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JENKINS, MARY ANNE CARUANA

A NEW MODEL FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION

*The University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

Ed.D. 1980

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A NEW MODEL FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION

by

Mary Anne Caruana Jenkins

A Dissertation submitted to  
The Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in partial fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education

Greensboro  
1980

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert L. ...", is written over a solid horizontal line.

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APPROVAL PAGE

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Aesthetic education and the theoretical foundations for its existence have not been accorded the important place in curriculum which they deserve. Recently, Broudy, Greene, and Macdonald have attempted to validate aesthetic criticism as an alternative to scientific or statistical studies in curriculum. Humanistic psychologists have also provided curriculum scholars with a more detailed analysis of the nature of aesthetic experiences in order to help systematize the study of encounters with the arts.

This study examines two models of aesthetic criticism which may prove helpful to school curriculum supervisors inasmuch as the models can serve as guides to writing narrative evaluations of school arts programs. Also, the researcher develops a model which compares the aesthetic growth of the individual with the Piagetian model of cognitive development. Using the data on the nature of aesthetic experience, the investigator traces the types of aesthetic experiences a child may typically undergo from infancy through adolescence.

A method of inquiry is fashioned which embodies sequence, order, and proof and which remains linked to artistic and literary scholarship. Developmental stages in aesthetic awareness are postulated which rely on the chronology of emergence of four types of aesthetic experiences. The relationship of this model to five archetypal influences in the writings of Plato, Schiller, Read, Dewey and Langer is discussed. Conclusive statements are a result of application of aesthetic criticism to the researcher's Parallel Model of Cognitive and Aesthetic Development.

New syntheses are being formed between scientific and humanistic modes of inquiry. This study, while placed within the humanistic domain, suggests additional research related to the investigator's model for aesthetic education.

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Finally, this paper is dedicated to my parents, Anne and Joe, who raised me to love the arts and to seek after the aesthetic experience.

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Educational research is entering a new era. The scientific methods which have determined the nature of educational inquiry have been challenged by a new conception of research whose foundations are as old as the institutions of education themselves. The particularistic is waning in favor of the generalistic; the attempts to make Nature answer Man's questions are being superseded by the realization that we must examine our questions as carefully as the answers. In many instances, notably the works of Eisner, Smith, and Child, new syntheses between the scientific and humanistic lines of inquiry are being forged.<sup>1</sup> Among the works of social scientists, Sarason and Brubaker have developed systematic ways of looking at educational and social events which emphasize the holistic nature of experience, not the fragmented view which statistical treatments sometimes offer.<sup>2</sup> Yet the idea of examining the school experience as a whole has its pitfalls, and educational researchers have been slow

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<sup>1</sup>Elliott W. Eisner, The Educational Imagination: The Design and Evaluation of School Programs (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1979); Ralph A. Smith, ed., Aesthetics and Problems of Education (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1971); Irvin L. Child, Humanistic Psychology and the Research Tradition: Their Several Virtues (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973).

<sup>2</sup>Seymour B. Sarason, The Creation of Settings and the Future Societies (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1972); Dale L. Brubaker, "Social Studies and the Creation of Settings," Journal of Instructional Psychology 4 (Summer 1977): 18-25.

to warm to the idea. It is an assumption on the part of all researchers that inquiry produces intelligible results only when it is systematic, logically ordered, and proceeds from one premise to another by careful steps. It is reasonable to say that the construction of designs for curriculum has followed the historically prescribed path of order, sequence, and proof. Tyler, Taba, and Popham serve as examples of model builders whose curriculum design depends upon order, sequence, and proof.<sup>3</sup> There is every reason to believe that models along traditional lines will continue to be constructed. The problem lies in creating new models which still depend upon order, sequence, and proof, but which retain the spark of artistic and literary inspiration, rather than the formal, scientific rationales which undergird traditional models of curriculum design.

The search for order, sequence, and proof in artistic curricular models has led many curriculum workers to examine the body of critical literature about the arts to determine if models of criticism may be applied to curriculum inquiry. Tolstoy, Ruskin, and Hegel offer nineteenth-century systems of art criticism.<sup>4</sup> Krutch, Beardsley, and Greene have contributed criticism and literature on criticism as they explain

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<sup>3</sup>Ralph W. Tyler, Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950); Hilda Taba, Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962); W. James Popham, Establishing Educational Goals (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970).

<sup>4</sup>Leo Tolstoy, What is Art? and Essays on Art trans. Aylmer Maude (London: Oxford Press, 1932); John Ruskin, The Art Criticism of John Ruskin, ed., with introd. by Robert L. Herbert (Garden City, New Jersey: Anchor Books, 1964); G. W. F. Hegel, Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art trans. with introd. by T. M. Knox (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1975).

their own particular styles, values, and biases.<sup>5</sup> Others provide insights into the critical process by deriving models from their own work. Abrams and Meyer do this from two sharply differing positions.<sup>6</sup> Abrams' work belongs to a lyrical prose tradition of criticism; Meyer adopts a quasi-scientific style of analysis. Both models are useful as starting points in the quest for new directions in curricular inquiry. Both models may contribute information and possible answers to the question--is it possible to create a new model for curriculum design which retains the flavor of artistic and literary criticism yet embodies the order, sequence, and proof which educational research requires?

To address the problem, it becomes necessary to examine existing models of criticism, create models from archetypal ideas (which Jung would term part of the collective unconscious, our cultural zeitgeist)<sup>7</sup> about education and art, and synthesize these into a flexible conceptual framework for curriculum design which owes its life to an aesthetic conception of education.

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<sup>5</sup>Joseph Wood Krutch, Experience and Art: Some Aspects of the Esthetics of Literature (New York: H. Smith and R. Haas, 1932); Monroe C. Beardsley, ed. "Aesthetic Theory and Educational Theory" in Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958); Maxine Greene, Landscapes of Learning (New York: Teachers College Press, 1978).

<sup>6</sup>M. H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953); Leonard B. Meyer, Music, the Arts, and Ideas: Patterns and Predictions in Twentieth-Century Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

<sup>7</sup>C. G. Jung, Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955).

### Scope, Purposes, and Intents of the Study

This study will examine pervasive models of the aesthetic experience, of aesthetic criticism, and of aesthetic theories in order to synthesize them into a comprehensive design for an aesthetic curriculum which transcends the bounds of traditional course offerings in the fine arts. The models to be examined will be those which, to the writer's way of thinking, have provided educators in this century with explicit or tacit philosophical directions for curricular innovation and reform. These models from the literature may be said to persist as "archetypes" or organizing principles for how we educators view the aesthetic curriculum. The illumination of these archetypes and comments on how they influence our thinking and writing about the aesthetic curriculum are designed to achieve the first purpose of the study. The series of essays in Chapter Two will develop a new conceptual framework to assist in the critiquing of events within the aesthetic curriculum. The third purpose of the study will be to help educators devise new philosophies and programs for aesthetic education within school settings.

### Significance of the Study

There is some concern about the status of aesthetic education in our schools. There has never been a clear-cut mandate for instruction in the fine arts, much less for a comprehensive arts curriculum. Movements in this direction have been severed time and time again by social and political contingencies like world war, Sputnik, and the drop in average Scholastic Aptitude Test scores. Furthermore, current legislation focuses attention of the public and of educators upon basic remedial skills

which are highly cognitive in nature. There exists no disciplinary map for the fine arts as a whole, no standards by which school people can examine the quality of aesthetic life in their schools. Administrators continue to render lip service to fine arts curricula, yet in practice fail to support development and implementation with financial and personnel resources.

This study is significant in that it will:

1. Present information about the foundations of the aesthetic curriculum,
2. Advance the conviction that a basic education consists of encouraging perceptual, affective skills as well as logical skills, and of promoting self-knowledge of creative capacities as well as technical proficiencies,
3. Provide a conceptual framework which will help the educator explore new territory and expand old boundaries.

This study is also significant in that it will treat the aesthetic domain as a pervasive element in schooling, a transdisciplinary experiencing of beauty and meaning, not as a preserve which the fine arts claim exclusively for themselves. The fact that this study has been placed in the realm of educational philosophy, and not within the limits of one of the fine or applied arts also contributes to the significance and uniqueness of the views and conclusions. This is because aesthetic concerns pervade the entire educational field, and form a part of the social foundations of school research.

Art, like technology, is viewed as somewhat separate from everyday life. This is an unfortunate state of affairs, because both art and science are responsible for the shape of culture as well as being products of that culture. With this separation there coexists a mistrust

of artists, the result of centuries of artisans whose craft leaned more and more to decoration, and less to the production of useful articles for human existence. The non-quantitative measures of evaluation fall within this circle of distrust and suffer the same fate as aesthetic criticism. We have begun to see in the latter half of this century a synthesis between art and technology, and a flowering of aesthetic awareness within the applied sciences. Man is no longer content to accept utility as the only criterion for the design of devices to alleviate the struggle for survival. As this aesthetic awareness develops, it should follow that the public becomes ready to accept non-quantitative research into the arena of acceptable data about schooling. They already accept this form of information as part of the political, economic, and ethical decision-making processes in which society engages. It is curious that education should be a strong bastion of quantitative evaluation. The aim of this study is to establish a systematic form of evaluation which proceeds from the aesthetic modes of understanding.

Finally, the significance of this study also rests with the writer's belief that this document should be a contribution to the aesthetic life of the reader--it should contribute to an entente between the rational and aesthetic modes of valuing. As much as possible, it will try to communicate some unique experiences to the reader. It will succeed only to the extent that the dissertation is an inviting, appealing object, art in the fullest sense, a true effort to create and sustain beauty and meaning, to entertain as well as enlighten.



## Definitions

### Praxis, Metaphor, and Archetype

Several key words used in this study require an operational definition in order to clarify as well as justify their use. Definitions gathered from the literature will also be used; where there is ambiguity in the literature, or where the term's meaning has been expanded or limited by its use within the study, then it becomes necessary to arrive at a more precise account of how the word will be used. Sarason states,

As soon as one resorts to language the process of dissection of experience begins, and although this is both inevitable and valuable, it fractionates that which is whole and the ensuing array of part-characteristics renders difficult the task of understanding their strength, duration, and vicissitudes.<sup>8</sup>

Aesthetic criticism does not wholeheartedly endorse the fractionating of experience, nor does it insist that descriptions should substitute satisfactorily for reality. Criticism does make reflection upon the aesthetic experience more profitable because it equips us with the images and language to effectively communicate that experience.

In this study, praxis will denote reflective action. When used in an artistic referent, it means choices made about further encounters with art forms based upon the nature and intensity of past encounters. When used in an educational referent, praxis refers to observable changes in choices made on the basis of aesthetic experiences within a school curriculum. Teachers and students are both capable of praxis. Artists and audiences reflect praxis choices when the nature and intensity of the art object changes through technical skills or self-knowledge, or when choices

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<sup>8</sup>Sarason, Creation of Settings, p. 228.

are made to attend to art objects which are an extension of experiences with previous art. Praxis also refers to the self-knowledge gained through encounters with art and curriculum, when that self-knowledge results in choices to extend knowledge or to replicate experience.

In the poetic sense, a metaphor is a highly descriptive way of conveying meaning, a figurative rather than a literal way of saying something. "The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor" is a vivid example of poetic metaphor. In a broader sense, a metaphor may be an art object, or a model, or an idea. In this way, a metaphor may be said to be an image which stands for something else. We think in metaphors--mental images which race across the mind. We do not tend to confuse these mental images inside us with the "real thing" in the outside world. Nor does seeing a road at dusk normally result in our thinking about a ribbon of moonlight. The paradox of knowing that a metaphor is not "real," yet can convey a deeper, more pleasurable image than reality is the central concept of the separation of art and non-art.

An archetype is a pervasive idea or concept which shapes our thinking about certain human interests. We are often guilty of being unconscious about the influence and persistence of archetypes. One archetype under consideration in this study concerns the division of human mental processes into the logical and emotional. This archetype has its roots in classical Greek philosophy, and is found in the works of Schiller as well as twentieth-century research of the split brain. C. G. Jung wrote that the aim of research

is to force (Nature) to give answers to questions devised by Man. Every answer of Nature is therefore more or less influenced by the kinds of questions asked.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Jung, Synchronicity, p. 8.

An archetypal idea may be said to influence the kinds of questions which research forces Nature to answer.

### The Transdisciplinary Curriculum

A curriculum, in the words of James Macdonald  
is the study of what should constitute a world for learning, and  
how to go about making this world.<sup>10</sup>

Realizing the limitations placed upon those who would attempt to create  
this world, Macdonald refines his view to

the school setting . . . a potentially manageable microcosm of a  
rather unmanageable macrocosmic society.<sup>11</sup>

As difficult an assignment as this may appear to educators, there are  
always those of us who should make the attempt. There are certain ele-  
ments of a curriculum which are more manageable than others. The extent  
to which we wish to manage rather than orchestrate the development of  
total school life--to actively promote a schoolstyle or just watch it  
grow--reveals assumptions about the persons, places, and ways of knowing  
that each of us as teachers prizes and protects. An aesthetic school-  
style is one which cherishes the aesthetic experience, and actively en-  
courages teachers and students to seek it. A transdisciplinary conception  
of aesthetic education recognizes that it is not only a set of plans and  
objectives drawn up to implement courses in the fine arts (although those  
plans and objectives may form part of a larger design for an aesthetic

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<sup>10</sup>James B. Macdonald, "Value Bases and Issues for Curriculum"  
Curriculum Theory, eds. Alex Molnar and John A. Zahorik (Washington,  
D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1977),  
p. 15.

<sup>11</sup>Macdonald, "Value Bases," p. 28.

curriculum), but the way that the emotional events aligned with the larger curricular frame are handled.

It was necessary to use the word "transdisciplinary" to convey the meaning that the aesthetic curriculum embraces concepts throughout the school experience. "Interdisciplinary efforts" connotes an almost forced detente between separate school divisions of learning. A transdisciplinary view of aesthetic experiences assumes that the student will encounter forms which instruct and satisfy throughout the curriculum, and that these encounters will eventually be seen by individuals as desirable for themselves wherever they occur--and that the ends of learning are not the accumulation and ordering of facts and meanings, but the broadening and deepening of one's desire to have aesthetic experiences over a wide range of human interests and endeavors.

#### Models and Design

The term "model" has its limitations for description in aesthetics, but it also has advantages which make it a desirable word to explore. An inaccurate use of the word "model" is as a synonym for theory. A theory must give an account of the "why" of an event or series of events. The purpose of theory is explanation, even if this explanation is founded upon hypothesis alone. For example, a theory of aesthetic education in part must explain how schools become responsible for passing judgment on some art forms--that is, why some forms are included in the curriculum of the public schools, and why some are excluded. We generally expect that students will receive musical training in the secondary school in a large ensemble, such as chorus or band; it is less of an expectation that the

student will receive training in a homogeneous ensemble, or a small group, such as trombone choir or barbershop quartet. Few schools offer such experiences as a part of the organized, approved course of study for credit. A theory of aesthetic education must, in the traditional sense, explain this phenomenon through philosophic, pragmatic, or political assumptions based on observation. A model of aesthetic education as it happens will not explain, but describe. That is, a design must be generated which shows how these bands, choruses, trombone choirs, or barbershop quartets contribute to the growth of the individual through their interactions in his environment.

Models, like theories, are built upon assumptions. It is in making these assumptions about models that we create a true or distorted picture about what is taking place in schools. Given the band/trombone choir example above, one could assume that band is offered because it is intrinsically "better" as an art form than a trombone choir. One could also assume that band is offered instead of a trombone class because it attracts more students, and is, therefore, more economically prudent. To the extent that assumptions about models are explicit in their value positions--that is, what the model builder believes is good and true for a curriculum--then that model will also be accurate in its portrayal of an event as the model builder sees it. For this reason, a model is never bias-free.

Skill is model building--showing the "how" of something--consists of being able to show the parameters of the model builder's concerns about referents such as curricular events.

the formation of a model consists in conceptually marking off a perceptual complex . . . Every model is a pattern of symbols,

rules, and processes regarded as matching, in part or in totality, an existing perceptual complex. Each model stipulates, thus, some correspondence with reality, some relevance of items in the model to reality, and some verifiability between model and reality.<sup>12</sup>

To add to Meadows' excellent description of the model, the "existing perceptual complex" must include also the model builder's assumptions about the curriculum. In aesthetic criticism, any model which does not include this explicit caveat is limited and perhaps even misleading.

A formal model can devise, but it can also explicate and evaluate. To explicate is not to contribute to theory, but it is to clarify and complete theory. To evaluate is not to contribute to theory, but is to determine the objects falling within the range of the characterization of theory.<sup>13</sup>

It is clear in Maccia's view that model building is not theory building. Yet models derive from theory, as well as show designs which help implement theory. Thus models contribute to knowledge in that they show events from a pragmatic viewpoint, and serve as replicative agents by the efficacy and suitability of their design. There are two orders of models, as Maccia describes them:

To be a model of is to represent something, and to be a model for is to be represented in something. (Emphasis mine)

a model which is a representation (is) a 'first-order model':  
and a model which is being represented is a 'second-order model'.<sup>14</sup>

As esoteric as the distinction between first- and second-order models may appear, it becomes important to the study to distinguish between the two and constantly cast models under criticism into one light or another.

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<sup>12</sup>Paul Meadows, "Models, Systems, and Science," American Sociological Review 22 (Spring 1957): 88.

<sup>13</sup>Elizabeth Steiner Maccia, Models and the Meaning of Retrodution Paper #62-110 (Columbus, Ohio: Foundations Division, Bureau of Educational Research and Service, 1962), p. 10.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 4-5.

