Neil C.M. Brown

Studies in Philosophical Realism in Art, Design and Education

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Preface

Artworks that meant little to me once now mean everything, and I attribute these changes of heart almost entirely to changes in my understanding. For this reason, what I want to say about education in art reflects my desire in becoming more deeply acquainted with the elusive and enduring autonomy of art. I trust that my need for understanding grows out of a respect for art rather than a wish for its definitive control. While happy to construct, deconstruct, reconstruct and reframe my understandings of art, I oppose the imposition of these as conceits on the existence of artworks. The pretence of remaking art into a creature of one's understanding means that you can never be wrong about the meaning of works shutting out the possibility of changes of heart that, in my opinion, nurture the integrity of arts education.

Bringing together the papers for this book is the inspiration of Dr. Kerry Thomas, my joint collaborator in the exploration of philosophical realism in art and education. In her role as senior curriculum officer (visual arts) and then inspector (creative arts) with the New South Wales Board of Studies, Kerry made possible the practical implementation and revision of ideas elaborated in the following chapters. Then as my PhD student and currently as associate professor in the School of Education at the University of New South Wales, Kerry saw value in telling the story of philosophical realism as an evolutionary narrative of my papers stretching back 30 years. I am forever grateful to Kerry for her gracious and selfless endeavour in this regard. I also wish to thank Liora Bresler for considering this book for inclusion in the "Landscape" series.

Arts education is the most eclectic of domains, and its collaborative demands are correspondingly onerous. I thank all those who have taken an interest in my ideas including those less well disposed in the early days. I have strived for consistency in my views, and I hope this is sustained over the quarter century in which they are presented.

Sydney, NSW, Australia   Neil C.M. Brown
December, 2015

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Part I
The Development of Philosophical Realism in Art, Design and Education

Chapter 1
Introduction to Studies in Philosophical Realism in Art, Design and Education

Neil C.M. Brown and Kerry Thomas

> *There is an indelible relationship between [an] art teacher's training, their vintage, their assumptions, their beliefs about art and movements in the artworld, and what goes on in art education (Brown 1992, p. 81).*
>
> *But I know and will do nothing to conceal it, that in reality I discovered only little by little, even on the terrain of research, the principles that guided my practice (Bourdieu 2008, p. 2).*
>
> *It was only slowly, and almost retrospectively, that I began… to spell out my 'difference' (Bourdieu 2008, p. 3).*

1.1 Purpose of This Book

This book is a reference work made up of an edited collection of original chapters. It includes previously published peer reviewed articles and conference papers by the educational philosopher and teacher, Neil C.M. Brown, spanning three decades from the late 1980s until today. The primary purpose of this book is to bring together into a single volume, philosophical, theoretical and practical papers that address the concept of Philosophical Realism in art education. Its benefits to the international field of art education include the foundations for a Philosophical Realism in art and design education; a realist analysis of contemporary issues in art education; and the contribution of Philosophical Realism to the development of visual arts curriculum.

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1.2   Philosophical Realism in Art Education

Brown's development of Philosophical Realism in art education over the past thirty years is evolutionary rather than programmatic. It springs from events in the early nineteen eighties coinciding with his research into the limitations emerging with New Criticism, the psychologically framed aesthetic orthodoxy underlying Anglo Saxon theory of art in the first half of the twentieth century. The subjectivist aesthetics of New Criticism was under siege from influential structural and historicist revisions in aesthetics, many originating from revolutionary developments in Europe during the late nineteen sixties. The corresponding shift from a subjectively causal to a cognitively based aesthetics in North America had a revolutionary impact on the politics of practice in art to the extent that foundational concepts of art and aesthetics could no longer be dismissed as esoteric curiosities by art educators as they may have been earlier in the century (Weitz 1956; Dickie 1974). In consultation with the North American educational philosopher Elizabeth Steiner, Brown's interest in the details of European aesthetics turned to focus on the conundrums these systems posed collectively for practice in art and education. He believed that ontological incompatibility, underlying a plurality of European aesthetic systems, foreshadowed dilemmas of value in art education that would lead the field into a revolutionary politics of choice. The uptake of structuralism, culture theory, including the legacy of subjectivist aesthetics, Brown believed, would oblige the making of ontological choices in art education, breaking down the division between theory and practice in art teaching, with implications for the nature of content to be taught, and ways it was to be understood and assessed.

1.3   The Threat of Philosophical Revisionism and the Corrosive Effects of Pluralism

As an eclectic field, art education offered little resistance to invasion by philosophical revisionists. During the latter half of the twentieth century powerful philosophical systems began carving up the spoils of art and education. By the end of the century a largely pragmatist and creativist art education in North America was being variously rebirthed semiologically (Project Zero; see for instance, Gardner 1989), institutionally (Getty Museum's Discipline Based Art Education; see for instance, Smith 1989; Wilson 1997), and culturally (Freedman/Raymond Williams inspired critical theory; see Williams 1976; Freedman 2000), amongst others. Brown was particularly interested in two issues relating to these unfolding events. Firstly, in the way that revisionism in art education, borne by different and, he felt, comparatively unexamined assumptions by the field, mandated ontologically exclusive understandings of art. Secondly, insofar as these assumptions were value laden, they placed imperatives on the details of practice in art and education. Together these issues led to his belief that the field was being politicised by ideology masquerading

as ontology. That is, philosophically derived beliefs about art, although solemnly held, were misappropriating the autonomy of art's existence. The consequences of mistaking epistemology for ontology in this way implicated art educators in the making of exclusive theoretical choices, constructing what art could be and thus severely handicapping art educators' freedom in the interpretation and explanation of artistic meaning with students.

Completing a study synthesising Monroe Beardsley's (1958/1981) concept of aesthetic criticism and Nicholas Wolterstorff's realist theory of art kinds (1980) in nineteen eighty-six, Brown began examining ways of overcoming constraints on the application of Philosophical Realism to practice with a view to countering divisive pluralism and providing tools for developing students' conceptual autonomy in their making and understanding of art. There was no doubt, he felt, that an art education dominated throughout the twentieth century by a mind to world approach to aesthetic meaning was in need of a world to mind layer of reference or praxeology, beyond that provided by studies in the critical history of art.

The chapters in this book analyse the advantages of Philosophical Realism, including its capacity for preserving the continuity of inherited systems of artistic value, while embracing new systems of meaning. Although Philosophical Realism has never been seriously proposed as a revisionist option for art education, Brown, with the support of Professor Elizabeth Steiner, was convinced by the work of philosophers including Richard Wolheim (1968) and Nicholas Wolterstorff (1980) of its value for the field. However, the pathway to Philosophical Realism in art and art education is a trail strewn with many difficult theoretical, not to mention political obstacles, as revealed in the following chapters.

1.4 The Contribution of the *Occasional Seminars in Art Education* Series in the Development Philosophical Realism

The chapters in this volume, although thematically consistent, are written around concerns and issues emerging within an historical context. This is consistent with the tenets of Philosophical Realism insofar as it embraces a grounded historicism in its approach to meaning in art and practice. Particular reference is made to papers originating as groundwork for curriculum development in New South Wales, Australia, many emerging as leading presentations in the *Occasional Seminars in Art Education* series in Sydney at the College of Fine Arts (COFA), UNSW. The *Occasional Seminars* series, conceived as an outreach program for art teachers by Brown during his tenure as Head of the School of Art Education, continued over a period of ten years. The seminars provided the opportunity for debate and the exchange of ideas amongst international contributors, departmental staff, art teachers and postgraduate students on questions referring to Philosophical Realism. International contributors to the series included: Arthur Efland, Howard Gardner,

Eliot Eisner, Kerry Freedman, Norman Freeman, Jerome Haussman, Andrew Harrison, Mike Parsons, Terry Smith, Peter van Sommers, Mary Stokrocki, Ellen Winner and Enid Zimmerman.

Seminar themes of significance to chapters in this book include Norman Freeman's investigations into children's developing theory of art; Elliot Eisner's critique of the concept of cognitive transfer, examined by Brown in Chap. 16; Arthur Efland's investigation into historical influences on the development of cognitive theory in art education; Kerry Freedman's analysis of rapid shifts in image production and cultural meaning; Enid Zimmerman's narrative case study of her talented artist son Eric, representing Brown's concept of the body of work in Chap. 12, among others.

While intellectual issues driving these seminars were significant for the wider field of art education they were also pitched at the contemporary experiences of art teachers in NSW. The proposals put forward, such as those described in Chaps. 7 and 10 for the Frames and in Chap. 12 for the assessment of student performance in the making of the Body of Work, were designed to address practical concerns of art teachers as they arose, rather than reflecting a particular ideology of an educational system or special interest group. Backed by a rich tradition of philosophical inquiry, presentations at these events challenged taken for granted views, taboos and unexamined conundrums, such as those posed by the complexities of art for standards based approaches to assessment, as discussed in Chap. 11, the making of aesthetic and practical explanations and the concept of aesthetic development in children (see Chap. 5). The seminars frequently embraced the wonder of art, its systems of values and histories acknowledging the volatility of theoretical shifts in the artworld and the obligations placed on art education to respond.

1.5   Collaboration with the NSW Board of Studies in the Use of Philosophical Realism in Visual Arts Curriculum Development

While the Occasional Seminars provided academic leadership for art teachers and academics in NSW, opportunities for practical implementation of concepts in Philosophical Realism were made possible through institutional alliances between Brown and the Creative Arts division of the NSW Board of Studies (BOS) in Sydney, Australia—the statutory authority responsible for curriculum and assessment in all schools K-12 across the state. Under the leadership of its President, John Lambert, the BOS implemented a broadly based curriculum reform agenda (NSW Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs 1989), the timing of which was well suited to the collaboration, as described in Chap. 7, that followed between Brown, as the architect of realist revisions including the "Frames" and Creative Arts curriculum leaders at the BOS, Paul Milton, Inspector Creative Arts; Kerry Thomas, Senior Curriculum Officer Visual Arts (later Inspector Creative Arts); and Amanda Weate,

Visual Arts Syllabus Chair (subsequent Head of the School of Art Education at the College of Fine Arts, UNSW).

In working party meetings between the School of Art Education, Department of Education, the BOS and its Visual Arts syllabus committee, Brown argued that students' understanding of contemporary art was being poorly served by the assumption of artworks existing solely as immediately meaningful objects. What could be learned about art, he insisted, was tied to particular frameworks of belief. Brown recognised however, the need for cushioning the transition to reform and grafted his proposal for the Frames onto the existing content areas—Art and Australia, Art and Culture, Art and Media—resulting in a greater acceptance of these measures by art educators and the BOS (Board of Studies 1987, 1995, 1999; Brown 1989a).

Running counter to these developments in the early 1990s, the Australian Federal government following the international push towards competency-based education, and in pursuit of micro-economic reform, embarked on the introduction of a national curriculum. The national agenda aimed at converting subject content into key competencies and was widely interpreted by academics as a threat to the intellectual integrity of subject content including the Visual Arts in NSW. Although the NSW BOS was reluctant to apply competency-based approaches to the Creative Arts, the Visual Arts was nevertheless obliged to comply with this national agenda for some years. Recognising the challenge that these 'reforms' posed for the identity of art in education, and in collaboration with Garth Gaudrey, Professor of Mathematics at UNSW and leaders from other subject domains, Brown opposed the national curriculum by exposing the determinism of outcomes and profiles as representational artefacts, as detailed in Chap. 11.

In contravention of the national agenda, the commitment to curriculum innovation through the Frames in visual arts education continued in NSW. Nonetheless, work undertaken in developing the Visual Arts Years 7–10 Syllabus (Board of Studies 1995) recognised the need for compromise with the BOSs curriculum committees. It was not until innovations in Philosophical Realism in Visual Arts were accepted at committee levels, through broadly based state consultation and with ministerial endorsement that they could be accepted for introduction.

Shortly after this, reforms to the Higher School Certificate (HSC) the major matriculation examination in NSW, led by Professor Barry McGaw, sought a reconsideration of the purposes of the senior years of secondary schooling, focusing comprehensively on curriculum structure, assessment and the reporting of results.[1] McGaw believed that it was possible to ensure differences in level of intellectual demand within a single course allowing student performance in each subject domain to be measured across the one scale (McGaw 1997). However, McGaw's proposal exposed a flaw in the way art was being assessed, namely, the capacity of art curriculum to represent qualitative differences in levels of intellectual demand across a course of study in creative practice.

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[1] English, Mathematics, History, Music were exempt from this 2-unit arrangement of subjects. For further information on course, subjects and curriculum provision (See Aqilina n.d.).

Brown's interest in children's cognition and intentional theories of mind helped in meeting the representational challenges for art posed by McGaw's reforms. In seeking to ameliorate the difficulties McGaw's proposal posed for creative art making, Brown devised a proposal for creative assessment based on a "body of work", as distinct from a 'major work', traditionally used in assessing a student's artistic performance. The hallmark of this proposal, accepted by the BOS, was a framework designed for differentiating levels of cognitive performance in creative artworks that could be applied to the assessment of student performances for the HSC, as described in Chap. 12.

The 1995 Visual Arts 7–10 (middle school) syllabus and the senior syllabus (matriculation) that followed, focus on enfolding cognitive frames into creative practice. These frames provide the opportunity for teachers and students to ask explicitly questions such as 'what do those in the artworld do', and 'what are the constraints in the relation between artists, their works and beholders'. These and similar questions elaborate on the relationships between functional players in the field of art with a view to complementing teacher and students' creative interests. In NSW this focus built on Bourdieu's theory of practice (1990), of particular interest to Brown and Thomas. Bourdieu's concepts refer to 'the field', 'feel for the game' and the implied concepts of 'institutions', 'agency', 'relational networks', and are accepting of a more open engagement between teachers and students in art. They represent approaches offering a broader conceptual space for the interaction between art teachers and students in NSW schools to reframe art as a domain within art education while conversely instituting the acceptance of art education as a domain within the field of art.

In the most recent development, as Brown proposes in Chap. 8, the domains expand the syllabus beyond the focus on art making, art criticism and art history, or what have become popularly known as 'practices' by art teachers. These domains acknowledge that art content, as a *field of practice*, is appropriately represented as a historically evolving collection of domains rather than as a universally unchanging set. Some domains endure and re-emerge after contact with changing cultures, fashions and technologies. Others assist in making sense of contemporary developments in art and design including multi-modality and the use of digital technologies.

The value of these domains is their applicability in varying degrees to works of art and practice from any historical period. Each domain facilitates understanding in art making and art criticism by expanding students' knowledge of the field while breaking down the orthodox representation of developments in creative practice as radical renouncement of the past.

Currently discussions are underway with the NSW Board of Studies and Teacher Education Standards (BOSTES, the previous NSW Board of Studies), to amend the senior syllabus by acknowledging this significant development that is well suited to extending teachers' conceptual repertoire while also further building students understandings of art. These domains, as a further curriculum innovation, have already been of great interest to art teachers who have recently acknowledged their enduring role in the NSW Visual Arts and Design Educators' 2015 annual conference, and in the professional development meetings held in the last two years

including the 'critical friends' meeting, cross-sectorial *Artworld Alliances* conferences (UNSW 2014a, b), and the follow-up *Change Agents* conference (UNSW 2015), held at the UNSW.

1.6   The Chapters in This Book

1.6.1   Part I: The Development of Philosophical Realism in Art, Design and Education

Part I collects together papers devoted to the elucidation and defence of Philosophical Realism and its application to the practical arts (Chaps. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6). Chapter 1, 'Introduction to studies in Philosophical Realism in art, design and education' provides the background to Brown's development of Philosophical Realism. This is set within the historical context of revisionist developments in art education during the later part of the twentieth century. The chapter also briefly outlines the focus and content of this volume.

Chapter 2, 'Constraints on art in education' deals with the theoretical difficulties facing the educational representation of art in the curriculum at all levels. Brown argues that art education can be seen as an institutional network of implications, influences and limitations that is imposed on educational practice as a consequence of characteristics relating to the special nature of art as its referent. This chapter foreshadows the strategic approach to curriculum development in the Visual Arts since 1994 as represented in Australia through the NSW Board of Studies and syllabuses used in secondary schools. In Chap. 3, 'Making art a real thing', Brown identifies how art education has been slow in learning the lessons of the *avant garde*: namely, that there are few privileged performances in the visual arts and that the artistic imagination can be accounted for in various ways. He argues that an intentional account of art should be able to accommodate different theories of art rather than favouring one theory over another or abandoning explanation to a negative pluralism. Projects related to art in education, Brown says, are in urgent need of ontologically neutral presuppositions about the domain of art and he sketches a minimal set of conditions to meet this requirement:

1. That art objects exist independently of mind.
2. That art can be explained without catastrophic consequences for its existence.

Brown goes on to explore how, despite their causal density, true assertions can be made about the meaning of artworks framed in the form of satisfying non-reductive explanations. These ideas are elaborated on in Chap. 4, 'Aesthetic description and realism in art education', where the usefulness of a stable realism, rather than a metaphysics of art, is discussed. Brown explains how questions related to the

description and understanding of artworks can be addressed. He shows how real artworks, freed from the entailment of an infallible epistemology, do not have to be 'right' before they are revealed to students for critical interpretation.

The last two chapters in this part focus on children's cognition, knowledge and belief in art. In Chap. 5, 'Theoretical perspectives: Research into children's cognition and knowledge', Brown explores how the visual arts has secured and traditionally defended its position in the curriculum on the basis of its subjectivity. Nonetheless, changes in the philosophy of meaning and belief in the arts since the 1960s have shifted the emphasis from the study of children's art as a phenomenon to the study of children's understanding of art. While not widely acknowledged in the literature of children's art, Brown shows how a child's coming to know art requires domain awareness, that is, a reflective engagement with the artworld. He discusses the role played by theory in the representation of art and the impossibility of eliminating a wide range of conceptual stances with respect to how children develop artistic understanding. In Chap. 6, 'Aesthetic fallacies in perspective', Brown examines the long-standing opposition to critical explanation in the arts and art education. Drawing on examples from the logic of Monroe Beardsley's three aesthetic fallacies, he shows how aesthetic meaning in art depends upon the intentional representation of beliefs. Brown argues that representations do not impose ontological preconditions on artefacts as reductions to a single truth but act as a way of constraining, or framing, the sense of references to artefacts within relational networks of causation. These frameworks are not relativistically interchangeable but meta-represent meaning in artworks from alternative points of view. Placing the artwork at the centre in this study expresses Brown's contention that understanding in art is transmitted as patterns of causal interaction with real, independently existing artefacts.

1.6.2   Part II: The Critical Application of Philosophical Realism to Concerns in Art, Design and Education

Part II includes Chaps. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Chapters 7, 'Art education curriculum praxis: A time for collaboration' and 10, 'The Frames and Relational Aesthetics' deal with innovation in curriculum development at state level in NSW syllabuses in the Visual Arts. These two chapters focus on the origination of the 'Frames'—subjective, cultural, structural, and postmodern—that, while not exhaustive and in a continual state of mutation, inherit ways in which objects are valued, interpreted, created and made use of as art. The Frames are not artefacts of curriculum but chosen as distillations of historically emergent, axiomatically distinct and grounded epistemologies. Brown considers the ongoing authority of these frames as different systems of knowing functioning within overlapping constraints.

The contribution of the Frames, as elaborated on in these chapters, lies not only in their complementary epistemic perspectives but also in the way, at varying levels of complexity and with increasing degrees of autonomy, they present students with a new layer of conceptual tools for the explicit interrogation of artefacts and artistic ideas. Placing students in conceptual charge of their artistic development Brown sees *as* the eventual goal of art education.

In Chap. 7, 'Art education curriculum praxis: A time for collaboration', Brown suggests the potential of a fertile association between collaboration and curriculum innovation, characterised through the introduction of the Frames. However, he warns of how interdisciplinary collaboration can pose a threat to highly eclectic fields such as art education. In this chapter ethical issues associated with collaboration are discussed including differences between a right, an ought and a could, and the opportunity is used to reject a popular synonymy of the time—between 'collaboration' and 'action research' in education. In Chap. 10, 'The Frames and relational aesthetics', Brown identifies resonances with Nicholas Bourriaud's (2002) concept of relational aesthetics. He explains how the Frames continue to bring a theoretical power to art, as forms enabling students at varying stages of conceptual autonomy, to reposition, dismantle, reassemble and apply the meanings of art into intentional systems in art and design; including contemporary developments in multi-modality and digital technologies. The Frames take the original step of making conceptual positioning in art an explicit choice for students rather than imposed as assumptions concealed in the rhetoric of the curriculum. Conceptual positioning opens the way for concomitants in conceptual autonomy that can be used in registering differences in developmental levels of understanding in art.

