

SECTION TWO
EDUCATION, ART AND
CULTURE TODAY

CHAPTER 7

VIRTUE, VICE, AND VISION:
ART EDUCATION TODAY

...our youth should learn to be literate, above all, about those visual documents which explore their social oppression.

—Vincent Lanier, art educator

The prior chapters of this book are quilt squares that needed to be completed before they could be sewn together to form an art educational quilt. Talking about art ed without them is to me like trying to keep warm with quilt squares that are not sewn together. The fabric of this quilt is woven with the warp of critical candor, the weft of artistic integrity, and the weave of historical insight.

The Declaration of Independence if written today would be considered a sexist, religiously bigoted document. Its first sentence reads:

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Modest research reveals that by Men, the authors meant White, landowning, Christian males. Apparently the residents of the United States who found themselves outside these boundaries were (and still are) endowed with death, slavery, and the pursuit of misery. One may argue that such is not what the framers of our freedoms intended, but the historical record bares to the light of today the fact that such has been the endowment of many. In 1776, the year of the Declaration's signing, Abigail Adams wrote a letter to her husband which noted the irony of colonial women's status in light of colonial men's announcement of their right to rebel against governments that denied them voice (in Rossi, 1974). Europeans noted another irony: "If there be an object truly ridiculous in nature, it is an American patriot, signing resolutions of independency with the one hand, and with the

other brandishing a whip over his affrighted slaves," wrote the English radical Thomas Day in 1776 (Schama, 2003).

Is oppression of one demographic group by another always wrong? Many agree that the oppression of felons in the form of imprisonment is not, if we base our observation on the practices of major world cultures. Most also would agree that formal, institutionalized oppression of social groups by a nation's public school system is wrong. Yet the dehumanizing of entire groups occurs daily in our schools. Nothing that happens inside school walls is independent of social context; in fact, the school is driven by this context, healthy or not. The ruling class agenda is wrapped around the public school in a pretty red bow that with a yank becomes a noose. Painful examples of this are found in commonly used art education curricula. Bastian (1975) found that, when asked to draw 'an artist', young children were more likely to draw a male than a female.

Take this quiz: List ten famous White male artists, ten famous White female artists, ten famous African American artists of either gender, ten famous Latino artists of either gender, and ten famous artists from any other minority group of your choice. Was the first list the easiest? How do your other lists compare to it? Did you even finish any of the others? 'Lists of facts' are not value-neutral—they emerge from a culture's invisible prejudices.

Art in the public schools is a frill. This is because our children often do not learn about art in art class. They learn a shallow, cartoon-like imitation of it—color wheels, rendering tricks, and holiday art. If it's November in elementary school, you know what's coming—trace your hand and make a what? If it's February, fold red paper in half and cut out a what? These mindless activities are called art class. If math or reading teachers taught this way, parents and society would revolt. Rarely is art history included in any serious way in public schools, regardless of grade level. If it is, it seldom reaches beyond Monet. Picasso is too controversial for many art programs. And of course in many public schools, women artists and artists of color do not exist.

Few art teachers have the backgrounds to transcend this. Principals often use art time to drill for standardized tests. If children received real art educations in grades K-12, art majors would begin their freshman studies at what are now senior or MFA levels. More importantly, the majority who do not major in art would form a visually sophisticated society that supports, even heralds, its artists. But having grown up without these rich conditions, we are oblivious to our staggering loss. If we understand it, we might be furious. The term art education has come to mean something comical. In many university art departments, art education majors are referred to as the cut-n-paste crowd. I suggest a philosophy so different from this that the college major cannot fairly

be called art education, given that term's baggage. Grounded in the connections of art and life, rooted in community involvement, and steeped in ethics, I suggest a major modeled at Texas Tech and other universities, a major called visual studies.

Visual studies faculty expect their students' artistic output to be on a par with that of studio majors. These students become competent teachers by working in the public schools semester after semester. They deliberately are placed in impoverished schools. They also teach in alternative sites such as facilities for incarcerated youth to undermine stereotypes. They are conversant about art made by people of varied cultures, ethnicities, genders and socio-economic backgrounds. They learn that art is personal and political, that being ethical is more important than being talented, and that teachers and artists really can change the world.

The mainstream/hiddenstream model that describes the history of Western art is usefully applied to the history of art education (Collins and Sandell, 1984). The art educational mainstream is characterized by male achievement, especially at the national level. Men have held the offices, presented the papers, published the articles, written the books, and received the awards. Hiddenstream accomplishments occur more commonly at the local and regional level, beginning with classroom teaching itself. Often undocumented, these accomplishments are typically anonymous beyond a local area. Chapman (1978) concludes that hiddenstream contributions tend to come from women, who are trained to be modest, humble, and dedicated to the needs of others. Significantly, public school subjects with feminine identifications such as home economics and art are expected to offer skill training in hiddenstream art forms. Art teachers who buy into distinctions between art and craft perform to these expectations and thereby perpetuate the distinctions. Samuel Hope (1990), Executive Director of the National Office for Arts Accreditation in Higher Education, identifies some heroes of the hiddenstream:

Outstanding [arts education] programs have been created primarily by outstanding individuals who have devoted their careers to teaching one of the arts disciplines. We submit that these teachers are the unsung heroes of American's cultural advance, and we believe that they deserve far more respect and philosophical support than they have received from the arts community as a whole.

The tradition of the male artist is contradicted within our present, visually illiterate society, which assigns femininity to artistic pursuits. Today's male who chooses art study may overnight find himself recast as effeminate in societal and even familial perceptions. The female who chooses the same path may not raise eyebrows, but she will have a more difficult time than the male in being taken as something other

than a dilettante. Art history is a favored degree of the ingénue. One response, found in contemporary feminist art, is to include images that assault stereotypes of women as passive, powerless, and promiscuous. New forms, such as body art and vaginal imagery, place the images of pornography into a new and uneasy context. Collins and Sandell (1984) offer a personal anecdote illustrating how difficult it can be to find a book on women artists to be given to a child as a gift. The search led to Lillian Freedgood's *Great Artists of America*, which included one woman, Mary Cassatt. Cassatt's chapter was titled "The Old Maid," and concluded with the observation, "Mary Cassatt may possibly have 'failed as a woman, but she triumphed as an artist.'" Today children's books about women artists are becoming more common.

Women's studies, revised art histories, and other forms of feminist education are appearing in college course catalogs. Yet few equivalent developments are occurring in art education training programs at the university level. Only when this is changed will art education in public school classrooms change. The formation of the National Art Education Association's Women's Caucus is an important development, but it is not enough. Collins and Sandell (1984) comment:

If increases in the exhibition of women's art and reductions of masculine bias in art criticism and history promise to provide more equitable gender coverage, we must still deal with the educational lag which finds art teachers ... still using outdated [curricula]...

Female role models in art at the local level are often disparaged and devalued by art teachers who orient to East and West coast contemporary mainstream art. Feminine identified art activities such as quilt making receive little if any attention, and the bulletin board decorations of female classroom teaches are derided by the art teachers trying to increase their students' aesthetic awareness.

An identical statement could be made concerning the status of the art of ethnic and racial minorities in art education and a visitor to any school notes the absence of art that challenges dominant religious views or sexual conventions.

In 1974 the women's movement in art education took a step forward with the formation of the Women's Caucus of the National Art Education Association. The mission statement of the Caucus states, "The National Art Education Association's Womens' Caucus exists to eradicate sexual discrimination in all areas of art education and to support women art educators in their professional endeavors." The Women's Caucus began holding its own conference sessions in 1976. In this forum, presentations have been given on issues of status, stereotypes in art, women's history, political and legal issues, women in administration, alternative futures, research on male and female differences in art education, women art-

ists and women art educators past and present, and a host of other topics too numerous to mention. The Caucus encourages professional journals to publish issues and articles on nonsexist art education. It gives annual awards to individuals who have performed outstanding service to the art education field. The Caucus has contributed substantively to improving the status of women in art education.