For example, a teacher looking at a "model curriculum," such as the widely acclaimed Evanston Township Plan, is seeing a representation of an event--a first-order model. That teacher may wish to use that plan as a replicative agent, that is, a plan for his own curriculum. In this sense, the Evanston Township Plan is a model for, or a second-order model. Those responsible for writing the Evanston Township Plan did so after years of trial and error in classroom settings; what they wrote down during their experiences teaching there is a representation of something--a first-order model. The sets of assumptions held by the teacher viewing that document as a second-order model are materially different from the assumptions of those who wrote the model with the benefit of hindsight. The inability of educators to view aesthetic curricula as first- or second-order models leads to frustration in the classroom. Many teachers accept state-adopted texts as first-order models, yet when used as second-order models in a curriculum, as plans for school learning experiences, the texts fall short of expectations. Educators often do not recognize the difference between models, a difference not in the plan or model itself, but in the use it is put to by various individuals with various assumptions, whose "perceptual complexes" are influenced by the function the model serves in their lives.

So we have seen that the model, the design, plan, or document itself is only a part of what must be considered in model building. The taking into account of the assumptions of the model builder and the model user must also form part of the critique of making and using models in curriculum studies. So to extend Meadows' description, each model stipulates

1. some correspondence with reality,
2. some relevance of items in the model to reality,

3. some verifiability between model and reality,
4. some accounting of the model builder's position with the model--as recorder (first-order) or as implementer (second-order).

In this study, a model may be either first or second order, or both at the same time, depending on the purpose of the reader or creator of the model. Since the model is basically a map--a picture or an image of an event, frozen in time, committed to paper for the purpose of capturing the essential features and interactions of ideas or concepts within the event, it can be inferred that several kinds of pictures will emerge. The first set of pictures can be called status models. They attempt to show how things are, how things operate; the picture is two-dimensional in that relationships are static or stopped in time. Examples of status models are Maslow's hierarchy of needs:

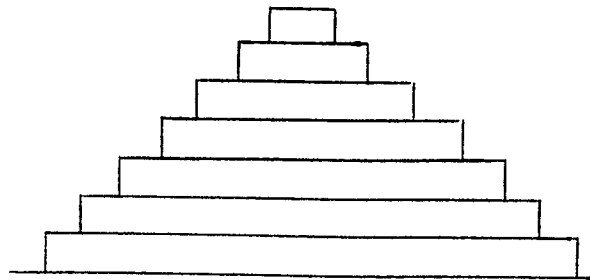


Fig. 1.

Design of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

and Brubaker's model of the creation-of-settings process (the amoeba).

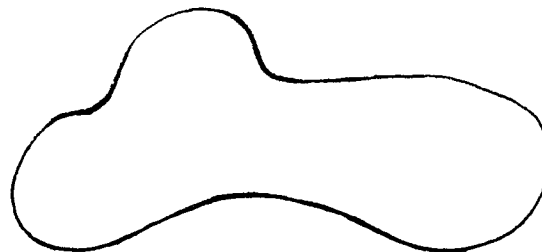


Fig. 2.

Design of Brubaker's Creation-of-Settings Model



Both models are concerned with a single design; both show an image of a series of events, which in reality never exist two-dimensionally, but can be rendered stationary for purposes of analysis or evaluation.

The second set of pictures includes models which try to put interconnected events into three dimensions, which try to add the feeling of movement or process. The dialectic or conflict resolution model shows how two ideas interact to inevitably lead to a third idea or event, a synthesis of the first two:

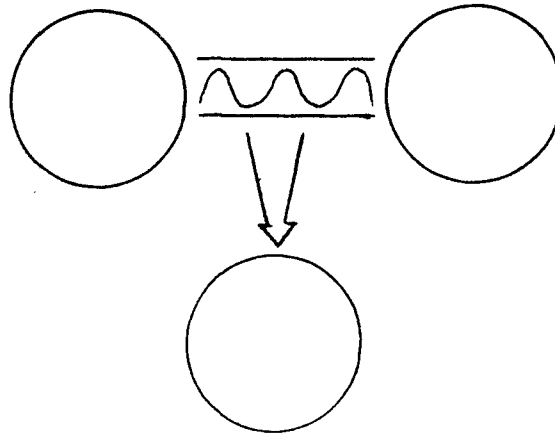


Fig. 3.

#### Design for a Conventional Dialectical Model

The pictures now begin to become more complicated, as the model maker tries to expand the model figures artistically. Another type of model which shows a progression from one state to another is the heuristic model, exemplified by the spiral or the ziggurat. To ascend from one event or idea through others to a final concept or theory (which in itself may be the starting point for another model) is shown like this:

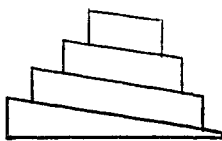


Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.

#### Two Heuristic Designs

Whether one ascends or descends the ziggurat, or travels inward or outward upon the spiral, is not solely a directional or semantic distinction. To arrive at self-knowledge, to illuminate a tacit assumption, the proper direction upon the spiral, metaphorically, would be inward. Similarly, the refining of theory would show an upward climb upon the ziggurat, as a search for program rationales through observation would be indicated by downward travel. There is a symbolic archetype in human experience which has us reaching up for knowledge, looking within for reflection, settling down to tasks, and stretching outward for understanding. The upward-downward and inward-outward metaphors of the ziggurat and spiral models make them convenient to use in dealing with the directionality of learning.

The final model design has to do with expansion into four dimensions, and here it becomes necessary to invite the reader to imagine the model, not on paper, but perhaps in the air before his eyes. The zetetic models postulated by Tykociner<sup>15</sup> deal with the ordering of recorded knowledge and the expansion of that knowledge by the individual, and include information on how that knowledge can be used to change himself. The model speaks of an inner core or recorded (memorized) knowledge expanding through certain phases of consciousness and ending not as a core, but as a shell. The metaphor which cannot be shown on paper is that of the stellar universe, proceeding from a dense core of super-heated material, exploding to fill space, moving outwardly in all directions at once, simultaneously giving birth to new stars and solar systems. This model shows the influence of

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<sup>15</sup>R. Tykociner, "Zetetics and Areas of Knowledge," Education and the Structure of Knowledge, ed. Stanley Elam (Chicago: Rand, McNally Co., 1964).

the archetypal outward movement for growth and control, just as science's description of the expanding universe is the result of archetypal thinking. As a simple, single frame of film is inadequate to capture this motion, so paper and pencil fail to render the outward motion, the inexorable burgeoning of the universe of personal knowledge. This is the most regrettable flaw in the zetetic type of model. Two dimensions fail to catch the essence of its multi-dimensionality. The closest attempt to concretize a zetetic model would be through the use of the cinema or a continuous hologrammatic projection.

The paper-and-pencil sketches known as models form only a part of the kind of models used in curriculum studies. They serve as corollary metaphors in criticism, as they assist the reader to form mental images of the way events and ideas interact and evolve. Models tend to follow archetypes of upward-downward and inward-outward directions. Designs after the fact are representative of something: first-order models. All of the designs in this section are of this type, because they are derived from events; an existing perceptual complex has been clarified or schematized by adding a sketch. Any of these models could be used as a second-order model, that is, to influence the way some future event might be planned.

#### Praxis as an Element of Aesthetic Education

Each encounter with art forms has certain characteristics which separate that encounter from other, more prosaic experiences which make up the majority of human endeavors. While the nature of the aesthetic

experience will be described in a later section, one desirable result of that experience is that the person, as participator in an art form, will make more or less enlightened judgments about that form, and will seek to replicate or avoid further experiences with that form. While art, like war and women, has often been described as being all things to all men, it is clear that some encounters with art will result in the wish to avoid the particular form under consideration. Other interactions with art will prompt the beholder to seek newer, fresher experiences with the same work or others of its kind. As educators see students consistently making choices about art forms, and acting upon those choices, it can be inferred that praxis--reflective action--has taken place. Praxis becomes more effective for the person as his principles for choice-making become broader and deeper. This repertoire of principles generally emerges from past experiences and past efforts at praxis in a circular fashion. The more diverse the art forms the person encounters, the greater the range of choices available to him; the more intense the interaction, the more likely that a particular form or genre will be selected or avoided in the future, according to the pleasure involved in the original interaction. A person hearing selections from an opera on an inadequate sound system, in a classroom that is poorly lit and ventilated, in the presence of others whose company may exert a disrupting influence, may make judgments about the music which are not totally the result of a musical experience. If his experience stops there, he may not choose to hear that music again. Should the same student find himself in the audience at a performance of the same opera, his interaction with that same piece of art will be substantially different from the encounter in the classroom. If that same

person is given the opportunity to actually participate in a performance of that opera, his subsequent decisions to repeat or avoid the event are colored by the intense nature of the experience he had. So praxis in art--the decision to increase or decrease further participation with art forms--is fashioned by:

1. The nature of the encounter
  - 1.1 as a participator or creator
  - 1.2 as a critical member of an audience (the person is required to make analytical statements about the work)
  - 1.3 as a casual member of an audience (the person is not required to make analytical statements about the work)
2. The intensity of the encounter
  - 2.1 in performance, all the logical and motor capacities are engaged
  - 2.2 as a critical audience, the logical capacities are called upon
  - 2.3 as a casual audience, a person may respond to art through emotional channels, as well as through motor activities
3. The kinds of knowledge the person may have gained through the encounter
  - 3.1 the student may learn something about art forms
  - 3.2 the student may learn something about the feelings and experiences of other persons
  - 3.3 the student may learn something about himself

Four young people had the opportunity to watch many performances of an outdoor drama several summers ago. At that time, they may be said to have had interactions with that art form like 1.3, 2.3, and 3.1 above. As their summer progressed, it was apparent through their continued desire to witness the play, the kinds of questions they asked about it, and the kinds of relationships they developed with the members of the cast, that their modes of interaction were changing to 1.2, 2.2, and 3.2 and 3.3. The next summer, each youngster chose to audition for and participate in the drama. As participators in actual performances, each talked about how different it felt to be on stage, rather than in an audience

(1.1), how much more physically and emotionally taxing, yet satisfying their roles were (2.1), and what kinds of things they had learned about their own abilities in theater (3.3). Yet not all chose to repeat the creative experience in theater during the third summer: two remained on stage, two decided to "work the house" at the amphitheater in other jobs. What had appeared to be four children undergoing the same experience, was really four different episodes with four different consequences. Each based subsequent praxis upon the unique constellation of value decisions derived from the nature and intensity of the encounter, and the knowledge gained from it. So while art may strive to be all things to all men, praxis in art will be different for each person, as that person is different from others. The outline above provides only a starting point from which to discuss the multitude of variables involved in examining reflective action based on art forms.

The Aesthetic Dimension in Education:  
Theory and Experience

Any definition of the word "aesthetic," when used among artists or aestheticians, will probably precipitate more argument than agreement. As a branch of philosophy, aesthetics is fairly new, having its genesis as a discipline in the world of post-Enlightenment Germany. Baumgarten, Kant, and Schiller are frequently credited with giving aesthetic theory a place in philosophical scholarship, and refining the models of aesthetic inquiry beyond comments on taste and style to include the search for underlying principles throughout all art forms. Nineteenth-century aesthetic theory focused on the role of the artist, and began to posit questions like:

What is the aim of art?

Should art concern itself with morality?

Should art be used to entertain or instruct?

What should the artist say through art about life, art, politics?

These questions remain unanswerable to this day, giving our twentieth-century aesthetic philosophers some material for reflection. Yet aesthetic theorizing has advanced beyond the concerns of pure philosophy into the realms of science and politics with questions like:

What kinds of forms are art, and what kinds are not?

What is the psychology of perception, and how can artists use it?

What forums are available for artists, and who controls them?

It is possible to see how the concerns of aesthetics are influenced by the cultural zeitgeist. As the problems of culture are explicated through art, so does aesthetic theory transform the experiencing of art into cultural influence through the continuing process of art criticism. If explanations for the impact of art works and the experiences they produce finally succeed, it is hoped they will do nothing to lessen the mystery and beauty of the aesthetic experiences humans have.

Traditional aesthetic theory confines its inquiry to art forms.

To define beauty, not in the most abstract, but in the most concrete terms possible, is the aim of the student of aesthetics.<sup>16</sup>

This task may seem impossible, but each of us fulfills it to our satisfaction each time we encounter art. Our likes and dislikes are based upon a fluid set of expectations about art, however informed or naive. We are all amateur theorists when it comes to art.

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<sup>16</sup>Walter Pater, The Renaissance, ed. Kenneth Clark (Cleveland, Ohio: World Books, 1961), p. 181.

Aesthetic theory also forms the basis for appreciation and criticism of art works. Using a set of rather sophisticated expectations, critical inquiry happens weekly in the local newspapers. Whether or not the professional critic is aware of the nuances of aesthetic philosophy is apparent in the style and content of his criticism: how he uses the technical language of the genre, which concerns he addresses, and the importance he attaches to the artist, work, universal ideas, and the audience. Usually (and unfortunately) media critics base their work on assumptions which are somewhat narrow in their formalistic view. To critique with insight and skill demands an understanding of traditional and revisionist aesthetic theory, and a willingness to go beyond the technical evaluation of performance (the violas were out of tune) to a theorizing about the moral and political aspects of the performer's choice of work (why are the Wagner music dramas rarely heard in Miami Beach?), the awareness of the audience (the high schoolers did not grasp the implications of John Cage's 4' 33"), and the efforts of the performer to involve the audience in his unique view of the art work (why is there no verbal communication between the symphony conductor and the audience, but so much between audience and performers at rock concerts?).

Aesthetic theory can be expanded to treat with human endeavors other than art. The key idea was expressed by Krutch: he felt that the domain of aesthetic theorizing extended to whatever is not found in Nature, yet is treated as real.<sup>17</sup> Thus, our modern conception of aesthetic inquiry extends to most human interests, with the exception of the natural world. The basic question in such exercises in criticism is how to deal with the

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<sup>17</sup>Krutch, Experience and Art, p. 28.



variety of forms: their suitability to a situation, their elegance, economy, and effectiveness, their variations and similarities, their proliferation, their use as archetypal models for other forms, their morality and meaning for the persons who live in and work with them. We are considering not only the forms of architecture, nourishment, clothing, transportation, and the like, but also the forms our interactions with these items take, and the forms our personal and cultural choices impose upon their implementation. As much as any other disciplinary mode of inquiry, the new conception of aesthetics is a barometer for the changing social environment, and a foundation for inquiry into the human condition.

As we continue to speak of art, curriculum, and the aesthetic domain, it is well to remember that traditional ideas of art have been expanded to include the creative efforts of persons in many disciplines whose efforts produce forms which delight and enchant us, as well as inform and amaze.

The aesthetic experience, bracketed apart from the everyday, still has its foundations in the commonplace images of life. As well as in art, the areas of religion, labor, learning, and morality possess an aesthetic dimension, which when considered allows judgments based not only upon logic, but also upon a sense of the beautiful. Thus, it can be asserted that art, and the possibility of aesthetic inquiry, exist everywhere in human life. In the panorama of human interests, each event calls for a response from our sense of the beautiful, as well as from our sense of the good, just, and true.

At the heart of learning, for the aesthetic educator, lies the aesthetic experience: a recognizable yet intangible moment, a fleeting

synthesis of the logical and emotional capacities. The moment is of great import to the person, yet worthless in itself, except in that it points to other moral or ethical judgments. The aesthetic experience informs the social, political, and educational realms of judgment because it is capable of revealing to us our fantasies and fears, doubts and expectations; it is potentially a purifier of the imagic storehouse of the consciousness, ridding us of faded stereotypes and tired metaphors; it can be as a mirror to the beholder, a means of comparison between the attitudes and beliefs of individuals.<sup>18</sup> In these three ways, the aesthetic moment sustains, clarifies, and alters our thoughts and actions. The self-renewal which proceeds from the aesthetic state should enliven the decisions of moral action or praxis, and should enrich the logical and emotional capacities from which it springs.

Where there has been no perceived connection between the art process, the art object, and moral behavior, herein is proposed a new conception. It is based upon the status of knowledge about the aesthetic experience, the intentionality of the artist, and the role of praxis in the growth of the person. If the intent of art, according to revisionist aesthetic theory, is both to communicate a unique view by the artist as well as provide an ambiguous object to focus those views, the art object becomes a map for praxis, that is, something which calls for the participator in art to fill in the blanks--engage in praxis. The participator commits himself to action by the very fact that he has witnessed the art work--further decisions to reflection depend partly upon the effectiveness

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<sup>18</sup>Harry Broudy, Enlightened Cherishing: An Essay on Aesthetic Education (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1972).

of the art work in communicating a unique view, and partly upon the willingness of the participator to act on the basis of that view.

Sontag posits that the aesthetic experience assists moral judgments in the following ways:

1. That morality proceeds from decisions made consciously, after reflection upon alternatives,
2. That our responses to art are moral responses--"the quickening of our sensibilities and the enlivening of our consciousness,"
3. That this enlivening nourishes our capacities for moral choice making, and prompts our readiness to choose a course of moral action,
4. That these choices are prerequisite to moral behavior,
5. That moral action indicates the development of judgment based on an ethical system which prizes images of the good, just, true, and beautiful.<sup>19</sup>

Assuming that an aesthetic experience has taken place for the participator in art, Sontag expects that intense interactions with art help persons develop capacities for moral judgment which vary in kind and degree from the judgments of persons with limited aesthetic experiences. It is important to distinguish between capacity and behavior at this point; one is always reminded of the use to which the Wagner music dramas were put in the notorious prison camps at Belsen, Auschwitz, and Theresienstadt.