In Chap. 8, 'Coming to terms with Visuality in the content of art education', the most recent of the chapters written in 2015 and drawing on his *Literature Review* for the *National Review of Visual Education* (2006), Brown explores how content in art and art practice is generated in the form of curriculum narratives in art education with a particular focus on how the concept of the 'visual' has emerged as a central narrative in the field. He identifies how the tag of the 'visual' in the multi modality of a post digital age has become 'the elephant in the room' when applied as a defining concept in art education. Then in Chap. 9, 'The spectacle of the artist in art education', Brown focuses on how theoretical changes underpinning key functions of content in art education are positively correlated with the spectacular advantages they bring to the field. Borrowing from Guy Debord's (1967) economy of the spectacle, as appropriate to representations of the visual artist, Brown identifies three spectacles of the artist in education—the psychological, epistemological and anthropological. He shows how narratives, based on the spectacle of the artist's role as it is portrayed within curriculum content, flourish and endure by enchanting teachers and then implicating them as dependents in the maintenance and production of the gaze.

Taking a broader view of educational reforms in nation states and state based curriculum that resonate today, in Chap. 11, 'The meta-representation of standards, outcomes and profiles in visual arts education', Brown examines the opacity of meaning in competency based approaches to the field. He reveals the way

standardised outcomes designed, ironically, with the purpose of eliminating the need for interpretation by teachers, require the opposite. Using a concept map, Brown represents the different ways that five educational meta-narratives explain relationships between concepts of curriculum standards and their referent subject domains. He argues that, like paintings and photographs, standardised outcomes are in effect representational artefacts that qualify as representations because they refer to something else. This asymmetry in meaning runs counter to their stated educational purpose of establishing an unambiguous identity in the relation between subject matter and guaranteed levels of student performance.

Chapter 12 returns to a perennial issue for art education. In this chapter, 'Bodies of Work', Brown examines the terms under which students' artistic ability is imputed from their artworks analysing three commonly accepted modes of assessing student art—the aesthetic ranking of finished works, portfolios, and the assessment of students' bodies of work. He deliberates on how the assessment of students' performances in art is marked by the complexity of the relationship between the artwork and student maker. Brown proposes a framework for differentiating levels of cognitive performance in art, with an application for the assessment of senior students' bodies of work, as represented in the NSW Visual Arts syllabus but also applicable to other curriculum contexts. In Chap. 13, 'Distinguishing artistic from vernacular performances', Brown considers differences between the teaching of vernacular performances in art and the cultivation of identifiable artistic ends in elementary and primary schools from the alternative perspectives of epigenetic and epistemic pedagogies. In this chapter the character of the visual arts is represented as a kind of practical reasoning enacted in relation to three different frameworks of artistic value—the structural, sociocultural and psychological.

Cautioning against populist orthodoxies of talent and self expression, and recognising concerns associated with relations between teacher guilt and student performance, in Chap. 14, 'Similarities between creativity and politics as forms of practice', Brown defends the notion that particular theories of political action provide a parallel for creative action. He demonstrates how political norms are applied in the justification and determination of individual creative achievement but transacted necessarily through public performances. Brown questions the sufficiency of creativity as a value base for art education arguing that such an approach privileges merely novel performances at the expense of epistemic and socio-cultural determinants. In Chap. 15, 'Creativity as collective misrecognition in the relationships between art teachers and their students', Brown and Thomas investigate the teaching of creativity as an exchange of symbolic capital within a particular socio-cognitive setting. Reporting on a pilot study, they test the proposition that creativity is traded between teachers and students, like the exchange of gifts. Evidence emerges that demonstrates how the teacher and students collectively misrepresent violations of student originality in order to shore up the students' chances of creative success in their assessment.

In the final chapter in this part, Chap. 16, 'The meaning of transfer in the practices of arts education', Brown examines the assumptions underlying the concept of 'transfer of training', a recurring approach to redressing the marginalisation of the arts in education. He argues that the meaning of cognitive transfer in the arts, often advocated as a panacea, including evidence of a cognitive structure shared with other mainstream knowledge domains, varies according to its representation within different values of arts education practice.

1.6.3   Part III: Philosophical Realism and Its Implications for Practice in Art, Design and Education

Part III includes Chaps. 17, 18, 19, and 20. Chapter 17, 'Pragmatism and privilege in the practical arts' focuses on the influential legacy of Dewey's pragmatism and scientist instrumentalism in shaping the present status of the practical arts, including the practice of teaching. In a theme elaborated on widely, Brown discusses how the influence of pragmatism has contributed to the gradual extinction of virtuosity as a practical value in the crafts, leading to further erosion of professional autonomy across the practical arts. In Chap. 18, 'The relation between evidence and action in the assessment of practice', Brown explores how global approaches to teaching and learning aimed at producing 'active, creative and critical workers for life long and life wide learning' are redirecting attention away from the structure of axiomatic disciplines to emphasise the importance of practical reasoning in the navigation of knowledge. However, he explains how such a shift poses problems for curriculum and assessment arising from the difficulties with apportioning evidence in practical reasoning unattached to formal disciplines.

In Chap. 19, 'The representation of practice', Brown returns to a critique of action research used as an approach to research into design practice. He proposes a functional account of artistic practice, informed by Pierre Bourdieu (1990, 1996, 1998), Guy Deleuze (1988, 1991, 1995), Jean Baudrillard (1996), Richard Boyd (1988), and John Searle (1995), in which he portrays the agencies contributing to innovation in design as augmented sets of interdependent functions acting in concert. This functional account is illustrated in two examples of creative practice in design where the agency of the 'designer' is illustrated from two different functional perspectives. Building on the previous chapter, in Chap. 20, 'Paradox and imputation in the explanation of practical innovation in design', Brown identifies the under-explored link between agents and artefacts in the designing relation. He proposes that it is the practical reasoning governing the relation between artefacts and practice—that is, the way in which a diversity of agents are admitted to filling the gap in this relation—that explains the process of innovation in design and thus extends our understanding of research into practice.

1.7   Omissions from This Book

The chapters in this book have been selected for the scope of their contribution to the development and implementation of Philosophical Realism in art education. Practical constraints have led to the omission of papers in which Brown elaborates on the relation between Philosophical Realism and student assessment (Brown 2001a); the crafts (Brown 1997); later arts participation (Brown 2001b); the impact of institutional power (Brown 1995, Brown and Weate 2002); visual literacy (Brown 1989a, b, 2003), and other issues.

Empirical studies supervised by Brown grounded on a theory of Philosophical Realism in art education have been set aside for a following publication. These include studies into adolescent photography, realism and consciousness in art, children's developing critical choices in portraiture, the transfer of creative capital in art teaching, children's emerging theory of art, as well as further evidence relating to developments in the concept of Philosophical Realism.

Cumulatively the chapters and those omitted address the possibility of a co-joint psychological/philosophical underpinning for the notion of cognitive development in art and design as a practical domain in education.

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Chapter 2
Constraints on Art in Education: Realism and Art Education

2.1 Background

Art in education is modelled on conventional practice to a far greater extant than other subjects in the curriculum. Even though universities have the responsibility for teaching about art and accrediting practitioners, their influence on the generation and direction of artistic content is fragile. For this reason the content of art provides educators with an unpredictable object of study. Art practice, for example, is committed to ideals of personal expression and cultural difference. It is subject to the contingencies of radical change in fashion and, rather than accumulating a stable body of truth, is normally committed to the production of objects aimed at the private enjoyment of beholders. Courses in the preparation of artists and art teachers have only recently found a place in British and Australasian universities. By comparison with training for other professions courses in art are beset by constraints on their formalisation as knowledge. The philosophical puzzles presented by these constraints rekindle the traditional suspicions that have marginalised the arts as an academic form within Western and particularly Anglo Saxon education. While the curriculum has seen the advent of many new subjects and cross disciplinary changes, in many ways art education continues to invite, as it has for centuries, the scepticism of educators and the scorn of artists.

Intelligent choices are made by art educators who can anticipate these constraints. A philosophical foundation for curriculum aims to provide an interpretive framework for use by teachers, at all levels, in the reconstruction of their every day teaching practice. The following discussion outlines the philosophical foundations recommended by the School of Art Education at UNSW and adopted for revision of the years K-12 Visual Arts syllabi in New South Wales, Australia. Detailed arguments and references have been omitted for purposes of the discussion.

2.2   A Framework of Constraints in Art Education

Art education can be seen as a network of implications, influences and limitations imposed on educational practice by the special nature of its referent, art. Framed as a system of artistic constraints, this network can serve the practical needs of art educators by explaining how riddles in the nature of art place limitations on concerns of truth, explanation and assessment, and on what it is currently reasonable for art teachers to teach.

A system of constraints provides art teachers with a means of hypothesising the instructional effects of different artistic decisions. For example, a method of teaching, valid under the assumption of one theory of art, may be invalidated under another. A young student's heart felt point of view about their favourite picture, encouraged under one approach, might be dismissed by the teacher as a silly misunderstanding under another. Even strict taboos on teaching practice such as—allowing students to copy from each other's work, giving technical instruction to students in early childhood, or encouraging students to make political interpretations of artworks, have a history of being abandoned on the basis of little more than modest changes in artistic opinion. Nevertheless, it is far from the intention here to demonise the past in art education. Rather it is to provide an apparatus of constraints enabling the cautious reassessment of past practices and even, perhaps, considering their qualified reintroduction.

A system of constraints allows for the reappraisal of approaches to teaching art without committing to an entirely new utopian ideal. During the twentieth century pedagogical approaches to art have variously embraced—the fostering of artistic beliefs within aesthetic experience, the social anthropology of art as a pathway to civic competency, art as a module within a multiplicity of intelligences, and art as the reconciliation of cultural difference. Should these different approaches be regarded as universals competing for sovereignty, or viewed as constraints within different but acceptable alternatives?

Notwithstanding, our answer is far from ideologically neutral. It argues in favour of a down-to-earth realism in art education. The realist maintains that an intuitively real, independently existing artwork permits a robust approach to its understanding. A real work enables students to engage it without needing an arcana of precepts even before they start. A real work empowers educators to disengage the existence of the work from the structure of its descriptions and thus allow students to be wrong, to change their minds, and to develop more sophisticated points of view. Most of all realism serves as an antidote to pluralism, the enemy of cultural understanding, and rails against a one-sided commitment to cultural nominalism.

A constraints approach helps art education to stretch the boundaries of its own definition. By mapping art education within a network of constraints educators can trace the path of its relationship with the ruling meta-narratives of philosophy and psychology. In so doing, a system of constraints empowers the field to supervise its own revision under the rapidly changing stewardship of the humanities.

2.3   The Wider Relevance of Art Education

As access to knowledge becomes easier and cheaper for students, outcomes of teaching and learning are no longer satisfied by the passive reproduction of information. An increased emphasis on the interpretation of knowledge introduces many new instructional and evaluative problems for teachers. There is a growing demand for curriculum approaches in art education that model the development of epistemological autonomy in the learner. Art education is a domain that rewards independent thinking and calls upon students for the rhetorical and aesthetic representation of their ideas. A sibling of ethics, art moves uniquely beyond the certainty and control of other subjects in the curriculum towards a respect for the justified opinion of all students. Framed within a system of constraints, art education is able to provide a model for the development of representational autonomy in students that has relevance to the wider curriculum and incidentally satisfies many of the expectations of cognitive transfer, without resorting to inflated claims of inter-domain enhancement.

2.4   Realism and Art Education

This position paper presents a practical philosophy of art education. In its reference to "relations" and "kinds" of art, the approach betrays its realism. If the search for the identity of educational content in North America is characterised by pragmatic optimism, the search in Australia is reconciled to reality. Whether out of a collective respect for an unforgiving landscape, or the monocular perspective of a uniform cultural experience, Australians attest their realism. While pragmatists bend knowledge of the world to practical use, realists resign themselves to the knowledge of a wilful and independent world. Realist pessimism has its advantages. The assumption of a world independent of mind keeps objects respectfully apart from their descriptions and mitigates against the corruption of the former by the latter. It creates a logical space in which the world and its ascriptions can be compared. Within this protective place, descriptions can turn out to be wrong, can be subject to change and are allowed to be conventionally different without calamity. This lucid, virtual space provides the knower with a road for joining up different epistemic systems.

Despite their tolerance of difference, however, realists are flatly opposed to pluralism. Realists object that by their uncritical acceptance of alternative descriptions pluralists undermine the search for meaning. By contrast, realists challenge the validity of descriptions by seeking an explanation under the terms in which the description of a thing is represented. To honour these terms, however, is not to submit to a realism of compliant verisimilitude. As Bernard Smith (1962) remarks in relation to the great traditions of pictorial realism from Goya to Drysdale, and of the philosophers John Anderson (1962) and Hilary Putnam (1987), realism involves accountable selection in the way that it represents the world.

A 'wistful' girl in a Vermeer painting, for example, must always be, for the realist, plausibly wistful under the terms of some kind of pictorial presentation. Unlike nominal pluralists, realists feel obliged to know the basis on which a wistful description is true. They also want to know the semantic price paid for the truth under these basic terms. Unlike pragmatists, realists are interested in knowing how a thing is identified with its description. For example, do we sense the mood of the girl in the Vermeer, do we read it as a sign in the painting, do we simulate how she must be feeling or, maybe, simply learn it from an authoritative text book? For realists, therefore, the meaning of 'wistfulness' in relation to a figure in a painting will vary in relation to the identity 'wistfulness' shares with some pictorial concept; it will vary as some kind of feeling, system of signs, authoritative text and so on, as configured in the work. Realists are content to work within these different artistic systems of reference but only on certain conditions. It is on condition that a description of an artwork be faithful to the referential terms of its chosen system of identity and on the understanding that each system exacts a penalty on the meaning of particular art works. A description, in other words, imposes a constraint.

The educational strength of realism lies in its emphasis on explaining things. Paradoxically, a principled explanation is often seen by its objectors as the weakness in artistic realism. Like good jokes, they say, artworks come prepared for implicit interpretation. While objectors might agree that the enjoyment of a game of chess is dependent on an explicit knowledge of the rules, the complexity of Eric Fischel's paintings, Stephen Spielberg's *Schindler's List*, and I.M. Pei's buildings are presented to their beholders already interpreted for immediate consumption. Furthermore, objectors argue, realists' tendency to generalise the uniqueness of aesthetic meaning, by confusing what McLuhan (1964) calls hot messages with cold, represents a category mistake. They are most offended by the causality in realist explanations and are concerned that the realist fixation with theoretical prediction functionalises the human element in the making and meaning in art.

Nevertheless, it is the experience of most art teachers that when talk about art is confined to a student's intuitive likes and dislikes, classroom discussion soon descends into banality; and even though their enjoyment of art may not be strictly dependent upon explanations, students, as Simon Frith (1998) points out, tend to seek understanding rather than entertainment from their educational experience of art.

In his introduction to *Patterns of Intention,* Baxandall (1985) sets out the categorical terms of pictorial description that lay down the ground rules for an explanation of pictures. However he doesn't elaborate the systems of categorical identity on which such descriptions might call. Because of their representational opacity, artworks, upon deeper investigation, have a tendency to multiply their identities rather than simplify them. The more artworks are understood the more complex they appear. Teachers may find themselves left with too few referential resources to help partition and manage the layers of meaning in works. Furthermore, different layers of reference can prove mutually unsupportive. With the adoption of every new referential approach teachers are beset by new conditions on the way that art can be taught, learnt and assessed. What, then, equates with a principle for

choosing among different codes of artistic reference? How far are teachers entitled to mandate the outcomes of one form of artistic reference over another? Answers to these meta-questions of reference are built into the philosophical and vernacular assumptions about art and are revealed in the symbolic capital exchanged within art educational practice.

2.5   Paradoxical Constraints on Artistic Content

Since ancient times, the ambiguities in art have made its translation into orthodox forms of educational content difficult. A sample of the philosophical paradoxes in art is sufficient to clarify the extent of the educational problem. For instance, although artworks are profoundly ordered in their aesthetic form, their meaning is resistant to a formally principled explanation. Although indebted to technical virtuosity the mere presence of high levels of craftsmanship in artworks provides insufficient evidence of their artistic value. The very success of artworks as seductive and convincing forms of representation disqualifies them as arbiters of the truth. Enjoyed without need of explanation, artworks, nevertheless, are subject to interpretive indeterminacy and invite endless debate. Artworks combine aesthetic immediacy with stylistic opacity, and their meaning unites illusionistic transparency with cultural specificity. They may conceal the arcane practices of their construction behind deceptively naive appearances yet, within these appearances, they can inadvertently betray cultural prejudices of gender and race. The popularity of artworks is unrelated to their critical significance and even the latter is subject to unpredictable change. And although individual works can cause most of us to laugh and cry spontaneously, an autonomous understanding of art demands conceptual maturity and takes many years of specialist inquiry to attain. The metaphysical complexity of a painting calls upon even the naivest of beholders to reconcile how it is that it can simultaneously be the intentions of its maker, the depiction of something else, and a material thing. Artistic conundrums of this order set the terms of constraint in art education.

2.6   Constraints of Artistic Identity

Paradigmatic episodes in the history of thought regulate the kind of thing art is allowed to be. Changes in artistic identity nearly always lead to iconoclastic challenges to the practice of art and result in new solutions to its philosophical paradoxes. It is impossible to abstract artistic meaning or the processes of meaningful artistic practice outside the assumptions of its philosophical history. Whether an artwork is assumed to exist as an aesthetic object, a cluster of formal properties, a module of thought, an attitude, a belief, or culturally determined text, sets limitations on the features that art can possess and on the ways in which teachers and

students can legitimately gain an understanding of them. Different artistic identities of this kind admit and exclude properties from works, according to the categorical way they are sliced. Artistic identities validate explanations of how works are created, authenticate new frames of artistic interpretation, and re-set the benchmarks of artistic value. For example, artworks identified as a type of 'attitude in the beholder' have their meanings searched for within the artistic tokens of a student's felt experience. The meaning in a 'semiotic' type of work, on the other hand, is sought out within its token system of signs. Students who can feel the warmth in an image through their experience of a work may, nevertheless, find themselves learning of its warmth by reading the denotative labels—simulated in the first type and symbolised in the second. For the realist, of course, it is the same underlying entity inhabiting each type of artwork. It is just that the entity is believed, intended, entrenched, dreamt, felt, encoded, simulated, projected, theorised, represented, imagined or sensed in different ways, depending on what epistemic grounds it is conceived.

Teachers who mix up the types and tokens of artworks will mix up their students as well. It is the realist's view, therefore, that the content of art is passed on to educators as a system of identifiable constraints upon different types of art. To think autonomously within this economy of constraints teachers must avoid entrapment in parallel worlds of artistic identity. Isolation within two incommensurably referential worlds, such as the worlds of visual literacy or hypersubjectivity, for example, confuses the artwork with its reference in the most rigid way. On the other hand, that there does exist an innate limitation on what type of thing an artwork can be in the mind of a very young student, for example, does not refute its reality within the tokens of its established constraints. Choosing among the types of artworks and the terms under which they can be described, however, requires some sort of inferential guidance, some sort of map.

2.7 Mapping the Constraints on Artistic Content

Now can we map the constraints on artistic content. Borrowing from the work of Michael Baxandall (1985) and Richard Boyd (1988) we can draw up a map of the minimal agencies of art and plot the relations among them. Agencies include the 'artist', the 'artwork', the 'beholder', the 'world represented'. These four agencies provide a minimum few among the many other responsible 'authorities' and 'functionaries' at stake in the causation of art. An explanation of the typical constraints on art is satisfied by mapping the functional relations among these agencies. In archaic Greece, for example, where mythical narrative moderated the truth, art was identified as a type of revelatory knowledge about the world. Mythical narrative is drawn on the map as a relation between the artist poet and the world of mythical knowledge. The direction of influence in this relation is dominated by the divine inspiration of the artist. Inspirational truth gradually lost its authority in Platonic Greece under the influence of rational forms of adjudication. The rise of rationality

in the sixth century reverses the direction of influence between artists and the world they represent. The mythical world is displaced by a natural universe which gradually exerts its domination over the artist. The creative will of the artist, revered in Archaic thought, comes to be regarded in classical philosophy as untrustworthy. The role of the artist as diviner of a poetic truth is relegated to the role of compliant imitator of a natural universe. This new role is sketched on the map as a world to artist causal relation. Constraints on the intellectual role art is entrusted to play, on its value as a commodity, and on its educational status, are portrayed, in general, as causal implications between agents on the map. Thus any one 'homeostatic' (Boyd 1988, p. 197) configuration of the map, at any one time, represents a conception or theory of the functional relationships among the players and agents involved in the formation of the artwork—a theory of art. Using a different theory of art is registered on the map as a variation in the conceptual relation among its agencies. It forms a concept that guides the choice of categorical terms deployed within artistic descriptions and determines the direction of causality in the relation between each of its agencies.