The early 1980s marked the reappearance of content in the art curriculum in the form of discipline-based art education (DBAE). DBAE was a step in the right direction, but only a step. Its flaws are becoming common knowledge, and cutting edge art educators are moving to social theory (sometimes errantly labeled issues-based art ed), which I will discuss in some depth in this chapter. Discipline-based models have been adopted by many states, which offers them a great deal of staying power, even as the field moves away from it.

Art education is well served by moving emphasis from art making to a balance of viewing and making. Inclusion of the art of world cultures is met more effectively with an art curriculum that emphasizes both than with one that emphasizes only one.

The means to achieve informed viewing in an egalitarian sense in American schools today is to devise curricula that include the visual art products of all groups that comprise our public school population—an art ‘affirmative action’ program. Affirmative action programs—if defined as giving every citizen equal access to opportunity, if subject to the ideal that the most qualified applicant wins—are desirable in any arena, certainly in public school art history study. May the strongest art of every ethnic group be studied. Any student of multiculturalism knows that every world culture has created its share of worthy art. I offer a tripartite Deweyan model of art education as the model for the twenty-first century. This model—rooted in social theory—focuses on the child, the subject, and society.

History makes clear that encounters of diverse cultures with each other happen continuously. Some such encounters result in the oppression of one culture over the other, the results of which range from the extinction of the oppressed culture to the eventual hybridizing of the two cultures to form a new third culture. Some encounters result in the comparatively peaceful hybridization of the two cultures to create a new culture without the period of domination. In any case, cultural encounters commonly result in hybridization. The degree of hybridization is determined by the degree of interaction between the cultures. The question is not whether the blurring of old cultures into new is good or bad; since hybridizing is inevitable, the question is how peacefully it can be accomplished. A critical part of the machinery of power, the machinery that determines how peaceful this transition will be, is the school. The first goal of

multicultural education should be the peaceful facilitation of this hybridization. Art education when properly taught is a key player on this stage, since cultural values are foregrounded in a well-taught art education program.

Tomhave (1992) defines six levels through which multicultural art education is approached. One is called *acculturation/assimilation*. The original educational policymakers in the United States embraced this approach, seeking to ‘perpetuate democracy’ by giving White male immigrants equal access to education through such means as teaching them English and otherwise acculturating them to Anglo-Saxon values. Adherents of this dominance-based approach can achieve their goal so long as the subordinated group is kept from political power. More commonly, of course, the results, while insidious, are less extreme. Support for these latter results is found in art education literature in the Right-leaning preachments of Ralph Smith (cf. 1986, 1992a, 1992b). The undue influence of Smith on the art education field is caused partly the fact that few art educators have articulated radical, or even liberal, theories of aesthetic education. Culture, like nature, abhors a vacuum, so Smith’s views have been accorded stature that exceeds their merit. The irony is that art educators purport to teach their students of the art world, one of the most liberal corners of culture. The failure of art education to bridge this ideological gap explains much of its failure to develop respect for art (or for itself as a social entity) in American culture. Zimmerman’s (1990) reference to the “global age” of the late twentieth century underscores the outdated nature of the assimilation/acculturation model of multicultural education. Anderson (1979) calls for a move away from a mono-national to a multinational context; from a mono-cultural to a multicultural context; and—the most radical proposal of the three—from a school-bound to a community-involved context. Smith suggests that the art object is imbued with magical qualities which enable it to generate an “aesthetic experience,” as opposed to boring, everyday “experience.” Art that pursues a mission other than the conveyance of this epiphany risks degenerating into “mere politics.” Smith intones:

Marxism, feminism, and multiculturalism would seem to be fueled largely by political agendas. It is quite clear that a politicized art education will be an art education that differs sharply from the ways it has been conceived since mid-century. And there is a question whether it will really be art education.

The fact that art education at mid-century was a disaster—the frill to beat all frills—has escaped Smith. The postmodern demand on the art world is that it produce works that satisfy society’s political as well as aesthetic needs. Now is the time to abandon that pointless separation between the aesthetic and the political.

Many of today's adults are the victims of the Lowenfeld era. No major artists of the second half of the century acknowledge that public school art education had any influence on them. The take-no-prisoners schlock that constitutes today's mass taste is another testament that today's adults didn't learn much about art when they were children. In fact the mid-century art education of which Smith is so fond is responsible for Four Great Art Myths that created the visually illiterate society we are burdened with today:

Myth I—The ability to draw realistically cannot be learned because...

Myth II—this ability is reserved by the muses for a select few to whom it is given at birth; therefore....

Myth III—the measure of an art image's esthetic quality is how closely the image approximates a photograph. None of this matters, however, because...

Myth IV—art is not important.

Smith's fears that "political agendas" will stain the pristine whiteness of art education. So much for art 'sullied' by *barrio* and ghetto experience. So much for the burgeoning body of feminist art. So much for art 'tainted' with Third World concerns. So much for marginal art—in short, so much for postmodern work, part and parcel, that does not conform to the exhausted doxology of White Male Modernism. Even within the modern tradition, "political agendas" permeate the artistic image (Canaday, 1959). Perhaps Smith will guide us as we separate and discard the politically biting work of Botticelli, Boucher, Goya, Daumier, David, Delacroix, Chardin, Millet, Hogarth, Manet, Toulouse-Lautrec, Rivera, and Picasso from their 'pure' work.

In 1992 Efland, critiquing Smith, cited Huyssen's (1990) charge to art educators to include the social basis of art production. Eleven years later his argument took on an enormously more poignant layer of meaning:

But how would this critical discourse proceed in today's art programs if the central issue was aesthetic experience as the valued end, while all social issues were made peripheral? One might imagine a hypothetical discussion of the World Trade Center as architecture, limited to such matters as the success or failure of its fenestration pattern, not seeing that these towers also function socially as monuments to the corporation and the international market....

Social issues indeed. But Efland, while aiming at the right target, sends the wrong arrow. The problem with Smith's notion lies deeper. It concerns *who* anoints given works with 'exemplary' status, *why* they do it, and *how* they keep everyone else from getting in on the action. A full answering of these questions requires an unblinking examination of extant

power structures, a deconstructive analysis of capitalist machinery and its control of the media, and an exposure of the elitism behind art production systems—surely sufficient bone for students to sharpen their critical teeth. In 1929, Dewey issued an unusually biting criticism of the very kind of 'child-centered' model Lowenfeld would later propose for art education:

There is a present tendency in so-called advanced schools of educational thought to say, in effect, let us surround pupils with certain materials, tools, appliances, etc. and let pupils respond to these things according to their own desires. Above all let us not suggest any end or plan to students: let us not suggest to them what they shall do, for that is an unwarranted trespass upon their sacred intellectual individuality. Such a method is really stupid. For it attempts the impossible, which is always stupid, and it misconceives the conditions of independent thinking.

Another level of Tomhave's (1992) model of multicultural education, *cultural understanding*, attempts to strike a compromise between preserving the voices of all contributing cultures as it seeks a consensus that meets the needs of the larger society that is the sum of these cultures. Some suggest that this approach is the most practical.

A third level of multicultural education is called *bicultural education*. An example of this is the emerging political power of Latinos in the Anglo-dominated Southwestern US. The two cultures vie for power over educational policy. The emergent culture seeks 'equal time', arguing that this will foster positive self-images among its students. Much of the research done on multicultural education is done in bicultural settings. This approach inevitably results in exposure of the minority group's culture to members of the dominant group and somewhat facilitates the creation of hybridized culture.