Recent writers in aesthetic philosophy have attempted to refine a description of consciousness in the aesthetic mode. The model of aesthetic experience postulated by Beardsley has an interesting parallel in the work of John Dewey. This similarity of ideas about aesthetic

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<sup>19</sup>Susan Sontag, Against Interpretation and Other Essays (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1966), p. 25.

experience and learning suggests that aesthetic theory and educational philosophy share many points, and that the stimulation of inquiry across disciplinary lines could be of mutual benefit to art and education. To the question "to what extent and in what respects can the aesthetic experience serve as a model for the educational experience?" Beardsley replies:

- a) It (the aesthetic experience) involves attention to a portion of the phenomenally objective field, either sensuous (such as the colors in a painting) or intentional (such as the events in a novel), and to its elements and internal relationship.
- b) It involves an awareness of forms, i.e., relationships among the elements of a phenomenal field, especially (but not exclusively) relationships of similarity/contrast, and serial order . . . it involves perceiving the field as a stratified design, in which a complex appears to have a certain unity just because of the relationships among the parts of which it is (or appears to have been) composed.
- c) It involves an awareness of regional quality . . . simple qualities of complexes, and especially (but not exclusively) those qualities which are described by words taken over metaphorically from human contexts. The class of regional qualities corresponds roughly to these aesthetic concepts . . . beauty, elegance, grace, dignity, irony, wit, frivolity.
- d) It is characterized by a fairly high degree of unity in comparison with everyday, ordinary experiences. Unity has two distinguishable parts: coherence and completeness. An aesthetic experience is unusually coherent, in that the various perceptions, feelings, inferences, recognitions, memories, desires, etc., that occur in the course of its development . . . have a character of belonging or fitting together, or succeeding one another with continuity. An aesthetic experience is unusually complete in that the experience marks itself off fairly definitely from other experiences--both from contemporaneous items of awareness that do not belong to it, and from other experiences that precede it or follow it.
- e) It is intrinsically gratifying, or, in other words, brings with it a lingering enjoyment that is felt as part of the development of the experience, and a final satisfaction or fulfillment that may linger long after the experience has ended.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Beardsley, "Aesthetic Theory," p. 9-10.

In the Deweyan model of educational experience, the teacher-artist creates an aesthetic object (the learning environment) where the attention of the audience (students) is engaged, and their imagination stimulated to inquiry by the ambiguous relationships of elements within the environment. Dewey speaks of "having an experience" as a situation with a unity, where every successive part flows freely, continually, and which runs its course to fulfillment.

"Its close is a consummation, and not a cessation. Such experience is a whole, and carried with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency."<sup>21</sup>

The educational experience shares many traits in common with the aesthetic experience. In both, the learner may perceive with particular clarity the nature of relationships within a whole, completeness and coherence of the events at hand, regional or emotional qualities, and feelings of satisfaction or fulfillment. Aesthetic experiences which produce feelings of disquiet and dissatisfaction are useful in their own way, and often act as a powerful stimulus to inquiry, reflection, and action.

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<sup>21</sup>John Dewey, Art as Experience (New York: Minton, Balch, and Co., 1934), p. 54.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review of the literature has a dual purpose: first, to establish the existence of several families of scholarship in aesthetic philosophy and related disciplines, and second, to explore the relationships between these families and to assess their influence upon the model presented in Chapter Three. The review is organized into three essays. The first essay concerns aesthetic criticism and will justify it as an alternative methodology to scientific inquiry. Three models of criticism will be examined and examples of their use will be cited. The second essay will deal with creativity and hedonism and their part in the aesthetic experience. Essay three covers the creation-of-settings model and the relation of aesthetic theory to social action.

#### Aesthetic Criticism as a Methodology

Any study of a set of points, any construction of a conceptual framework, any design for or of a model, or any work of art, may be said to proceed from a tacit or explicit value base, through a concretization into a physical form, into a set of repercussions for the creator, the participant or viewer, and the critic. Often we forget that art--as well as instruction--proceeds from a set of life experiences which in their vivacious reality create subsidiary, ephemeral events in whose vicarious nature we relive and perpetuate the original emotions and feelings of the primary artistic or curricular form.

Works of art are constructions serving to arrange fragments of observation and experience into patterns which are pleasing because they are understandable in terms of human thought and consistent in terms of human feeling.<sup>22</sup>

These subsidiary events, the residue of contact with art and curriculum, are the expressive building blocks from which effective criticism is built. To attempt criticism solely upon objective forms, the so-called formal elements of art or curriculum, denies the importance of the participator or audience. Like the example of the tree falling soundlessly in the forest, would there still be art and curricula if there were no one to experience them? The aim of aesthetic criticism, then, is to expand the artistic experience by illuminating those vicarious feelings, desires, emotions, satisfactions, and ambiguities which the audience derives from contact with art. The intent is to allow the viewer to see the building blocks as well as the edifice. Each piece of criticism will be a unique work; each critic will see the edifice in a different way. Each piece of criticism will employ a methodology most suited to the nature of the particular aesthetic event under consideration. If the critic shares an aesthetic experience with the poet, playwright, or pianist,

any attempt to describe it must involve something personal . . . that now so-much-despised something which was once admirably described as 'the adventures of a soul among masterpieces'.<sup>23</sup>

Yet aesthetic criticism as a methodology is not without its dimension of systematic rigor. It is also not without its uses as an observational tool in areas like curriculum theorizing which seek to point

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<sup>22</sup>Krutch, Experience and Art, p. 101-102.

<sup>23</sup>Krutch, Experience and Art, p. 108.

out the social, moral, and ethical foundations of schooling. Educational philosophy and evaluation depended upon criticism for decades. Only in this country, in this latter half of the century, have sociometric and statistical models been borrowed from other disciplines for use in educational evaluation. Now educational critics are called upon to justify their craft on the basis of its replicability. Aesthetic criticism has some distinct advantages over scientific methodologies because the rich, descriptive nature of its narrative more effectively communicates the subsidiary vicarious emotional events which take place in art and schooling. The mode or style of criticism may be replicable: the unique results vary from critic to critic.

There are two models of aesthetic criticism which bear examination as good examples of descriptive methodology. The first, that of Joseph Wood Krutch, places critical writing upon a continuum of possible personal involvement with the art form.

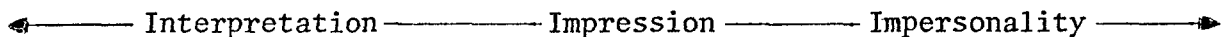


Fig. 6

A Continuum of Critical Styles (Based on Krutch)

A critic who attempts an interpretation of a work of art does so from an explicit personal value base. Using Picasso's Guernica as an example, a critic interpreting that work may view it as an anti-war statement, since he sees in the twisted figures and bloated human and animal parts a vivid description of the aftermath of war. His interpretation is purposive--it views art in relation to the values he holds. A critic who uses interpretational criticism works within the social milieu



which nurtured him in order to diagnose the posture of the artist, and to prescribe reactions for viewers. Interpretation can be a form of social criticism, because it draws moral, "ought" relationships between the artist, the work, the critic, and the audience.

Critics who offer impressions of artistic events choose a different value orientation. They wish to advance the notion that the worth of art resides in the effect it has upon the viewer. With himself at the center of the aesthetic experience, the impressionist critic often muses about the feelings and emotions a particular aesthetic event inspires. His commentary is sometimes verbose and rambling. Its intent is to assist each viewer to experience art as an illumination of personal values. A critic using an impressionistic mode to examine Guernica uses expressive language to convey a sense of the emotions which the painting evokes within himself. These emotions are drawn from the universal human experience, and contribute back to the enrichment of human life as the readers of criticism compare their feelings with those of the critic. The horror of the bombing of the Basque village is but an example of the suffering humans endure. The important aspect of this type of criticism is its ability to give voice to the emotions which the artist has silently created within the viewer. Like interpretational criticism, impressionistic styles have their prescriptive dimension, but it is a personal rather than a social one. These criticisms acknowledge the unique nature of each encounter with art. Impressionistic criticism assumes that each participator in art forms can articulate the emotional impact which art has. It does not stress the verbalization of the formal, structural qualities of art, nor does it prize the ability of the viewer to analyze

art in those terms. Impressionistic criticism like that of John Ruskin is heavily laden with description (the what), but not with explanation (the why). Much criticism of this variety was accomplished before the study of psychology developed models of perception. Recently, there has been a return to an introspective art criticism. Now, however, armed with the formidable vocabulary of the research in perception and emotion, it is quite a different criticism from its post-Romantic predecessor.

The doctrine of impersonality, or objectivism, would have us believe that we can come to know art through attending to its form, and that therefore the proper posture of the critic is that of an evaluator of the separate elements within the artistic whole. This is akin to the educator who believes that the nature of schooling can be examined by looking at students' grades, achievement scores, teacher morale according to measures such as the Purdue Inventory, and so on. The objectivist critic eschews a value base, but there are values operating, if they are not apparent. This "New Wave" of criticism treats the emotional aspects of art as emanating from the unique combination of design elements within a work. An objectivist studying Guernica would attempt to ascribe the effect of the work to the balance, colors, textures, and shapes used by Picasso. The objectivist critic would argue that our cultural conditioning to certain nuances of design within Guernica should produce exactly the aesthetic effect desired by Picasso. While inflating the importance of technical design in creating emotional response in art, this mode of criticism often ignores the variety of response for the issue of conditioning to technical development itself. Leonard B. Meyer offers an excellent example of objectivist criticism. His is a persuasive view of

the effectiveness of form in communicating musical ideas. In comparing a phrase from J. S. Bach's Little Fugue in g with a similar phrase from a work by Geminiani, Meyer demonstrates that forms which tend to frustrate rather than fulfill expectations are superior to forms which require less effort from the listener to "fill in the blanks." To Meyer, elements which have ambiguous meaning are better than those which are immediately self-evident. Meyer bases his argument that the Bach is a better work than the Geminiani upon the fact that the melodic line in the Bach does not reach its goal immediately, thus involving the listener's mental efforts to a higher degree.<sup>24</sup> While seeming to acknowledge the importance of perception and conditioning in music listening behavior, Meyer nevertheless makes the point that regardless of individual differences in perception and conditioning to musical events, the effects of a well-turned phrase or effective visual composition will fall within predictable bounds for the great majority of individuals in any audience. Thus the superiority of form and the predictability of perception is the central concept around which an objective, impersonal style of criticism evolves.

The work of M. H. Abrams provides still another analytic model for aesthetic criticism. In Abrams' design, criticism is a way in which the critic or viewer can extend his personal involvement in the art form by increasing his awareness of the relationships the art form has to the artist, to the universal ideas it embodies or evokes, and to the audience to which it is presented.

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<sup>24</sup>Meyer, Music, The Arts, and Ideas, p. 25.

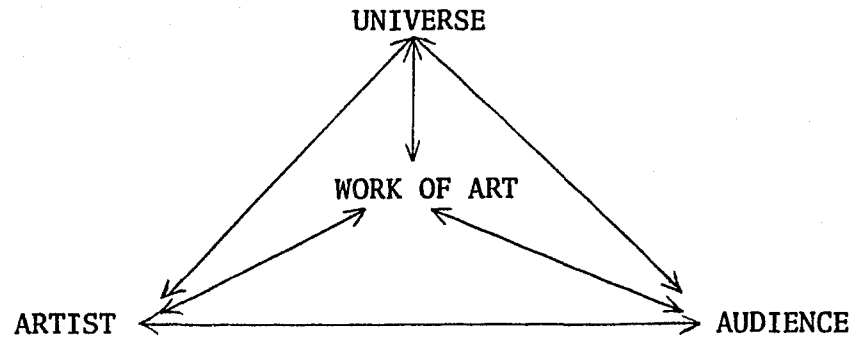


Fig. 7.

### Relations of Elements in Critical Writing<sup>25</sup>

The critic is required, when using Abrams' model, to explore relationships and levels of awareness between universal ideas and the artist, the artist and the audience (of major importance in contemporary arts and letters), and between the audience and the universal ideas they confront in art. Criticism is systematized through four concepts:

1. The work of art has value only in relation to humans and their ideas,
2. The artist and the audience form covenants of belief, and the nature of these covenants reveals much about the work of art,
3. The artist has an obligation to "tie into" universal ideas while communicating personal ideas,
4. The participator in art grows into the role of critic as his ability to "tie into" universal ideas increases through understanding.

Abrams' model assumes that the critic has wide experiences with art forms--the best experiences being the most direct, as creator or re-creator of art, like a poet or musician. Those who have no direct experiences with art are encouraged to develop a proficiency with the

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<sup>25</sup>Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp, p. 10.

language of the art forms being critiqued. Abrams also stresses the art-like quality of good criticism--his own writing demonstrates an expertise in using the expressive qualities of language. Criticism using Abrams' model is an exercise in descriptive comparison and contrast. The critic uses a connoisseur's judgment in setting up a network of relationships which remain in potential flux because of the arbitrary nature of the design. Another critic, using the same model, might create a different design because of his choice to explore some relationships more deeply than others. Each person using Abrams' model needs to see himself as an important factor in the critical methodology--a catalyst for the ideas and concepts he must bring to the study of art forms.

It can be seen that an aesthetic methodology may be fashioned which combines descriptive freedom with scholastic rigor, which makes clear relationships while acknowledging the fluidity and ambiguity of these conclusions. Thus, to bring aesthetic criticism to curricular forms, the student of aesthetic methodology must:

1. Attempt vivid description through literary means, including the use of metaphors and anecdotes, the drawing of definitions, and the derivation of models,
2. Apply these definitions, models, and metaphors to educational phenomena in a systematic way,
3. Attend to the value base of the definitions, models, and metaphors in their historical contexts as well as in the here and now,
4. Forge conclusions based upon comparisons using the poles of universal ideas, works of art, the artist, and the audience (educational philosophy, specific curricula, the teacher, and the students),
5. Cast these conclusions in a conceptual framework which adequately describes the relationships of the four elements above, and

6. Imbue that framework with a flexibility or ambiguity which can make it useful as a critical tool in other curricular or artistic situations; the final product should remain within the spirit of "art (as) a realm of human freedom; it is perpetually being remodeled in accordance with human desires."<sup>26</sup> It is wise for us to remember that "mystery is an essential element of any work of art."<sup>27</sup>

### Creativity and Hedonism

In this essay, several dimensions of creativity will be examined and explicated: perception, process, and product will be fit into the model of aesthetic education which is being built. Hedonism, or the pleasure factor in the aesthetic experience, will also be traced through the literature.

Perception, as a scientific model, consists of a number of fragmented abstract reactions to environmental and subjective stimuli. In an aesthetic model, perception is a fluid, changeable process, capable of being trained or manipulated by the perceiver. The person can change his or her method or way of perceiving and organizing environmental and subjective events. One may also choose to reorganize the perceptions of others through aesthetic means; this reorganization of perception may well be a major aim of the artist as he or she creates an art object or event. The teacher in the aesthetic model attempts to help students with this reorganization. Altered states of consciousness which proceed in a natural fashion from these changes in perception help students become aware of connections between self and events which may have gone unnoticed

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<sup>26</sup>Krutch, Experience and Art, p. 96.

<sup>27</sup>Luis Bunuel, quoted by Penelope Gilliatt, "Interview with Luis Bunuel" The New Yorker, November 24, 1977, p. 54.

in more ordinary modes of perception.

Below are two scenarios in which some sixth-grade students participated.

#### Scenario I

The students approached the door of the media center with anticipation and nervousness. Each quietly chose one partner. Peering around the door frame, one pair scurried across the lobby of the school and dived for cover against the wall by the principal's office. Crouching, hands nearly to the floor, they hurried past the office door, underneath the window. Escaping detection so far, one scuttled under a bench, the other headed for a hiding place inside the alcove leading to the boys' rest room. So far, their reconnaissance was successful--no one was on the hall, no one had seen them. Another stealthy pair shot out of the media center door, across the lobby; the first pair flattened themselves against the wall and inched back down the corridor. Stooping below door windows, they progressed back toward the media center as their companions made their way in the opposite direction. Two teachers coming off break opened the door of the lounge and stepped into the hall. They spied the second pair, bodies flat against the wall, arms and legs splayed out, heads well back and chests heaving from fear. "What is going on out here?" The first pair spotted the teachers and launched themselves silently from their lair across the

#### Scenario II

The hall was quiet. At 10:15 on a Friday morning, the usual bustling activity of the primary wing momentarily ceased. It was as if the school had become a giant cat, muscles tensed and twitching, waiting to pounce on lunch. A pair of sixth-graders paused by the door of the media center, surveying the empty hall and the doors which on either side opened on offices, lounges and classrooms. As the pair walked quietly across the lobby, several teachers and aides exiting the office passed them going in the opposite direction. Engaged in discussion, the teachers did not spare the students a glance. As the students proceeded down toward the boys' room, the principal stepped out of the lounge and said hello. Returning her greeting, the pair made their turnaround. Other, younger students began to line up to go out to play. Walking slowly back to the media center, the pair encountered three eighth-graders on their way across the lobby. Heads together, arms full of books, the older students rushed past unaware of anything but their gossip and giggles. The sixth-grade pair stepped into the media center; except for the principal's greeting, it was as if no one had noticed their presence in the hall. It was as if they had never been there at all.

lobby and back into the media center. They had not been caught!