Through such a map teachers can enable students to deepen their understanding of art and increase their autonomy in navigating through the un-sign-posted landscape of real artworks.

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Chapter 3
Making Art a Real Thing

3.1 Introduction

It is a preoccupation of the recent *avant garde* in western art to show that there are few privileged performances in the visual arts, and that romantic belief in the artistic imagination is able to be accounted for in alternative ways (Preziosi 1990).

This lesson of the *avant garde* has been learnt slowly in art education. The lesson is manifested in two major corrections to the romantic concept of creative imagination. The first correction takes the form of cultural relativism. Relativism refers to the determining effect of cultural context on the significance of things including artworks. Relativism is manifested in the 'eschatology' of Marxism, the 'conventions' of pragmatic structuralism, and the 'forms of practice' in speech act theory. From a culturally relative point of view the origination and interpretation of art is founded, not in the imagination of individuals but in the conventions of cultural practice. The second correction is provided by *nouveaux critique*. The project of deconstruction in *nouveaux critique* focuses on the replacement of intentionality with nihilistic textual determinism. Textual nihilism is exemplified in the postmodern application of "quotation" to the visual arts. Quotation postpones contact between the artwork and its psychological intention by deferring indefinitely the point at which one consults the other. The postmodernist subtraction of mind from the concept of knowledge works to deny the possibility of art as a representational object by deconstructing artistic identity into the material traces of its history.

Foucault (1973), for instance, dismisses the intentional notion of meaning as a Heideggerian paradox. He argues that meaning conceived as intentional content is detrimental to Heidegger's deeper notion of meaning. Heideggerian meaning,

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Foucault claims, is more properly centred in the deeper existential relation between a cardinal sense of being and action. Foucault argues that the business of mapping this tacit, cardinal sense of meaning onto the intentional sense is the result of a western preoccupation with metaphysics which, although giving rise to the mutability and difference distinguishing texts, nevertheless bypasses the formation of meaning in its deeper sense. For this reason, he says, the process of intentional mapping into texts cannot be used to explain their deeper meaning. Foucault reserves this explanatory privilege for the methods of textual archaeology and genealogy and its concomitant concept of "difference".

Despite its intentional nihilism the radical understanding of "difference" in *nouveau critique* raises important questions for knowledge. The elimination of mind within textual nihilism and the complete anomalousness of its account of causes in fields of knowledge threaten the holistic structuralism underpinning cognitive theory in contemporary art education (Brown 1993). In a spirit of reconstruction this paper reopens the question of difference and the role played by language in the critical interpretation of visual artworks.

It is fundamental to the argument in this paper that, even if textual nihilism is right about the arts, satisfaction of the learner's need for understanding still requires an intentional account of the way forms of difference in art are explained. This account should be capable of accommodating all theories of artistic understanding, including those of the textual nihilists themselves. The notion of difference built into a structural psychology of visual arts education sits incoherently with notions of difference advanced by textual nihilists.[1] I will argue, however, that this incoherence provides no reason for making declarative stands in favour of one over the other, or of giving in to pluralism. It is a tenet of this paper that we do not have to get a concept of art 'right', or uncover its signal nature, before we can present artworks to a class of students for critical interpretation. Students have already formed some notion of art before they come into the classroom (as Wittgenstein pointed out with the learning of a language by children). Thus a structural account of art isn't necessarily contiguous with a structural account of mind or *vice versa*.

In a related sense, coming to understand art or any particular example of art entails a recursion, however tacit, to some belief about what art is.[2] If this is right then structural foreclosure on the ontology of art by researchers and educators denies students autonomy of belief. For these reasons projects relating to the arts in education are in urgent need of presuppositions about art that are as ontologically neutral as possible. A minimal set of conditions meeting the requirement of neutrality might be:

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[1] For example, the theory of mind underpinning Howard Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligences.

[2] It is pretence to assume undisclosed ontic conditions in regard to art objects on a knowers' behalf and then proceed, for example, with eliciting a respondent's psychological beliefs about art on the basis of those assumptions, or to undertake a course of teaching about art which assumes the object being talked about by the teacher is unreflectively agreed upon as the one being referred to by the students. This deterministic approach denies respondents recourse to their beliefs. See the questioning used by Parsons (1987), or the analytical tools used by Winner (1982), for examples.

1. that the entities of art can be identified with properties and relations that can be explained;
2. that the explanations justifying the relational properties of art can be wrong.

The force of these two conditions lies in their requirement of:

- inter-subjectivity;
- admission of the opacity of meaning and value in art, and;
- charitable extension of reason to critical understanding.

Because the ontology of artefacts is already nested within the causal circumstances of their formation many of the interesting properties and relations accounting for their meaning are opaque, their significance being emergent and non-exhibited within perception.

Therefore attempts at objectifying the presence of non-exhibited properties in artworks cannot be easily managed by explanations functioning at the level of clinical description. Even where description appears to suffice, as in the spontaneous reports people give of their feelings about artworks, these reports are tacitly positioned within an assumption of the relevance of feeling to artistic interpretation. In asking what artworks mean, critical interpretation assumes a referral to these understandings.

3.2   Meta-explanation in the Visual Arts

This section is not about the way in which artworks can make true assertions about the world but about how we can make true assertions about artworks. The problem with the truth about artworks is the problem of ethical realism. That is, how is it that we are able to uncover satisfyingly grounded explanations for the things that people do. There is little dispute that although artworks are caused to be originated by actions artists take, like natural objects, artworks can go on to acquire a complex existence of their own. However, unlike determined natural entities, artworks could have been otherwise. Although natural objects can be invested with meaning and value (even to become artworks), unlike artworks they do not present themselves as already meant and valued things. Whatever significance artworks have is causally implicated in the actions that account for their being and is effected by the suspicion that artworks are made (or invested) that way for a reason. Scientific explanation of an artwork's causation is impossible since the same non-normative property involved in its making may be causally implicated in two different artistic choices. Thus the causal unpredictability of the beliefs and desires underlying artists' choices stands as a logical barrier to any further non-normative reduction of their motives.[3] This barrier has stopped artworks functioning as true assertions, has denied them a

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[3] Sometimes referred to as the fallacy of implication of theory in practice.

status as real entities, limited the objectivity of what they mean, and continues to challenge their cognitive status in the curriculum.

But the normative *force* with which artworks are enacted can be explained. Davidson (1990) argues that in order to explain human actions we must treat normative enactments as *if* they were entities with properties and relations as open to explanation as natural objects.[4] Davidson claims that normative actions can be explained within a theory of value not entailing their reduction to a *necessary* set of prior motives. Actions are explainable non-reductively for the very good reason that artistic actions can be entertained within a collectively shared network of constraints. Indeed it is impossible for an action to be entertained at the normative level—*as*—an artistic action, outside a framework of such constraints. The critic, for instance, extends intelligibility to artistic actions on the assumption that, in their enactment, the artist has respected this same network of constraints. In sum, an artistic action is a normative event shaped within the presuppositions or, as Davidson says, within the "charity" extended by these constraints.

Critical explanations provide nomological justifications of meaning and value events in art within the logical constraints of what is involved in observing and enacting them.[5] The supervenience of aesthetic meanings in critical interpretation, usually understood as emergent within metaphor, is made possible by the normative nature of artworks.[6] The concept of meaning only makes sense within the intrigue of a normative choice. A cloud is lonely on the basis of it being chosen by Wordsworth as a representation. The event of 'being chosen to be represented' makes the cloud into a normative property of the artwork. The cloud becomes a representationally lonely choice, justified as a property within a nomology of value.

But this is jumping too far ahead. Further below, following Davidson, I shall sketch out a basis for a normative realism of visual art. In the mean time, what are some of the networks of constraint satisfying the explanatory needs of critical interpretation in the visual arts?

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[4] I address Davidson's event ontology in relation to visual artworks briefly below.

[5] Nomological: relating to or denoting principles that resemble laws, especially those laws of nature that are neither logically necessary nor theoretically explicable, but just are so.

[6] The conundrums of aesthetic supervenience traditionally confound explanations of artistic realism in the transaction between the beholder and art works. Object realists are constrained by the necessity of providing naturalistic explanations of the correspondence between secondary qualities and physical properties of the artwork (See Wollheim [1980] for a type/token account of the former, and Dretske [1986] for a general example of the latter). In addition, secondary meanings are made more complex by a beholder's metaphoric endowments upon as well as by the representation of artistic motives in the work. Nearly all theorists accept a literal understanding of the role of language in metaphor differing, however, in their explanation of how the literal account actually refers.

3.3   Constraints of Understanding on the Identification of Meaning in Artworks

Depending upon one's point of view, the meaning of visual art works can either be the easiest and most transparent, or the most difficult and opaque of things to understand.[7]

3.3.1   Example 1

It is thought by some that the meaning of artworks is embodied; that works and beholders are joined by a psychological causality. As a perceptual object, an artwork's conditions of understanding are satisfied by the beholder's experiences, funded in memory. While an artwork's conditions of formation may reflect the conventions of practice, the motive and shape of its formation is wholly satisfied by experience. The meaning and value of artworks, while they may need repeated exposure and reflective consideration, are critically transparent in experience. This idealism is exemplified in the positions of Dewey, Jauss, and Merleau-Ponty (Jauss 1982).

3.3.2   Example 2

Others argue that the perception of artworks is confounded by their artefactuality. The effect of their being already made things invests artworks with nested properties of motive and setting, of choice (what is left out as well as what is put in), of commitment and uncertainty—all of which are causally related to the satisfaction of (rather than being satisfied by) the artist's memorised and perceptual experiences. Artistic intentions are represented in the work and account for its interpretation. However, artworks present and represent the events of their formation in such concatenation that the pathway between the beholder's encounter with the artwork and what it means is concealed. Art works are lost in the complexities of their formation and depend for their interpretation upon causal explanations grounded in anthropological, social and historical evidence. By these measures we can *retrieve* what colonial artists meant in their works and reconstruct the purposes of Palaeolithic

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[7] On opacity: very few would go so far as to accept reference to a perceptually irrelevant property as "opaque". For example, an entirely collateral interpretation, that is, an interpretation entertaining no perceptually appreciable effect, however indirectly, on the character of an artwork is incorrectly referred to as opaque; On the other hand, a meaning bringing a previously unappreciated perceptual quality to light, or a meaning revising the significance of a directly appreciable quality, is legitimately referred to as opaque.

paintings. This realist view is held by historical revisionists like Savile (1993), and by critical retrievalists such as Wollheim (1980). Meaning is perceptually opaque.

3.3.3 Example 3

Interpretation is usually thought of as an *ex post facto* means of uncovering the meaning of artworks. Others see it, however, as a kind of prescription. From this perspective interpretation is conceived as a 'hard-wired' union between practical convention and the biology of symbolic reasoning. The structure of interpretation is a precondition of all speech act formations including the making of artworks. Meaning, from this point of view is not revelatory but deterministic. By determining the formation of artworks, interpretation is made transparent in every artistic speech act as a presupposition of its formation. Thus we can look at a painting and construct its cultural significance, its colonialism, its racism, its assumptions of patriarchy and so on. Our ability to do this is limited only by our fluency in reading the symbolic meanings of the work, meanings we can bring to the work because they are encoded and readable within it. We can *determine* what colonial artists meant in their paintings. Barthes (1988) shared nominalist views of this kind at one stage.

3.3.4 Example 4

Yet others dismiss the role of Intentionality in the formation of artworks. They base the origination of a work on its chance encounter with other works. New works form and mutate within the material influence exerted by other serious and authoritative formations. Artworks are thought to be as material in their formation as slip grafted plants in a nursery. In this process the actor/artist is not conceived as an expresser of internal beliefs, but as a propagator of serious texts. From this point of view, they argue, it is imperative that interpretive criticism breaks free from the constraints of the propagational metaphor. Critics can escape these metaphoric constraints by disclosing the material genetics of speech act underlying the formation of works. Critical disclosure does not involve pulling apart a nest of psychological motives in the artwork, rather, the metaphysical interpretation of meaning is displaced by deconstructive methodologies of archaeology and genealogy in which meaning, however, is immediately opaque. This is the materialist view held by Foucault (1973).

Searle (1983) claims that

> "Meaning" is a notion that literally applies to sentences and speech acts but not in that sense to intentional states. It makes good sense to ask, for example, what a sentence or utterance means, but it makes no sense to ask in that sense what a belief or a desire means.... Meaning exists only where there is a distinction between intentional [sic] content and the form of its externalisation, and to ask for the meaning is to ask for an Intentional content that goes with the form of externalization (pp. 28–29).

By way of meaning something about an artwork critical interpretations are nested within the meaning of other acts.[8] We can ask of critical interpretations in turn "what do they mean?", and so on. Searle says, "in order to mean that p, there must be some overt action" (Searle 1983, p. 49). It is noteworthy in the four examples above that although they acknowledge the origination of art within human action, the ontological site of its enactment is incompatibly different in each case. The four examples differ in respect of the satisfaction conditions bridging the gap between the psychological state of knowing in the artistic act (and subsequent critical acts), and its concordance within psychological states of the beholder. In other words, although artworks are commonly accepted as kinds of action, the conditions of difference bridging the gap between act and meaning in the four cases above are satisfied by quite different ontologies. In example four, the formative nature of speech acts is explained without reference to mind at all. Foucault eliminates Searle's externalization condition on meaning and strips away his satisfaction condition of Intentionality.

While not exhaustive, the four examples instance ways in which artistic speech acts are understood to exist. Differences in the ontology of the act of making, constrain the inferences warranting the attribution of meaning to artworks. These constraints influence:

- the rules of artistic speech act formation;
- the setting and site of an artwork's critical interrogation;
- the eligibility and identity of the properties of a work and;
- the satisfaction conditions of an artwork's meaning (truth).

The direction of critical inference in the four examples above can be schematised as follows:

$$r$$
$$p < to < q$$

where p is the entity being apprehended; q is the apprehending entity; and r is the explanatory basis on which meanings and values are apprehended (Table 3.1).

The four examples extend access to varied and distinct realms of critical apprehension. How can we transform these four incommensurable ontologies into autonomous critical frameworks without defaulting to a facile pluralism? A problem with using Davidson's meta-linguistic approach, as I see it comes down to the acceptability of extending critical charity to artistic events on such inferentially incommensurable terms. In other words does Davidson's assumption of reasonable action violate our intuition of what is entailed in making artworks?

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[8] Searle includes artworks among speech acts as forms of externalisation.

Table 3.1 Critical interpretation

	Basis of critical understanding			Transparency of meaning
Example 1	Artwork	*beholder*	Beholder	transparent
Example 2	Artwork	*artist*	Beholder	**opaque**
Example 3	Artist	*artwork*	Beholder	transparent
Example 4	Artwork	*artwork*	Beholder	**opaque**

3.4   Art as Visual Thought

Is art understood in terms of a special language of vision, a visual system of reasoning, or does visual 'thought' merely represent a metaphorical notion towards which critical charity is to be extended, or is charity to be extended on a limited basis to all?

First I need to address the notion of 'visual literacy' insofar as its currency in visual arts education successfully challenges the verbal/causal mode of critically understanding visual artworks. Broadly, visual literacy has it that understanding in the visual arts is represented within an aesthetically non-notational kind of symbol system (Goodman 1976). It argues that in the way they refer and are understood, objects in the visual arts, despite their iconicity, comply with the requirements of a language. The problem with visual literacy resides in its structuralist philosophy of mind. Given above that most of the interesting properties in the visual arts are emergent and non-exhibited, it is important that any account of the way in which meanings and values in the visual arts are explained make free reference to the basis on which they are critically justified.

But justifications cannot be read visually. As Harrison (1987) says

> Cause and consequence, intention and accident are not pictorial matters. Neither are values or selves.... Most critically of all, perhaps, from the point of view of the analogy of the metaphysics of meaning with the problems of art, a picture's scene, while it may show what was, or might have been seen from a point of view, by a conscious self, cannot at the same time picture that self.... Wittgenstein as author of the *Tractatus* has to make cause, intention, purpose, value and self, transcendental to what can be pictured—to what, if we accept the picture paradigm of meaning, can be *said* (pp. 64–66).

Harrison's account parallels the reasoning underlying Foucault's critical explanation of the gaze in Velazquez's *Las Meninas*. Foucault describes Velazquez, himself represented in the painting, as trapped within the pictorial paradigm of the gaze, unable to mobilise a meta-representation of his own work. Without meta-representational recourse Velazquez is denied the imputation of motives and thus the judgement that things in his painting could have been represented differently. Velazquez's understanding of the critical value and meaning of his work is unable to transcend the conventional references of the visual practices of its period. As a non-notational symbolic form alone the visual arts, in their practice are unable to

provide the levels of implementation commensurate with the requirements of truth and inference for artistic thought (Hofstadter 1979).[9]

To give an example, the action painters of the New York school, with the support of writers such as Sontag and Greenberg, disciplined their paintings by attempting to close the interpretational gap between the marks they made on the canvas and the actions taken to make them. They tested the possibility that painting could exist within the confines of a representational space in which critical explanation is reduced to description and description is reduced to ostension. The aim of the action painters was to eliminate the opacity of meaning opened up by Intentionality. Within the terminology of 'visual thought' action paintings are self-denoting. Their project, as it turns out, is unconvincing because we are compelled to ask of action paintings, "what does it mean to produce an artwork which has been so calculatedly deprived of Intentionality?" In action painting the irony of "calculation" in the question of indexical self-denotation is left unexplained. In my experience, for example, beholders in the National Gallery of Australia are more likely to question the meaning of action paintings like *Blue Poles* than any other mode of abstraction. It is thus ironic that meaning in the works of Jackson Pollock, who declared his paintings to be "as transparent as footsteps in the sand" is so opaque to beholders. By accepting the lack of any significant difference between the actions of the artist and his painterly marks on face value, visual readings of self-denotation in *Blue Poles* begs the more subtle questions of intentional 'calculation'. Following Harrison and Foucault, visual readings provide insufficient meta-representational distance for their own charitable extension. Why is this?

3.5 Determinate Meaning Versus Explanatory Meaning

The underlying structuralist ontology of visual literacy brings a determinist view of mind to the concept of interpretation in art.[10] Interpretation is naturalised as a kind of higher level computational fluency imposed by a reading on the signals (visual or otherwise) that a person receives through the perception of artworks (Fodor 1987). Artworks gain their meaning first, through the aesthetically singular way that they denote and second, according to Fodor, in the way perception of aesthetic symbol systems is rationally transfigured within "mentalese", a tacit kind of inner talk or computational form of reflection. The concept of belief and intentionality in mentalese has its structural counterpart in the notion of anchored content (see pp. 50, 51). Anchored content can be expressed as the embedded, or hard-wired means by which visual symbols are configured into mentalese. For Fodor the belief system used to

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[9] Hofstadter explains levels of "implementation" as the way in which the acquisition of new language is gradually absorbed into one's habits of thought. He says, "somehow, the new language must fuse with your internal representation system—your repertoire of concepts, images and so on—in the same way English is fused with it" (1979, p. 379).

[10] Not to be confused with the "analogue debate", "visual" debate (See Pylyshyn 1981, pp. 16–45).

interpret perceptions is structurally determined within mentalese. This gives rise to the production of narrow content at the level of explanation a necessary condition, Fodor believes, for establishing the truth. Truth, in other words is a supervenient relation between contingent symbols perceived, and the psychophysical liaison between mentalese and brain states (a naturalistic form of truth).