A fourth level is *cultural separatism*. It occurs when a minority group possesses enough power to support schooling that emphasizes its own culture at the exclusion of the dominant culture that surrounds it, yet not enough that it threatens the dominant culture. This approach is tolerated paternalistically by the dominant culture. Supporters of this approach believe the myth of 'separate but equal'. When the dominant group uses this rationale, it is insidious. When it comes from the oppressed group, it is pathetic. The minority group ultimately cannot escape the influence of the dominant culture; thus, this approach results in *de facto* hybridization.

A fifth level is called *multicultural education theory*. This theory responds to the awareness that minority pluralities are approaching the point at which they will collectively form a majority in our most populous states. The US is becoming a cultural color wheel. Adherents to this theory suggest that

the only way to understand a culture other than one's own is to place oneself at its center and from there trace its values. This idea makes charming theory but is difficult to implement, because it requires exposing one's students to expertise in two or more cultures. Few teachers possess intimate understanding of even two cultures, much less the many found in the United States. Often, attempts to implement this approach depict one culture as it is perceived through the lens of another culture. Examples are the perceptions among some in the United States that all Canadians live in igloos, that all Chinese travel by rickshaw, and that all Jamaicans wear dreadlocks.

A sixth level is *social theory*. Adherents to social theory hold that art education and the general educational curriculum are powerful components of the machinery of power. This approach is the most comprehensive in that it includes not only racial and ethnic concerns, but also those of sexism, classism, Euro-centrism, and the other 'isms' that inhibit democracy. Social theorists in art education call for art study that takes action against structural inequities. Because of its broad-based approach to social understanding and the redress of social grievances, this approach contributes most substantively to the process of hybridization.

Collins and Sandell (1992) reduce the number of approaches to three: *integration*, *separatism*, and *pluralism*. They suggest that "the integrationist vision of the melting pot and the specter of the separatist ghetto [are] intellectually naive and ethically repugnant." They criticize the integrationist approach for embracing the art of other cultures "as if they were harmless, failing to examine their politics and ideology." The art of Nonwestern cultures can be sexist, racist, religionist, classist, ageist, homophobic, and in other ways conformist to the same prejudices that plague the West. Failure to identify these issues in Nonwestern art trivializes and romanticizes it. It is multicultural study in the sense that tourism is multicultural study. If confused with in-depth multicultural education, it can mask the hidden curriculum of American public schools. The integration approach may involve 'inserting' exemplars of marginalized groups' art into one's curriculum. This treats one of the West's deepest problems, cultural prejudice, by attending to its surface.

Schools can erect ideological walls between subject areas as solid as those that separate classrooms. Not surprisingly, a view defining art as one ingredient in a holistic educational blend motivates social theorists to call for a mode of instruction under which borders between subjects did not exist. The Ad Hoc Consortium of National Arts Education Associations (1992) the arts can issues a caveat: The arts can enhance the teaching of other subjects, and should be so used, but such integration should not be taken as a replacement for discrete programs of instruction in each of the individual arts. The degeneration of art into the role of handmaid

rather than equal to other subjects skews a school's entire curriculum.

Another idea that seldom works is the combining of arts education into a single course. Such a course would be desirable if connections between the arts were more than superficial, but this requires pan-artistic syntheses that usually extend beyond the expertise of the faculty involved. An 'integrated' arts course consisting of a succession of mini-courses in the individual arts, taught by separate teachers, is usually only poor teaching. The matter becomes still worse when such 'integration' is left to one teacher. Few teachers possess adequate knowledge of two arts areas. Such approaches provide uninformed administrators with excuses to collapse the portion of the school day devoted to arts education. These problems lead to the same result: triviality of thought, as exemplified in these comments from teachers in Every-school, USA:

History. *"People, today we are going to make a diorama of the Alamo. Each of you make three Texans and five Mexicans. Janie here, who is talented, will make the Alamo out of this shoebox."*

Social Studies. *"People, here is a picture of a Chinese family. Write a list of items in their home and a paragraph describing their clothing."*

Geography. *"People, each of you has a red crayon, a blue crayon, a yellow crayon, and a map of the fifty states. Color in the states, making sure no states that touch are the same color."*

Science. *"People, trace the diagram of the human eye on page 132 and label the parts."*

Language arts. *"People, write an essay on how you spent your summer and color a picture illustrating it."*

These students may or may not learn a bit of history, social studies, geography, science, or language arts, but they learn precious little art.

Under varying guises, expressionist (i.e., Lowenfeldian) and discipline-based art education have dominated theoretical debate in art education during the twentieth century. In 1990, before I became a social theorist, I conducted a classroom-based study to identify the merits of each. The subjects were three classes of sixth graders. Each class was divided into three groups: an expressionist group, a discipline-based group, and a control group. The expressionist group was taught according to the methods of Lowenfeld, the discipline-based group was taught according to the methods of Greer (1984, 1987) and the Getty Center for Education in the Arts (1987), and the control group had study hall. Subjects were given a Likert-scale pre- and post-test which was analyzed with a chi square instrument (quantitative analysis, when contextualized, becomes better than useless). Two items from this test are of particular interest.

The first item read, “Art class makes me smarter.” The DBAE group significantly increased in agreement from pretest to posttest ($p < .01$), whereas the expressionist group and the control group remained unchanged. The second item read, “I like art class.” The expressionist group significantly increased its agreement ($p < .01$), whereas the DBAE group and the control group remained unchanged. This suggests the use of curricula that contains academic content and is presented within a secure and encouraging environment. This is a first step toward social theory. When we add relevance to students' lives, awareness of ethical consequences of our behavior, and connections to universal personal and political issues, we create vibrant learning experiences that can last a lifetime.

This model need not be limited to the schools. Museums have long been silent about sociopolitical issues; only in recent years have some begun to develop art education programs that address contemporary concerns. They advocate that art should not simply be presented for its own sake, but so that viewers “gain insights into local and global issues.” Nadaner (1985) calls for the inclusion of art from one's students' subcultures in one's curriculum. Nadaner (1984) also suggests blending the sociology of art with art criticism for the study of such topics as sex and violence in the media. He recommends conceiving art production with an eye on social issues. This can be done by broadening the range of ‘acceptable’ subjects students can address.

Broadening this range, however, means nothing if students are never exposed to it. Why do students lose interest in art as they reach adolescence? Most adults draw as they did when they were eleven or twelve. It takes that long for teachers and parents to destroy children's belief in themselves as artists and replace it with the beliefs that they have no talent, but that they need not worry since art is not important. In 1838 Calvin Stowe, describing his observations of public education in Prussia, presented a different view:

The universal success...and beneficial results with which the arts of Drawing and Designing, Vocal and Instrumental Music, have been introduced into schools, was another fact peculiarly interesting to me. I asked all the teachers with whom I conversed, whether they did not sometimes find children actually incapable of learning to draw and sing. I have had but one reply, and that was, that they found the same diversity of natural talent in regard to these, as in regard to reading, writing, and other branches of education; but they had never seen a child that was capable of learning to read and write who could not be taught to sing well and draw neatly, and that too without taking any time which would at all interfere with, indeed which would not actually promote his progress in, other studies.

A similar example, contemporary with the first, occurred in the United States in the form of a group of artists and art educators who formed a populist movement under the banner “ANYONE WHO CAN LEARN TO WRITE CAN LEARN TO DRAW” (Chapman, 1847/1858). Through self-help books and other means, they were able to demonstrate the truth of their motto. Then as now, boys and girls of all ethnicities demonstrated comparable alacrity at learning to draw.

