the intellectual development of their discipline while excusing them somewhat because of their overextended positions. Again, we can hear academic art educators talking to art teachers.

Much of this anthology is for the insider. Those who know the field of folklore will like reading the historical reflections on the leaders, and the better known characters in the field. Archie Green writes about how public folklore got its name. Bess Lomax Hawes cheers the folklorist on while she describes the public sector folklorist’s mission. Roger Abrahams, Robert Cantwell, Robert Baron, and Steve Siporin admirably begin the work of writing history. Siporin highlights major publications and programs with an accompanying bibliographic survey of the field. These chapters all acknowledge the well-established marginalization of the public folklorist within the academic field of folklore, often seen as a marginalized field of study in higher education. While the art educators may not find themselves too interested in these chapters, unfortunately they will probably see some correlations regarding their status.

With the exception of the Kirshenblatt-Gimblett chapter, the most valuable chapters for the art educators fall in the middle section of the anthology titled “Metaphors and Methods of Practice.” It is here where issues of educational methodology, cultural conservation, cultural invasion, cultural presentation, and folklore’s relationship to social work take place. Gerald Davis’ article does a good job of addressing issues of how we have to discover and try new ways of representing diverse cultures. Working as an African American in an African American community, he gives us examples of how this can be done. Other models are presented, such as Hopi filmmaker Victor Masayesva who used animation techniques to represent those aspects of Hopi religious life which are forbidden to the eyes of outsiders. Two of the most enjoyable chapters were those by Susan Roach and Richard Kurin; both authors know how to tell a good story while they educate. Roach utilizes a lot of narrative from folk artist David Allen, as she relates to us how this African American cane carver from rural Louisiana gained visibility and popularity. Economic, social, and technical issues emerge along the way, demanding certain actions or inaction which Roach effectively addresses. Kurin presents the experiences he had while involved in a Soviet-American cultural exchange program with the Smithsonian, during Perestroika. While the Soviets had expected to be given a packaged Disney-like program, the American folklorists were determined to send “community-based artists who have learned in a traditional way and who perform in an authentic nonstylized manner” (p.193). In addition, the Americans insisted on sending not a singular group, but groups which could, in some way, reflect the diversity of American society. Kurin’s chapter beautifully
raises issues similar to the kinds which art educators continually face: How does one teach a particular perspective in a social or educational system that has such different goals? How does one successfully present artistic products out of context? Which cultures and their art should be selected for presentation when time and resources are short? Likewise, the kinds of questions raised by Nicholas Spitzer should be continually entertained by art educators:

Does cultural conservation orient us to a primarily pastoral, bucolic, and uncritical view of culture? Does cultural conservation suggest that we see ethnic groups as somehow always reviving certain accepted cultural traits and bounded not just from mainstream society, but also from other groups? Could cultural conservation suggest restrictions on cultural change that might be beneficial to a social order? (p. 96)

This volume makes good use of photographic portraits, often those of the authors. Since I have never seen Bess Lomax Hawes, and she is such a legend in the field of folklore, I was grateful to have been greeted with her image. The list of contributors is placed at the front of the book instead of the back, giving the reader a flavor of how folklorists think and what they see as important. Sadly, only three of the eighteen authors (including the editors) are women.

Most of the writing is autobiographical which I find refreshing and easy to read. What most Social Theory Caucus members will find somewhat lacking in the anthology is an overt political and social agenda. Although Kirshenblatt-Gimblett asks that public folklore go beyond the idea of celebration to “address the root causes of the marginalization of particular groups and cultural practices” (p. 33), there is not enough of this kind of inquiry, except perhaps in Davis' chapter where he refers to activists and authors like Notzake Shange, Malcolm X and Mao Tse-Tung. Overall, however, this book is careful and conservative. While it mentions social and political experiences, it does not focus on issues of oppression, gentrification of communities, racism, sexism, classism, colonialism, or ageism; and it seems to me it should. The marginalized group most often discussed is the public sector folklorist. As I was thinking about this criticism, I was reminded of a conference I attended a few years ago where public sector folklorists commented on how much more freedom academics have to be overtly political. The academics in attendance, myself included, protested that it was not easy to be radical or politically different at universities. One can pay the price for activism, whatever the context. Curiously, I remember art teachers telling me and other academics, many times now, how they would be fired from their positions if they were to deal with some of the issues which others and I ask them to consider, no matter how much they are convinced of the appropriateness or rightness of such acts. Perhaps this criticism of Public Folklore is as unfair as it would be for me to criticize art teachers who are not more politically active in their classrooms. They, like public sector folklorists, are confined more clearly by their organizational systems and their funding structures.

In summary, I recommend this book for art educators dealing with organization theory/practice issues and those who care about multicultural issues, which should be all of us. In closing, I would like to encourage art educators to seek out the public sector folklorists in their regions in an effort to work more closely with them. I think we have a lot to share with each other, and perhaps we can help each other become more politically and socially engaged in our professions.

One last note about folklorists. When I was doing my doctoral work in the early '80s, a friend asked me if folklorists
did anything besides collect folklore. I replied that they did quite a bit more than that; they studied how the folklore functions in our worlds to help define who we are. But I believe the field of folklore is beginning to take a powerful step in another direction. During the business meeting at the 1992 American Folklore Society Conference, a passionate and emotional discussion took place on whether the Conference should be held, as planned, the following year in Oregon, a state which had proposed a referendum (Proposition 9) which would legally permit discrimination against gays and lesbians. There was a strength of commitment to support homosexuals that I have never witnessed by an academic professional organization before. Members wept over the hatred, gave testimony, and were prepared to sacrifice to do the right thing. Never have I been more proud to be associated with a professional group of people than I was at that moment. Folklorists, like many art educators, are just beginning to see power in their field of study and their organizational groups.

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