Each student in the class participated in both scenarios. Those who were seen by others during Scenario I reported that they were stared at, asked "what are you doing?", even apprehended by zealous or inquisitive teachers. By contrast, participation in Scenario II elicited not one curious comment from others on the hall. Students decided that there are ordinary and not-ordinary ways of accomplishing the same goal. In this exercise, the goal was simply to reach the alcove of the boys' room and return to the media center. By creating not-ordinary ways to do that, students violated the expectations of those they met, sharpened others' perceptions, and whetted their curiosities. It was a fact that some observers even became suspicious and sought out the teacher of the exercise to inquire as to her sanity. During Scenario II, an ordinary means of attaining a goal, no resistance was encountered from others on the hall. It almost seemed at times that no one noticed the hall wanderers at all.

Students express a number of ideas after such an exercise. One evinced his belief that if one is different--that is, engaged in activities not considered normal for that place and time, or appearing to be doing a normal thing in a strange or unfamiliar way--one is destined to be singled out, perhaps even in trouble. Another idea which several students shared was that it was possible to change others' reactions to creative behavior, but that it was not always possible to predict how they would react.

The interrelationship between perception and creativity has been studied by a few psychologists and educators. Among them, G. Stanley



Hall emphasized the role of perception in training the child's character;<sup>28</sup> Sigmund Freud believed that creative behavior was a therapeutic aid in resolving childhood conflicts dealing with love and rejection.<sup>29</sup> John Dewey asserted that childhood creativity should be encouraged because the resulting broadening of perception helped the child 1) come to terms with the environment, 2) attain a sense of equilibrium, and 3) behave intelligently by solving problems based on experience.<sup>30</sup> Viktor Lowenfeld, an art educator of the Progressive Era, crystallized Dewey's ideas into a model for child development through art education.<sup>31</sup> Using traditional art media, he worked with very young students to create a sequential skills program which taught the fundamentals of drawing as well as the steps in problem solving which Dewey advocated. James Mursell, in music education, working at about the same time, used Dewey's problem-solving model in a limited way to teach creativity with the materials of music. Mursell's methods stressed ear training, honing aural perceptions of relationships among pitches in a musical composition.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Stanley G. Hall, Aspects of Child Life and Education (New York: Appleton and Co., 1921).

<sup>29</sup>Morris Weitz, "Art--Who Needs It?" Journal of Aesthetic Education 10 (Spring 1976): 20-27.

<sup>30</sup>John Dewey, Art and Education (Merion, Pennsylvania: The Barnes Foundation Press, 1929).

<sup>31</sup>Viktor Lowenfeld and W. Lambert Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1964).

<sup>32</sup>James Mursell, Principles of Music Education (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1927).

The development of perception as a fundamental condition of the aesthetic experience dates back to G. W. F. Hegel in the early 1800's. T. M. Knox, in his introduction to Hegel's Aesthetics, points out a metaphor of which Hegel was particularly fond:

The eye does not see itself except through its reflection in a mirror. Consciousness becomes aware of itself by being aware of objects and then by being reflected back into itself from them.<sup>33</sup>

As the student progresses in an aesthetic education, his perception guides him to new understandings of what is self, and what is not self. Technique, then, becomes the way the student reconciles tools, instruments, media, or learned actions (Not-self) with his feelings, emotions, and desires (Geist or Self). This dialectical view of art is a pervasive archetype which has influenced many writers and researchers in the various artistic disciplines. Some educators have recently attempted to break away from traditional views of perception and art. Kenneth Beittel offers a contrast to the sequential training of perception in favor of a holistic, affective approach. In his view, learning is more than a set of skills to be copied, more than just educating a student to perceive in a progressively more sophisticated manner. Learning, says Beittel, is potential for action which is "teased out" through being and becoming, encounter and dialogue. It is a process where the student recognizes that all he has is "Self," and that the act of creation is more important than the evaluation of what is produced. While studying with a master craftsman in Japan, Beittel learned the Japanese symbol for metaphor means "speaking in darkness." His comment on sequential skills is

Everything must be learned at once because nothing can be

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<sup>33</sup>T. M. Knox, Introduction to Hegel's Aesthetics, p. x.

learned at all. One cannot learn to speak in darkness by speaking in the light. The child and the novice are protected by their ignorance. The "everything" they must face in their own proper darkness is commensurate with the scope of their heart and mind. It is even so with the greatest genius . . . the work of the child and of the genius can both address us as art speaking.<sup>34</sup>

Still, other educators cling to the dialectic between material and self:

How does one learn to draw, paint or sculpt?

1. Skill in the management of material,
2. Skill in perceiving qualitative relationships among those forms in the work itself, in the environment, and in mental images,
3. Skill in inventing forms that satisfy the producer within the limits of the materials he works,
4. Skill in producing spatial order, aesthetic order, and expressive power.<sup>35</sup>

Rudolf Arnheim supports the idea that artistic creativity is "going from whole to particular by a process of perceptual differentiation."<sup>36</sup> What is implied by traditional views and eschewed by artist-teachers like Beittel is that the artist must have a fair idea of where his technique leads him, and what the resulting product will be, before and during the actual creative process. The education of perception, then, in traditional aesthetic education, is to render more predictable the outcomes of the creative process and to give the artist finer control of the media and technique used in producing an art object. But to Eisner, "the joy of

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<sup>34</sup>Kenneth Beittel, "Perceptions of the Artist about the Affective Domain" in Feeling, Valuing, and the Art of Growing, eds. Louise M. Ber- man and Jessie A. Roderick (Washington, D. C.: Association for Super- vision and Curriculum Development, 1977), pp. 114-115.

<sup>35</sup>Elliot W. Eisner and David W. Ecker, eds., Readings in Art Education (Waltham, Massachusetts: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1966), p. 46.

<sup>36</sup>Rudolf Arnheim, Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1954).

the ride, even more than the arrival, is the motive force behind the artist's work."<sup>37</sup> To Beittel, "the artist chooses to act in fullness of being, in the midst of absurdity and nothingness."<sup>38</sup> Thus the above represent the newer view of aesthetic education which infers unity from the dialectic; it emphasizes process rather than product.

There is a good reason for the present dissatisfaction with product-oriented aesthetic education. Teachers and parents tend to confuse the artistic products and actions of their children with the artistic endeavors of professionals. In the rush to encourage our students to develop more sophisticated skill in handling media, the creative process is often overlooked. For example, a ten-year-old boy was richly rewarded with praise for a poem he brought home, but castigated for sitting in the closet with the lights off to "watch the pictures on my eyelids." Clearly, a creative process which does not result in a product is not as highly valued as that process which does. Similarly, as illustrated by Scenarios I and II, parents and teachers tend to respond positively to behaviors which conform to aesthetic norms or expectations, and respond ambiguously to childhood behaviors which do not seem to fit into traditional aesthetic patterns.

The hedonist view of the aesthetic experience focuses less upon the formal comparative aspects of art and more upon the pleasurable and ecstatic. Hedonist aesthetics predate external aesthetics, having an early link with the search for and creation of beauty. Plato, in the Greater Hippias, commented upon the beauty and pleasure in living life to be

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<sup>37</sup>Eisner, The Educational Imagination, p. x.

<sup>38</sup>Beittel, "Perceptions," p. 113.

rich, healthy, honored by the greeks, to reach an old age, and, after burying his parents nobly, himself to be borne to the tomb with solemn ceremony by his own sons.<sup>39</sup>

Hedonism and the good life have been intertwined in literature ever since the time of Plato. The usual connotation, however, inferred from the word hedonist, brings to mind a profligate individual engaged in constant revelry, squandering money and energy in the search for ever more intense earthly pleasures. This description is more that of a sybarite. In this discussion, hedonism is used to refer to the transient pleasures which accompany the artistic object or creative experience. Hedonistic vicissitudes may range from mild sensations of comfort, rightness, and well-being to ecstasies, visions, and hallucinations.

Writers who have expressed hedonist philosophy include St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine of Hippo, and David Hume. Aquinas viewed art and music as aids in the production of good acts, from which pleasurable sensations result.<sup>40</sup> Augustine postulated an "ordo amoris" in which scheme each object or act is accorded the kind and degree of love which it merits, and pleasure is derived from each in accordance with its place in the order.<sup>41</sup> Hume also offered a hedonist viewpoint as to the rationale for man's actions toward other men, and of the love for God.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Plato, in K. Aschenbrenner and A. Isenberg, Aesthetic Theories: Studies in the Philosophy of Art (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall and Co., 1964), p. 203.

<sup>40</sup>Thomas Gilby, Poetic Experience: An Introduction to Thomist Aesthetic (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967).

<sup>41</sup>C. S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man (New York: Macmillan Co., 1947).

<sup>42</sup>David Hume, Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, 2nd ed. (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Press, 1966).

Perhaps the best explication of hedonist logic was formulated by Jeremy Bentham in the Hedonistic Calculus. The pleasures men seek, he wrote, are mitigated by

1. The intensity of the pleasures,
2. Their duration,
3. Their degree of probability,
4. The promptitude of their fullness,
5. Their fecundity (the tendency of pleasure to be followed by pain),
6. Their purity (freedom from pain),
7. Their social extent (others who are affected by them).<sup>43</sup>

Any aesthetic event or object could be considered in the light of this framework. An experience which maximized items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 and minimized items 5 and 7 might be said to be exquisitely hedonistic. Experiences which included the likelihood of item 5 might be approached with caution; experiences which involve other persons willingly would have to be examined in contrast to activities which involved other persons unwillingly.

Tolstoy believed that art effects a brotherhood of men, since its purpose is to share feelings. The pleasure felt in sharing these feelings and emotions--some bitter, some sweet--worked toward a true union of mankind on Earth. However, Tolstoy pointed out, most art forsakes this ideal in order to promote emotions and ideas serving an effete class (Art in the service of Taste).<sup>44</sup> Schiller also decried Taste, which to him was the essence of the external (comparative) system of aesthetics. Taste, they argued, divides rather than unifies Mankind; it is a

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<sup>43</sup>Jeremy Bentham, Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, ed. Philip Wheelwright (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran, and Co., 1935).

<sup>44</sup>Tolstoy, What is Art.

political phenomenon which tends to lessen the sensuous pleasure of art.<sup>45</sup>

In the twentieth century, several writers have escaped from formal aesthetic systems to comment upon art and beauty from a hedonist standpoint. Standing outside the strong critical tradition is George Santayana. His philosophy of art promoted the idea that beauty is pleasure objectified; in other words, our pleasure is viewed as a quality of the object or event, which then appears to us as beautiful. Santayana believed that we come to know beauty from within ourselves, rather than appealing to an external set of rules about art.<sup>46</sup> William James, as well, saw personal experience as the structural basis of metaphysical and aesthetic reality;

as soon as we deal with private and personal phenomena as such, we deal with realities in the completest sense of the term.<sup>47</sup>

Alan Watts and George Leonard both derived hedonistic ideas about education from Eastern philosophies. Watts wrote that Godhead is identified with truth (sat), consciousness (chit), and bliss (ananda). Full manifestation of these three attributes results in an experience or state of moksha--liberation. By nurturing this attribute of ananda, and by attending to the processes of sat and chit, one may see the world

become real, in the moment it is no longer clutched, in the moment that its changeful fluidity is no longer resisted . . .

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<sup>45</sup>Freidrich Schiller, Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man, trans. with introd. by Reginald D. Snell. (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1965).

<sup>46</sup>George Santayana, The Sense of Beauty: Being the Outline of Aesthetic Theory (New York: C. Scribner's, 1898).

<sup>47</sup>William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature (New York: Modern Library, 1936).

to the mind which lets go and moves with the flow of change . . . like a ball in a stream the sense of emptiness or transience becomes a kind of ecstasy.<sup>48</sup>

Leonard also uses the concept of ananda in writing about the "Dionysian factor" in education.<sup>49</sup> He posits that liberational ecstasy can be reached through meditation (personal learning), through the natural environment (person and nature), and through developing values in human relationships (person to person).<sup>50</sup>

Hedonism, the process of joy, ananda, ecstasy: whatever one terms it, it threatens things as they are. It promises that there is more to life than knowledge customarily delivers. Since pleasure is so easily identified with the arts, it may be one reason why administrators and other educators sometimes appear to have a fear of musicians, actors, artists, and dancers as teachers in the classroom. Yet,

1. Ecstasy is not necessarily opposed to reason,
2. Ecstasy is not necessarily opposed to order,
3. Ecstasy is neither moral or immoral of itself,
4. Ecstasy is man's most powerful ally against anomie.<sup>51</sup>

The hedonist component of aesthetic education has been recognized by such groups as the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association. They wrote,

the fine arts can more easily be taught in a playful manner . . . creativity research continually shows a relationship between playfulness and creative behavior.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Alan Watts, The Way of Zen (New York: Random House, 1957).

<sup>49</sup>George Leonard, Education and Ecstasy (New York: Delacorte Press, 1968).

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>52</sup>The National Education Association, Report on Education and the Fine Arts of the Educational Policies Commission (Washington, D. C.: 1968), p. 4.



Furthermore, hedonist values are present in traditional schemes of aesthetic education, although they work behind the scenes. For example, to assume, as does Harry Broudy, that learning to create, analyze and classify aesthetic objects or events will intensify the pleasure of the aesthetic experience is to acknowledge the hedonist heritage.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, to assume that these more intense aesthetic experiences are heuristic, that is, that they will affect subsequent choices in the arts, is to borrow liberally from Bentham and his Calculus.

Hedonism has also found a home in the psychological foundations of education. Concepts presented by Maslow, such as "motivation" and "self-actualization" are based on the person's ability to reward himself for actions he perceives as "good and true."<sup>54</sup> There is also a hedonistic orientation to Maslow's theories about peak experiences--the intense feelings which accompany activities involving all a person's faculties and capabilities.<sup>55</sup> Finally, Maslow admonishes us to "re-sacralize" the person: to find pleasure in considering another "under the aspect of eternity," as Spinoza would have it.<sup>56</sup> To do the opposite, to take pleasure in acts or objects not acceptable to society or which stand outside even the broadest definition of harmless evils, represents not only aesthetic but moral dysfunction as well.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Harry Broudy, Enlightened Cherishing: An Essay on Aesthetic Education (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1972).

<sup>54</sup>A. H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

<sup>55</sup>Idem., The Farther Reaches of Human Nature (New York: Viking Press, 1971). p. 45.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>57</sup>Joseph Margolis, "Moral and Aesthetic Judgment: Against Compartmentalization," Journal of Aesthetics 25 (August 1965): 35-50.

The Creation of Settings: Its Aesthetic Dimension

In Chapter Six of The Creation of Settings and the Future Societies, Seymour Sarason describes the resources and discusses the values of the professionals involved in starting the Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic.

The reasons for starting the . . . clinic were no less varied and complex than any other instance of motivation and action, but several things were quite clear and they are contained in the following propositions. (1) The mental health professions were oriented primarily to dealing with individuals who presented themselves (or in the case of children were presented by others) as having personal problems. (2) These problems were conceptualized in ways that required "treatment" by highly trained specialists. (3) The disparity between the number rendering service was of a magnitude that was unresolvable. (4) Those who obtained service were almost exclusively white and middle class, and they represented a small fraction of white, middle class people who wanted the service. (5) The most notable exception to this was our public "mental hospitals," where treatment as an individual human being was notable by its absence.<sup>58</sup>

Sarason comments that the situation represented by these five propositions was "bad, sad, and wrong," but he also reflects that the disparity between supply and demand for psychological services and responses which inadequately address this disparity are inevitable and not likely to change.

The problem continued to be defined in a way that required dependence on certain kinds of human resources which . . . could only increase the disparity between the numbers rendering and needing service.<sup>59</sup>

The choices facing Sarason and his colleagues in establishing their clinic are familiar ones to the classroom teacher. Knowing that any attempt to open a free counseling clinic would result in the same type of disparity,

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<sup>58</sup>Seymour B. Sarason, The Creation of Settings and the Future Societies (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972), pp. 115-116.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

they felt the problem must be reconceptualized. The colleagues could 1) redefine "mental illness" or "drug problem" so as to reduce the number of clients for which the psychologists could justify treatment, 2) go beyond human resources to drug therapy or computer counseling techniques, 3) hire or solicit help and untrained volunteers to assist with the caseload or 4) spend each day coping with large numbers of clients until frustration and exhaustion made their efforts useless. Sarason and his associates chose six stipulations from their examination of the problem. To paraphrase,

- 1) The clinic would define its task in terms of service to the individuals working in it,
- 2) The clinic would accept therapists who expressed radically different ways of thinking about service,
- 3) The clinic would concentrate on settings, not individuals, particularly settings involving children,
- 4) Faced with the problem of choosing to work with the existing setting or creating a new one, the clinic would choose the latter,
- 5) The clinic would employ people who seemed to have the talent which could be developed to a productive level of service, regardless of credentials,
- 6) Each member of the clinic would be doing what every other member was doing.<sup>60</sup>

Sarason and his associates in the Yale setting made a series of difficult choices. Their first decision was to acknowledge the perceived lack of satisfaction for both counselor and client in many traditional settings. This lack of satisfaction is due to the necessarily perfunctory nature of relationships in counseling. Interaction between client and counselor is often of low intensity although it extends over a long period of time. This is usually the result of limited time, resources, and energy on the part of the counselor. The heavier the caseload, the more limited he

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<sup>60</sup>Sarason, Creation of Settings, p. 114.

becomes. Dilution of service is a corollary phenomenon and sometimes results in high anxiety. Asserting that help to as many patients as possible was not a primary goal of the Yale setting, Sarason substituted a more acceptable goal of personal satisfaction for the counselors. This reconceptualization is consistent with the theory of primary settings of goals (a sense of self-worth and a psychological sense of community) and with reconceptual aesthetic theory as well, because it emphasizes process, not necessarily product.