What then *is* the content of art? On the most basic level, students should receive guided opportunities to express themselves by acquiring visual vocabulary: the elements of art and the principles of design, as well as familiarity with a variety of media and techniques. Otherwise we simply deskill our students. Teachers should specifically draw students' attention to the elements and principles. For every specific art-making opportunity, the teacher should select one or two to emphasize. Some practitioners are guilty of placing this mastery at the most honored place in the curriculum. This is like trading creative writing for spelling drills. Necessary as they are, the art elements and principles, like the spelling words, are still only vocabulary. And students should have multiple class periods to complete their artwork when necessary. That's how we work. Why then expect beginning artists to do decent work without sufficient time?

On a more important level, students should study the history of art. One not need pore through ponderous texts to share art history with one's students. The fact that many art history professors, unschooled in the art and science of teaching, suck the life out of art, hardly means art is not an exciting, even thrilling, subject. Students need specific guidance on how to view art. This viewing should include discernment of the work's socio-cultural agenda as well as its aesthetic merit. Historical research can be likened to going fishing (Hamblen, 1990). Historical facts are as scattered as the fish in the sea. Our catch is determined by chance—whatever happens to swim by, as well as our choice of bait. Decisions of location and bait are made before we start, so we eliminate many fish before we begin. Did you ever use a teaching device called a timeline? Timelines offer utility, and I do not condemn them outright. As metaphors, however, they are poor. They denote linearity rather than three-dimensionality, simplicity rather than the complexity of history informed by two genders, several racial groups, countless ethnic groups, all religious and a-religious groups, all sexual orientations, and all economic classes. Timelines up to now have focused on the contributions of the ruling class, and have been popular because of their simplistic and convenient format. At last we are beginning to see the development of public school art curricula (including timelines) that embrace heretofore ignored world cultures.

Informed viewing of visual images is central to every substantive art educational program.

An experience I had in the Louvre Museum in 1990 drew my attention to flaws in how viewing is traditionally taught. As I wandered the endless galleries of the world's largest art warehouse, I happened into the room that at that time was home to Leonardo da Vinci's painting of *La Gioconda*, the *Mona Lisa*. At least I believe it was the *Mona Lisa*. Glimpses of the painting that I caught through the twenty-person-deep semicircle of tourists indicated so. Several would-be viewers at the back were holding their cameras over their heads at arm's length, optimistically snapping away. The irony is that the wall was covered with other paintings by Leonardo, some as good as "The Mona," but no one paid them any attention. I debated jostling my way through this crowd to view the World's Greatest Painting for myself. I realized, however, that I had seen that damned mysterious smile so many times in reproductions of every imaginable kind that, even if standing at the very front—which, I have been told, still involves viewing from behind ropes and glass—I could only be disappointed. I do not doubt that the original is better than its reproductions. I do argue that, given the baggage (much of it from well-intended art teachers) that the poor woman has accumulated over five hundred years, it has become impossible for it to be *that* much better. It is unrealistic to demand so much of a work of art—any work. I returned Stateside without having met the *Mona Lisa* and have since made a firm vow never to make her acquaintance. No disrespect intended.

If art is the religion of the twentieth century, the *Mona Lisa* has become its Virgin Mary. Marcel Duchamp's celebrated jape, the addition of the moustache, only formalized the fact that *La Gioconda* could no longer be a masterpiece; she had fallen from the weight of the pop culture millstone hung about Her delicately painted neck. She could not woo me into that press of bodies. In fact, I found sinful pleasure in the prospect of being in Paris only to return to the US not having worshipped at Her altar. *Mona* has been reified, deified, ratified, and stratified; plagiarized, trivialized, atomized, and even digitized (Asmus, 1987). One can purchase a T-shirt on which she peers over the shoulder of Michelangelo's *David*, her hands reaching around and delicately shielding his genitals from our view, or another of "Moona Lisa," on which the Enigmatic Smile is transformed into the leer of a grinning Holstein. *Mona* is the only artwork I have seen to get four pages in *Artnews* (Danto, 1991) on how it is *cleaned*. Everyone knows her image, but few can explain her sanctity. Why?

When we look to the most widely used models of criticism in art education, we discover part of the answer. (We know we're in trouble already when 'criticism' is placed in its own category, even with its own separate set of steps, instead of

being considered a vibrant aspect of a holistic blend.) Broudy (1972) and Feldman (1967, 1970) each developed models that have become Sacred Writ, thus contributing their share to the placement of art at the fringes of the school curriculum. Following are discussions of the Broudy and Feldman models and my suggestion for replacing them.

According to Broudy's aesthetic scanning model, one should critique an art object by examining its technical, sensory, formal, and expressive properties. Technical properties refer to the artist's mastery of materials and media. If the artifact is a wheel-thrown pot, are the walls evenly thin from top to bottom? Was the glaze fired to the appropriate temperature? If the artifact is a silkscreen print, are the layers of color precisely justified? If the artifact is a watercolor landscape, is the wash applied correctly? The sensory properties refer to the artist's manipulation of what are called the elements of art: *line, shape, color, texture, and value* (darkness and lightness). Some add *form* (shape is two-dimensional; form is three-dimensional) to this list. The formal properties refer to the principles of design, which are made from the elements of art. They include *unity, contrast, movement, pattern, composition, space, balance, rhythm* and a number of others. The expressive properties refer to the message contained in the work of art. In practice, this approach tends to fall into a sequence, beginning with the comparatively superficial issue of technical properties and moving through sensory and formal properties to the most complex, expressive properties.

Feldman (1967, 1970) developed a model which also is widely used. This model starts with description, which involves taking inventory the subject matter ("This sculpture is of a man throwing a discus." "This painting is of a wagon crossing a stream.") and a description of the art elements ("The colors are dark. The lines are jagged"). Feldman's description of the art elements compares to Broudy's sensory properties. The second step of Feldman's model is formal analysis, which equates to Broudy's formal properties. Thus, Feldman's formal analysis involves observation of how the artist manipulated the principles of design. The third step is interpretation, which roughly equates to Broudy's expressive properties. The viewer ascribes meaning to the work. Interpretations may differ, but should be based on information in work. Feldman's last step is judgment, which goes a step beyond Broudy. In judgment, one reaches a defensible conclusion on how successful the work is.

Neither Broudy nor Feldman deals adequately with art's foremost issue, the 'why', and both approach the 'how' backwards (Fehr, 1993). Consequently both fail as criticism models. Both roughly parallel Bloom's (1956) cognitive taxonomy. This hierarchy of cognitive activity invariably is listed beginning with the simplest level, knowledge. It then works through the increasingly complex levels of compre-

hension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Both Broudy and Feldman begin with simple levels and move stair step-like to the most complex. Approaches such as these appear reasonable only those who choose not to think the matter through. Foggy public attitudes toward the *Mona Lisa* are but one result of such approaches to criticism. Other examples abound: The world's vast bulk of Nonwestern art exceeds the bounds of both models. After fifty years the work of the abstract expressionists continues to perplex some viewers. I shudder to think of the average, badly prepared art teacher grappling with Ad Reinhardt's all-black paintings, or worse, Raphael Ferrer's conceptual piece, "Ice," without first imparting an understanding of the complex forces that brought modernism to a close (Fehr, 1991; Gablik, 1987; Meehan, 1971).

Both models can be used quickly and easily—even with zero preparation, a teacher can conduct something that looks like a viewing lesson using either one. Neither Broudy nor Feldman would advocate this, but for the busy art teacher, such a prescriptive approach may appear attractive. This is bad teaching.