The constraining determinism of Fodor's narrow account of meaning argues a fairly 'one way' notion of inference in that "… given a context, contents are different if extensions are" (p. 53). Thus the significance of the "calculation" in an action painting by Franz Kline would have to be true of the '*uncalculated*', self denotative character of his marks, which of course it is "self evidently" not. We would have to go into another reading (another system of narrow content) to see it. Thus I find it hard to understand what *motive* there would be, within the functioning of "narrow content" and "meaning postulates", for such irony to be hard wired, in contradiction to previously unambiguous self-denotative readings. Within art, what is the motive for choosing a different reading? Especially when "meaning postulates", which represent the semantic engine of comprehension in Fodor's determinism (at the narrow content level of implementation), are limited to computational rather than intentional operations. Fodor fixes reality not at the level of perception, which is contingent, but at the supervenient level where wide and narrow content enter into a law like relationship (Evnine 1991). Thus for Fodor, the limiting constraints upon the perceptual eligibility of properties is exercised by the implicitly categorical rationalisations of mentalese.[11]

Fodor's is a hierarchical system of thought in which each subsuming level of implementation becomes more deterministic. Reality is reserved for the largely tacit relation between tokens of perceptions and their mentalese types. It is a psychological reality within which the world and its entities are leant their semantic existence. It is a "world ideal"—"mind real" ontology. Entities do not exist independently of mind. Representations depend upon the innate system of symbols under which a person decides to logically assemble their inchoate tokens (Goodman 1978).[12] But what is it to *decide* in a Fodor/Goodman account of interpreting visual art? In such a world, value and meaning are reduced to symbolic competency. We are allowed to 'make' our world, but on such alternatively narrow and general terms that the choices seem hollow.

Set against our requirement for an unobtrusive ontology of art the presuppositions of visual literacy fall short. Structural holism, which justifies the concept of visual literacy, cannot tolerate alternative interpretations of artworks insofar as the concept of mentalese compresses the meaning of artworks into a structural convention. Thus, as a form of interpretation, visual literacy cannot be wrong and, if

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[11] In Goodman's terms, loneliness, normally a label denoting people, is transferred to denote an artwork.

[12] For Goodman, a painting by Rembrandt might be either a patch on a window or an artwork, depending upon the system of symbols under which it is referenced. Nominalist ontology collapses into epistemology insofar as things exist as a system of knowing. For structuralists, all relations are contingent except for the final one, the relation between semantics and the physiology of the brain.

competent, is always true. Interpretation is the determination rather than the explanation of works. It dangerously replaces ontology of art with ontology of mind.

3.6 Language and Realism in the Visual Arts

Normative objects such as art works are usually excluded from 'law-like' explanation. The criteria of universality and predictability, under which entities justify their independent reality, enter into a paradoxical regress when attempts are made at applying them to artworks (the general problem that Fodor's determinism sets out to solve). How can the freedom, which is consistent with the concept of an intentional mind, avoid relinquishing its autonomy, if the functioning of mind is predetermined by physical explanations? Failure to satisfy theoretical criteria of predictability postpones the real nature of normative objects until reaching a stage in their mental processing when they can be safely identified with physical laws (Quine 1969).[13]

Modernism's aesthetic object stops at the immediate object. Aesthetic qualities are referred to the object ostensibly wherein a declaration of approval is made about the artwork by a critic and its responsible parts are described in evidence (Scruton 1974). Aesthetic difference in an interpretation is sustained through inter-subjective references to the unique character of regional qualities of the work. Expressive qualities such as 'loneliness', for example are understood as exclusively *de re* properties of the term, properties that are *recognised* rather than instantiated in the work. But what if an artwork does not *appear* to denote loneliness? What if, for example, I believe the artwork is lonely, when all that it presents to other people's perception is a depicted tree? (a familiar experience for art teachers and their doubting students). In calling the depicted tree lonely I might be simply mistaken, fantasising or neurotically effected. On the other hand I could be the one who is right.

The visually perceptual knowledge base of a picture is confined to what it directly presents to the beholder (Gibson 1979). On the other hand, the knowledge base of concepts such as 'loneliness', which are used in matching visual perceptions, certainly cannot be grasped on the basis of their mere presentation in pictures. Wittgenstein (1953) and Goodman (1976) have shown how the selection of representational fit of concepts is necessarily intransitive. The game plan for the attribution of expressive qualities, like loneliness to a picture, is emergent and opaque. Thus loneliness in a particular picture is neither caused by the picture nor dictated by the connotations of the concept that identifies it. To summarise:

Even though I am claiming loneliness for the artwork:

1. I am still perceiving the same phenomenal object as other people who fail to register it as lonely;

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[13] "Stimulus meanings" and "narrow content", for Fodor (1987).

2. I am sharing the concept 'lonely' with everyone else, even though they may fail to see the significance of its application;
3. but *I* believe that the work is 'lonely' thus establishing a relation which others may not possess simply as a function of their sharing '1' and '2'.

Others can see what I mean about the work, but only on the condition that I satisfy them of the intention under which my belief is represented. This is not to slip into the operationalist trap holding that the ascription of meaning is somehow necessarily *predicted* by the structure of belief (Fodor 1987, p. 90). I believe that the object is lonely because of my representation of belief about it as an artwork. Others must impute the intercession of my belief about the work as a condition of loneliness being accepted as a property of the particular work. By the imputation of another's belief, that is, by uncovering the beliefs, feelings and so on which prompted my assertions, others can share what I mean when I say something about a work, whether what they assert is true or not. But there still may be no psychophysical or deductive connection between expressive concepts and art works. Obviously if loneliness is not directly caused, that is whenever others do not actually feel or deduce, or even denote loneliness in relation to a picture, then the fittingness or truth of their and my explanations cannot be arbitrated by means of the commonness of our perception (one's tacit state). Their grasp of my assertions about a work and judgements about them is an expression of the comparative level of autonomy other people are able to exercise in the imputation of *my* beliefs (Freeman 1991). What others need, in short, is an interpretation.

What an artwork means is not to be confused with a description of its properties. As pointed out, art works are normative entities. Thus their properties are mysteriously implicated in the dynamics surrounding the circumstances of their enactment. This is what is meant by the intransitive nature of representational properties. A teacher will ask "what did the artist intend by painting this picture?" It is a shrewd yet naive question. It is shrewd in the sense that it acknowledges the representational nature of art, but naive in its assumption that representations can be transitively reconverted into beliefs. Part of the problem with visual literacy is that, on this view, what the work provides is equivalent to what the artist intended.[14] This is why the visual thought account of talk about visual art works seems so unsatisfyingly tautological. It confuses the act of reading with the act of interpretation (Davidson 1984).[15] The interpretation of an artwork is not merely describing what it means, however complex the description. Interpretation is going on to provide the reason for saying so. In short, an interpretation is an argument, an explanation of an assertion made about a work, whose justification is necessarily asymmetrical.

Meaning in art is dependent on what can be concluded about "interpretations", "explanations", and "assertions" in the visual arts. Paradoxically these conclusions

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[14] Non objective paintings such as those by Kandinsky or the 'Black and White' pictures of de Kooning portray this vividly while it is no less true, its seems to me, of realist depiction.

[15] Davidson makes the point that even sentences in English of the simplest content have to be interpreted for their meaning.

are also involved in establishing the answer (Quine 1969)![16] It is central to art education that these kinds of conclusion are made accessible in ways that leave students free to recruit them for artistic interpretation. For argument's sake let us say that art educational content needs a way of particularising the property of loneliness in a work. But however loneliness in a 'work' goes on to be understood by students, either as a feeling event by the 'beholder', as a textual quotation purloined by the 'artist' from an earlier work, or as a depiction of a lonely 'thing in the world', is largely a function of ways in which loneliness can be *truly* justified as an extension of the work. Under which umbrella of truth can these different assumptions be deployed?

3.7   The Visual Arts, Language and Davidson's Event Ontology

Davidson's (1990) ontology of actions and events provides an insight into the way that entities such as artists and beholders, even 'works', which are composed of intentional as well as physical properties, might be construed as real. Can intentional entities, he asks be adequately equated with singular terms? Davidson argues that actions are indeed singular entities, but are regarded so only when their meaning is disclosed within the logical structure of a sentence. He says, "we must uncover enough structure to make it plausible to state… how meaning depends on that structure...." (p. 90). Words and sentences can be explained, in other words by a metatheory of the language of everyday use. It is this relationship between language and the logic of metalanguage that represents the way in which the difference between world and mind is bridged. Like Harrison (1987), Davidson (1984) believes that conventional readings within symbol systems do not possess a modal range extensive enough to deal with the recruitment of properties sufficient to satisfy truth conditions of normative entities.[17]

Actions and events are ordinarily referred to in terms of descriptions. Davidson argues that a description of an action usually fails to acknowledge its enactive nature. If I say that—"the woman reading a letter in the Vermeer is pensive"—it does not describe a single event at all. What I appear to be describing is "the Vermeer" or "the woman reading the letter", which is in *fact* a painting *made* by Vermeer. Davidson believes that these descriptive sentences simply proliferate ways of referring to the 'woman reading' and to the 'Vermeer', without coming to any settlement about the real entities (enactments) being addressed. What is the problem in this? With normative objects such as Vermeer paintings, the effect is to postpone any satisfactory explanation and thus interpretation of the Vermeer, because I am unable:

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[16] These "conclusions" function in turn like a recursive translation manual for the interpretation of art.

[17] See Davidson (1984, pp. 245–265) on what metaphors mean.

 (i) to reconcile the reality of an enactment with the physical properties which it
     entails, and;
(ii) thus unable to establish the conditions of identity which limit the descriptions
     to a particular enactment.

The truth of a description is necessary to meaning (see Davidson 1990, p. 143).[18]
Any account of meaning depends upon an understanding of the basis upon which
the properties of an entity cohere. But if this is to be done, some singular entity is
required that can be coherently referred to in a way that makes its properties true.
[That] the woman reading a letter in the Vermeer is pensive, the sentence above
without the parentheses attributes fact-hood to an entity—the entity under consider-
ation being the normative event of the Vermeer painting being made to exist (see
p. 136).[19] The picture is a fact made true by its reference to the event enacted, not by
its reference to the regress of causes predetermining its explanatory properties. To
paraphrase Davidson, by providing an extra predicate place (x) for event verbs, the
sentence becomes:

> (Ex) [pensive (that the woman reading the letter in the Vermeer, x)]
>   There exists a pensive woman reading the letter in the Vermeer—event,
>
> or
>
> There exists an event that is a pensive woman reading the letter in the Vermeer (1990,
> p. 135).

Following Davidson's meta-logical analysis of the way in which normative events
are referred to it is possible, upon establishing the existence of the "event entity" as
logically true in the meta-language, to return to the ordinary idiom of the sentence,
talk coherently about its truth and to set about establishing the identity of its
entailments.

How does any of this help educationally? Given that normative things can be real
entities these, being existent, provide the *non-reductive object* of explanation. This
means that an entity establishes a basis in truth lending it—the *difference*—that
enables its extensions to assert their identity. Davidson likes to draw an analogy
between the strict causal generalities of physics and those, such as are invariably
found in artworks, concerned with the prediction of human action

> If one event causes another, there is a strict law which those events instantiate when prop-
> erly described. But it is possible (and typical) to know of the singular causal relation with-
> out knowing the law or the relevant descriptions. Knowledge requires reasons but these are
> available in the form of rough heteronomic generalisations, which are lawlike in that

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[18] Davidson applies a Tarskian disquotational theory of correspondence to events and actions, such
as the relation between entities and their expression as fact, that is, between the way they are talked
about as things as opposed to way they are talked about as truthful.

[19] What Davidson wants to do is to stop the proliferation of entailments occurring as a result of
"polyadicity". Polyadicity arises when, for example, in 'the Vermeer painting'—'is lonely', 'has
soft light', 'is pensive' the sentence, although describing the enactment in a number of different
ways, nevertheless falls endlessly short of an explanation unless these descriptions are in some way
made true by their connection with the event.

instances make it reasonable to expect other instances to follow suit without being lawlike in the sense of being infinitely refinable.... When we portray events as perceivings, rememberings, decisions and actions, we necessarily locate them amid physical happenings through the relation of cause and effect; but that the same mode of portrayal insulates mental events, as long as we do not change the idiom, from the strict [my emphasis] causal laws that can in principle be called upon to explain and predict physical phenomena (1990, p. 147).

But there is nothing now to stop the art critic or students from producing a causal explanation of the disquoted entity, for example "the Vermeer is pensive" is true if the Vermeer is pensive. Would we agree that to seek an explanation of the relation between 'the Vermeer' and 'is pensive' would be treating the sentence as if it contained a singular term referring to an action? Events such as "the Vermeer is pensive" are "not necessary or sufficient as causes but events as described in one way or another" (p. 172). A 'the Vermeer is pensive' fact is *itself* in need of explanation. Some explanations that spring to mind are that the Vermeer is caused to be pensive by the artist's intentions, another by the attribution of pensiveness to the woman depicted, and another by a belief that pensiveness originates in the beholder's experience and so on. Others are, that the event *brought about* (caused in turn) changes in the formal relations of the materials of which it is physically composed.[20] These 'theories' are held true by the singularity of the existence of the 'Vermeer is pensive' event and are more or less warranted by the extent to which they are coherent in establishing its identity. We might say, for example, that 'the beholder feels that the Vermeer is pensive' thus establishing an identity between the feelings of a beholder and the 'Vermeer is pensive', based on the 'Vermeer is pensive' event. On what basis are we able to claim such an identity?

Davidson argues that we are now in a position to have an idea of what it is like to have singular terms 'a' and 'b' that refer to the same event and he proposes the grounds on what would constitute the truth of the identity 'a = b'. Davidson proposes that

events are identical if they have exactly the same causes and effects (1990, p. 179).

The truth of saying what an event is under two different descriptions might thus appear in the difference between the redescription themselves, and to be made factual by the existence of the event. In singular events, similar to those found in pictures, we may assume that some covering law relates two identical events, such as those given in the above-mentioned example (pp. 160–161). Missing, however, is the causal relation or explanation of the relation between the two events. Explanatory relations "typically relate statements" and are appropriately addressed as a relation

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[20] Davidson draws no logical distinction between the causal origins of physical and mental events. They are both able to exist under different descriptions. The critical beliefs of mental events, attributed as per the examples, are a function of what a person means by the belief/event/couplet; and what a person believes is a rational assumption of the truth. Thus uncovering the relation between the entity, or fact of the event is at least necessary for meaning. For example, the meaning of "Neil is fat" is not uncovered in the relation between 'Neil' and 'fat'. 'Neil is fat' if Neil is fat, establishes the sentence correspondence—'x'—with, and the entity—x.

between two sentences. Thus artworks as normative events are interpreted on the basis of reasons that are themselves recruited through the processes of inference. Verbal reasoning is implicated in critical interpretation, not only at the level of reportage and or reading, but in the generation of meaning and value as well.

All of this allows artworks, as normative artefacts, to stand independently clear of mind, protecting their existence from ontological predation by their explanations.

3.8   Conclusion

Davidson places the logic of metalanguage at the base of normative events. Artworks are archetypically normative events. The meaning of artworks is open to speculation and can be wrong. Nevertheless, on the basis of its underlying truth function, ordinary language use is able to extend interpretive charity to a wide range of alternative explanatory epistemologies to eventfully extant artefacts. Artworks are thus laid open to robust speculation about their nature without threatening their existence as normative objects.

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Chapter 4
Aesthetic Description, Realism and Art Education

The explanatory power of descriptions is largely determined by their capacity for representing objects convincingly and significantly to belief. What we know in the aesthetic or otherwise by way of description is largely determined by the manner in which our descriptive representations have been circumscribed. One of the most demoralising intuitions shared by art teachers arises from the suspicion that what can be said about the aesthetic character of objects, in particular art objects, will in many instances turn out to be self evident and relatively trivial (see Scruton 1974, pp. 37–70). For this reason art teachers in trying to verbalise aesthetic quality often find themselves diverted into using indirect kinds of description. As a result aesthetic descriptions in the arts can end up with little explanatory or assertorial strength.

4.1 Kinds of Aesthetic Description

Descriptions may be ostensively intended. Ostensive descriptions function as signposts pointing out the properties and qualities of things. Ostensive description is exemplified in Beardsley's (1958) concept of local and regional qualities with its neutral terminology of parts and wholes. Signposting aesthetic qualities, however, is far removed from the simple idea of a spatio-temporal index as implied in the concept of a map. For example, many artworks are platforms for the transaction of varied and overlapping narratives by their audiences. So that unless the aesthetic characteristic being described is tractable to mere appearance, or the notion of ostension is extended to include some kind of explanation, the feeling of self-evidence in aesthetic description is likely to persist.

A description may take on the form of a highly imaginative allusion. In its suggestion of the richness and power of aesthetic quality, allusion taps into the varied personal but unlegislated responses of the writer in the form of graphic reports. However reports of this sort can easily mistake a misunderstanding for a description. Thus allusory descriptions may turn out to be difficult to accept as believable representations of common experience. In other words, the subject relativism of allusory description can work against the propagation of knowing. An example of a more believable allusion in description occurs in Michael Parsons' (1987 p. 119) interview with Maureen an undergraduate who was asked, as part of Parsons' cognitive study, to describe the dog in a detail depicting a woman and a dog in Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party*. She said

> The kind of feelings you have for your own animal, a kind of love that is more part of the family… It gives you a good feeling, and it doesn't leave you wondering what it is. (p. 119)

However, if this description expressed an aversion to animals it may have been as equally valid but less believable.

Descriptions can also take on the form of rhetoric. Rhetorical descriptions depend largely upon injunctions of value and upon evangelical appeals aimed at pricking the aesthetic (ethical) conscience of the reader. But rhetorical descriptions can easily mistake deception for understanding. With rhetorical description there is always a lingering uncertainty whenever it appears that faith is displacing experience as the basis for belief.

Factual descriptions, those entailed in problematic and modal kinds of assertion are also inappropriate for the explanation of aesthetic character in artworks. To be acceptable as fact descriptions depend upon being grounded in the most contentious properties of the object. But insofar as aesthetic and representational characteristics of objects are secondary qualities they do not share a regular or predictable relation with their primary bases. For example, the 'serenity' of a yellow used in a Vermeer, may turn to 'foreboding' as ostensibly the same yellow is presented in a Van Gogh. Thus drawing necessary relationships with more primitive and doubt free properties like colour, line or shape cannot be used as a basis for building up aesthetic descriptions. Deprived of a descriptive logic (or criterion) for their characterisations, writers are denied a claim of factuality for their work. Aesthetic description must somehow go on to deal with an object's qualities more directly.

Another kind of descriptive indirectness arises out of a belief in the inherent conventionality and historicity of the aesthetic in art (Goodman 1976; Wollheim 1980; Wolff 1984; Foucault 1970). Historicists and conventionalists adhere to the broad position that the aesthetic character of artworks is implicated in the representational frameworks that transfigure them. Examples of this position include among others, the two great explanatory formal systems of semiology and social (critical) theory.

Conventionalists would appear to have an explanatory edge in their description of the qualitative world. In conventionalist description a power of explanation is achieved through the establishment of a model like relation between the socially determinate, or structural frameworks chosen by the writer; and the aesthetic

character of the object. Where conventional kinds of description differ from other kinds lies in the strength of their interpretative power. Their power is derived from the assimilation of descriptive quality to a more generalised system or, in the case of history, to empirical sources. In other words conventionalists identify aesthetic description with explanations based on an instancing in the object of some more general and external idea. Conventionalists however, attract the opposition of those who see the aesthetic as distinctly qualitative and concerned with singling out the unique value of an object. Anti-conventionalists believe the cognition of singular objects requires an immediate prehension of their character.

What if the description of an artwork is derived from the interaction between spectator and work (Holland 1981, p. 118) or from the product of a social group and the work? The reduction of artworks to objects of sociology or psychology tends to trade away art as a separate identity and possibly relinquishes the field itself.

Janet Wolff (1984, pp. 60–61) acknowledges how all ideologies of art are engaged with "aesthetic mediation" and how the critical, aesthetic reconstruction of the art object represents a preconditioning and thus a distinctive element in the social and psychological explanation of art. For example, even an explicit Marxist goal of reuniting students with their material bases through art does not necessarily involve the political activist in a material transfiguration of the art object. Bourgeois aesthetics with its expressive and elitist ideology is readily acknowledged by Marxists themselves to be one of the most powerful and preferred agencies of social change. The movie *The Grapes of Wrath* met all of Hollywood's marketing conditions yet was for this reason able to effect changes upon social consciousness. Artistic identity would seem at least, to retain its precedence and its separateness even within the context of political materialism. Thus art, although an agent of society is not agreed to be merely so. As pointed out above in relation to formalist systems, descriptions of artworks are not simply interchangeable with explanations of their social dynamics.

Bourdieu (1987), a socio-historicist, points out how the artworld in the twentieth century has reached such a thorough going historicism and has become such an integrated field of conventions, that it can claim a kind of internal relativity of norms. The artworld is now able to offer itself as a unified force to socio-historical study.