Rather than create a traditional clinic where frustrations mount due to staff anxieties, Sarason and his associates chose to create meaning and pleasure for themselves; in this mode of action, they could at least control some aspects of professional development and personal satisfaction. Consistent with the hedonistic component of aesthetic theory,

we were going to judge ourselves only secondarily by how helpful we were to others. Conceivably we would not be very helpful, and conceivably we might even be harmful and yet be successful in terms of our personal learning and growth.<sup>61</sup>

If such a choice seems morally ill-considered, view the alternative through this analogy of a teacher in a classroom. Faced with the realization that she, too, has only limited time, energy, and resources, the teacher must choose between "dilution of service" and service to herself. If the teacher decides to accept the alternative of "dilution of service" she may find her persona rarefied among thirty or more students. Soon the notion arrives that for some students, she will do some good, for a few she will do some greater good, but for some, no good at all will come. With this perception arrives feelings of anxiety, fatigue, and helplessness which researchers have referred to as "burn-out." To use Maslow's

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<sup>61</sup>Sarason, Creation of Settings, p. 116.

term, the teacher (and by analogy, the counselor in Sarason's original setting) is working with a sense of deficiency-cognition.<sup>62</sup> The teacher may view children as detached from their settings, separate from their history and culture. The teacher may, most unfortunately, see her students as belonging to someone or something else, not to a setting of their joint creation. This separation of elements from the organic whole is not consistent with any aesthetic theory (see Chapter One, "The Aesthetic Dimension in Education"). Contrast the outlook of a teacher with a being-cognition orientation. Her duty is not merely to nurture the students as if they were greenhouse plants, or to guide their footsteps along life's perilous journey.<sup>63</sup> Rather, it is to regard each student as he is, not as he was or can be. The student in this sense is less a creation of the teacher than of the setting itself. The teacher's artistry must be directed to the setting as a whole, not to the manipulation of the individual elements. The teacher's artistry must also be directed inwards, toward herself, to enable herself to grow so that the students may share that growth. The process of teaching evolves through the teacher's ability to come to terms with the reality that she does not possess the time, energy, or resources to be all things to all students; rather, it is she herself who should strive for a sense of informed personal worth and dignity, and to seek aesthetic satisfaction in the creation of the classroom setting. According to Maslow, this state should be as a result of an evolutionary process of thought, not a posture of

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<sup>62</sup>Maslow, Farther Reaches, p. 123.

<sup>63</sup>Herbert Kliebard, "Metaphorical Roots of Curriculum Design" in Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists, ed. William Pinar (Berkeley, California: McCutchan, 1975).

philosophical reductionism (reducing the situation to its most elemental attitudes and adopting the one which is the course of least resistance).<sup>64</sup> It is quite a different thing to arrive at the goals of self-worth and sense of community after long experience with other alternatives than it is to simply accept what may appear to be self-seeking motives with no awareness of their consequences to others.

Another analogical relationship concerning Sarason's conclusion #1 is that of the creative artist--the composer, playwright, or painter who works with the raw materials of the arts. Most persons who paint, write, or compose are aware of the tremendous array of technical resources available to them yet are constrained by reality to choose only a few of them. They develop a style of writing, painting, or composition which is identifiable as their own. It is a fact that one artist working within his or her personal style cannot convey a message with meaning for the entire human population of the planet, nor does he intend to. Style in art is the result of the acceptance or rejection of certain resources, the use of time and energy in developing technical mastery of these resources. Style is a way of conveying meaning (the artist's "service"), but it is also ultimately the result of the artist's satisfaction with (sense of personal worth) the choices he or she has made in regards to the shepherding of the resources available. In much the same way as Sarason and his colleagues decided to "explore new ways of thinking and acting" and in much the same way that a teacher evolves a style of pedagogy and the matching curricular tools, so the artist engages in the quest for personal style.

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<sup>64</sup>Maslow, Farther Reaches, p. 252.

Personal style based on an aesthetic scheme also figures in Erikson's commentary on social intercourse, Toys and Reasons.

Mutual interplay . . . is governed by the eagerness and capacity of persons to enhance each other's leeway in affiliative and erotic ways. But as each expands in his readiness, he persistently experiences the boundaries where reciprocal antagonisms set one person against another and one group against another.<sup>65</sup>

The model for the creation of settings provides amelioration for these reciprocal antagonisms by recognizing the need for establishing and renewing covenants of behavior.<sup>66</sup> In the aesthetic dimension of the settings model, those covenants which serve to maximize duration and intensity are potentially more capable of fostering the conditions which Erikson describes as indispensable to favorable social intercourse; trust, autonomy, and initiative.<sup>67</sup> This is what Sarason and his associates were attempting in the Yale clinic: the artist, similarly, tries to make his message last longer and become more intense through the art object.

Besides consideration of style (a function of personal satisfaction), an aesthetic analysis of the creation of settings model must also attend to its form, relationships among its elements, regional qualities (see item c in Beardsley's model of aesthetic experience, essay 1, Chapter 2), its unity, and its existence as a separate portion of the phenomenal field.

The creation of settings model satisfies the aesthetic requirement of separateness while retaining a flexible relationship among its elements,

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<sup>65</sup>Erik H. Erikson, Toys and Reasons: Stages in the Ritualization of Experience (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1977), pp. 69-70.

<sup>66</sup>Dale L. Brubaker, Creative Leadership in Elementary Schools (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt, 1976).

<sup>67</sup>Erik H. Erikson, "The Eight Ages of Man" in The Challenge of Youth, ed. Erik H. Erikson (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Co., 1963).

capable of various critical interpretations (See Chapter 1 "Models and Design"). The asymmetry of the shape Brubaker suggests connotes a passive, non-linear approach to the consideration of goals and processes. As the metaphorical "amoeba" changes shape in response to environmental contingencies, so too the shape of the model shows not a finished, concrete product, but rather a project whose direction and constitution varies at the desire of its creators. The creation of settings model resembles not a finished work of art, but the process of its coming to be. The three categories within the model--assumptions, processes, and goals--have an analogical relationship to a time scheme of the artistic-aesthetic process. The artist's reflection, application of technique, and creative object (work of art) all combine to produce a more or less ambiguous model whose meaning will be different for each perceiver.

Sarason's conclusion #4 supports the view of the setting as a total creative activity rather than as a finished product. In much the same way as a musical work differs from a painting, so does the process of creating a setting contrast with institutionalized views of group efforts. No one ever asked Van Gogh to paint "A Starry Night" again, yet musicians are continually re-creating serious and popular works of musical art. The difference is between the concrete and the temporal aspects of art. The creation of settings belongs to the category of temporal endeavors--for proof, consider conclusion #4.

Which regional or emotional qualities should the creation of settings model suggest? Although the qualities of beauty and elegance have been connected with theories and proofs, the process-oriented nature of the model brings to mind the qualities of grace and wit. Dancers, engaging



in their temporal form of art, exhibit gracefulness--so must settings members constantly remember that the symmetry of human relationships is at best fleeting, a fluid sort of design which changes, stabilizes, and then changes again. Wit implies repartee--settings members are encouraged to keep in mind the network of ongoing communication which is the life of the setting. Grace connotes an easier, more approachable understanding of form than either beauty or elegance, which are somewhat overwhelming in human contexts. Wit brings to mind a more affable, intelligent pleasure than frivolity. Both form and pleasure, essential aesthetic concepts, should pervade creation of settings processes. Playfulness with language--the pleasurable shaping and re-shaping of forms--characterizes settings members experience with communications. Humans who choose to create settings do so bravely, like Camus--with a concern for refusals and recreations, for a reconstruction of the world.<sup>68</sup> Refusals, because they will not submit, as Sarason and colleagues did not submit, to thinking and acting in the same old ways--recreations, because as Huizinga points out, to create and to play are inextricably woven into the experience of man.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Albert Camus, Resistance, Rebellion, and Death, trans. Justin O'Brien (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961).

<sup>69</sup>Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955).

## CHAPTER III

## A NEW MODEL FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION

The Aesthetic and the Developmental

Those wishing to validate study and use of aesthetic theories and models in school settings must apply themselves to the task of reconciling an essentially unlearned, unique-to-the-individual, unpredictable and largely unmanageable form of human experience with the systematic, objective developmental framework that curriculum attempts to present. This reconciliation is often difficult, regardless of the hypothesis that an experiential curriculum and the aesthetic experience are the flesh and bone of the educational body. There is simply too little known about the nature of the aesthetic experience--as a result of this lack, teachers have little expertise at engendering aesthetic experiences in the classroom.

While criticism of curriculum has successfully made inroads into the traditional fortresses of hard research, the accompanying techniques of managing and critiquing aesthetic events in the classroom have not become popular fare in graduate institutions. This can only be laid to the fact that schools and departments of fine arts view their stock in trade as technical, reproducible knowledge about the particular disciplines--their students know how to produce plays, conduct orchestras, and choreograph dance pieces. Yet the larger concerns of post-creative reflection--the enjoyment and savoring of the aesthetic event--remain mired in complex formal, critical treatises. Teachers are taught how to but not of what.

It is the of what--the aesthetic experience--that justifies art, that causes the rhapsody within the breast to supplant the notes in the air.

The notion that aesthetics possesses a developmental dimension is rather recent. By developmental is meant that the pleasure in coming to know form is a process which unfolds and improves through the lifetime of the individual. The idea that the aesthetic experience can be intensified by training or education is central to the concept of a developmental aesthetic. A brief review of five aesthetic theories yields an interesting insight. These individual explications of aesthetic theory--by Plato, Schiller, Read, Dewey and Langer--stand in chronological relation to each other and also have an analogical connection to the stages of intellectual development of Jean Piaget. That these writings constitute a model which so serendipitously applies to the concept of the developmental aesthetic is a coincidence which seems to lend credence to the existence and operation of archetypal influences upon current and historical theorizing.

How young children and adolescents develop capacities for aesthetic experiences, and the character of those experiences at different stages of intellectual development, is the basis of the remainder of this portion of the chapter.

What Piaget has asserted in his developmental model of cognitive learning is that the child gradually moves from an unawareness of the separation of self and environment to a stage where it realizes that objects and forces outside the self are capable of being manipulated and later conceptualized.<sup>70</sup> These stages of development are called the sensori-motor, the concrete, and the abstract.

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<sup>70</sup>Brian Rotman, Jean Piaget: Psychologist of the Real (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1978).

Robert Panzarella has offered an index to four different types of aesthetic experiences.<sup>71</sup> His work is based upon observation and also upon the verbal reports of such experiences by the persons being observed. His types fall into four broad categories: renewal, motor-sensory, withdrawal, and fusion-emotional experiences or "ecstasies." An aesthetic experience which is centered around a renewal vision or ecstasy is one in which a new view of the world is formed. After this aesthetic renewal, the world seems better, more beautiful than before. It still contains the tragic and the flawed, but this does not alter its goodness. The motivational aspects of renewal experiences consist of impulses to produce music, dance, or dramatic or visual art. Laski hypothesized that the impulse to be creative is inherently antithetical to the continuation of the ecstatic or aesthetic state and terminates it in order to initiate creative manipulation, testing, and probing.<sup>72</sup>

Motor-sensory experiences consist of physical responses and such phenomena as feeling high or floating. Body rhythms and changes in posture and locomotion also accompany motor-sensory ecstasies. Panzarella observed that these types of ecstasies are negatively related to transformational ecstasies (fusion-emotional or renewal). He posits that motor-sensory aesthetic experiences do not change the perceptions of the self because the self has taken a more active role in producing movement responses--the tendency of the physical reactions to be localized in distinct parts of the organism (arms, legs, hips, trunk) from which the

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<sup>71</sup>Robert Panzarella, "The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Peak Experiences," Journal of Humanistic Psychology 20 (Winter 1980): 69-85.

<sup>72</sup>Marghanita Laski, Ecstasy: A Study of Some Secular and Religious Experiences (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1961).

mental self remains somewhat detached.<sup>73</sup> Music begets such aesthetic experiences, as do sports and oratory.

Withdrawal ecstasies involve loss of contact with the physical and social environment. A perceptual narrowing occurs; attention is riveted to the aesthetic event. Visual arts, drama, and dance as well as film and natural phenomena induce withdrawal experiences. Often the person feels a loss of contact with others, and a sense of loss when the aesthetic event is finished.

Fusion-emotional ecstasies are rated highest in Panzarella's study in terms of desirability. The experience is one of total merger with the art object. Often such ecstasies result in personality transformation, especially if the art object has been considered as having a moral or ethical dimension.

Humane texts mean nothing unless they are read seriously--that is to say, for moral instruction . . . with the deepest impulse to learn something about life and to acquire wisdom.<sup>74</sup>

Fusion-emotional aesthetic experiences are nearly always limited to observers of art. Performers are trained to retain cognitive control over their art. As Gordon Craig has so succinctly stated, "emotion conspires against art"<sup>75</sup> so performers are on guard against emotional involvement which might mean loss of technical control.

Let us now examine the five aesthetic theories mentioned above and arrive at a schematic model which shows the relationships between the

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<sup>73</sup>Panzarella, "Phenomenology," p. 73.

<sup>74</sup>William Albert Levi, "Uses of the Humanities in Personal Life," Journal of Aesthetic Education 10 (Fall 1976): 6.

<sup>75</sup>Edward Gordon Craig, On the Art of the Theatre (London: W. Heinemann, 1912).

Piagetian stages of development, the four types of aesthetic experience postulated by Panzarella, and the five theories themselves.

For Plato, art had no use in the utopian republic he designed. Morris Weitz, commenting on Plato's lack of sympathy for the arts and for artists, paraphrases from the Republic,

It (art) is not only not good, but . . . downright harmful in the manner in which it sponsors fiction and falsehood, and engenders feelings and emotions which endanger morals and the rational life altogether.<sup>76</sup>

Curiously enough, Plato's views are an important first step in fashioning a developmental model of aesthetic growth. Despite his lack of enthusiasm about the place of the arts in education, Plato's theory of mimesis was the model for art works through the Greek golden age, and during the Renaissance as well. Art, to Plato, was twice removed from the Ideal: not an imitation of the good, true, and just, but an imitation of an imitation. This concept of mimesis forms the earliest aesthetic theory, and remains in powerful control of our production of art, even to this day. Sanctions like "art imitates life" and "modeling behavior" are derived from mimetic theory. Rote learning, memorization of facts, and recitation also have their genesis in mimetic theory; "good" knowledge is that which is founded upon authority, which one encounters in books in libraries, and from the lips of a certified, qualified teacher. Much of learning during early infancy is mimetic; the infant during the sensori-motor phase of cognitive development responds to a mother's smile by a first attempt to copy it. Infants learn to attend to objects by following movement with their eyes and head; babies' first sounds are

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<sup>76</sup>Weitz, "Art--Who Needs It?" p. 24.

copies of what they hear around them. Nature, children, and adults serve as models for infants' actions. Self-awareness has little significance at this primary stage of aesthetic development. The infant does not differentiate art works from other objects or events, but may develop a sense that art has some importance if the models around him also consider it important. The mimetic stage of development has been carried over into childhood's later years by educational agencies from antiquity to the present. The classic view of education is as a transmitter of a cultural heritage and prescribed forms of knowledge. The older student's proper attitude in this model is one of reverence for the ideal of pre-existing knowledge. The educational revolution of the past half-century has focused on the fact that while mimetic theory has powerful implications for early childhood curricula, its influence is outmoded and inappropriate at later stages of development.

For Friedrich Schiller, an aesthetic education affords the development of the play impulse which ultimately unifies conflicting sensuous and formal impulses--a harmonization that was a necessary prelude . . . to the synthesis of conflicting beliefs in the larger social and cultural crisis.<sup>77</sup>

Schiller's contribution to aesthetic theory was typified by the idea that the aesthetic state was a middle ground between sensuous behavior and logical thought. A corollary argument of his was that Man must pass through the aesthetic state in order to reach the higher ground of moral and ethical reasoning. He postulated three stages in Man's progression from natural instincts to logical reasoning: first, harmonious Nature (as in the late sensori-motor stage when the child begins to recognize

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<sup>77</sup>Walter Grossman, "Schiller's Aesthetic Education" Journal of Aesthetic Education 2 (January 1968): 34-41.

the subject-object paradigm), the antagonism of forces and the disintegration of personality (mature Man before an aesthetic experience), and the third, the state of renewal or integration which proceeds from the aesthetic experience and which precedes the perfection of the individual and the society in which he lives.<sup>78</sup>

The developmental significance of Schiller's theories lies in the importance he attached to the play impulse. If, at an early age, the child imitates behavior, then at the next stage, he must initiate playful behavior, to create actions of his own which may or may not result in created objects. In the larger model which is being fashioned here, the child is still progressing through the sensori-motor stage of cognitive development. Creative behavior is characteristically associated with pleasure, and is not always directed to the production of an object or form. Such play is a stepping-stone from the sensori-motor to the concrete cognitive stage.

Sir Herbert Read, writing during the Industrial Revolution, popularized the slogan "education through art". His discourses were drawn from a number of sources, including psychoanalysis, psychology, art history, and anthropology. They almost always reveal their origins in a definition of art as the discovery of form.<sup>79</sup> Read's theory of form corresponds with concepts about the concrete stage of cognitive development. It is in the early years of primary school that the child begins to encounter art, music, drama, and dance as "subjects;" he perceives not only

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<sup>78</sup>Schiller, Letters.