Neither Feldman nor Broudy would quibble with incorporating context into critical dialogue, but each misses its centrality. These theoreticians are of the twentieth century—modernists who came of age in the era of Abstract Expressionism, when the only content offered to the viewer was that of the formal elements and design principles. To discern further meaning in abstract art often requires textual accompaniment. The problem is that emphasizing art's elements and principles is like teaching reading by emphasizing the letters of the alphabet rather than what we can do with them when we have learned them.

My proposal is that we begin not with the most superficial aspects of visual imagery but with the most profound: Theory. To me, social theory includes an inward breath and outward breath. The inward breath deals with personal issues; the outward breath with social issues. Just as the inward breath and the outward breath need each other, so too is the symbiosis of the personal and the social. Feminists have taught us that the personal is political. This awareness eluded Modernism.

Let's try an example. As I write this, our president is pushing for war. A groundswell of opposition, following an essentially unanimous global trend, is building across the country. One might find the moment timely for discussing violence with children of any age, using appropriate language and images. These images might include Jacques Louis David's "The Oath of the Horatii" contrasted with Francisco Goya's "The Fifth of May." The former emerged from the milieu of the Napoleonic wars. It presents three sons in the garb of Roman soldiers, their swords theatrically poised, as they vow

to their father that they will give their lives for their country. Helpless women weep off to the side. The viewer of the painting must know of Napoleon, and that David was one of his favorite painters. This knowledge (often as available as the nearest encyclopedia) enables one to make the informed judgment that this image is a propagandistic tool of the Napoleonic state with a pro-war message.

Contrast this to Goya's image. How do the messages differ? How is this difference reflected in the ways the soldiers are depicted? How are the painting styles different? How does each style fit the message? Compare these images to war photos from World War II and the Vietnam Conflict. How do the images from these two wars differ? Which series of photos compares more closely with with of the two paintings? You can add more good questions and your students will as well. Use the word contrast whenever appropriate. Explain that the students will shortly be making images which express their feelings about war and that you expect them to use the design principle of contrast to make their images more successful. Also discuss color. How do the two painters and the photographers use it? How does the effect of the black and white photos differ from that of the color photos? (Every art lesson should start with theory and move into both viewing and making, and it should include conscious manipulation of at least one element or principle.)

When the discussion is completed, the students can begin their own work. You might ask them to make abstract images that express their feelings about war. They will need to consider what colors best fit their feelings. Ask them to suggest different ways they can use contrast to strengthen their messages. When they are done, display and discuss them.

The 'art criticism,' rather than being handled as a discrete step, was covered in a more vibrant and meaningful way because it was done holistically. As was the 'art history.' As was the 'aesthetics.' As was the 'studio.' This vibrancy emerged from the underlying social theory. In this case it was an outward breath, but note the inward breath aspects of it. War would affect all of us personally.

Let's look at an example of an inward breath lesson, which too has aspects of the outward breath—body image. We might view Barbara Kruger's "Untitled (We won't play nature to your culture)" as well as images of both young women and men in teen magazines.

image that deconstructs the sexism embedded in verbal language. This painting serves a propagandistic function as well—it is pro-feminist.

This model is fluid, even nicely messy at times, as art education should be free to be. It is rooted in rich contextual soil.

Preparing for it demands a teacher's time. One cannot teach the context of an art object by winging it. The payoff for the teacher takes various forms: Students' increased interest and the attendant reduction of classroom management matters. The sense of professionalism that comes from knowing the job was done right. The greater degree of learning that occurs, and not only on the students' part. The improved quality of the students' products. And perhaps most of all the greater sense of self and the world that results from taking a series of inward and outward breaths.

Few elementary and secondary art students go on to art careers, but potentially every student can develop appreciation for our world's visual heritage. Social theory creates learning experiences for the students that not only influence their studio production but perhaps more importantly, give them lifelong tools with which to be informed viewers.

I find Paris one of the world's most beautiful cities. I intend to spend more time there. But I implore the New & Improved Gods of Postmodern Social Theory to let me die never having seen the original *Mona Lisa*. It would kill me.

Art activity, whether making or viewing, engages the student in complex thought. When a child is presented with a visual problem and a blank page on which to resolve it, Bloom's three highest levels of thought are immediately brought to bear, and remain engaged throughout the process. The same levels of thought are engaged when viewing art thoughtfully. Informed art teachers engage students in complex problem-solving by referring not only to what they feel is important, but to what students feel is important. The successful curriculum is the one that generates enthusiasm in both parties. The student willingly engages in learning and the teacher knows that the learning is substantive. This is achieved by observing what interests a given age group and incorporating those things into one's teaching. Taunton (1986) found that art teachers often make remarks to students about originality and degree of detail in the students' work, whereas students are more likely to make remarks about topics relevant to their peer culture or subject matter they find unusual. Art that does not speak to its maker, regardless of age, offers its maker very little.

Students of all ages are interested in art. This fact is useful to teachers of any subject. When primary students find that mixing red paint with yellow makes orange (whether in art or science), they are engaged. When sixth graders dip alphabet letters carved from halves of potatoes into paint and then press out their own haiku poetry (whether in art or English), they are engaged. When ninth graders (whether in art or social studies), throw their first pots, they are attentive. When twelfth graders manipulate their digital photos in Photoshop, they are—yes—attentive.

Selecting not only processes, but subject matter that interests given age groups is equally important. Students who are dealing with subjects they care about will be self-motivated to stay on task, and the most sophisticated approach to classroom management is not "separating talkers" or "facing the class at all times." It is offering them content that captures their interest and thus generates internal motivation. Primary grade students are fascinated by animals, for example. Intermediate students often care about the 'in' cartoon characters of the moment. Some teenagers may like a rock group or a certain sport. Others are concerned about social issues such as AIDS or environmental protection. Children of all ages are concerned about their relationships with adults in their lives, particularly parents. The point is that since art often deals with specific subject matter, it should be subject matter the young artist cares about. Some theorists (Broudy, 1977) suggest that teachers should use only the 'finest' examples of art imagery in their teaching. They mean those 'exemplars' of various periods of art history. This is elitism. It is not that such works have no place in the art room. They do. And so do strong works that have not been given lofty labels. Comic book illustrations come to mind. In developing students' taste, we must take note of where they are or we may never catch them at all.

The third curriculum-related issue is product. The student who excitedly anticipates the end result is more likely to exhibit enthusiasm than is the student who does not, whether it is the primary student's imaginary clay animal, the intermediate student's cartoon drawing, or the high school student's hip hop CD cover. These three points—process, subject matter, and product—are by no means restricted to studio activities. As a rule students find discussions about art fascinating—provided they are in fact discussions and not lectures. Interesting lectures have their place, but dialog is vital. Easily the most important piece of advice for art educators on the subject of classroom management is to have a curriculum that can, of itself, interest the students.

Some art educators are guilty of teaching a year-long curriculum composed of a series of discrete lessons, one for each meeting period. Along with this, many art educators feel that they should expose their students to a wide variety of materials and processes. This is based on the false rationale that such wide exposure will later enable the students to make informed decisions about which materials and processes they wish to emphasize. The simple fact is that this is not how we artists work. We often grapple with a problem for extended periods, trying this solution and that one, until we feel satisfied. And we usually stay with a given process for long periods as well. Children are not to be treated as accomplished adult artists, but they are not to be treated as differently as one may think. Children should not be deprived of the same creative opportunities we artists enjoy. An art curriculum that includes long-term projects (broken into phases

when necessary) offers more opportunities for complex thinking than does a series of quickie lessons. Additionally, the opportunity to explore one material or process in some depth provides a student with a greater likelihood of becoming competent with it. This increases the student's opportunity to produce the vision in his or her mind's eye. It is true that younger children possess shorter attention spans than do older children. However, even first graders should be able to manipulate materials enough times to gain control over them. Often they are denied this chance.