The result is that, contrary to what is taught by a naive relativism, the time of art history is really irreversible and that it presents a form of cumulativeness. He states

> …What happens in the field is more and more linked to the field's specific history and to it alone. It is therefore more difficult to deduce it from the state of the general world at the given time (as a certain "sociology" unaware of the specific logic of the field claims to do). Adequate perception of works… is a differential, a diacritical perception: in other words it is attentive to deviations from other works, both contemporary and past. The result is that, like production, the consumption of works which are a product of a long history of breaks with history, with tradition, tends to become historical through and through, and yet more and more totally dehistoricised (p. 208).

Structuralist explanations can also create explanatory *cul de sacs* in aesthetic description. These are nicely encapsulated in Jameson's (1972) phrase "The Prison

House of Language". The assumption that the aesthetic character of artworks is explainable through reference to the linguistic structure of their representational systems is misleading. In the Gardner/Winner (Winner 1982) structuralist psychology for example, aesthetic characterisations of the drawings and paintings of young children are largely interpreted against semiotic criteria derived from Goodman's (1976) *Languages of Art*. Where Goodman's (aesthetic) symptom of 'repleteness' is used as a measure of children's sensitivity to the aesthetic, the inferences drawn are categorical. For the purposes of the study (Winner 1982, p. 171) subjects were to complete a drawing task. The study was structured in such a way that subjects were led into the presupposition of repleteness as a disguised solution to the task. The study effectively sorted subjects against the criterion of repleteness, it appears, but in doing so said little about the character of their responses. It is obvious from this analytical sorting that subjects' responses are not characterised aesthetically by the theory of repleteness rather, their responses become instances of repleteness. Their responses serve to endorse the generalisability of semiotic theory whose assumptions, of course, it was never the study's intent to question. In aesthetic description however, the role of structuralist interpretation must be to tell us more about the significance represented than about the theory behind the belief. Structuralist interpretations one suspects continually postpone explanations of the work to concentrate on the justification of their own mechanisms. Evidence for this is suggested in Levi-Strauss' conclusion that myth is about the mythological process (Jameson 1972, p. 198), and in Goodman's (1976) conception of expression as self-denotation. Formalist systems of explanation tend to beg the question of aesthetic and representational description in the visual arts.

Wittgenstein (Hagberg 1987, p. 252; Wollheim 1980) expresses the problem of systematic explanation in the arts as a difference between transitive and intransitive description. Transitive descriptions are explanatory but concerned with "what a thing has". What a work has can be separated externally from the work. But what is external is mistakenly believed to suffice as a legitimate form of aesthetic explanation. For example, saying what mood a work *has* entails the use of predicates which function as descriptive translations of the work into external 'feeling/mood' systems of explanation.

Satisfactory aesthetic descriptions on the other hand are intransitive, that is, they are comprehensive of the work. Their object is to keep the work embodied and informed. All of the great formal systems of interpretation have difficulty in accommodating the intransitive character of both myth and art. Aesthetic description derives its truth within rather than from its analysis into a system.

This small sample exposes some of the variations in approach to aesthetic description and hints at the difficulties associated with their varying explanatory power. However these difficulties are merely a symptom of the way deeper assumptions held about the nature of existence in art dictate the form of aesthetic descriptions.

4.2   Existence, Realism and Description in Art

In exploring the concomitance between descriptions of artworks and the nature of their representational and physical existence, I believe that advantages can accrue for visual arts education from the adoption of a stable realism. Stability however, depends upon being able to resist the tendency of writers and teachers in the arts to replace, in the name of description, one kind of object for another. This tendency is always possible, especially with the use of interpretations based on formal systems, because each formal system carries its own differing ontological presuppositions. Thus a stable realism is one that entails descriptions of works relative to their independently existing properties. It is one where descriptions can be made without resort to ontological excursions outside of realism, even for the description of qualities of a work appearing to fall within a special class, for example, the reconciliation of the emergent with the physical in a work. To retain the identity of art as a field I will stress the importance of being able to point to advantages for the existence of a real artwork. Where in a real artwork true descriptions of all the work's potential properties can be identified without resort to its entire transfiguration as an object.

Knowing in the visual arts is closely associated with the mostly tacit ontological positions taken by knowers towards works. Yet in the most practical way policies taken by art teachers towards the identity of artworks are crucial to the conditions that govern descriptive explanations. Art teachers are never tacitly indifferent to the question of artistic identity even if they may appear to be demonstrably so. The way identity is conceived by teachers can, for example, either preclude or mandate attitudes and beliefs about works chosen for study. For example, structural or semiological objects represent conventionalist assumptions. Thus to replace a structural with a phenomenalist or idealist object, for example, is to exchange a cognitive for a sensory aesthetic with the possibility of far reaching effects upon the content and methods chosen in the art curriculum. There is no certainty that an artwork would continue to be as valuable structurally as it was phenomenally, if taken from these differing points of view.

Visual arts curriculum makers already swap around their interpretative systems and thus their related ontologies. Teachers are motivated by what they believe to be the lure of wider descriptive opportunities afforded in various areas of content by one formalist system (purporting to be universal) over another. For example, the causal object in studio practice is exchanged for the object of Marxist contextualism in art history, which in turn, is exchanged for the phenomenal object of aesthetic appreciation. The opportunism of object exchange reaches its most vivid expression in the polemics of higher education. The sub-disciplines of the visual arts mark out their various college territories by redrawing the identity of the art object. The positivist materialism of the art object, as it is investigated in the behavioural sciences, is barely recognisable beside the phenomenalism of student works stacked away in the studios of art departments; while social historians see the aesthetic as a quaint but romantic nineteenth century aberration.

In the microcosm of the art room, school students may be cossetted as alternately bourgeois and Marxist within the time frame of the one lesson for the simple reason that, as a platform for the descriptive explanation of a particular area of content, one system is perceived to be more explanatory than another. Entreated one minute to originate with all the freshness of the *avant garde*, students are exposed the next minute to video clips of John Berger pointing out how Rembrandt was a mere pawn of ruling Dutch seventeenth century ideology.

When used in the description of art works the self-absorption of formalist systems and their general nature, beg most of the questions of aesthetic and representational interpretation. The exchange of one kind of object and its related formalisms for another is a trivial form of explanation (Boullart 1985). It is also pernicious for it commits the learner in the visual arts to descriptions reducing the individuality of works to the level of analytical dogma. The mere translation of the work into an alternative system is not necessarily to afford it an effective aesthetic description. Rather it tends to reduce the individuality of the work to the level of a general instance. Denied the reaffirmation of the aesthetic in each individual work the value differences between professional and vernacular judgements in description are diminished and differences between works leveled (see Adorno 1984, pp. 466–467). But the use of systematic explanations is also a category mistake. Devitt (1984, pp. 80–83) and Putnam (1975, pp. 223–227) identify the mistake as confusion between narrow and wide beliefs, or between intentional and functional states of the believer. Their point is that the assimilation of belief to wider structures *about* the conceptual value of belief (or intentional thought) provides the knower with little opportunity to "attribute any richer meaning or content to a sentence in thought" (Devitt, p. 82), "For to suppose otherwise is to think that an intrinsic property of an object can determine its relation to a particular object external to it" (p. 83).

The feeling of disquiet expressed in De Chirico's images of deserted and shadowy arcades for example, is not directly proportional in intensity to one's theoretical grasp of the concept of disquietude. Nor is it a function of behavioral accounts of psycho and socio-phobic neurosis in public places. Nor is it mere recognition or 'seeing as'. Amplification of a felt quality such as disquiet in a work and its refinement into the recognition of 'disquiet' is deeply involved in the precision with which it is translated into an identifying description. The interesting interaction of 'concept', 'recognition' and 'experience' (the acute feeling itself) in aesthetic comprehension, represents the praxiology of aesthetic description. In the very multiplicity of its representations to consciousness, the interaction effects a kind of cross check, a triangulation that audits one mental representation against another thus laying down for feeling a place in belief. It suggests, I believe, that aesthetic properties such as a sense of disquiet in a work exist independently as the judgement of true components of real objects and not as projections or anything else (see Scheffler's demystification of truth in metaphor [1988, pp. 45–50]).

4.3   Aesthetic Character as Real Properties

Although a philosophy of mind must show how conceptual understanding operates in the recognition of aesthetic properties, the task is dependent upon an account of how the former is mediated objectively into the latter, for it is clear that there is no implication for concepts in feeling. Thus an account of aesthetic description (and I have been including in 'the aesthetic' all senses related to the function of representation in art) must include an explanation of how aesthetic properties are able to be real assertions. (The relationship of realism to questions of; multiple works, endurance over time, coming into and out of existence, authorship, physicalism, and other issues related to the object will be set aside for now.).

Inductive, formalist description in the Broudyan (1972) tradition, justified by 'foundationalist' sense data, has little to contribute to an account of the sensuous nature of the aesthetic in objects. We accept that the perception of sensuous (felt) qualities, such as 'disquietude' referred to above, involve a conceptual background of understanding. (I acknowledge that the identification of a quality of 'disquiet' may lie outside the cognitive range of students at differing stages of development. However, I do not intend to address here the particular question of developmental cognition in aesthetics.). Sensuous qualities are not immediately apprehended even if they are supervenient on their pictorial properties. Thus aesthetic description is both articulated by and dependent upon an extension in the knower of ideas already in place and which have been shown to represent true properties elsewhere. It is a view that can be explained as "foresight" (Margolis 1984, p. 228). We accept with continental philosophy that

> We do not have a conception of things we have a fore-conception of them [which is to say] (1) the function of our concepts depends on a prior conceptual orientation which is in effect our history; (2) it is for that reason only that things are interpretable at all; and (3) the attempted recovery of such fore-conception cannot itself fail to be similarly encumbered: "An interpretation" says Heidegger, "is never a presuppositionless apprehending of something presented to us." (p. 228)

Art teachers concerned with teaching aesthetic understanding however, have the problem of deciding where to break into the perceptual cycle of the student. Cognitive studies into stages of aesthetic development (see Parsons 1987) tentatively indicate the characteristic entry points for aesthetic intervention. But ontology and epistemology should not be conflated. Historicist insights into the role of fore-conception in aesthetic understanding do not go so far as to require an object that is dependent upon knowledge for its existence.

Realism does not make the very existence of an entity dependent upon how we are able to <u>tell</u> it exists (Devitt 1984, p. 43). Realist descriptions are concerned with identifying the facts an art object shares between it and its identity that is, those properties true of the work. But students must be able to recognise rather than 'identify' the identity of a painting because artworks acquire their identity contingently. For example, 'such and such' is *Blue Poles* by Pollock. There are no properties implied in the identity of an artwork like *Blue Poles*. Its identity is stipulated and it

exists. In other words it is, by virtue of being referred to. Its existence is not logically composed as a deduction from a bundle of abstract properties (Kripke 1972, p. 273). The identity of the work is fixed and thus registered as a singular reference.

All students can recognise the identity of an artwork. Blue Poles is a work that most people in Australia know. However the epistemic level at which people know the work, that is, how it is identified, varies widely. Indeed in a famous scandal in Sydney an exhibition of fraudulent Jackson Pollock paintings escaped exposure only because the properties of the works were widely acknowledged to be indistinguishable from Pollock's. Yet the works were simply not real Pollock's. When their real identities were revealed, all that was previously acknowledged of them carried little weight in defense. Thus what is true of a work must also be true of its identity but does not necessarily constitute its identity.

Of the properties shared by a work and its identity, students may be widely ill informed or naive. Yet it is not fatal to the continued existence of a real artwork that the properties it has are ill defined, misidentified, misunderstood or even lie undiscovered. The artwork retains its existence irrespectively of what was, is, or can come to be known about it. Thus a real artwork has a robust presence for students that can be approached epistemically without any permanent damage to its existence. The work may not be, to begin with, part of a student's habitus, as Bourdieu (1987) would say, but habitus seems like another way of talking about learning, learning concerned with inculcating the esoteric rather than the exoteric.

Subsequently we can begin teaching about the work. Supervenient terms or terms relating to secondary and representational qualities, are usually commonplace terms without any precise criteria of their shared meaning. However, this is precisely why artworks and their study has become a field of practice. The field represents a context with its own conventions and norms for the arbitration of meanings that it may be possible to transmute as properties of the work. The true properties identifying an artwork are not unique. The pictorial property of blue and the aesthetic property of 'disquiet' are shared by many other objects. But the configuration of these properties begins to take on a comprehensive significance, a kind of emergent factuality local to the work. For the realist though, the independent existence of the object, which appeals so compellingly to common sense, is not to be identified as the thing 'in itself'. A real object requires descriptive mediation, the arbitration of a criterion to determine the truth of its properties and enable them to be reliably identified. But unfortunately the 'emergent factuality' of artworks, particularly their representational character, (subject matter expressed as the internal logic of the work, its *verstehen* as Adorno l984, p. 475 describes it) renders the theoretical use of concepts, the language of natural kinds, inappropriate.

Realists are unable to rely on theory as a criterion of truth about artworks in the way they do with natural kinds such as trees, planets, cats and so on (Wiggins 1978, p. 56). This is because there can be no such thing as a natural law governing a contingent and individual configuration like an artwork. Yet it seems patent that despite its emergent character, the aesthetic remains assertible in description as properties of the work. But it is equally clear that the notion of a quality as both emergent and

an independent property of an object sets up a contention difficult to reconcile within a realist philosophy of mind. What is the possibility of conciliation between the two?

Putnam (1983, p. 207) argues that the idea of a descriptive mediation in the stronger correspondence sense (correspondence realism) between mind independent (real) sets of properties, and special signs in a language, is unacceptable. Reference between words and properties is contingent. There are infinite ways Putnam says, that we can specify a correspondence between terms and their referents. He argues

> how can we pick out correspondence between our words (or thoughts) and the mind independent thing if we have no direct access to the mind independent things? (p. 207)

We are according to Putnam, in need of some bridge between property and mind. But Putnam in denying us a correspondence is also denying us a ready-made world of preexistent properties, in other words, denying us a metaphysical realism. Where then do properties originate?

Following Putnam (1983, p. 262), when we choose to represent the state of some system S, we choose to institute a frame relative to which S has a determinate property of being Q or of being P. For example, in a painting S we may choose to institute the alternative frames Q or P referring, let us say, to the expressive character of sadness or wistfulness. But we only choose to fill one of these otherwise idle frames. The frames do not determine the property in some metaphysical sense (Scheffler 1976, p. 41). Sadness is a metaphorical hypothesis, a speculative coalition of meanings in the form of an experience or idea, for which the frames function more as literal reference points or quantitative values. Hypotheses about sadness for example, are felt in response to observation, even though observation is constrained as fully categorised by its literal frames.

In the context of painting S the frames being P or being Q, functioning as descriptive categories, do not disabuse us of the freedom to apprehend but rather, within the connotation of meaning they extend, enable us to be realists when we do apprehend. Indeed if we are wrong about the sadness, rather than the system and its frames, it is our observation within the frames that would show us the error. Rather than a reduction to essences, or of some correspondence to reality the descriptive scheme we select represents choices relative to the facts we are interested in (or as Parsons [1987] would add, we are at a cognitive stage to understand). It is what Putnam (1987) calls "internal realism….a view that takes our familiar common sense scheme, as well as our scientific and artistic and other schemes at face value, without helping itself to the notion of the thing in itself" (p. 17).

4.4   Realism and the Reliability of Aesthetic Description

We are still left with the problem of the way we condition our choices reliably in aesthetic comprehension. What guides do we have in the selection of our references that can satisfy conditions of assertibility relative to aesthetic character and are

compatible with an objective realism? Two promising directions in which these conditions might be found are those set out in papers by Wiggins (1978) and Petit (1987).

4.5   Wiggins' Concept of Authentic Effect

Wiggins (1978, p. 56) echoes Putnam's internal realism when he talks about the conditions involved in maintaining what he calls the "authentic effect" of an artwork. Wiggins maintains that there is a real "effect" discernible in the artwork, an effect that shares an identity with the character of each work. The real effect is traceable through the identifiability of the artist's purpose (theory or policy). The artist's purpose cannot be characterised in causal terms. The effect is not expressible in terms of the experience felt, in other words, as an effect on the viewer but in the "effect" of the work. The effect is instrumentally, constitutively and materially related to the devices and calculations (the scheme) used by the artist. An artwork is an independently discoverable configuration in which the material and conceptual choices constitutive of it serves to identify its representational system. The artwork is its purposeful constituents. An artwork, Wiggins claims (p. 60), acquires its identity because we as spectators are able to objectify its constituents from the perspective of an insider experiencing its authentic effect. We are able to do this because we participate in the artist's game plan as projections of his/her ideal audience. The tangibility of the artist's work anticipates our experience for its authentic effect.

For Wiggins, Putnam's choices relative to facts are the artist's choices relative to effect. Note that we are not speculating from the work according to some psychoanalytical model about the artist's subliminal motives. We are trying instead to reconstruct an explanation of the work as a result of our comprehension of artistic policy, that is the artist's constitutive theory of the work. The work is calculated constitutively, materially, and instrumentally to accrue a dynamic and singular effect because it is gained against a background of artistic purpose in which we as spectators share. Thus the artwork becomes describable as a kind of individual system regulated by the artist, the work and the audience (pp. 61–65).

In this way, Wiggins believes (pp. 64–65) we escape the platitudes of self-evident description and enter into a Hegelian idea where a work's sensuousness is constituted as a dialogue of like-minded choices revealed and judged among audiences and artist as the constituents of the work.

There are problems with Wiggins' realism. The major problem relates to his notion of sensuousness. Many aesthetic or secondary qualities are not easily reduced to explanations of purpose, or described as properties in the constitutive terms that claim to be a theory of that purpose. For Wiggins the theoretical power of description, used in the explanation of natural kinds, is paralleled in the theoretical description of artistic purpose that, he claims, serves in the identification of individual artefacts like artworks. But mere identification of the facts relative to both artwork

and its purpose is not sufficient enough as theory to act as a reference class able to govern the objectivity of aesthetically emergent "effects".

4.6 Petit's Theory of Rectification and Positioning

Petit (1987) as a realist, believes that pictures for example, only display their aesthetic character suitably as properties when their properties can be assigned to an appropriate reference class. To place an object in the appropriate reference class is done he believes, by subjecting the object imaginatively to various positionings so that the observer comes to apprehend the appearance of things objectively. But identification is achieved only in so far as the perceiver knows what the relevant contrasts are "…one succeeds in making the picture display the appearance of… [x]." (p. 31). Petit introduces two constraints on imaginative positionings (p. 37). These moves are designed to audit imaginative positionings and lend property-like strength to what would otherwise be something little different to aspectual seeing or 'seeing as' (Wittgenstein 1952; Aldrich 1963; Scruton 1974). To qualify as assertible truth the perception of an aspect of the aesthetic, for example sadness, disquiet, or some other representational characteristic, must be referenced against appropriate and relevant background information. Petit calls this "rectification" (p. 37).

Rectification involves the placement of properties into their normalised reference classes. The process of rectification is straight forward with pictorial properties like colour. Not only can I gain access to a standard presentation of 'red', which reliably enables me to adjudicate an elusive or ambiguous case of 'red', but also the quality of red if expressed as an assertion by someone else can be accepted as true (knowledge). If rectification is successful assertions can be accepted at face value without the reader's first hand knowledge of the truth; *de dicto* as opposed to *de re* knowledge of a property. In other words, not only would I know that red *de re*, but I would also have 'knowledge that red' *de dicto*.

The notion of adjudication is crucial because it determines whether a work really does have (as a property) a perceptual quality (e.g., of sadness) or not. What, for example, if a work possessed a quality of sadness in its gestalt that a given audience was unable to perceive (experience)? To where would they be referred in order to see the sadness? The question serves to highlight indirectness of aesthetic description as an issue of crucial importance to the notion of learning and instruction in the visual arts. Aesthetic qualities, Petit says, are "…essentially perceptual or perceptually elusive" (p. 34) and as a result have no standard reference class. A *de dicto* statement about disquietude would encourage little belief because it attracts no common references. Simply, there is no criterion of sadness and thus no truth claims can be proposed for sadness in a work.

Petit shows that for two pictorially identical artworks the aesthetic quality they represent remain the same. Thus an interdependence contrast is set up between the constituents of the work and the qualities supervenient upon them. It is this interdependence that Petit calls the aesthetic reference class and it is to this reference class

that an aesthetic quality is rectified. Rectification can be compared with Scruton's (1974) idea of pictorial realism. Scruton says, "Realism is always realism in a certain aspect" because, he continues, "not every feature I see in a work is a feature of its appearance" (pp. 202–204). Secondary qualities for Scruton are not seen through primary qualities but seen as an aspect. Thus Petit's theory of rectification is an attempt to lend assertibility to Scruton's unasserted reports of aspectival experience. But we have already seen that there is no implication for secondary in primary qualities of a work. The representational in the aesthetic is, according to Pettit

> by reference to something which may change from case to case. It requires only normal information and memory to position an object appropriately for colour; it requires imagination to position it so that it displays a property like sadness (p. 31).