<sup>79</sup>Michael J. Parsons, "Herbert Read on Education," Journal of Aesthetic Education 3 (October 1969): 27-45.



the discrete forms of each, but the separation of the arts from other school endeavors. Motor-sensory and withdrawal types of aesthetic experiences are characteristic of this age. The child is keenly aware of art as separate from other forms of experiences, but usually only because he is told so. Later he recognizes that some forms of art make him "feel good" or "feel sad." He cannot explain why a certain piece of music or a painting makes him feel just so, and the same painting or music may not make him feel the same way again. The recognition of the aesthetic experience as linked to art is just beginning to dawn in his experience. Repeated forms and symmetry are apparent to the child at this point: rhythms in music and dance, repetition of designs in art and sculpture have a particular appeal. The emotional content of art also grows in his awareness. The separation of fantasy from reality is accomplished by most children at this stage, and lends a special poignancy to dramatic and literary experiences. The categorization and manipulation of concrete forms is the hallmark of this stage. Creation and manipulation of ideas behind the forms will not come for several years.

Dewey called aesthetic experience

experience in its integrity . . . experience freed from the forces that impede and confuse its development as experience.<sup>80</sup>

The effecting of connections, the achieving of continuities which aesthetic experiences foster are integral parts of the Deweyan theories of growth through reinterpretation of experience. Art requires of the child, during the pre-abstract stage of cognitive development, to bridge cognitive gaps and to complete or accept artistic ambiguities. During

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<sup>80</sup>Dewey, Art as Experience, p. 113.

the pre-abstract stage, the child is learning to manipulate the raw stuff of the arts. Although not yet ready to come to terms with the emotionally symbolic content of the arts, he still may be intrigued by the possibilities for self-expression which the arts offer. The perceptions are sharpened as the student learns to attend to the separate elements within the art object. The aesthetic experience is of particular significance at this stage of cognitive development. As Pauli framed the question,

What is the nature of the bridge between the sense perceptions and the concepts? All logical thinkers have arrived at the conclusion that pure logic is fundamentally incapable of constructing such a link.<sup>81</sup>

The aesthetic experience may be capable of creating such a link. Relations of qualities within art forms, and the link or connection between the senses and concept formation share a paradoxical model. Polanyi speaks of "knowing" the face and "not knowing" the separate identity of each feature--nose, eyes, ears and mouth, and their proportional relationships. In a similar manner, the child during the pre-abstract stage "knows" the art work and engages himself in coming to know the separate elements of the work. To paraphrase Polanyi,<sup>82</sup> the bridge between tacit and explicit knowing is like the link between the senses and concept formation. The child is creating that mystical link and is doing so in an increasingly more symbolic manner.

The emergence of the renewal type of aesthetic experience is a hallmark of the pre-abstract stage. By early adolescence, the student becomes

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<sup>81</sup>W. Pauli, The Influence of Archetypal Ideas on the Scientific Theories of Kepler (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955).

<sup>82</sup>Michael Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966).

aware of peer pressure and has experienced both frustration and joy in his relationships with others. Renewal experiences confirm his hopes that all is well in his world. Identification with dramatic roles and with the emotional content of the dance, music, and visual arts contribute to his psychological as well as aesthetic growth. Happy endings and a satisfactory climax and denouement are acceptable and desirable. The absence of plot, as well as music, art, or literature which is non-representational, will have little referent in his experience. Art which confirms his wish for stability provides a starting point for his departure into the abstract stage of development.

As the child becomes an adolescent, nearly seventy-five percent of his physical and mental development is achieved. Between the ages of twelve and fifteen a third of adolescents move into the abstract stage of development. By eighteen nearly two-thirds have done so.<sup>83</sup> Fusion-emotional aesthetic experiences extend the adolescent's new capacities of conceptualization in a more immediate manner than other types of experiences. The ideas of art now speak to the adolescent with new eloquence. In the fusion state, the person develops empathy for these ideas. Conceptualization enables him to extend those empathic impulses to other persons, and to become aware that they, too, are possessed of emotions and feelings. As beholders of art, students in the abstract stage have "been endowed for a time with the keen perceptions and impetuous emotions of a nobler and more penetrating intelligence."<sup>84</sup> Art as a symbolic

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<sup>83</sup>William D. Rower, Paul R. Ammon and Phebe Cramer, Understanding Intellectual Development (New York: Dryden Press, 1974).

<sup>84</sup>Ruskin, Art Criticism, p. 85.

means of expression "communicates and records matters with which neither science or philosophy can deal."<sup>85</sup> Suzanne Langer began to formulate the concept of art as symbol in the late 1940's. With the publication of Philosophy in a New Key, she allied her aesthetic theories with Ruskin and Tolstoy who wrote that art was a means of communication. If communication can be universalized by any means, the artistic-symbolic would surely be the way, Langer argued.<sup>86</sup> The purpose of art is to perpetuate communication between artist and audience, between artists and artists, and between members of the audience. Artistic-symbolic communication is unique because it has two separate dimensions of meaning. We can know what a picture represents in its explicit dimension; for example, we readily acknowledge that a particular painting is "of a tree," but another tacit dimension of meaning--the symbolic--cues our understanding of what the picture means. The regional qualities like grace, elegance, wit, irony, frivolity and so on are linked to techniques in all the arts. If a tree is represented in such-and-such a manner, it may be said to be elegant. Other artistic techniques will render meanings of a different nature. Nobility, pathos, fear, anxiety, happiness, reverie and tenderness are all symbolic functions. During the abstract stage of cognitive development, the student comes to know the two dimensions of meaning in art. More importantly, he begins to value the universality of symbolic art. He is embarking on that journey of a soul among masterpieces that

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>86</sup>Suzanne K. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1942).

Krutch sought. He understands that we "teach the meaning of freedom when we . . . explore the world of imagination and art."<sup>87</sup>

By the abstract stage of cognitive development, the student exhibits facility with conceptual skills as well as technical. He may be capable of the full range of aesthetic experiences. Piaget recognized from his observations that all strands of intellection do not develop in a regular manner. Similarly, it may be that aesthetic development progresses in halts and spurts; the student may be well into the abstract stage and yet not have the fusion-emotional experiences which are typical of conceptual activity. Piaget called this type of time lag décalage.<sup>88</sup> The following model shows the ideal relations between the aesthetic and cognitive strands. (See p. 68.) Variability of development should be accepted as the rule rather than as the exception. The uniqueness of each individual is attributed, in part, to the infinite number of décalages among the developmental domains.

#### Discussion of the Model

The model has four main headings: Piagetian stage (cognitive), type of aesthetic experience, aesthetic stage of development, and theorist. Each heading forms a column below it. Underneath the heading "Piagetian stages (cognitive)," appear the chronological divisions of intellectual development from infancy through adolescence. Each chronological division refers to a cluster of intellectual skills which are mastered by the child before moving into the next division. During the sensori-motor stage

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<sup>87</sup>Harold Taylor, Art and the Intellect (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1960), p. 77.

<sup>88</sup>Rower et al., Understanding Intellectual Development, p. 35.

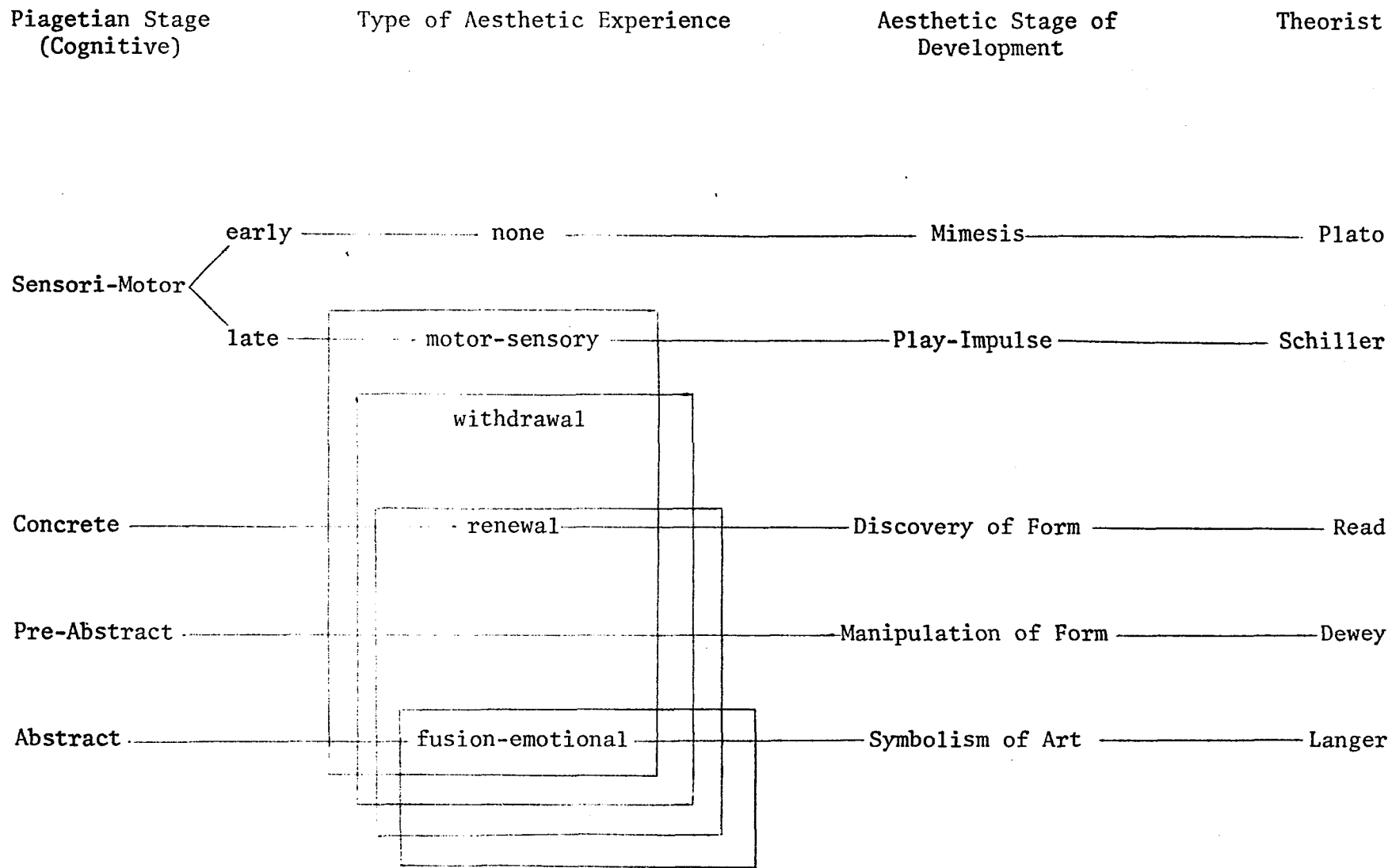


Fig. 8.

A Parallel Model of Cognitive and Aesthetic Development

(which for purposes of this model has been divided into an early or infantile period, and a late or pre-operational period), the child recognizes and uses the senses and the large muscle groups. He learns to use the body as a machine, but the mind, while exhibiting self-consciousness, is not capable of "if-then" logic. This "if-then" type of cognitive operation characterizes the concrete stage. The pre-abstract stage heralds the child's entrance into the world of ideas. The ability to deal with experiences as extensions of concepts, that is, to mentally postulate acts toward a goal and their consequences, belongs to the adolescent who has moved into the abstract stage of cognitive development.

Under the heading "type of aesthetic experience," there are five categories--none, motor-sensory, withdrawal, renewal, and fusion-emotional. It is posited that each of these aesthetic stages emerges in conjunction with one of the cognitive stages of development. Like the cognitive divisions, each emerging aesthetic experience subtends its predecessors; that is, once a child is capable of a motor-sensory experience, he does not cease to enjoy art in that manner when he experiences withdrawal. It is important to note that although each type of aesthetic experience is allied with one cognitive stage, its appearance does not depend upon the mastery of the cognitive stage with which it is linked.

The last two headings of the model include hallmark characteristics of each aesthetic stage of development and the writer who is given credit for theories bearing on that stage. Here one must recall that each theorist viewed his or her theory as a complete set of propositions about the nature of art, not as components of a larger framework. Plato, for example, theorized that art imitates nature; yet the archetype of mimesis

fits the developmental model at its earliest stage. As an archetype, mimesis has survived the test of time, although time has also proved it inadequate to explain fully the causes and consequences of art. However, mimesis has shaped our thinking about art, and in doing so shaped it at the theoretical as well as the practical. Modern theories also function as archetypes, and serve nicely to illustrate the developmental model as well as to illustrate the evolution of art forms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

If one reads from left to right across the divisions of each column, a relationship between each column is readily accomplished. Starting with the final category under Piagetian stage, it can be seen that the abstract stage is allied with the fusion-emotional aesthetic experience. The aesthetic stage of development which may be expected of an adolescent in the abstract stage is symbolism of art--and if one wishes for a further explanation of how aesthetic theory views symbolism, one is directed by the model to read the works of Suzanne Langer. The model works this way in all categories.

If, however, one reads downward through column two, "types of aesthetic experience," some ambiguity may be encountered which it is the purpose of this discussion to illuminate. It may be seen that the late sensori-motor cognitive stage is linked both to the motor-sensory and withdrawal types of aesthetic experiences. In the model, each type of aesthetic experience is framed by a rectangle, the name of which appears in the upper-left-hand corner. The use of the rectangle was not accidental, nor was the use of the word "frame." In the same sense that a painting or a photograph is framed in order to protect it from the environment



and enhance its appearance to the viewer, so too the types of aesthetic experience categories have each been framed with overlapping rectangles. Metaphorically, this allows the reader to consider the aesthetic experience as separate from total experience, as a thing or event to be cherished, protected, and enhanced. It is the most important part of the model, because it is the part that is most real. Each of us secretly harbors the notion that the aesthetic experience is the motivator which makes other realms of being--the political, educational, economic, familial--worth the risk, worth the pain, worth enduring at all.

Consider now the size and proximity of the frames for the types of aesthetic experiences. Notice that the motor-sensory, the withdrawal, and the renewal types are all fairly close to each other and have frames which extend all the way from their emergence through the abstract stage. On the other hand, the fusion-emotional stage is separated from the others by a little space, and its frame is smaller. This is to suggest that the fusion-emotional experience is a rare and precious event for the individual (if it happens at all--like the abstract stage of intellectual development, some individuals may never "get there"), coming later in life when the emotional and intellectual capacities are in full maturity. The aesthetic state of which Schiller wrote negates the emotional and rational aspects of mentation. This type of aesthetic experience must stand a little apart, a bit unique. It is the joy we seek but rarely find, the release and fulfillment which elude us. The fusion-emotional state may be said to be closely identified with moksha--liberation; it may be said to be the ultimate teacher, the living proof that ecstasy lies within the grasp of each of us willing to give the very soul to art.

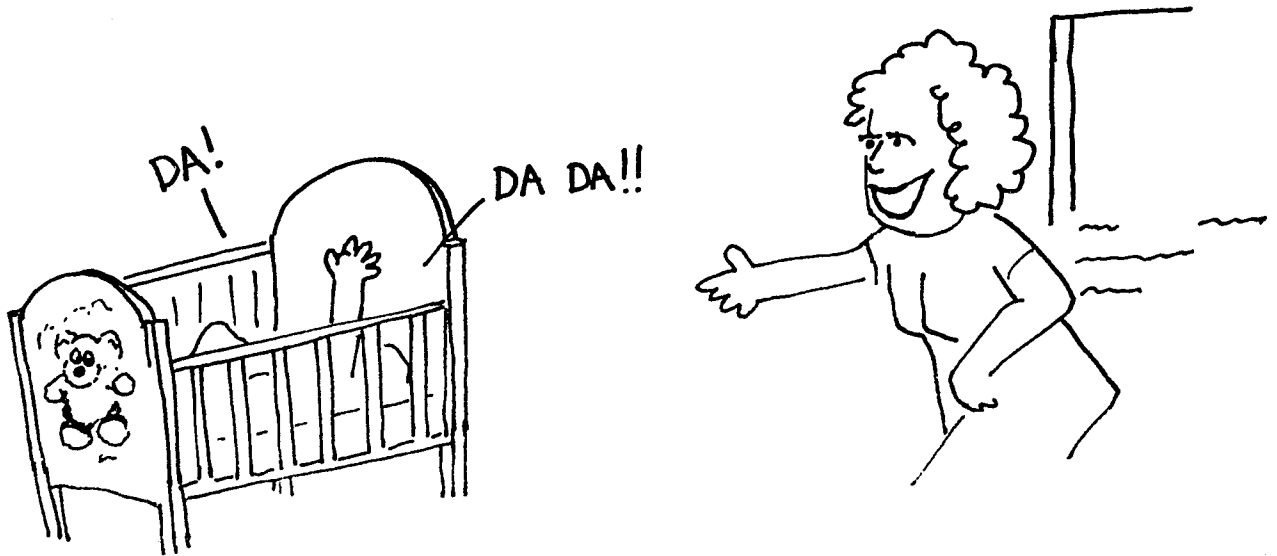
The zetetic models mentioned previously attempt to demonstrate the unfolding of events in four dimensions. The following model approximates the attempt at cinematic accuracy, in that it shows various aesthetic experiences in the life of a child from infancy through adolescence.

This is Danny.