If your pedagogy already incorporates the above ideas, congratulations. You are probably overseer of a quality art program that affords your students many opportunities for creative problem solving and self-expression through the nonverbal language that is art. If not, you might try these suggestions. They may become permanent fixtures in your teaching. A balance between child-centered and curriculum-centered approaches, in a multicultural context, viewed through the lens of critical theory, results in a powerful art experience. Strong teaching by the new generation of graduates trained in social theory is causing visual art's star to rise in the educational constellation, placing it increasingly nearer the center of the curricular solar system. Gradually, educational policy-brokers are learning the true role of imagination in the thought process. Broudy (1977) writes:

[I]magination has suffered from a bad...press for centuries. It was held to be antithesis of reason; its flights regarded as inimical to...wisdom. Some attributed...its unpredictability to demons at worst, and to the gods at best; others located the cause in drugs or a bad conscience or bad digestion. It is not surprising, therefore, that the intimate connection between imagination and the intellect has been overlooked...especially in our schools.

[I]n the beginning was the image, not the word.... It is this relation between the imagination and the other functions of mind that ground the claims of arts education.

Language is a system of symbols, for the most part abstract...i.e., the sounds of the words or their appearance in print do [sic] not resemble the objects which they designate. No cat looks or sounds like c-a-t.... [L]earning to read and speak means connecting sounds or marks on paper with images.... From day of birth the mind is being stocked with images.... It is this...store that is activated whenever we read or speak or listen to speech. We comprehend with these resources. [E]very term...evokes many layers...of meaning.

One could go on in this vein. One should not have to waver it not that in the current mania for the basics, [the fact] that we read with the imagination and not merely with phonetics [is almost certain to be forgotten].... Children with impoverished stores of images will not read; they will simply decode mechanically messages that have been mechanically encoded. But how much of our [verbal] communication can be cleansed of all ambiguity? No matter how precisely a statute

is drawn, there is always enough ambiguity to keep lawyers and judges busy and happy. The public is rightfully enraged when pupils fail to achieve minimal literacy, but do we need twelve years of schooling for literacy sufficient only to construe utility bills?

I do not therefore urge arts education because it contributes to mastery of the three Rs, but rather because it enriches the store of images that makes comprehension of concepts possible.... This is the proper contribution of aesthetic education to language mastery, and if this is not basic to education, then it is difficult to imagine what would be. Aesthetic literacy is as basic as linguistic literacy.

Experienced art teachers observe some fundamental truths that challenge the lofty posture of 'artistic talent':

Truth I—If picking the ideal art student, one looks for:

- 1) A high level of general brightness, not 'artistic talent'.
- 2) A high level of industriousness. Excelling at art is no different from excelling at anything else; it takes discipline.
- 3) Good guidance, which of course is the teacher's job. Bad guidance in art is worse than no guidance.

Truth II—We live in a culture that is verbally literate and visually illiterate. This explains why so few understand that the ability to draw realistically is a skill, not a talent.

Truth III—If drawing realistically is a skill, then art must indeed be trivial if its measure of quality is nothing more than mastery of a skill. That would place art on the level of bicycle riding.

The process of contour drawing demonstrates these points. Commonly in this exercise, teachers have students do 'before' drawings of their hands without instruction. Tracing is optional. Then students draw their hands again, but this time without tracing or looking at their papers. A mistake commonly made by timid drawing students is to fixate on what is happening on the paper instead of on the object being drawn. One's brain gets no useful data about an object when one is focused on the paper. The old saw that 'learning to draw is learning to see' is independent of gender and ethnicity. For this 'blind' drawing, students are instructed to turn around so that they cannot see their papers. They place the hand to be drawn into a complex position and draw it slowly, striving to capture every wrinkle, bump, and change of direction, both inside and outside the hand's shape.

The students then do a third drawing, beginning by again placing their hands into a complex position. The actual drawing of the lines is done without looking at the paper;

however, the student may stop drawing at any time and look. The pencil may be moved to a different place during this time. It is only when the student is drawing that the paper is out of vision. For the last step the student does an 'after' drawing—a freehand sketch, again of the hand in a complex position. The student may look at will. After finishing, progress is evaluated.

Students sometimes make the mistake of comparing their 'after' drawing to the work of an accomplished artist. If the student's work is compared to the *Praying Hands* of Albrecht Durer, the student loses. Such a comparison is simply inaccurate. The way to evaluate one's performance is to compare the 'after' drawing to the 'before' drawing. Has change occurred? Almost always the answer is yes. Such exercises, simple as they are, expose the fable of 'innate talent' and dismantle the message of those art education programs which teach that visual art is a toy for the elite. Not only is this message conveyed by the schools, but society as a whole bludgeons its members with it. Do we not hide our best art in museums, out of the path of everyday life? This practice is historically recent, and many world cultures even today find it silly. Few Americans visit an art museum in a given year. If one believes that art is the turf of a group to which one does not belong (a myth some museums perpetuate) then why *should* one go there? Art is often the elementary child's favorite subject, but it is an ability today's parents feel is unimportant. These parents have learned their false lessons well: art is for the few, and is therefore unimportant.

During the contour drawing exercise, the student may notice the silence that accompanies the activity. The left hemisphere of the brain, which handles verbal language, is subordinated by the drawing activity, which is handled more by the right hemisphere, the hemisphere that processes visual images.

Speaking of drawing, the lynchpin of art production, I piloted an idea in the summer of 2002 with a group of graduate students at Texas Tech's satellite campus in Junction TX. I call this approach spirit drawing. It is an alternative to traditional approaches, which I call survival drawing. I began each class with spirit drawing. On the first day I asked each student to do a drawing without instructions. They were told only that they would show their drawings to their classmates when the exercise was finished. The students drew for about 15 minutes and then we asked them to hold up their drawings. Most of the students held them up shyly and cast furtive glances around the table, while some of the skilled renderers displayed theirs proudly.

Following this exercise we asked them how they felt when they did the drawings, knowing they would be asked to show them to their peers.

"Stressed."

"Worried that my skills might not measure up."

"I didn't enjoy it."

"Are you kidding? I got nervous just hearing that we had to bring a sketchbook to class!"

I asked if this situation reminded them of their undergraduate drawing experiences. They assured us that it did. We asked if this was similar to the experiences they provided their students. Several admitted that it was.

We discussed the survival approach by which we all had learned to draw. An assumption of this approach is that drawing is a matter of talent. It creates a climate of competition with peers. We remembered how earnestly we sought to please the teachers who put yellow police tape around their inner circle of favored classroom artists. We worried about grades. We worried about failure and embarrassment. This approach cultivated a hunger to make an impressive finished product. When we succeeded in this, it disposed us to think, "I am better than the other students." When we failed, it disposed us to think, "I am a weak artist." We learned that drawing classes might cause us to believe less in ourselves. The survival approach quite possibly inhibited our growth as artists.

We then discussed the spirit approach safely removes the yellow tape. We would begin by quieting our chattering minds and discarding our learned notions of competitiveness. We would support each other's artistic growth by changing our focus from 'me' to 'we.' The classroom would be a safe haven for experimenting, taking risks, and for making drawings that did not satisfy us. We would fill the classroom with peaceful energy that we could feel when we walked in. We would focus on the process, 'making marks' in complete comfort. We would be open to the notion that drawing in this way creates paths to our inner selves. We would consider that such drawing becomes our souls' expression. Notions of good and bad drawing would thus be meaningless.