We cannot wait for the work to explain sadness as if we, through reflective effort, could squeeze it out as an essence. As Kripke (1972, p. 253) would say in reference to secondary qualities in general—any changes to them are not expressed by reference to some internal essence of 'sadness' or anything else, but by changes to the way they, as references are marked out in context. Secondary qualities, unlike natural kinds, have no facts about them to be known. Thus their truth is a condition of their context, that is, their affirmation or denial by the positioning effect that throws them into contrast with their surroundings.

As Danto (1964) explains, two identical objects one real but a natural kind, the other an art kind, can only be distinguished by the transfiguring constraints of an informed perception. We take sadness and for some imaginative reason, elect to re-reference the work or, reconstruct it as sadness. But the arbitrariness of Kripke's renaming, and the cryptic nature of Danto's theoretical transfiguring, seems to take us too far away from the sense of rectification as "positioning" in context. Positioning suggests in other words that, the work as a complex, conditions the property; that is, the whole work acts as reference class to that property which is the one, as Putnam says, we are interested in (sadness, disquiet etc.).

Petit (1987, p. 35) explains that constraints upon positioning can be conceived as both "holistic" and "humanistic". Holistic constraints are produced through the interactive effect of one property upon all its partners. A property, from its position within one reference class, highlights certain others. A representation of a woman in a picture for example, "…naturally effects how it [the representation] may be positioned with a view to displaying economy, lavishness, dreaminess or matter-of-factness, sadness or gaiety" (p. 35). Any given positioning that fails to make coherent sense of the whole or any part of the picture is thus wrong or inappropriate. Petit seeks truth and objectivity in the act of positioning through an appeal to rational intuition (see Dancy 1985, Ch. 8, for an introduction to the coherence theory of truth, and again Adorno 1984.).

But Petit is careful to acknowledge the historical perspectivism embedded in the way art understands itself as a coherent form. The humanistic constraint on indiscriminate positioning considers the way artworks tend to resolve themselves into the intellectual milieus shared by their audiences. This tendency, Petit points out, does not try to presuppose artist's motives, but perceives the work, "…as something

intelligible that a human being should have produced" (p. 35). Like Wiggins, Petit sees rationality among the constituents (the properties) of the work that can only be contemplated in the broad sense as the emergence of an artistic intentionality. But milieus can also be conceived in relation to a diacritical artworld. From a diacritical perspective positioning can be seen as an editing of representational meaning against a perception of the way meaning deviates from present and past representations in earlier works, that is, from the conventions of representation. The recognition of these is as much a part of the uptake of the work as anything else. It helps show why an esoteric or specialised knowing of the artworld is important to students' understanding of the otherwise deceptively common place subjects of art. Thus the audience is perceptually conditioned by the work to anticipate what is tolerably believable within it, a sort of internal logic. Within these parameters and with further acquaintanceship the beholder's understanding of the work can become increasingly precise.

For a successful realism, the description of the individual character of works is consistent with its being critically assertible fact. In this way realism can combine the power of truth with the writing of aesthetic description and engender aesthetic understanding while disengaging its existence from dependency upon the necessity of truth.

4.7 Summary

In summary, a real artwork has an intuitively separate existence and the worlds and qualities it represents are its properties. If all of a real work's properties could be rendered assertible, teachers would be able to take advantage of the similarity rather than the differences between artworks and other entities students learn about in school. A real artwork has both a configurative and a representational presence united indivisibly by common sense. A real artwork has an origin and a past, a present and a future. It has a persistence and a vulnerability, but not in a way which is dependent upon how students think it is in order for it to exist. An art teacher is able to approach the teaching of a real artwork in the knowledge that the object is already seen to exist by the most naïve of students. But that the work, in existing, can be addressed by the student in the spirit of finding out with the same sense of wonder that goes with the exploration of objects in the physical universe.

In a real work (following Putnam, I have rejected metaphysical realism), the myriad of properties relative to it can be accepted without exclusion; its interesting historical facts, its physical nature, its market value, its fashionability, the general ideas and narratives transacted within and about it, its causal effect on oneself, and upon others, its social anthropology, its technical nature and, not least, its aesthetic and representational character (see Wolterstorff [1980, Ch. 1] for a discussion on the lack of identity between the aesthetic and art).

Students need to be able to trust their intuitive sense of the existence of the artwork as an entry point into its understanding. Yet even though a work may be a

complex well beyond their present comprehension, new insights gained through art learning should come as a cognitive challenge to students rather than as an attack upon their common sense. A real art object affords teachers and students this opportunity.

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Chapter 5
Theoretical Perspectives: Research into Children's Cognition and Knowledge in the Visual Arts

There is one seam of guilt even Woody Allen has yet to uncover. It is the rich deposit lying beneath the field of art teaching. This is possibly because most art teachers have at one time or another been as much subjugated as helped by their conceptions of art: scouting anxiously for the first sign of an eraser, waiting tensely for drawings to "fill the page", riding shotgun on tracing, and frustrated to despair as the outcome of a unit on personal expression decays into sixteen Roger Rabbits and a Bart Simpson.

All subjects within the educational syllabus have secured their place on the basis of some special disciplinary advantage. The advantage claimed for the visual arts has been traditionally defended as its subjectivity. No other subject has construed itself in the curriculum in such baldly causal terms as the visual arts. Objectives in the visual arts have commonly nominated subjective states as content. Until recently art was traded in the syllabus not as an alternative discipline but as an alternative to discipline. However, changes in the philosophy of meaning during the last thirty years have reconstrued the notion of belief in the arts. One effect has been to shift the emphasis from children's art studied as a phenomenon, to the study of children's understanding of art. This has led to a rekindling of interest in art as a kind of knowing, as a discipline, and a cultural object.

Committed to an assumption of the visual arts as a deeply spontaneous process, art teachers would find the thought of any parallel being drawn between violin lessons and figure drawing offensive. The Suzuki method may be debatable within music but the prospect of "Suzuki figure drawing" is an outrage (even if a possibility). Vernacular violin playing on the other hand is more of a remote possibility than

an outrage. When different assumptions of knowing in art are forced together, as often by circumstance they are caused to be, even if only by developmental limitations, art teachers are likely to experience it as a practical dilemma.

Art teacher's guilt is plausibly a tension created by the hegemonic influence of the beliefs to which they adhere, a contingency of the way art teachers know art to be. For many teachers the concepts of knowledge and art have always been disjunctive. Yet, this talk is not about cognitive dissonance in art teaching but about cognition in art.

While it is by no means widely acknowledged in the literature of child art, coming to know art requires at some point a reflective engagement with the art world. The art world represents a field of cultural self-consciousness and volatility without rival among disciplines. Probably for this reason the survival of doctrines associated with artistic cognition has been low. Think, for example, of the anachronistic Meier Tests of Artistic Judgment. But also, by regularly refinancing their explanatory stocks with new and un-exchangeable philosophical capital, psychologists, over a period, have undercut the assumptions underlying many art curricula. Our field has endured long exposure to the patronage of psychologists who tell us, "It is our [psychologist's] duty to provide you [art educators] with the best possible information". Of course our reply should be: how do we insure ourselves against banality, what Jerry Fodor calls "a narrow notion of content" and incommensurability in the doctrines you afford us? (1987, p. 32). For it is increasingly clear that art education lacks a sufficient critique of the authority of the human sciences. As John Kennedy reminds us

> …psychology of the arts like psychology in general is caught in a squeeze. Psychology in general can never flout the assumptions about mankind it made in asserting it would be scientific. And the psychology of the arts must begin with preconceptions about the arts that it cannot violate, or it risks being irrelevant to its chosen domain.... Experimental psychology is a second order discipline, which must follow and cannot establish the definition of its field of inquiry (1984, p. 35).

But there is an irony in the very concept of trying to naturalise ethical domains like the visual arts however respectfully psychology follows its object. It is an irony captured by Nietzsche in his genealogy of morals when, in *Ecce Homo,* Nietzsche asks the question of "what is good?" He asks it of himself—the perspective is vital. What is morally 'good' becomes a question of what is the basis for my use of 'good' in language? How do I avoid the infinite regress of a representative account of its choice when I reflect on the basis for using the word? For Nietzsche the answer is that I don't. Rather I create the meaning in its use. If the use of the word cannot be foretold then its enactment must be creative.

Nietzsche's semantic irony anticipates the broader irony of representational perspective alluded to by Foucault, of 'man' himself (1973). It is that of an anthropology where the faculties of 'man', not of man as a human being, but of 'man' as an idea are, like Nietzsche's question of morality, at once the object and the agent of study. In the anthropology of man the faculties of 'man' are made to cohere as if in law like and predictable ways. Yet, Foucault says, an apparently lawful coherence within these faculties conceals a basic discontinuity within the flux of their existence.

Any measurement of the concept of 'man' is condemned to contingency. Like the Nietzschean concept of morality, for Foucault the concept of 'man' is deeply implicated in the creative installment and mutation of its own nature.

The influence of representational perspective was dramatised by its reappearance as bias in reports of the First Gulf War. Bias in television reports of the war was no longer confined to its expression within a single structure of truth. Instead, bias emerged as a tendency within reports to tailor particular events to whole justificational systems on the basis of what appeared to be their rhetorical advantage. Coalition forces in the Gulf War, for example, seemed to be represented within a postmodern rhetoric of deferment. The Iraqi, on the other hand, were usually represented in a modernist rhetoric of affective experience.

Consequentially the 'truth' of allied missile attacks upon the Iraqi people reported from Bagdad was typically justified within the framework of subjective expression about which Jameson says

> The very concept of expression presupposes indeed some separation within the subject, and … a whole metaphysics of the inside and the outside, of the moment in which, often cathartically, 'emotion' is then projected as the outward dramatisation of inward feeling (1990, p. 77).

The sense of Iraqi pain was referred to the viewer's belief by images of human suffering chosen to evoke an immediate and deeply empathetic shock of recognition.

In reports of allied attacks, however, justification of the 'truth' was constantly deferred. It was postponed in favour of some predisposing image or "…conception of practices, discourses and textual play...." which continually set back the meaning of the object (p. 77). Graphic examples of representational deferment were provided by the video images transmitted from the warheads of Coalition missiles as they sought and destroyed their targets. At the very moment of impact the warheads were transfigured as military objects into agents of representation. Jameson comments, "Such machines are indeed machines of reproduction rather than of production, and they make very different demands on our capacity for aesthetic representation" (p. 98). He argues that reproductive machines like the computer are not objects of representation but ones "whose outer shell has no emblematic or visual power….[E]ven the casings of the various media themselves, as with…television…articulates nothing but rather implodes, carrying its flattened image surface within itself" (p. 98). For the television viewer of "Desert Storm" it seemed that even reports intended as explanation of the destruction were deferred back onto the surface of the image. Thus, in a Nietzschean sense, meaning, rather than being represented, was enacted, 'created', at that point.

It might be argued that media reports of "Desert Storm" were characterised by the more or less deliberate choice, for rhetorical ends, of two meta-systems of representation, one subject centred, the other textually centred. At a justificational and ontological level both systems appear untranslatable. As two perspectives they neither share their meanings within the event, nor even appear to interrogate the same object. Their success is determined rhetorically within the narrative. As Kennedy

(1984) has reminded us, however, irreconcilable assumptions are by no means confined to those found in the media. In cognitive psychology the origins of truth are fiercely debated. Positions defended include Dretske's (1986) school of naturalising epistemology, Dummett's (1982) reality independence, Putnam's (1983) scientific realism, Goodman's (1983) constructed realities, Brentano's (1973) intentionality and Davidson's holistic propositional attitudes—to mention a few. Despite the factuality of grounding data, debate often stalls when data is applied to each position at it retreats behind its assumptions.

Irrespective of their present positions, the past work of van Sommers, Gardner/Winner, and Freeman serve to illustrate different ways in which descriptions of psychological processes in art subtend reality. We are always in need of some bridge between property and mind that it is the role of theoretical frameworks to provide. For art teachers these theoretical assumptions are crucial. Alternative philosophies of mind do not merely reinterpret the same data, but co-define the analytical terms qualifying the perception of reality. Thus data is not only interpreted as art but can either be selected or disregarded according to the theoretical doctrine employed. Theoretical assumptions set out for us the nature of what it is to know by isolating the ontology of the object to be known, locating it within perception, and conditioning the cognitive form of its interrogation. These assumptions are vital ingredients of curriculum.

Peter van Sommers is conscious of these difficulties (1984). At the beginning of his book *Drawing and Cognition,* he states, "Historically, the whole research program began in a naturalistic way. Rather than setting up hypothesis, I began with observation and analysis" (p. 3). He remarks earlier, "But my object has been to be as comprehensive as I can and as true as possible to of abstractness in simple drawings" (p. 2).

The expository scheme van Sommers chose as the most sensible was one in which the production of drawing is reported as moving "…from basic mechanics, through certain simple skills, plans, and economies to representation and finally to pragmatics…" (p. 2).

Art goes on to be distinguished from the vernacular in van Sommers' scheme as a socially complex and largely institutionalised form of pragmatics. Van Sommers accepts with minimal reservations an analogy between speech acts and graphic acts (p. 235). He uses Searle's speech act theory to explain the transfiguration of the technical, material, and physical constraints upon skill in drawing, into their layers of meaningful progression from technical skill to its communicative application. Representational drawing is conditioned by formal, non-cognitive constraints from below and by the social context of its enactment from above (p. 115). Mediated through speech act theory, spontaneous drawing is identified as a vernacular activity more akin to language than speech. Spontaneous drawing is transfigured by prosodic and social rather than structural imperatives into forms of communicative meaning. These meanings he variously identifies as expressive, aesthetic, cognitive, functional, recreational, and so on.

It is interesting to see how drawing conceived as a graphic act deploys categories such as 'private', 'public', and 'dialogue'. How, on the same basis, it enables a

distinction to be drawn between expressive, cognitive, and recreational intention, emphases which interpretations based on other assumptions might contest. That while ever it falls within the communicative orbit of intent the reporting of data by informants is (more) likely to be accepted as evidence of psychological reality. Van Sommers says, "Sue Koenig [his colleague] and I have simply **asked** [my emphasis] informants to recall an actual incident in which they had to draw something...." (p. 239). For example

> The third example, that of a woman drawing symbolically how she feels when depressed, is not cognitive.... As she was recounting the incident, the woman experienced some difficulty in articulating why she made the drawings beyond saying how they helped her to understand better how she felt. She was emphatic that there was no audience either present or anticipated, and there was not enough content in each [drawing] to represent a "readout" for cognitive purposes. One might almost describe the drawing as an elaborate visual sigh (p. 237).

Through their answers informants participate in the underlying pragmatics that is an assumption of the questions. For example, in the question "What was the drawing for?" even a negative answer such as 'it was not for anything' is bound to comply with the questioner's concept of communicative intention. Maybe it is not so surprising when van Sommers states that he finds, "Perhaps one of the surprising items was the frequency of drawing to express feelings, including communicating to others" (p. 243). The preponderance of drawings to express feelings, rather than a non-cognitive psychological property of the drawer, however, might be otherwise interpreted as the deployment by drawers of a wide but tacitly held orthodoxy about drawing. In other words, the expressive tendency of drawings might plausibly be a case of their manifest content, masking a bias in the analysis toward communicative intention.

Critique in the human sciences is particularly vulnerable to the conflation of theoretical perspectives. Joachim Wohlwill's analysis of Gardner/Winner's structural psychology of art appears to be an example of this kind of confusion (1985). When he admonishes Winner for an undue emphasis in her analysis upon cognition, Wohlwill's says, "Surely an appreciation of a painting such as *Rembrandt's Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer* will remain incomplete if the viewer does not recognise the characters portrayed and their interrelationships." Nonetheless, the differentiation between the perceptual and the symbolic remains important, for it sensitises us to the differences between such meaning-charged pictures. Wohlwill misses the enabling assumption of the Gardner/Winner project, following Goodman, that perceptual processes are radically constructed.

The key to Goodman's structuralism is found in the universality of the semiotic itself (1982). The power of Goodman's structuralism lies in its investment of all meaning into arbitrary denotative associations. Even deeply felt sensations, if ever they surface into meaning, do so for Goodman not as a perceptual causality or as idealised cognitive representations but as a prefigured possibility of the language. Feeling and value are thus assimilated into the cognition of a symbolic system. Sensation, drawing, and art are suddenly transfigured by universal tendencies of symbol systems into a way of knowing!

The polarity of Goodman's structuralism however, presents a number of problems for the human sciences. Most striking is the paradox between its theoretical reductionism yet at once its pragmatic relativity. His semiotic identifies five structural characteristics of aesthetic symbol systems, which include that of "repleteness" (1982, p. 67). The presence of repleteness represents a structural tendency of symbol systems toward the denotation of uniqueness, a tendency that is symptomatic of the aesthetic and of art. But as with all structural descriptions, explanations are assimilated upward into generalisation. When repleteness is used in the analysis of children's artistic understanding, for example, rather than detail their understanding, each particular explanation, as one among the infinity of concrete particulars, tends to instantiate the symptom. At such a high level of generality, repleteness in a drawing is either always uninterestingly true, or so theoretically dense that unpacking into experimental parameters renders it banal (Brown 1989, pp. 214–215). When employed in the critical analysis of an artwork, repleteness is too thin an abstraction to usefully help in showing how the unique character of particular symbols count aesthetically. More importantly, along with the five other analytic symptoms of the aesthetic, repleteness is culturally immutable and therefore in danger of insulating the aesthetic from radical changes in artistic practice. (Thus jeopardising its reliability as a marker for art).

Freeman on the other hand is a realist (1990). For Freeman, depictions, portraits, artworks, are part of the nature of things, the furniture of the world. Pictures do not do things (p. 8), nor are they identified as structural tendencies within symbolic systems. Drawings are things. They are states of affairs confronting the knower. What artworks mean is a function of understanding what is true of them; creating art entails the deployment of that understanding. Thus people know art by virtue of possessing and deploying a theoretical model that provides some systematic account of the facts about art and its depictive relations. Freeman holds that in experimental settings encouraging active rather than reactive reporting of information, subjects will recursively engage with theory as a means of coming to terms with the making and understanding of art. The holding of orthodoxies about art is ubiquitous and often tacit. The effect, realists think, is often to confuse a belief with psychologically real properties. For example, the belief that one expresses oneself in a drawing may be confused in a particular work with a causal interpretation of its expressiveness.

Realists eschew the extremes of cultural determinism on the one hand, and solipsistically constructed realities on the other. Thus beliefs about art are neither radically structural, conventional, nor naturalised. Beliefs can be changed and adapted to different contexts. Realists largely support a separation between ontology and epistemology. For realists a naive or wrong theory does not threaten the very existence of things. For realists we don't have to get art right even at a deep level before we can investigate it psychologically. Constructed realities carry the disadvantage for realists of transforming the nature of things into knowledge. Structural explanations, for example, turn real things into linguistic objects when for realists, objects need transfiguring semantically into real things.

Problems with realism, however, need to be sorted out. The problems have mostly to do with praxis and supervenience, that is, how secondary aesthetic notions can be asserted theoretically, grounded in truth, and their fittingness judged through discourse, in other words, to the ethico/political character of art and aesthetics. For to imagine as Kennedy does that the artworld is unrecursively prior to representational perspectives favoured by the human sciences, naively underestimates the hegemonic investment of those perspectives in artistic practice. Needless to say art teachers, who are not only responsible for what is done but also for what ought to be done in art, are deeply interested in all of these questions.

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Chapter 6
Aesthetic Fallacies in Perspective

A standing joke in art criticism asks 'this painting may work in
practice but will it work in theory?'

6.1 Introduction

Explanations satisfy the need for meaning in most domains. Disputes over meaning
are usually confined to issues of evidence and interpretation, except in the arts
where the very idea of explanation is considered inappropriate. Theoretical explana-
tions are incompatible with aesthetic meaning in the arts, it is said, because explana-
tions quantify what is common rather than qualify what is unique about art works.
Critical explanations in art only succeed if based on evidence within individual
artworks as a form of grounded theory (Feldman 1971).[1] However, grounded expla-
nations provide unsatisfying aesthetic interpretations. At best grounded 'schemes'
lend little additional force or clarity to the meaning of artworks and at worst destroy
their tacit spell. Art must speak for itself.