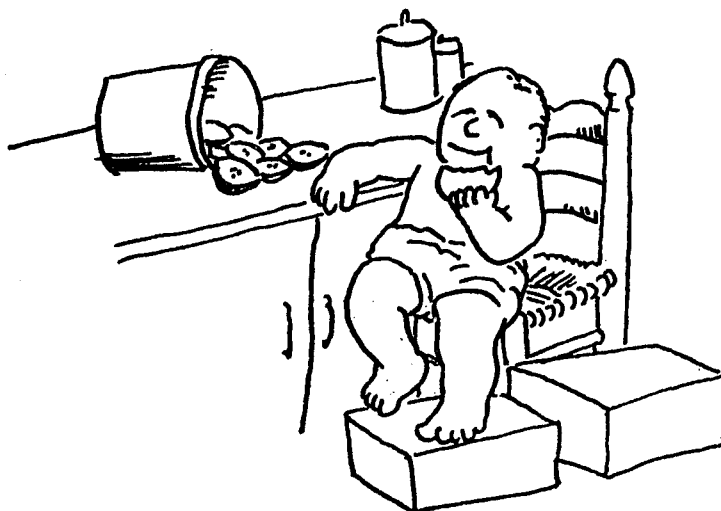
Like most babies, he's busy learning.  
Now he can see, hear, touch, taste--  
smell and wiggle.

Soon he learns that if he copies some sounds,  
some actions,



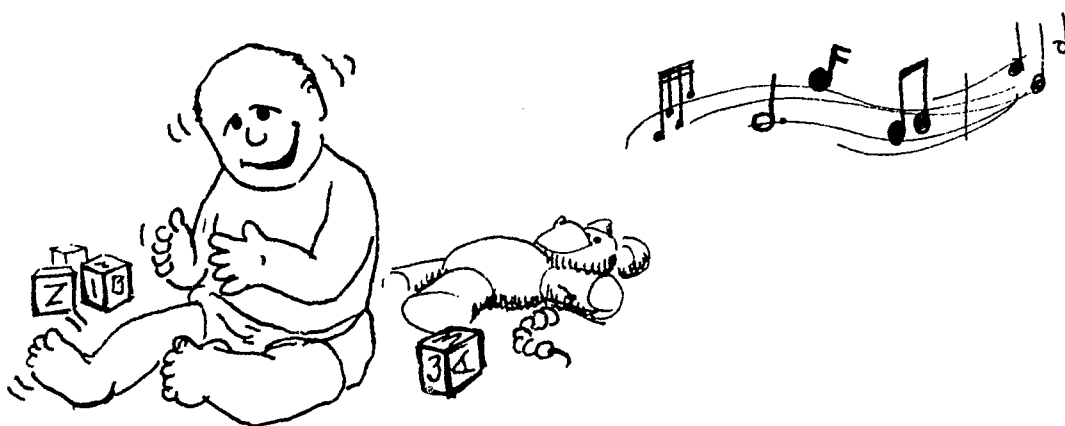
He'll get what he needs.  
And he'll feel pretty good!

Here's Danny again, a little older.



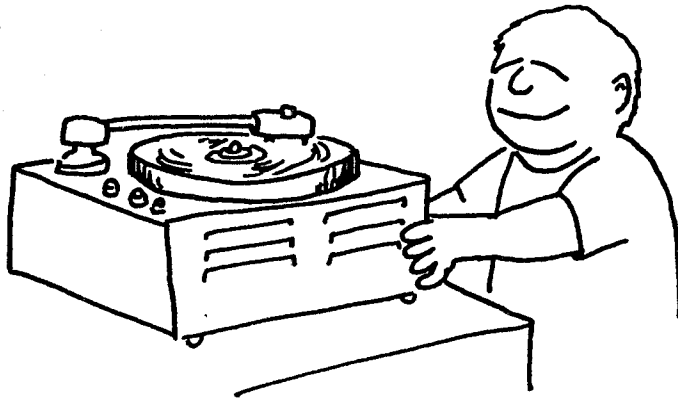
He can move things, stack things, climb...  
Sometimes he feels pretty good!

Here's Danny in his room.  
Mom turns up the stereo...



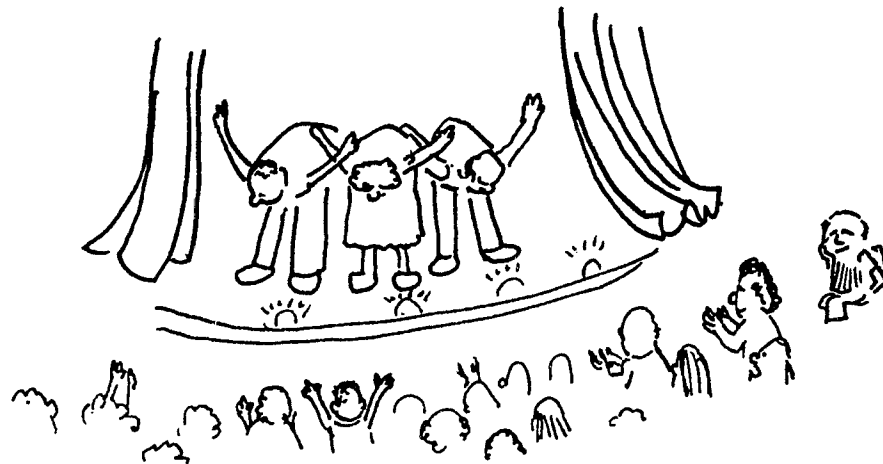
And that feels pretty good!

Here's Danny in Day Care.



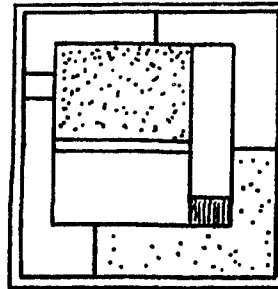
Sometimes they let him listen to the record player.  
Once he thought the music came from...  
inside his head.

Danny is in first grade now. One day some people  
came and did a play.

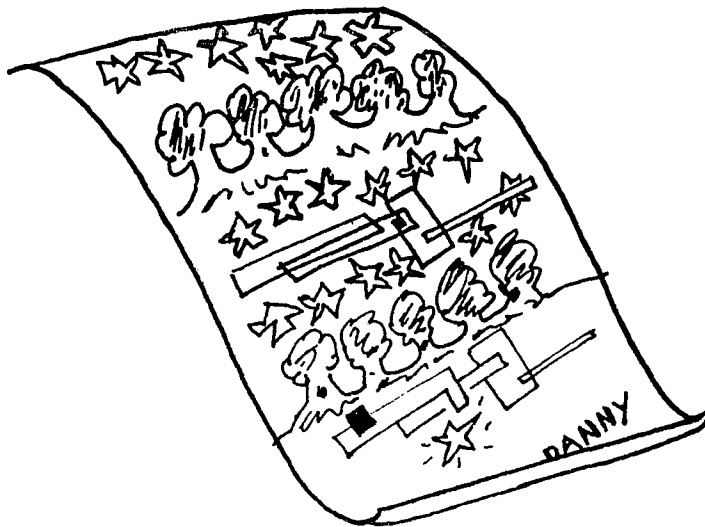


In the play, a little boy ran away from home.  
Danny was afraid. When the little boy went  
back home, Danny was glad.  
He knew it was just a play, but still...  
He felt pretty good.

In fourth grade, Danny's art teacher showed his class a painting. There were a number of squares in it.



Danny decided the painting was much like the music he heard Tuesday. It was a Rondo. Danny could always tell when the first tune returned, even though there were several other melodies in between.



Later, Danny drew a picture of his own about the painting with the squares and the Rondo. There it is...

And he felt really good!

A young woman came to see Danny's seventh grade class. She had on an old-fashioned dress, and used old-fashioned words.

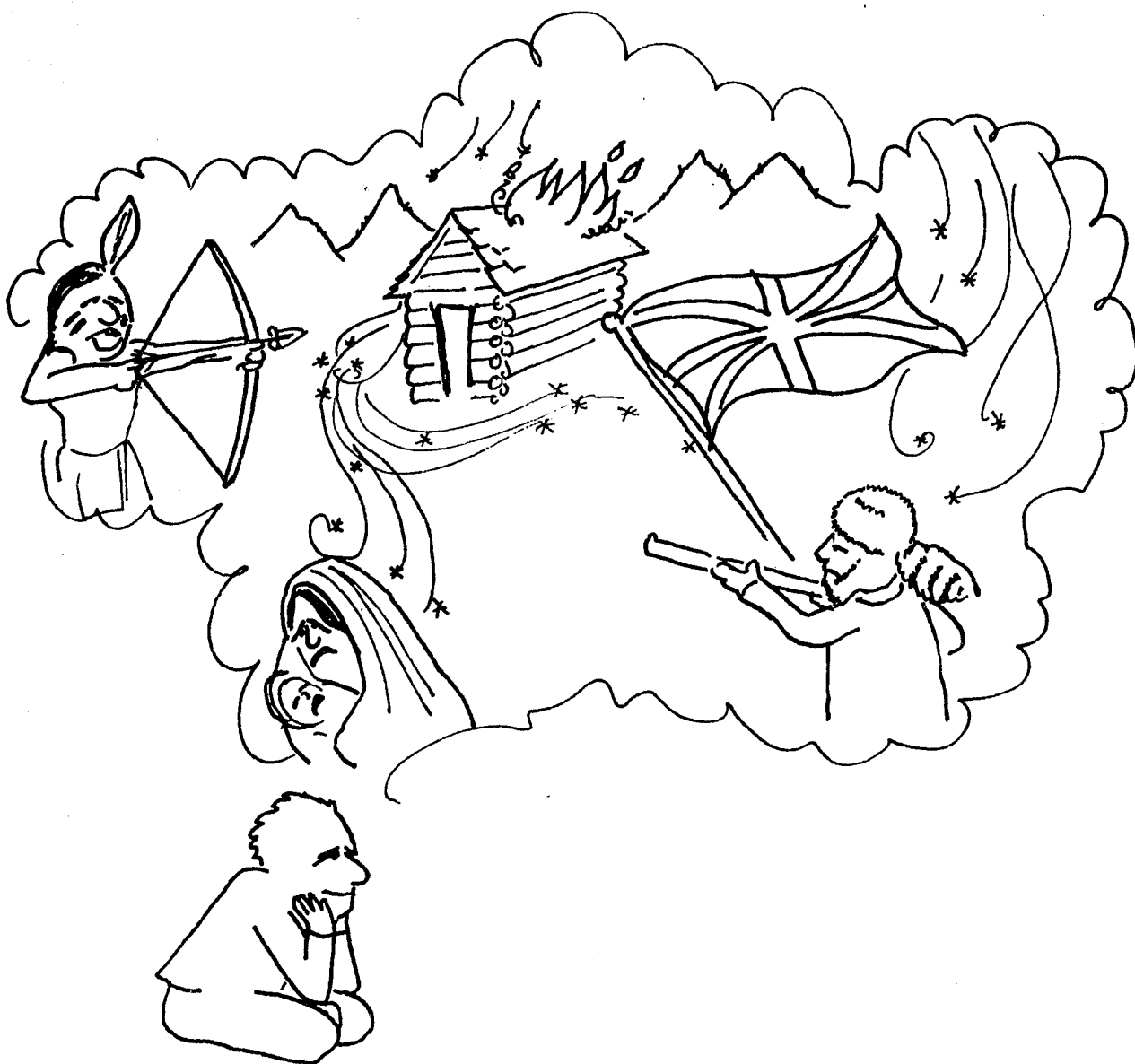


She played a dulcimer. She sang about how her ancestors fled to the mountains to escape the Redcoats.

They endured disease and famine.

They survived Indian raids and frigid winters.

Their babies died: their horses and cattle were stolen or killed by wild animals.



Danny became part of that song. He wished he could fight the Indians. He wanted to make the sick babies well. He felt afraid...he felt cold...he felt sad.

But a little later, when he was all alone, he didn't feel bad...

He felt very, very good...

And very, very different from the  
Danny he knew.



CHAPTER IV  
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The problem which the study addressed was the search for order, sequence, and proof in aesthetic inquiry. The working hypothesis of the study was that it was possible to create a new model to assist curriculum design which retained the flavor of artistic and literary criticism yet embodied the order, sequence, and proof required by educational research. Three models served as examples of good critical design. The critical systems of Krutch, Abrams, and Meyer provided the methodology for the creation of the model which was eventually presented in Chapter Three. The archetypes which the systems represented were personal involvement with the art form, the relationship of work of art to the artist, audience, and the universe of ideas, and the ambiguity or flexibility of the work of art. The new conceptual framework developed in the study was fashioned with these three archetypes in mind. In addition to assisting with the development of the new model, these critical systems themselves deserve notice inasmuch as they should help educators evaluate the aesthetic curriculum and devise new philosophies and programs for the entire educational endeavor.

The significance of the study rested in its attempt to present information about the developmental nature of the aesthetic experience, and thereby validate that type of experience as the foundation of the aesthetic curriculum. The study was also significant in that it

encouraged the development of perceptual and affective skills as well as technical and logical skills. The study also promoted the self-knowledge of the creative capacities and treated the aesthetic experience as a pervasive event in schooling. Since the study has been placed in the area of educational philosophy rather than in one of the fine arts, it was hoped that it would bring the aesthetic dimension of the curriculum to the attention of the general educator. The study should contribute to the aesthetic life of the reader; thus the format includes anecdotes and illustrations as well as text.

The definitions in Chapter One formed an introduction to the two final essays in the chapter. These essays functioned as position papers as well as exploratory exercises in aesthetic theory. Praxis, metaphor, and archetype are concepts which form a core of understanding in aesthetic education. The transdisciplinary curriculum is a desired outcome as this core of understanding is shared among educators. The section on models and design was included as a means to reduce conflict among members of a core group. The design of models reflects archetypes which signify hidden value statements and philosophical positions. Illuminating the differences in the way models are viewed contributes to understanding among individuals working toward the transdisciplinary curriculum.

Praxis had been defined as reflective action, an indispensable outcome of an aesthetic education. Self-knowledge may be said to depend upon reflective action. The teacher aware of the model of developmental aesthetic stages will constantly reflect upon and act upon students' experiences and perceptions in light of those stages, and shape the students' future experiences to enhance the stage in which each appears to

be. Like the Piagetian model, the move from one aesthetic stage to the next can not be aided or hastened. The capacity for the fusion-emotional stage remains linked to the psycho-emotional development of the individual and his awareness of aesthetic form. Those who build intense identity links with art forms will emerge from the fusion-emotional experience in a reflective stage of mind, with the determination to seek that stage again.

The Aesthetic Dimension in Education focused upon the realm of theory and the realm of experience. Aesthetic theory was seen as a diverse set of organizing principles treating the creation and criticism of art forms. The perception of form, the social referents of art, and the efficacy of expression are each premises of major schools of thought within aesthetic philosophy. The use of technical language, the relating of a work of art to audience, performer, and universal ideas, and the expansion of traditional aesthetics to include human endeavors other than art are the concerns of aesthetic criticism, the principal way in which aesthetic theory is presented to readers. Dewey and Beardsley explored common territory in their discussions of aesthetic theory and experience, and Sontag, in her literary criticism, postulated a relationship between the aesthetic experience and moral judgment.

The literature review established the existence of families of scholarship in which the individual authors or critics were linked by ideas or theories held in common or proceeding from one another. In the section on aesthetic criticism as a methodology, several models of criticism were examined and two were validated as systems of research suitable for the aesthetic curriculum. The model based on the writings of Joseph

Wood Krutch placed critical writings on a continuum of personal involvement with the art form. The three positions on Krutch's continuum were interpretation, impression, and impersonality. The critical model of Leonard B. Meyer was offered as an example of an impersonal or formalist style. M. H. Abrams' system for criticism, a four-pole model, is an example of the interpretive mode. John Ruskin was mentioned as an author using the impressionist method of criticism. Six prescriptions were given as a guide to researchers using an aesthetic methodology. The writer should 1) attempt vivid description through language, 2) systematize the application of metaphors, anecdotes, definitions, and models, 3) attend to the value base of the metaphors, etc., 4) forge conclusions based upon comparisons between the educational equivalents of Abrams' four poles, 5) frame these conclusions in a conceptual model or framework, and 6) infuse the model with ambiguity or flexibility to encourage its creative application.

The essay Creativity and Hedonism focused on the interrelationships between modes of perception, the artistic process, and the artistic product. Altered states of perception were viewed as natural adjuncts to the creative process. The traditional emphasis by school arts programs on artistic products was reviewed and judged insufficient for the transdisciplinary curriculum. This statement was supported by the revisionist aesthetic educators Eisner and Beittel. Hedonism was described as the valuing of the transient pleasures which accompany the aesthetic experience. The hedonistic view of morality was traced from Augustine and Aquinas through Hume and Bentham to Watts and Leonard. The concept of pleasure and ecstasy as constituents of an aesthetic education was seen

to have its enemies among those who would wish to keep education as it is. Hedonism was also related to the psychological construct of motivation.

In the final essay of the literature review, aesthetic theory was applied to the social research of Seymour Sarason. It was demonstrated that a number of rationales which formed the basis of change for the Yale Psycho-Educational Clinic were closely related to the hallmarks of the aesthetic experience as described by Beardsley. The essay itself followed Abrams' model in order to show that social as well as artistic and educational settings were appropriate subjects for aesthetic criticism.

Chapter Three used the critical models of Krutch and Abrams to outline a new conceptual framework for aesthetic education. This new model utilized five theories of art from the writings of Plato, Schiller, Read, Dewey, and Langer. Each theory was shown to have had a relationship with the chronological aesthetic stages of development. These aesthetic stages corresponded to the Piagetian stages of cognitive development but did not depend upon the completion of the cognitive stages for their progression. In relation to the five postulated stages, four types of aesthetic experiences were viewed as typical to each aesthetic developmental stage. Each type of experience characteristically happened during an aesthetic stage and persisted throughout the remainder of the child's aesthetic development.