This idea aligns with our definition of social theory as having an "inward breath" and an "outward breath." That is, we make the world a more peaceful place through our teaching and other activism ("outward breath") as we concurrently nurture and heal our inner selves ("inward breath"). My wife Mary also conducted free yoga sessions for the students as part of the "inward breath."

Following our discussion, the students did their first spirit drawing. Each day after that, we started class with a spirit

drawing. At first I walked around peering over students' shoulders as they drew and having them hold up their drawings when they were done in an effort to make them comfortable with others viewing their work. After a few class meetings they told me that was not working and suggested that I do the spirit drawings along with them. I found their points wise and exchanged peering over their shoulders for doing my own spirit drawings. I enjoyed doing the drawings and ended up giving Mary a sketchbook full of them for her birthday.

I also moved to a voluntary "quilt" format for display. Students who wished to show their drawings could place their sketchbooks in rows in the middle of the table to make a "quilt." Participation in the quilt, although voluntary, was almost unanimous throughout the course. I noted too that the amount of time the students desired for this exercise had doubled by the end of the course.

The spirit drawings deeply affected some of the students. The two most poignant examples involved mothers who had experienced tragedies with their children—a violent accidental death and an attempted suicide. Both approached me privately to tell me the process was helping them to heal.

At the end of the course, students filled out anonymous assessment forms. Their unedited comments about the spirit drawing marker are as follows:

Finally, a possible solution to the FOD (Fear of Drawing). Also helps teachers see the different ways students think visually. It has helped me get back into drawing and thinking through ideas using images, not just text. Also, it has helped me break the bad habit I had developed of becoming more and more precise. I'm moving back to more metaphor and symbolism.

The important aspect of 'soulful' art was addressed in many ways but especially through the spirit drawings. The spirit of cooperation developed early in class.

Great way to start a class/get centered. Very cool to take away competition. Freeing for those who didn't like to draw. May stimulate art-making.

Got off to a slow start but I was very drawn to the silent moment and learning to be free. Would like to continue this with myself and in the classroom.

A chance to settle down, to think, to focus.

Good class starter to calm down and focus. Made more of a community. Will use in my classes.

Good way to start class. I appreciated the quilt approach. Lessened the competitive nature.

The spirit drawings were a wonderful escape from representational drawing for me.

What follows are excerpts from the journal of a doctoral student from Columbia University who was auditing the course.

June 30

After introducing ourselves we began the routine of our 'Spirit Drawings.' We just draw, with no command. I can't seem to just go, so it was a narrative—a story of being here in this place I feel somewhat out of place in. I like the spirit drawing idea, none of that side-of-the-pencil-does-it-look-real stuff. Then we all show them. It feels like an 'I'll show you mine if you'll...', but the concept is good. They're all so different, though some are still making drawings based on the nature study idea, what Dennis aptly calls 'Survival Drawing'. I can see how this way of teaching drawing could open up things for our students. I notice he's very open to ideas from us, and changes with good suggestions. Practices what he preaches, but in a different voice from his writing. He also starts where the students are. I watch.

July 2

The spirit drawing idea is going well. Maybe this is a way to get back to drawing. I realize how little I draw now. I got so involved in the perspective idea. It was just about doing 'good drawings' but they weren't really about anything.

July 5

I'm having a kind of cognitive dissonance here. Some of the things the others are afraid to get involved in while teaching I've been expected to take care of with my students. I've never been in a situation where I was afraid to teach something. I'm not really brave because my bravery has never been challenged. I guess I realize that some of the important things I've taught and discussed with my students could get a teacher in another place fired. Many seem reluctant to discuss with students social issues the kids bring up. They say they often tell them to talk to their parents or refer them to the guidance counselors. As one of the women in class said, "You hear horror stories that make you afraid to do anything." It's hard to go against that. We have to develop some kind of comfort talking about these things. What kids often want to talk about is the stuff teachers either don't dare or the stuff we pretend doesn't exist. It's often what adult artists make work about. Which brings me to spirit drawing. Today, for some reason I did mine about my grandfather dying. The class's drawings are transforming into re-presentations of experiences, thoughts and feelings. They're becoming more personal and distinctive styles are coming out. Dennis has stopped his hovering around us it was like

we were talking a test! and is drawing with us. Much better. And no more show & tell with our drawings. Instead, if we want, we put our drawings in the center of the table. They make a sort of quilt, and we look at it throughout class.

Spirit drawing touches the artist inside that was there when the first humans made their first marks. Those marks were honest. They were free of the baggage that keeps so many from discovering their inward artist, the baggage that perpetuates our visual illiteracy, generation after generation. Addressing the huge population in our schools that is disenfranchised for being visual rather than verbal, Baker (1991) states:

A text-based method of instruction honors a...cognitive mode of learning. It emphasizes the memorization of printed data, the manipulation of it in the restrictive symbolic forms of a twenty-six character alphabet and a ten digit numerical system, and the employment of them both in linear patterns. It...segregates students...into robins and sparrows—and we all know which ones are winners and which ones are losers.... It punishes the visual learners...and it denies...verbal learners the rewards [of] greater visual acuity.... It may be that the limitations of text-centered instruction...are contributing to the problems of today's schools.... It may also be curricular practices toward the word-bound methodologies that have come to dominate the "academic" subject[s].

It is most evident to any who teach art that schooling in America has been extraordinarily well funded by a text-based methodology and short-changed in one of the most essential modes of learning known to us—the visual arts. However...as public schooling has matured, the visual arts have been subtly compromised by the economy, efficiency and prestige of the printed word and image. It is as though, while we fought to provide students with alternative ways to learn, we were...embracing mind-sets and adopting instructional formats that would be favored by our more academic colleagues. In doing so, we increasingly have students ask, "What is art for?" By asking this question, students convince me that it is by virtue of the compulsive, artlike behaviors they engage in throughout their lives, behaviors that...begin with a scribble and move to schematics that will change the shape of a city; in trips to the moon that begin in a cardboard box in the basement...and in the garments a social group insists must be bleached to the max and ripped in just the right places. They are behaviors that beg for confirmation...behaviors that want answers to the "What is art for" question....

One might add that such behaviors are not to be mocked, but honored; and that young people who engage in them are worthy of dignity.

Visual art has been an unblinking monitor of cultural priorities for millennia. This is true today as much as ever. The

emergence of critical pedagogy in art education is welcome. To teach students to view art within the context of only artistic issues is to shield from their view the agendas—economic, sociological, political, educational—that drive art. To teach art critically is to give students the tools that enable them to identify the commissars of culture whose decisions govern the issues that most affect their lives. The growing awareness among art educators of this need is reflected in new approaches. New York's Tim Rollins, an art education hero, teaches learning disabled high school students. He collaborates with his student artists to make huge collage/paintings based on their lives in the South Bronx. Another hero is Judy Baca, whose still growing mural, *The Great Wall of Los Angeles*, documents the experiences of Third World residents in America. The project is taught to local children, for both its artistic and its activist content. It is used as a remedial tool for neighborhood gangs and offers economic support to impoverished minority communities. By sticking *barrio* art into the eye of the European Cyclops, Rollins and Baca reverse one of art education's greatest failings. The blanket of capitalism, which has kept Eurocentrism warm, has covered art education like a shroud. Rollins and Baca know that public art education neutralizes the weapon of market control. And quietly moving art education away from ruling class taste removes another weapon. Education works in two directions. It is time for young urban artists and their suburban teachers to teach each other.