Art teachers know, however, that many artworks are not self-evident and children
in particular struggle to unravel the meaning in works (Freeman and Brown 1993).

This paper views even the long-standing opposition to aesthetic explanation in
the arts and art education as itself a causal constraint in the representation of arte-
facts. It shows how the sense of references to even immediately felt qualities such
as aesthetic qua aesthetic meaning in art are framed by constraining networks of
causation (Frege 1961). While these frameworks can be formal or informal, sur-
mised or discredited they are not relativistically interchangeable. They function as
constraints qualifying the sense of faithful references to artworks and how they
'work' from alternative points of view (Quine 1964).

This study is a precursor to a larger commitment to philosophical realism in art,
holding that meaning is not resolved in the contest between competing ontologies of
art, but identified as constraints on the representation and misrepresentation of

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[1] Feldman regards interpretation as the advancing of a hypothesis that is to be disconfirmed by
experimentation.

mind-independent artefacts. Protecting the existence of art from determination by its meaning (its ontology by its epistemology) requires disengaging the existence of art from reduction to an infallible epistemology. The virtue of this approach lies in the freedom it extends to artworks and their explanations to evolve independently without catastrophic consequences for the existence of art. The form of the discussion is guided by the following presuppositions:

1. That objects of art can be referred to faithfully in any number of ways.
2. That the sense of references to artworks even when evoked in the beholder as private feelings and ideas can be represented under the functional terms of some explanation (Wittgenstein 1922).
3. That representational autonomy entails beholders' ability to meta-represent the conceptual constraints under which meaning in art is sought.

The paper explores the force of these propositions in Monroe Beardsley's three aesthetic fallacies and the implications of representing each fallacy from alternative points of view.

6.2   Representation and Meta-representation of Meaning in Art

The meaning of artefacts stems not only from their seductive appearances but also from the possibility they could have been made differently. When we ask, 'why is the De Kooning painted like this?' or we say 'I wonder why Mr Pink in the movie *Reservoir Dogs* says this?' it is asked against the realisation that although Mr Pink's reasons are presented in the narrative of the movie they are also the result of causes underlying the making of the work. The satisfying interplay between realizing and overlooking the underlying causes of Mr Pink's motives in the movie is both a condition of its recognition as well as a marker of its success as art. As Arthur Danto (1964) points out with regard to Andy Warhol's soup cans, the conditions effecting the presentation of a soup can, and a soup can as art, depends on our awareness of there being no presentational difference between them. Indeed the overt spontaneity of abstract expressionist painting, for example, goes to lengths in reassuring beholders that a work is the expression of the painter's univocal choice thereby absolving beholders of the need for representing any underlying causes. The representation of causes and purposes translates into the character of an artifact's appearance even though their evidence is concealed. Thus, as beholders, we accept that the interest flowing from the character of artefacts flows from the representation of artistic choices and other agencies that are, nevertheless, united seamlessly within their presentations; the more seamlessly united the more artful.

Here lies the rub for artefacts in so much as representations of meaning, on which their successful apprehension depends, even those arising causally from our private feelings, must be constrained in forms that are respectful of the artwork's

presentations.[2] The beholder realizes with Donald Davidson ([1984]) that, although driven by our suspicions of their artifice, like metaphors, what we come to know about artworks must be intended in ways that participate in maintaining their fictional reality.

In 1937 Rene Welleck accused the literary critic F. R. Leavis of failing to defend the value assumptions that underlay his critical dealings with English poetry. In his defense Leavis argued that the disclosure of critical assumptions, while necessary in the philosophy of criticism, was out of place in the criticism of poetry (Leavis [1937]). Leavis conceded to Welleck that critics brought many value assumptions into their judgements. But he insisted that critics should try to set these presuppositions aside whenever possible. Critics were obliged he went on, to confine their attention to the internal nature of the artwork. The role of the critic, Leavis declared was

> To attain a peculiar completeness of response and to observe a peculiarly strict relevance in developing his response into commentary; he [sic] must be on his guard against abstracting improperly from what is in front of him and against any premature or irrelevant generalisations—from it. His first concern is to enter into possession of the given poem (let us say) in its concrete fullness. … He doesn't ask 'How does this accord with these specifications of goodness in poetry?'; he aims to make fully conscious the articulate the immediate sense of value that places the poem (Leavis [1937], pp. 213–214).

Leavis' call for the suspension of critical assumptions in 1937 seems tendentious in retrospect. In building an opposition between an "immediate sense of value" and "any premature or irrelevant generalisations" in this context Leavis draws a distinction that most contemporary critics would find difficult to accept. Although philosophical reductionism is still a contentious issue in art criticism, Leavis' view that poetic works can possess a "concrete fullness" which is able to be "possessed" has itself subsequently been exposed as an unchallenged presupposition, an artifact of the aesthetic gaze.

Forty years later critical revisionists such as Fredric Jameson ([1978]) have not only come to dismiss the possibility of a presuppositionless criticism but also question the virtue of dividing critical practice off from the practice of philosophy. However, the amalgamation of criticism and philosophy advocated by Jameson retains none of the deference to formal philosophy that Welleck had demanded of Leavis. Rather Jameson laments the outmoded way in which critical theory has become content to simply "apply" various philosophical systems to the arts in what he calls an "occasional way".[3] Literary criticism, Jameson believes, functions more relevantly as praxeology, that is, one practiced as a form of philosophy itself. In other words, criticism as philosophy, or literary theory as it has come to be called, is better able to function in the interpretation of artworks if it is free to uncover and to speculate upon the historicised interaction of forces giving artworks their shape (Eagleton [1983]). While so ever critical practice defers to the philosophy of criticism as a privileged source of objectivity in artworks, he says, artworks continue in being

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[2] Even "entering into the spirit of a work", or "the suspension of disbelief" involves some kind of mental positioning, faming or bracketing.

[3] What Jameson would refer to as the sterile McCarthyism of New Criticism ([1978], p. 509).

seen as fictional, self-referring entities cut off from the real world. Maintaining the relation between philosophy and criticism on objectivist grounds, whether phenomenal or structural, Jameson argues denies critical interpretation its right to participate in explanations that are derived from the interaction of an artwork with its milieu.

> In so far, in other words, as symbolic action … is a way of doing some thing to the world, to that degree what we are calling the "world" must inhere within it, as the content it is to take up into itself in order to give it form…[but]…to overemphasize the way in which the text organizes its subtext (in order, presumably, to reach the triumphant conclusion that the "referent" does not exist)… or on the other hand to stress the instrumental nature of the symbolic act to the point where reality, no longer understood as a subtext but rather as some mere inert given… is surely to produce sheer ideology whether it be in the first alternative the ideology of structuralism or in the second that of vulgar materialism (Jameson 1978, p. 523).

The opportunity for critical explanation, Jameson says opens out at two levels. At one level, artworks can be understood in the form of different ideological readings. In this way artworks can be construed as historicised entities via the critical disclosure of their subtexts. At another level, artworks can be seen as symbolic acts that contribute to the representation of human understanding. In viewing art from this perspective, critics interpret the ways in which artworks, as historical narratives, are able to exert a significant force in the explanation of social and psychological relations in the real world.[4]

Jameson believes Leavis and Welleck were imprisoned within an ideology of textual autonomy. However, whether practiced in innocence from within an engulfing paradigm too grand to step outside of or disclosed as an ideological subtext in retrospect, the nature of Jameson's own commitment to critical value remains a significant referent in his understanding of art. It is therefore paradigmatic within Jameson's reading that he would redeem Leavis from the unwitting ignorance of his critical assumptions. Indeed Jameson does redeem Leavis by reconstructing Leavis' declared presuppositions of "concrete fullness" and "immediacy" into values compatible with Jameson's own historical narratives of the text (Jameson 1981, p. 523).[5] Redemption is inevitable because the strength of Jameson's personal commitment to the subtexts of historical narrative not only deconstruct Leavis' critical assumptions of immediacy into the form of closely read subtexts, they **reconstruct** in retrospect the warrants by which aspects of poetic works were chosen by Leavis to be significant.

Despite their differences both Leavis and Jameson are motivated by a commitment to transparency in their representation of critical meaning. Whereas Leavis believed his critical duty lay in ridding himself of presuppositions, Jameson challenges the

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[4] He models his understanding of the humanistic role of the arts on the work of the critic Kenneth Burke. See also Jameson (1981, p. 224).

[5] Jameson says "…so the very greatest critics of our time—a Lukacs, for example, or, to a lesser degree, a Leavis—are those who have construed their role as the teaching of history, as the telling of the tale of the tribe… the narrative of that implacable yet also emancipatory logic whereby the human community has evolved into its present form and developed the sign systems by which we live and explain our lives to ourselves" (1978, p. 523).

origins of his own critical commitments by measuring them against the historicised 'reality' of the artwork. It is an irony of critical representation, however, that truth and value in the portrayal of meaning is fashioned by the differences inherited in both Leavis' and Jameson's critical commitments.

The dilemma is exemplified in Heidegger's famous search for a transparent representation of being (Derrida 1967, p. 93; Spivak 1988, p. 294; Heidegger 1959). Heidegger adduces that the essence of being and the word 'being' stand in a bivalent relation to each other (Heidegger 1959, p. 88). In using the present indicative of the verb 'to be', when we say that something is something, the 'is' carries within it a profound existential markedness. This markedness, or commitment, is opaque within the use of the word 'is' and not reducible to its grammatical relation. The identity established between the things the "is" brings together, even if satisfying the existential requirement, does not satisfy the meaning requirement. For example, when we refer to a painting as melancholy, the painting and the melancholy in mere conjunction are insufficient to satisfy the demands of the representational relation. There is something about the "is" itself that presupposes the basis on which an identity can be drawn and that invites exploration. It underlies Davidson's metaphoric realism and is alluded to above in Danto's "'is' of artistic identification" (Danto 1964, p. 574).[6]

6.3 Beardsley's Three Aesthetic Fallacies as Representational Constraints

The significance of critical commitment is illustrated in Monroe Beardsley's identification of art with the aesthetic object. The aesthetic object is a mental object disciplined by perceptual processes designed to exclude from consideration all but the phenomenal experience of things.[7] These *epoche* like processes are described as those employed in adopting "the aesthetic point of view". Although experiences of things in general, like sunsets, can be considered from "the aesthetic point of view", New Critics believe that unlike things in general, artworks are purposefully aesthetic. Artworks are thus conceived to exist as ideal objects composed from phenomenally experienced (sensuous) qualities of artefacts necessitating their consideration from an aesthetic point of view.

Aesthetic experiences of artworks are objectified through the critical processes of description and interpretation. The critical process measures the qualitative

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[6] The "is" of Danto's **own** account is expressed in the socio-cultural ontology of the artworld which, as an overriding presupposition reconstructs (or transfigures, to use Danto's own term) the truth and value assumptions of the theories of art, e.g. Impressionism, abstract expressionism, post object art that it explains. Heidegger's existential 'is' is crushed by the presupposition of instantiating conceptual schemes bringing potted forms of self-evidence to the meaning of artworks.

[7] Intentionally, as in Dewey's distinction between experience and "an experience".

experience of art against three aesthetic criteria: unity, intensity and complexity. Justification depends upon the precise way beholders are constrained in grounding these three experiential criteria descriptively in a work. New Critics emphasise that aesthetic fit between experience and work is constrained by the necessity of referring only to aesthetically causal parts of a work to the strict exclusion of neurotic and other aesthetically 'irrelevant' properties.

In emphasising the importance of aesthetic discipline in description New Critics draw similarities between art criticism and experimental science. In art, as in science, objectivity depends upon the transparency and reproducibility of clinical language in the recording of phenomenal values. Disciplining (or bracketing) the translation of phenomenal experience into relevant descriptions hinges upon the avoidance of three aesthetic fallacies, the "genetic", the "affective", and the "intentional". The three fallacies serve as rules constraining critics in the use of proper perceptual conduct when apprehending artworks. In consulting exclusively aesthetic qua phenomenal experiences in works art critics/beholders must exclude from their intention references, for instance, to cultural representation, representations of neurotic feelings, and the motives of artists. In representational terms, the three fallacies function as logically framed constraints arising from New Critics' theoretical approach to the direction of fit between the functions of artists (A), beholders (B), and the world represented (W), in their causal relation to artworks (P). Thus the three fallacies can be listed as representational constraints on three key functions in relation to art (P):

The intentional fallacy—the artist (A)
The genetic fallacy—the world (W)
The affective fallacy—the beholder (B)

The artist (A) maker or communicator; the beholder (B) beholder or experiencer; and the world (W) things outside in the world, i.e., the world represented, including the art world of artistic technology /history /culture. The work itself (P) is the object of reference and its framework of relations with functions (A), (B) and (W) is schematized as:

The relations between the functions above are constrained by the agency allotted under the sense in which they are conceived. Thus their meaning in reference to an artwork is governed by the causal constraints under which they are represented. The three functions are rendered fallacious as an implication of the New Critics' ontology of the aesthetic object and expressed as the direction of fit between the functions (A), (B), (W).

6.3.1   The Genetic Fallacy

The genetic fallacy declares that all qualities of aesthetic significance are categorically distinct from matters relating to the origins of aesthetic production. Knowledge of what contributes to the origination of artworks (aesthetically conceived) however

factual is irrelevant in the critical apprehension of artworks. In its logical and ethical force the genetic fallacy resembles the legal position in a trial where counsel for the prosecution is denied the use of an accused person's criminal record when developing a case against them. Under the genetic fallacy only the phenomenal properties of the artwork (its sensory evidence) are allowed into consideration. Everything that is related to the history of the artist or the artwork is ruled out. This includes the authenticated accounts of art historians, the identity of things in the world represented, as well as the technical and cultural context of the work. Even representational and fictional references, other than immediately apparent in the work, are excluded as aesthetically irrelevant. How a work was made and the knowledge that it was made in a particular medium is also irrelevant. To know, for example the difference between trumpets and saxophones or oil and water paints is irrelevant to the aesthetic character of works and must be disallowed. Thus in a musical work if the sound of a trombone and a saxophone are phenomenally indistinguishable the *fact* of it originating from different instruments must be excluded from critical consideration. A New Critical description of a painting by Vincent excludes seductive **gossip** about his ear as vigorously as it excludes documented **facts** about his depression at St. Remi. These constraints can be mapped as representing relations between the entities, A, P, W, B schematized in Fig. 6.1. Genetic constraints defend a (P to B) relation in which the function (W) is confined to the critically objectified experience of "regional qualities" represented in the (P to B) relation.

Opposition to the genetic fallacy is exemplified in culture theory. Culture theorists emphasise the agency (W) at the expense of (A) and (B), representing artworks as social artefacts and accounting for aesthetic variability among works through cultural relativism. Cultural relativists hold, for instance, that the phenomenal presence of Vincent's staccato brush strokes and combinations of hue and intensity are not inherently meaningful but vary in meaning when set against different historical insights into the context of the artwork. The creation of artworks, under (W) include the functional contribution of agencies such as artistic genre, political power, as well as the industrial, material and economics of the oeuvre and the biographical context of the artist. This can be represented as a (W to P) relation where the world represented (W) is functionally augmented as in (W to [W_1 to W_2 to W_3] to P) relation. Postmodernists defend a (P_1 to P_2) relation, excluding functions (A), (B) and

Fig. 6.1 Concept map of art—The work (*P*) as the object of reference and its minimal relations with functions of artist (*A*), beholder (*B*), and world (*W*)
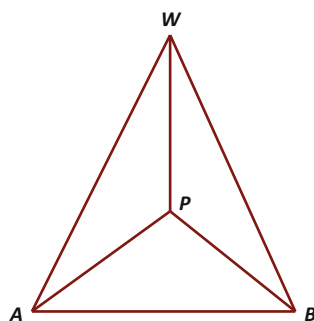
(W), in which artworks P_1, P_2 etc., function as self-propagating agencies (P to [P_1 to P_2] P) under constraints of chance and irony.

Solipsists on the other hand defend a (B to P) relation in which B is the referent as in (B to [B] to P).

6.3.2 The Affective Fallacy

New Critics argue that failure to maintain sufficient distance between the aesthetic registration of emotion and emotional responses in the beholder confuses neurotic and physical aversions with properties of the work (onions make you cry but are they art?). If Goya's etchings of the Spanish Civil War make me feel ill, my feeling ill is not an aesthetic property of the work. Correspondingly sentimental works are rendered artistically suspect. Sentimentality breeches the contract of disinterested-ness that divides off the sensuous from the erotic in aesthetic representation. Maintaining disinterest in the beholder is one of the most enduring legacies of eigh-teenth century aesthetics, epitomizing the ethical foundation of the relation between value in artworks and constraint in aesthetics.

At the conclusion of *Heart of Darkness* Conrad visits the widowed wife of Mr Kurtz in Hamburg. The woman's adulation of a husband whose degenerate charac-ter she is unaware renders the meeting tragically ironic. For New Critics the aes-thetic character of the irony is lodged in the complexity and intensity of the narrative experience. Beholders, New Critics say, can only apprehend the futility of human life represented in this scene as an aesthetic object if their reading is constrained to the qualities of the text. For readers to be carried away by emotion distracts from qualities of the scene crucial to the satisfaction of its aesthetic meaning. It is at this point, according to New Critics that a sense of self is most antagonistic to the aes-thetic integrity of the work.

The affective fallacy confuses subjectively causal with aesthetic properties in artworks. While not denying the capacity of artworks (or any objects) to engender human feeling, this capacity should not be confused with the recognition **of** feeling in artworks. The confusion is illustrated in the distinction between the question, "What feeling is expressed in the artwork"?, as opposed to "How does the artwork make you feel"? Determining the critical relevance of the two questions entails meta-representing the logical constraints underlying the fallacy. This is cognitively beyond school age children. When feeling is applied as a criterion of aesthetic value by children, a happy work is good either because it is "good for the artist" (P to A) or that it is "good for the beholder" (P to B) to be happy. But for children it is not a good work simply because it is "aesthetically good".

Common sense belies the affective fallacy. The affective fallacy is a far from self-evident representational constraint. Its manifestation functions as a reminder of the rational impropriety of our aesthetic conduct whenever we laugh or cry sponta-neously at a movie. It is applied as a meta-representational constraint exercised at a

cognitive level likely to disqualify school age children from entertaining experiences of art as aesthetic.

E*xpressionists* and *imitationists*, however reject the aesthetic fallacy. For expressionists the incapacity of works to evoke emotion in the beholder throws doubt upon their authenticity as art. An expressionist's belief in art is registered as a resonance between beholders and the causal power of the artwork. The work makes you cry, sing, bristle with fear or nervous with anticipation. It is important that these affects are experienced as actual feelings. This is because the nature of art is coextensive with its unique function, that is, to play out with conviction the distinctly sentient nature of humanity. Art cannot represent as art unless it moves the observer emotionally within a (P to B) direction of causality. Nevertheless, expressionists are not solipsists, such that, despite the feelings of emotion (P [P to B] B) is meta-represented in the relation.

6.3.3 The Intentional Fallacy

The intentional fallacy is the most infamous of the three. It rejects the chain of reasoning causally relating the artist's deliberate intentions to the aesthetic meaning of the object, and can be expressed in the relation (A to [P] to B). In an intentional relation the meaning of an artwork (P) is represented as a communicative function between artists and beholders. New Critics object that the belief that an artist's mere intent is sufficient to produce a work of aesthetic value, or to invest a work with a particular mood or character, substitutes the aesthetic objectivity of the artwork (P) for loquacity of the artist. The critical process, they say, is not coextensive with second-guessing an artwork's success in realizing its artist's dreams. New Critics do not deny artistic intent but explain it as a process of creative adaptation of the work to its emerging aesthetic qualities. The artist is a conjoint critical beholder constrained throughout the creative process, as it unfolds, by their experiential relation with the work (Dewey 1938).[8] Richard Wollheim agrees but from a realist perspective. In all creative action, Wollheim says, artist's intentional choices are delayed until suitable *objets trouve* turn up during the process of making. These fortuitous moments are expressed as a (W to [P to A] to P) net of relations. According to New Critics, knowledge of an artist's moods and beliefs cannot be inferred as properties of an artwork nor reduced to an artist's dispositions. It is reasonable to believe that Piranesi, for example, was of a happy disposition despite the satanic character of his prints. (A) is not be confused with (P) such that (P to B) is replaced by (A to B). Naive realists, for example represent questions about the artist's feelings as questions about the world (W) as portrayed in the work. (A to B) is converted to a (A to [W to P] to B) relation. The artist is conceived as merely one more representational agent causing the work to be how it is and their feelings are automatically transported as properties into the work.