The description of the four types of aesthetic experience and how each relates to the contemporary views of the five historical theories formed the introduction to the model. The concept of *décalage* or time lag between strands of development was introduced to emphasize the flexibility and deliberate ambiguity of the model. The model should be

expected to serve as a guide to a general understanding of the types of aesthetic experiences and comprehension of aesthetic phenomena, as an outline of how these understandings progress in relation to cognitive abilities, and as a framework for further scholarship in developmental aesthetics. The illustrations following the discussion offer a different perspective on the model. The visual representations of events which might hypothetically have contributed to the creation of the model seemed to be an efficacious method of allowing the reader entrée into the spectrum of observations which the writer made as a preliminary to the study.

### Conclusions

This study does not represent conventional statistical research. What it has done is to offer a new view of the aesthetic foundations of education, using forms of critical inquiry usually associated with literary or artistic criticism. Regardless of the methodology of an inquiry, or its intent, some statement of conclusion is necessary and appropriate. From the speculations and facts which support them, it is concluded that:

1. It is possible to fashion a method of aesthetic inquiry which retains the flavor of artistic and literary criticism yet embodies the sequence, order, and proof which educational research requires.
2. A method of artistic inquiry should be based upon comparisons between and among four poles or aspects of schooling: the teacher, the students, the educational setting, and selected ideas from the whole of educational philosophy.
3. Comparisons should be made in a narrative essay, the styles of which may be impersonal (formalistic), impressionistic (personal

expressions of opinion), or interpretive (social referents).

4. The style of the narrative combined all three of the above orientations, or may select from among them. The writer should stipulate which style he chooses, or otherwise make his choice apparent.

5. It is possible, through this kind of critical endeavor, to fashion conceptual frameworks which serve to organize knowledge of a particular phenomenon (first-order models) or to serve as heuristic devices for other researchers interested in that phenomenon (second-order models).

6. The conceptual framework presented in this study used artistic and literary methods of inquiry to postulate the existence of developmental stages of aesthetic awareness.

7. The postulated stages were derived from observation of the aesthetic experiences of many children and adolescents. The experiences of these students were compared with the educational environments in which they occurred, the aesthetic involvement of their teachers and the observer, and selected ideas from educational philosophy, psychology, and aesthetic theory.

8. The style of interpretation was chosen for this study. It is recommended that further research in developmental aesthetics adopts this style. While personal opinion and formalistic studies may be interesting, each alone cannot fulfill the conditions of proof, order, and sequence. What is currently needed in aesthetic education is work in the foundations area. Interpretive inquiry fulfills that need.

### Recommendations for Further Study

#### The Phenomenology of the Aesthetic Experience

As outlined in Chapter Three, Panzarella has noted that there are at least four types of aesthetic experiences. His conclusions were drawn from observations of subjects undergoing such experiences as well as from the verbal and written reports of those persons he observed. Since his studies were done with adults, it would be a logical extension of his study and this to observe and record the behavior of children and adolescents involved in encounters with art. Written reports by children may lack the cogency and descriptiveness of adults; it may be wiser to rely on verbal descriptions of what passes through their consciousnesses during the aesthetic experience.

In encouraging children to talk about art, there are several programmatic steps to follow and a number of attitudinal changes to watch as the steps are mounted and passed. First, children must develop a descriptive vocabulary to deal with the art object and their feelings about it. Often, culturally imposed paradigms are subtly substituted to countervent original or divergent subject-object emotional links a child might make. For example, children are encouraged to think of the "cool" colors--blue, green, and purple--as being restful and as signifying peace and repose. Yet those who walk through a mountain forest on an early summer day may become aware of the paradoxes presented by the "burning" blue of the sky overhead, the "fiery" green of the transparent leaves in motion upon the wind, and the "riotous" purple profusion of violets along the streambank. Similar cultural-artistic biases occur in music--for



example, the standard equations of minor keys = sad, major keys = happy. Educators who plan to equip their students with an aesthetic vocabulary should guard against such dictums which eventually form catechisms of cultural-artistic bias.

A second programmatic step in assisting the study of aesthetic experiences with children is to develop strong, positive identity links between the child and the art work. In doing this, it should be apparent that certain forms and styles of art are more suitable to the postulated aesthetic stages than others. While the entire ballet Petrouchka may have its fascination for the adult connoisseur, the music in its entirety may make severe demands upon even the most imaginative younger mind. Robbed of its dance, Petrouchka becomes an outline. To fill in such an outline without the verbal or imagic vocabulary mentioned above becomes a task more likely doomed to failure than destined for fulfillment. The study of aesthetic experiences among children should take place in the milieu most suited to the genre--i.e., viewing a ballet in a theatre rather than merely listening to its score in the classroom, or creating movements to accompany the score rather than fidgeting in a desk while it is played. The social-active dimension of the aesthetic experience demands that in order to insure positive identity links with art, the child must engage as much of the self as possible, as early as possible. Transference of actual involvement to hypothetical involvement is one long-range intent of the aesthetic education. The child moves from superficial, external involvement with art on the most simple level through an internalization which allows him access to mental images which enhance the art object and at the same time prompt the creative faculties.

Adolescents may sustain the mental images which allow them not merely to read, but to "read into" novels. If children of earlier aesthetic stages can not read novel-length literature, it is probably less due to a "short attention span" than it is to the development of hypothetical identification which characterizes the later aesthetic stage. The identity link, then, between the child or adolescent and the art object is distinguished by 1) early physical involvement with the mechanical aspects of the artistic genres, 2) the eventual development of the imaginative mental capacities which allow the child to "fill in the blanks" in art forms requiring it, and 3) the reliance upon such mental images to spur the child on to experimentation with creative forms which require originality, technique, and expressiveness.

A third programmatic recommendation is in the dimension of value. Often a child is reluctant to express ideas because he has been ridiculed or because he may appear silly. In the realm of art, where all things are possible (or at least probable), insane ideas and expressions have as much place as the recondite or abstruse. Art is the domain of nonsense and nonsequitur as well as of theory and technique. A playful, open confirming approach to discussions with children about art will meet with success. Often their ideas contain fresh and poignant views which adults with years of experience and training may overlook. The important thing to keep in mind while working with children of earlier developmental stages is that they express themselves using their newly-acquired technical vocabulary, and that they do so under conditions of excitement, encouragement, and experimentation.

Some specific research possibilities are suggested here to accompany these programmatic recommendations, as well as some directions which might be helpful in the development of curricular material. First, in the area of the descriptive vocabulary, curriculum development might

1. Establish a list of essential skills and concepts in each of the arts for each postulated aesthetic stage;

2. Derive a list of descriptive words, phrases, and expressions which might be desirable for children to use at each stage;

3. Observe children's aesthetic experiences using a checklist including these words, phrases, and expressions to note the frequency and distribution of the words during the experience;

4. Constantly update and revise the checklist to include motor responses, facial expressions, and gestures which occur during the aesthetic experience.

Second, vis-à-vis the recommendation "to develop strong identity links between the child and the art work," curriculum observers and writers might wish to pursue longitudinal case studies of several children using the checklist suggested above, keeping a log of the children's significant encounters with art forms. The log information might include

1. The genre, title, and author, composer, or creator of the art work;

2. The setting in which the child encountered the work;

3. Significant social data pertaining to the encounter, e.g., was the child alone or with parents, peers, or a teacher; was the experience self-initiated, teacher-directed or the product of chance; who performed and through which medium; was the encounter generally praised, denigrated, or neutralized by the child in his reflections upon it;

4. The nature and intensity of the observed aesthetic experience compared with the child's assessment of his experience;
5. Descriptive vocabulary used by the child in a brief post-encounter interview;
6. A short narrative written by the researcher evaluating the above data and placing it in perspective to the child's progress through the postulated stages of the model.

The curriculum researcher should infer that as the child matures, some regular patterns of aesthetic experience will emerge. The selection by the child of experiences which fulfill his desire to hear or view certain types of art may be construed as evidence that he has developed an identity link with that type of art. In addition to providing a clue about aesthetic development of the child, this data may also contribute to a personality profile of the child. The prudent researcher will explore the value dimension of such repeated choices by careful examination of verbal and written reports of the student. Bias words, judgment phrases, and emotionally charged statements should be critiqued as well as words and phrases from the checklist mentioned above.

Some other research possibilities in the phenomenology of the aesthetic experience (apart from specific investigations in curriculum) are:

1. Case studies in the creation of aesthetic settings focusing upon critical incidents changing the direction of the setting or profoundly affecting the individuals within the group;
2. Narratives which concentrate upon the role of the facilitator as perceived by him and as perceived by members of the aesthetic setting (a

good example of this type of narrative is Season with Solti by William Barry Furlong. The book tells the story of the performance season of Georg Solti and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, concentrating upon the interaction of the conductors, the musicians and their families, the managers, entrepreneurs, and financiers of a major American symphony orchestra;

3. Studies which outline the aesthetic development of individuals of diverse backgrounds--statistical researchers, social researchers, and arts educators--who may be initiating transdisciplinary programs in business, schools, or community arts settings;

4. Studies which work to confirm the existence of aesthetic developmental stages in mentally or orthopedically handicapped students.

#### Theoretical and Critical Studies

Another direction which further research in aesthetic education could take is through the lens of teleological criticism. As alluded to in Chapter One (The Aesthetic Dimension in Education: Theory and Experience), certain art forms are judged suitable for use in the school curriculum and some forms are not. The constraints of time, resources, and class size mitigate against some discarded forms, but there seems to be no clear purpose for excluding the rest, unless one accepts "taste" as a criterion. The trombone choir and the barbershop quartet served as examples. Other examples might be recorder ensembles, medieval dance, Jewish music, "found" art and guerilla theatre. Less specific artistic endeavors excluded from the curriculum are the theory and criticism of art and settings which exist to showcase original creations of students

(apart from painting, drawing, and sculpting classes). In music, drama, and dance there seems to be a dearth of classes solely for the production of original student works. One must discount large metropolitan high schools such as the High School of the Performing Arts in Brooklyn, New York, and North Miami Beach High School in Miami, Florida. Numbers of students well prepared to undertake original works abound in those areas. One may argue that the number of students able to participate in such settings in smaller urban and rural schools might be painfully small. However, one begs the question, is "numbers" really a justification for offering or not offering courses or experiences which students deserve and want? Those who are able to participate should be able to do so, even under the severest constraints of teacher allotment and scheduling, in the strong hope that others not equal to the task may follow and be inspired.

The criticism of educational purposes may be crystallized around Habermas' writings on the reasons why humans gather and use information. To briefly paraphrase, these reasons are 1) gathering information or knowledge for the purpose of controlling or manipulating people and situations, 2) gathering knowledge for the purpose of understanding social-cultural phenomena (hermeneutics), and 3) gathering knowledge for the purpose of emancipation or liberation of human potential.<sup>83</sup> These parameters may be viewed as inclusive, exclusive, or sequential. In a sequential relationship, the teacher of art first attempts to control the techniques the student learns in order for the student to later understand

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<sup>83</sup>Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), p. 35.

how those techniques may be used to liberate the student and potential audiences from the faded stereotypes and tired metaphors of which Broudy wrote. In an exclusive relationship, teachers of art may concentrate on only one aspect or parameter--let us say, control--and view the others as peripheral or unimportant to the artistic process. Beittel, for example, would fall under the general heading of a liberationist with an exclusive view of the purpose of teaching art--the liberation of human potential. Those who hold the view that art has no political dimension (or should have none) fall into the category of exclusive hermeneutics. By contrast, a Marxist aesthetic, such as espoused by Marcuse, would reject this view and its reliance upon a single, exclusive view of Habermas' model. Rather, the New Aesthetic--often termed "Third Wave"--adopts the despairing, near-existential inclusive view that art is doomed to work through all three parameters of Habermas' model. Although the artist may genuinely try to negate the constraints of society upon his work and consequently liberate the audience's consciousness from similar constraints, he still is engaged in an act of control, of which little or no understanding exists at any level.

A speculative model of the relationships between Habermas' paradigm and the dimensions of artistic endeavor may help to enlighten the teleological realm of art curricula. If criticism, art-in-process, and re-creative art are arbitrarily postulated as the three purposive dimensions of art--in criticism, to understand; in re-creative art, to gain technical control; and in art-in-process to liberate the potential of the creator--then links between and among elements of the model appear as such:

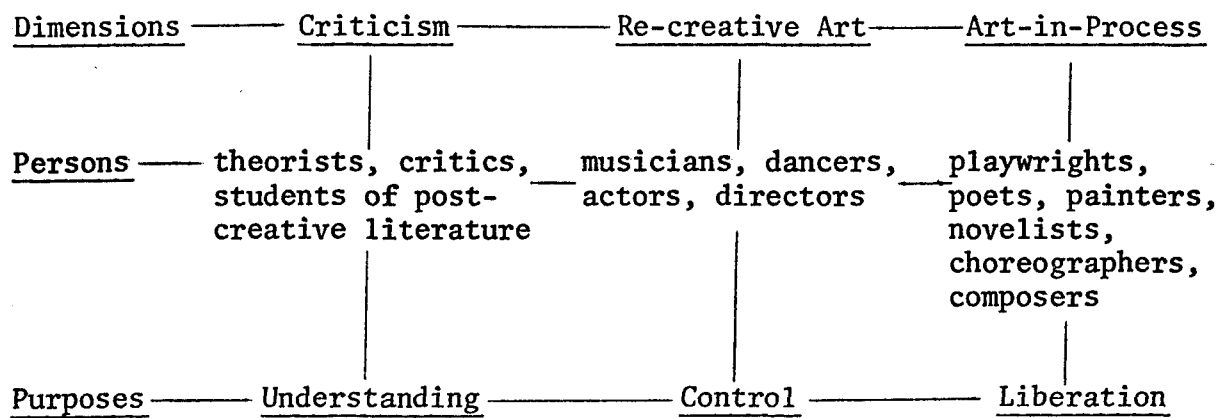


Fig. 15.

The Dimensions of Artistic Endeavor

Eventually, through dialogue among the persons in each of the three dimensions, arts curricula and programs should evolve to look like this:

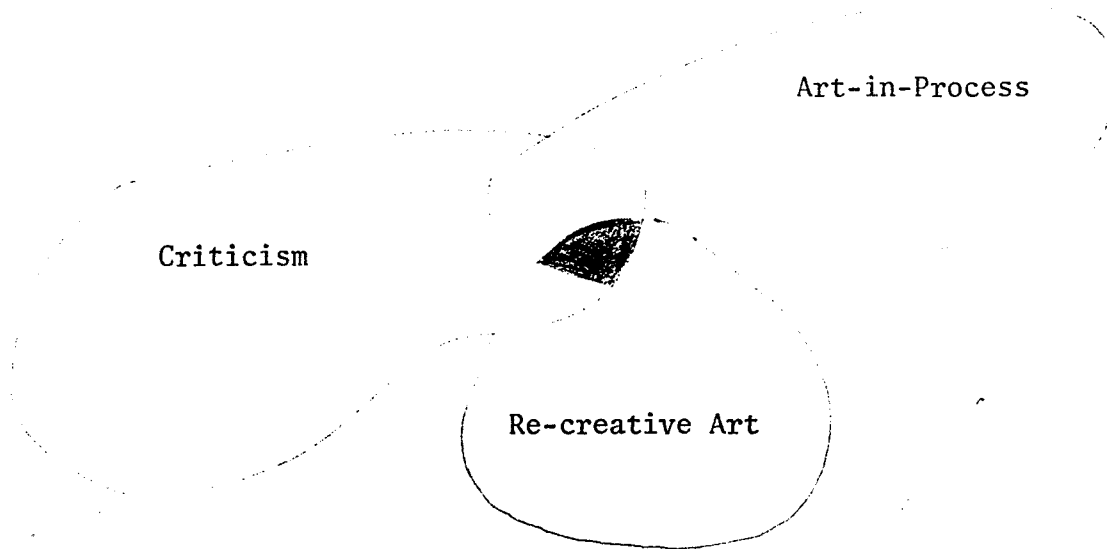


Fig. 16.

Arts Curricula and Programs



This should be a model which school art programs could philosophically support and realistically implement. From the small, dense, "hot" core where the purposes, dimensions, and people coincide, there should emerge exciting possibilities for inquiry of critical and theoretical varieties.

Habermas' model lends itself especially well to teleological criticism. Further research in aesthetic education should examine the political dimensions of programs in the arts and could address questions such as

1. What are the purposes of an aesthetic education as seen by school administrators, college professors, performing artists, public school teachers, parents, and students?
2. What are the areas of congruency and disparity among these views?
3. Why are some art forms excluded from the school curriculum and what are the historical, social, political, and economic reasons for their exclusion?
4. How should school arts curricula be evaluated: in terms of the creative, re-creative, or critical output of the students?
5. How can social research and curriculum theorizing interface with aesthetics? Does art philosophy currently have the capacity to deal with real school issues or must other methods of research suffice?
6. How can key persons in school leadership positions be moved to make financial commitments to aesthetic education, and what strategies should arts educators employ to guarantee these commitments?
7. What are the moral dimensions of taste, and what are their roles in the development of an arts curriculum?

8. What are the philosophical implications of statistical research in the arts? How does "hard" research mitigate for or against the aims of an aesthetic education?

Finally, Maxine Greene offers a caution to those scholars pursuing aesthetic studies. To gain understanding of forms and lose the capacity to enjoy them is a great danger inherent in arts scholarship.

It is true that, in order to penetrate and to realize a work of art, individuals must be equipped with a degree of cognitive understanding: they ought to have some acquaintance with figurative language in the case of literature, with the distinctively dynamic images created in dance, with the tonal structures and sound relations in music, with plastic and pictorial values in painting. It is possible, however, to understand the metaphor . . . so well that one can write scholarly treatises on figures and symbols--and be incapable of aesthetic involvement.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Greene, Landscapes, p. 179-180.

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