Horn and Sieder (1992) describe a program at the St. Augustine School of the Arts in the South Bronx, the poorest congressional district in the United States. In a blighted neighborhood with a seventy-five percent dropout rate, the school uses visual art, music, creative writing, and dance to maintain its ninety-five percent rate of students who read at or above grade level. Throughout New York City's 600 elementary schools, two-thirds have neither music nor art teachers. Fewer than one percent of all students in Los Angeles County receive comprehensive arts education. In 1990 then-President George H. W. Bush and the state governors announced six National Educational Goals. Arts education did not merit mention, much less establishment as a goal. Horn and Sieder (1992) cite a study by the College Entrance Examination Board which found that students who took more than four years of music and art achieved verbal Scholastic Aptitude Test scores 34 points higher, and math scores 18 points higher, than those who took less than one year of music. Japan and Germany, designers of the world's most competitive products, require arts education from kindergarten through high school. The US Department of Labor issued a report in the summer of 1991 urging schools to prepare students for tomorrow's workplace. The skills they called for read like a checklist of abilities fostered by arts education: teamwork, communication, creative problem-solving, self-esteem, imagination, and invention. The National Endowment for the Arts, charged at its founding

to make the arts a basic part of every child's education, is only recently beginning to work toward achieving this goal. This effort may improve its status among conservatives.

Another opportunity for art educators lies within the global technological shift toward visual communications. If the past is a measure, the electronic communications revolution may be the most important sign of a new age. Many define the birth of both history and civilization with the advent of written language. The inventions of the book, the printing press, and movable type each changed Western civilization. Solomon-Godeau (in Wallis, 1991) observes that the mass production and consumption of visual images characterizes advanced societies. The transition from cave drawings to alphabetic writing has been thrown into reverse by the electronic information explosion, which relies on visual imagery more than mechanically-based systems ever did. The bio-electronic process of thought itself is involved—visual images are processed in the brain's right hemisphere, verbal images in the left. What does this mean for art education? Nothing, unless art educators understand its import. No other group will know what to do with it or pay it mind. Its impact is being felt in art education (cf. Edwards, 1986), but more research needs to be done. The future of art education may lie in that direction. The second to last generation of artists was the first to graduate with MFAs. The last generation was the first to grow up with television. They know television better than they know art history, and their work shows it.

The present generation is the first to grow up with computers. The illiterate of the future will not only be those who cannot read the text; it will also be those who cannot read the image. The pedagogy of Madison Avenue and the pedagogy of Hollywood combine to form the real curriculum of today. It is better understood by our children than that of the school (Kellner, 1991) because it is twenty times more interesting. McLaren (1991) suggests that critical pedagogy must not simply include popular culture, but focus on it. Art educators must teach their students—and thus society—of the heightened role of visual literacy in postindustrial society. To do this, first art educators must understand it themselves.

As today's pro-art education rhetoric escalates, its momentum produces mixed translations into classroom practice. Seven recent U. S. presidents have spoken for the arts in education (although the only action recent Republican administrations have taken toward the arts is to censor them or cut funding). National education advocates such as the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National School Boards Association, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the College Board, support the arts as core subjects. Initiatives by the Getty Educational Trust, Harvard Project Propel, and the National Art Education Association have prompted some policy

changes toward arts education by the NEA and the Lincoln Center Institute. Funded by the NEA and the Department of Education, two national-level centers for research in arts education (one at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and one at New York University), were created in 1987. Perhaps most notably, in 1991 Representative Mary Rose Oakar of Ohio introduced into the House of Representatives a bill to establish a Department of Arts and Humanities to be headed by a Secretary, Under Secretary, and Assistants. The Department's two-part mandate would be to protect cultural heritage and provide opportunities for participation to all.

Today arts credits for high school graduation are mandated in 39 states, and 46 states require arts instruction at both elementary and secondary levels. For over a decade the Minnesota State University System has recommended fine arts for entrance to its seven universities. Magnet schools for the arts are in all U. S. major cities as well as a number of medium-sized and small communities. The educational research community is linking arts education with learning in general, and artists themselves are—at last—waking up to the power of robust art education programs in the public schools.

The United States is in a transitional period in its arts education. Yes, things are improving, but do we now have in place a vigorous, politically critical, nation-wide art education program? No. At the grassroots level—the public school—resources do not exist to support art education. Art education in the public schools may some day be funded at least in part by private sources. High schools often stretch arts requirements for graduation to include foreign language study, woodshop, and home economics. Despite eloquent testimony by art educators before the National Goals panel in May of 1991, references to the arts are not to be found in its publication, *National Educational Goals*.

Walter Smith (1872a), a thoughtful nineteenth-century educational reformer, described a sequence of art education that would give the public of today a more truthful view of art:

There are three sections of the public to be educated—children, adult artisans, and the public generally, who come under neither of the first two divisions. How this has been provided for in most of the European States I may here shortly describe. For children, elementary drawing is taught as a part of general education in most of the public schools; for adult artisans, night schools and classes have been established in almost all towns or populous villages; and for the general public, museums, galleries of art, and courses of public lectures on art subjects, are becoming general. Upon the comparative value of these several means there may be and is much difference of opinion; but on one point there is a general agreement, viz., that to make national art education possible, it must commence with children in public schools....

To establish schools of art and art galleries before the mass of the community were taught to draw was like opening a university before people knew the alphabet; but to provide both of these agencies in conjunction with, or as a continuation of, the instruction of drawing in public schools, was like a logical sequence, going in rational order from strength to strength of an unbroken chain; from bud to branch, and from branch to flower of natural educational growth.

Social theory's roots go back at least to Jesus, but it emerged in more or less its present form in the 1960s with postmodernism. One of its offshoots, critical pedagogy, explores means by which schools help maintain class schisms that perpetuate ruling class interests. Works such as Bowles and Gintis' *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976) and Apple's *Ideology and Curriculum* (1979) identify the covert agenda of the public schools. Closely following the emergence of critical pedagogy, art images from non-Western cultures and by women began to appear in public school art rooms. Editions of Janson's infamous *History of Art* contained expanded discussion of non-Western art and included a handful of contemporary women artists. Lanier (1980) writes, "...our youth should learn to be literate, above all, about those visual documents which explore the conditions of and reasons for their social oppression." A principal concern of critical pedagogists in art education is the development of evaluative criteria in the curriculum. What motives define the 'good'?

Ideally, students will question not only historians' decisions, but those of their own teachers. Teachers must be secure enough to create environments in which students feel safe challenging them about their decisions. These matters are too important to be subsumed beneath a teacher's insecurities. Freire (1970) speaks of liberatory pedagogy, teaching that enlightens students to the oppressive restraints of culture, including those imposed by schools. "Curriculum building blocks should be sets of issues, themes, or cultural phenomena rather than formal art vocabulary, art styles, or canonical examples of art stripped bare of their cultural contexts," states Garber (1992). Apple (1979, 1990), Aronowitz and Giroux (1985a, 1985b), and Beyer and Apple (1988) have exposed the political influence under which public education operates. The political power of art both to mask and expose is so great that teachers of art perhaps more than of any other subject must be aware of this and confront it in the classroom.

An image popular with some people depicts a group of dogs sitting around a table, smoking cigars and playing cards. In many card games the advantage is the dealer's. That is fine so long as the role of dealer rotates around the table. When it does not, the dealer can become top dog, even if a mediocre player. What we do not need in the United States is a red, white, and blue facade of freedom painted over a wall of prejudice. Most of us would not hang a Jasper Johns painting of

the US flag in a gas station restroom any more than we would hang the image of the dogs playing cards in our homes. Today we find people of both genders, all economic classes, all races and ethnicities, all religious and a-religious groups, all sexual orientations, and all degrees of ableism, working toward that day when every voice is heard, when the majority protects the minority, when no group is subservient, when the label 'ruling class' is a linguistic dinosaur, that day when our teachers become the priests, and our schools the cathedrals, of democracy.