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[8] Dewey says the beholder "recreates" the work as an experience.

Idealists, on the other hand are not constrained by the intentional fallacy. Arch idealists such as Collingwood understand artistic intention as the application of preconceived mental plans, consulted by the artist retrospectively throughout the creative process, as expressed in the relation (A to [A to P] to P). Collingwood shares the middle term [A to P] in this relation with semiotic idealism. Semiologists represent the artist (A) as the sender of a coded message (P) to the receiver (B). Artwork (P) employs a code shared between artist and beholder sending information to beholders in the relation (A to [P] to B). The relation underpins questions such as, "What is the artist trying to say in this picture?" or, "What do you read in this photograph?" Implied in these questions is the notion of an artist (A) signaling their intention to the beholder (B) through an artwork (P) within a readable sign system they both share. The use of a shared code removes the logical incoherence of creative intention when it is represented in artworks as a phenomenal property.

The nature of the signs used by artists, however, poses a problem for aesthetics qua aesthetics. Aesthetic codes are rendered so densely in artworks, their denotations so self-referring as to be rendered unique (Goodman 1968). In the absence of a shared public code, the artist (A) and the work (P) become indistinguishable insofar as (A)'s message collapses into the phenomena of (P). Despite the reduction of (A) to (P) semiologists avoid the intentional fallacy by meta-representing aesthetic uniqueness as a hyper-idiosyncratic message.

Constrained by the fallacies beholders must be careful to de-centre by bracketing themselves out of the artwork's seductive affects. Even though phenomenal parts belong to the work, beholders must be reminded that the art entity (P) is both phenomenal and an object. The relation (P to [P_1 to B_1] B) is held together for the New Critics as a transaction between the picture and the beholder where beholders are constrained in being sufficiently distanced from the affects of the work through their meta-representation of [P_1 to B_1] in the relation.

6.4 Summary

The fallacies assume the analyticity of phenomenal experience and aesthetic immediacy. Beardsley's aesthetic object is a function of beholder's fidelity to the process of reducing the objective qualities of a work to the presupposition of its affects, that is, of existence to truth. Infidelity to this process has a catastrophic impact on the existence of the aesthetic object and thus on the existence of art. For example, children of school age who are constrained developmentally to believe that the world (W) of things depicted is responsible for the pictorial form of pictures, defending a naïve realist (W to P) relation with no intercession of qualifying terms [W_1], [A] etc., cannot entertain the idea behind the question "what feeling is depicted in the artwork?". However, denying young children's naïve beliefs because they are untrue does not cause the artworks they experience in ceasing to exist. We can respect children's false beliefs because they are genuine mis-representations (even if young

children themselves are unable to do so) and tailor our teaching to accommodate these constraints without fear of misleading them about art.

Artworks engross beholders by concealing their artifice within presentational realities. Transparency of artistic meaning of works within their presentational realities, however, does not render representational constraints unnecessary. We entertain artworks as much as they entertain us insofar as even tacit absorption in their presentations depends upon complying with representational constraints. Representational constraints change constantly and, in addition to those imposed by philosophical protocols such as Beardsley's experiential reductionism or Goodman's semiotics, are often imposed on beholders informally as the result of conceptual opacity in artworks, developmental limitations in children, cultural habits, political policy, idiots savant, or simple ignorance. Those who think they can dispense with explanations of art must consider that, however tacit, some kind of representational intention or point of view qualifies meaning in artworks, and that the scope of meaning can only open up when works are reflectively repositioned within alternative value perspectives.

The aesthetic fallacies are not universally true. They are logical constraints imposed on the critical representation of artefacts when considered from an aesthetic point of view. Rebuttals of the fallacies only make sense therefore within the causal constraints of values underlying alternative points of view. However, when points of view constrain meaning so strictly as to impose exclusive ontological conditions on art they descend into a politics where representation of works intended or 'viewed' from 'unauthorized' perspectives can threaten an artwork's very existence. Jameson's rejection of art criticism's **dependence** on philosophy, in favour of its employment as a **form** of philosophy, seems like a case in point.

Only when beholders acquire the autonomy to navigate intentionally among the constraints arising from different points of view are they able to widen the scope of artistic understanding.

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Part II
The Critical Application of Philosophical Realism to Concerns in Art, Design and Education

Chapter 7
Art Education Curriculum Praxis: A Time for Collaboration

Collaboration falls within the category of ethics. When people collaborate they are motivated for various reasons to unite in some action. The purposes people cite as the reason for taking cooperative action also stand as the ethical basis for their collaboration. Collaboration is different from other forms of professional and political relationship because of the way in which its purposes are directed towards a goal. Collaborative action is unified by the commitment each of the cooperating parties have to a common goal. Once the goal is removed either through its achievement, redefinition, or its loss in some way, then collaboration usually ceases.

The grounds for commitment to cooperative action ranges from coercion at one end to indifference at the other. However, at these extremes there is insufficient exercise of free will to sustain the practical meaning of collaboration. For example, in war time collaborators were usually not identified amongst those forced to comply with the enemy; or amongst citizens of neutral countries. The idea of being forced to engage in an activity to which you are indifferent makes little sense in terms of collaboration. In addition to issues of authority and autonomy the nature of collaboration is bound up with the reasons why a person or group might elect to commit to a collaborative effort.

Collaboration entails some degree of trust in those with whom you cooperate. People qualify as trustworthy to the extent that they are able to reassure you of their commitment to a shared goal. Commitment is determined partly by the collaborator's qualifications for bringing about the goal effectively, and partly by the significance of the goal within the collaborators agenda (they must believe in the goals). Trust within collaboration does not depend necessarily upon idealised notions of cooperative spirit such as friendship, or upon common beliefs. Two groups antagonistic to each other on personal grounds may still be able to collaborate effectively

Table 7.1 A model for collaboration

No.	Type	Context	Identity	Praxis
1.	*Dialectical* **Defining the problem**	Critical imbalance	Political in nature	To change: "what is wrong"
2.	*Autonomous* **Defining the facts**	Missing facts	Investigatory in nature	To find: explanations "what is"
3.	*Consultative* **Proposes ends**	Need for particular advice	Creative in nature	To design: ends "what ought to be"

if appropriately "committed" to the same enterprise. Trust also suggests that collaborators can expect to extract from each other a degree of equality at least relative to the significance of their particular contributions.

The following diagram schematises collaborative trust as three types of collaborative ends or goals in view. Trust can be expressed as the bond of commitment unifying and motivating action in three types of collaborative goal:

1. an action which is unified in empowerment, i.e., collaboration in critical redefinition of the goal
2. an action which is unified in curiosity, i.e., collaboration in the factual redefinition of a goal
3. an action which is unified in doing what is right, i.e., a collaborative proposal for achieving the goal (Table 7.1).

7.1 Dialectical Collaboration

In the first type of collaborative action dialectic occurs amongst people whom, for various reasons, are dissatisfied with some state of affairs. Dialectic is a kind of debate between two points of view in which one point of view is represented by those seeking to maintain their position and the other by those wishing to challenge it. In other words, people institute criticism of some state of affairs by drawing attention to problems within it related to injustice, sectional disadvantage, ignorance of new facts, complacency, negligence, concentration of power, intransigence and so on, which they believe need redressing. The group nature of dialectic, its challenge to existing authority and commitment to change, make the dialectical processes inherently political. The dialectic fosters an ideological relationship among groups.

Bowles and Gintis (1987) explain the need for dialectical collaboration as the disjunction between "learning and choosing", characteristic of western liberal institutions like education. They argue that learning, for example, has come under institutional patriarchy since the seventeenth and eighteenth century and since then has been broadly represented in the liberal democratic community as a socially passive role. Learning is equated with those in the community who are in the process of "socially becoming" including children, students, women, the "insane", prisoners,

servants, the "uncivilised", and all others whose actions, following John Stuart Mill, are deemed to be 'irrational'. Learning is represented by social instrumentalists as a stage in a person's formation, or by a class of people who, by their work or status are engaged in a process of formation and are thereby technically conceived of as learners. Learners are made up, in other words, of those who need to be told what they ought and oughtn't do. For this reason, learners are rendered ineligible to participate amongst the "choosers" or those entitled to engage in the self-determination of ends. It is the inability to reconcile the learners and the choosers within the extension of liberalism that Bowles and Gintis believe constitutes the paradox of liberalism in western democracies and a source of dialectic.

To enlighten the paradox Bowles and Gintis criticise Mill's instrumentalism using Marx's conception "of the formative power of action". Marx in *Capital*, stresses that Labor is "a process between man and nature, a process by which man… acts upon external nature and changes it, and in this way simultaneously changes his own nature" (p. 126). Under these terms Bowles and Gintis go on to position the problem as a form of dialectical collaboration

> … by recognising that personal development is in general best served through an interaction of two strategies. They are exercising one's freedom to choose independently of collective sentiment, and entering into mutual, reciprocal, and participatory action with others to achieve commonly defined goals (1987, p. 127).

The liberal paradox where eligibility, that is the authority to speak, is set into conflict with the universal principle of the freedom of individual action has been traditionally resolved in western democracies by its representation as a rationalist/competitive criterion presupposing a distribution of the population into learners and choosers. In order to break the barrier imposed by the notion of ineligibility, a notion inherent in the concepts of chooser and learner, Bowles and Gintis propose the replacement of "representation" in a popular democracy with "participation", and the concept of "exit" in a consumer based economic relationship with the concept of "voice" (see pp. 127–130).[1]

For example, steadily growing critics of the art education syllabus in NSW (see *Occasional seminars in art education, Perspectives on the four Focus Areas of the senior syllabus*) is unified in the belief that not enough attention is devoted to those elements of the curriculum responsible for the fostering of artistic understanding. Not everyone agrees with this concern. However, the degree of conserving resistance to these concerns has generated dialectic. Entry into dialectic over an issue

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[1] "Exit" applies to the rationalist's market place belief that the producer and the consumer exercise influence in relation to each other through the power (or threat), versus the option, of the consumer to 'go elsewhere'. "Voice" applies to a non-market place strategy in which withdrawal of patronage is replaced by a critical say in what ought to be produced. This is particularly apposite when what is being produced is people themselves a situation which Marx maintains is inherent in all productive settings. Schools and their curricula are agencies of social reproduction in which both students *and* teachers are often classed as "learners" especially in settings such as those entertained by the National Curriculum where those empowered with the imprimatur of "rational choice" are made increasingly remote from the setting in which the educational actions such as teaching are being performed.

usually results in at least some changes being made to the existing position, and the syllabus dialectic in NSW is no exception.

Dialectic ventilates discontents. Sometimes these may be coherent enough to function as alternative solutions. Usually, however, discontents are more likely to serve in focusing the problem. The process of critically re-describing a vague discontent into a problem is not dependent upon the possession of solutions. There is no necessary connection between the processes of identifying a problem and the possession of solutions. Dialectic crystallises the goal.

The liberal paradox is made vivid whenever informed discontent within the passive voice of the irrational learner (teacher/student within the system) is forced into conflict with the "rational" or eligible representative chooser. Thus the socially formative process of a liberal democracy denies, by paradox, the opportunity for representative choosers to be briefed by the one section of their electorate who on most practical issues are often the most critically informed.

"Participation" and "voice" are typical of the critical portrayal of collaborative action. Their absence is especially poignant within settings of social formation such as art departments in NSW schools where representational forms of choice (e.g., over the Key Learning Areas) exercising sovereign authority deprive teachers of a dialectical role and thus the exercise of rationality in critique of a domain falling into their immediate concern. Criticism of art syllabi, or national curricula for that matter, is automatically perceived to be out of order whenever it is portrayed as being made by teachers as "learners". Criticism under these terms presupposes a revolt against authority. Extending the example to students Bowles and Gintis ask (1987)

> How do we deal, for example, with the case of the craft that considers not only what consumers want, but what will contribute to the development of consumers' capacities to appreciate? What about students who fully accept the notion of learning and perhaps even revere the superior wisdom of their teachers, but wish to participate in the making of educational policy? (p. 126)

Dialectical collaboration begins with the presupposition of participatory and vocal if not other forms of equality. It represents the basis within a sovereign setting (typified by state authorised syllabi) on which critical dialogue can be entered into. It legitimises change initiated from "learners" and enables them to graduate as "choosers".

7.2   Autonomous Collaboration

In the second type of collaboration people are motivated to cooperate in the discovery or justification of some entity or truth, which is common to their concerns and to which they share a commitment. In contrast to the first type of collaboration the second is motivated by the need to satisfy factual goals. Although autonomous collaboration may be nested within the dialectical it remains autonomous because the

collaborating parties are confined within their particular areas of competence. Autonomous collaborators may be committed to a goal but only to the extent that the goal lies within the methodological constraints of their expertise. Goals and problems tend to be formally represented by the discipline in which the expert is engaged. Thus autonomous collaboration is usually long term, addresses universal rather than particular issues related to a problem, deploys agreed upon rules of investigation, which normally recruit powerful explanatory models.

Autonomous collaboration is not of a form normally associated with action research. While the goal of autonomous research may be coextensive with a number of practical problems, autonomous collaboration does not commit the error of imagining that practical problems, particularly those in the human sciences, are in some way made more tractable through scientific rigour. Rather, autonomous collaboration arises from the recognition that a particular goal depends upon certain theoretical explanations for its understanding and for which currently a precise account is either lacking or due for renovation. It was suggested by Stenhouse (1975), for example, that teaching itself was a kind of research. Stenhouse argued that expert knowledge in education is at best provisional and invariably open to review. The authority of the expert was constantly in need of challenge. He believed that curriculum research provided teachers with the assurance to make autonomous judgements within their particular educational settings and thus meet that challenge. But as Carr and Kemmis (1986) have shown Stenhouse's error was collapsing ethical goals into science. In other words there are forms of collaborative research in art education other than action research. Autonomy in this second form refers to contributions in which collaborators within a discipline seek to retain their collaborative identity rather than bend the collaborative agenda to justify the taking of a particular educational action (Oakes et al. 1986).[2]

The hyper eclecticism of art education as a field threatens its autonomy. Whenever faculties are called upon to cite the most significant references in the art educational field it is not surprising to find many of these citations originating in external disciplines. In art education we trawl through a diversity of literature in which the challenge is not so much to the veracity of the sources, as to the opportunities they afford and to the suitability of their application. The autonomy we seek in art education is often sought not so much in the emancipatory sense as in the identity sense.[3] In autonomous collaboration the human affairs of the practical arts, typified by art

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[2] The authors make the point that collaborative efforts serve to inform theory as well as practice. "The complexity of real school settings and the multiplicity of perspectives of practitioners and students can be neither ignored nor analysed simplistically when they are part of the theory making process" (Oakes et al. 1986, p. 546).

[3] One of the motives of the discipline based art education movement was to rescue the identity of art education from the instrumentalism of creativist and therapeutic forms of rationalisation. If the cold hand of economic rationalism is held out to art education at the level of autonomous collaboration we can accept the invitation as equal partners only if we have the formal identity to construe art educational goals in economic terms true of our field. The capitulation of art education to economic agenda is due not only to a political but also to a conceptual immaturity, that is, an inability to compete on autonomously collaborative terms. See, for example, Boughton and Aland (1989).

curriculum are not so much strengthened by knowledge that has been shaped within action research for any particular case. Rather it is the capacity of art education in acknowledging the relevance and significance of a justified explanation. For example identifying the formal basis on which concepts in developmental psychology and the goals it addresses are of relevance and significance to the art educational field as a domain of practice. The notion of autonomous collaboration keeps the issue of science and ethical affairs distinct in a way that scientific problem solving in the particularity of human affairs does not.

Perhaps the notion of autonomous collaboration is closely paralleled by the interactive team perspective found in the work of Griffin, Lieberman, and Jaculloo-Noto under the auspices of the *Interactive Research and Development Study of Schooling* (McKernan 1988). In this model teams are made up of university faculty, district teachers, administrators, educational laboratory research and development personnel, and representatives of funding bodies. However, despite the unique body of skills contributed by such a purpose built "team", the retention of collaborative autonomy within such a secure unit threatens the loss of discipline authority.

The purported neglect of 'artistic understanding' in the NSW art syllabus, cited above as an example, can be interpreted as a goal of dialectical as well as autonomous collaboration. However, unlike the dialectical, autonomous collaboration is ongoing. Autonomous collaboration into the investigation of artistic understanding is formalised into the discourses of cognitive psychology and philosophy of art education and is usually addressed at the level of professional research (Parsons 1987). It is a kind of research that is rare in art education. It is often argued that unless this kind of research can be dialectically unpacked in terms of its practical relevance, that is as a collaborative event directed towards some particular goal, then it is liable to be misunderstood or dismissed by teachers. But the plain fact is that the opportunity for art educators to collaborate autonomously with developmental psychologists on matters related to artistic understanding is limited (Brown and Freeman 1992).[4] Autonomy can spring just as effectively from a confidently discursive voice among disciplines as it can from the emancipation of practical action from such discourses at the level of art teaching.

Both the first and second types of collaborative action are implicated in common goals even though the dialectical finds its basis in the schools, and the autonomous in universities. The example drawn from the NSW art syllabus unites the two in relation to the question of artistic understanding. Teacher and researcher can serve each other collaboratively if they are unified by their common goals.

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[4] In this collaboration Brown worked on the basis for an ontologically neutral and universal notion of art as real entities and Freeman modelled the neutral entities into a concept map of artistic understanding. An honours student, D. Sangar, piloted the study. This collaboration brings together the philosophy of art education with the psychology of representation. The *autonomy* of the collaboration stems from the discourses in which the study is invested.

7.3   Consultative Collaboration

The third type of collaboration is the consultative. It is the type most widely recognised as collaboration. Where as in the former two kinds of collaboration solutions were either part of the dialectic, or sought universal explanations, in the third type the problem seeks a particular solution. For example, when a syllabus of some kind needs help in solving problems emergent within its design, it is often necessary to seek technical, practical or theoretical expertise.[5] Nested within the notion of 'curriculum designer' may be another collaborative group who shares responsibility. However, because of the theoretical, technical, and practical bases on which participants stand to make choices about ends in view, their relationship is consultative. Consultative collaborators need to trust each other's judgment insofar as being normative artefacts curricula cannot be predicted by rules. All art syllabi are subject to unique constraints represented by things such as the examinability of art, local knowledge, community profile, historical precedent, entrenched beliefs, time and space constraints (timetabling), sovereign limitations (the key learning areas) and the climate of economic opinion (creating its own dialectical agenda). The first and second types of collaboration are unlikely to provide any necessary implications for the resolution of design problems of this kind. Solutions expressed in the first type as broad dissatisfactions, or in the second as formalised generalisations in the third type require unique kinds of collaborative resolution.

Thus consultative collaboration tends to be goal free and emergent despite its, often oppressive, constraints (Scriven 1972). In type three collaborations not all collaborators may share a designer's depth of commitment to the problem. Designers' commitment to the problem stems from their final responsibility for its solution. However, collaborators do make a heavy investment in solutions. For example, questions of intellectual capital often create moral dilemmas for consultants. Consultation requires emersion in the peculiarities of the solution and fosters a kind of clinical relationship with the designers. The enthusiastic consultant is always in danger of recommending narrow technical ends (Habermas 1971).[6] Designers are equally in danger of being intimidated, or even corrupted by the authority of the consultant's expertise and of defensively retreating behind their own rhetoric. Providing that consultants meet the commitment condition of trust sketched out above it is incumbent upon designers to at least acknowledge a consultant's advice.

In the nature of its urgency consultancy resembles lobbying. There are always agenda. Some line needing to be taken will inevitably exclude another. Since consultative choices are mediated by judgments, rather than by the retrospective dissatisfactions of the dialectical, or by the discursive 'principle' of autonomous types of collaboration, consultative collaboration is inherently political. The smoke screen

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[5] Technical expertise is not confined to art educational research. It can originate in schools, students, other subject and discipline areas.

[6] Habermas' notion of emancipation warns of the dangers to human problems of their easy domination and enslavement by technical solutions. See Habermas (1971).

of research suggested in the quasi-scientific construct of 'action research' obscures the fact that existential dilemmas laid down between the good and the popular as a result of contextual research in art education cannot provide the basis for their own resolution.[7] For example, just what does the fact that there is four hundred art teachers unemployed in NSW imply?[8]

When it is directed toward the fashioning of artefacts such as curricula, consultative collaboration assumes an inescapably creative if political character. The point is not lost on social theorists like Stephen Kemmis (1982) or Anthony Giddens (1982). Both harbour a belief in what Giddens generally refers to as the effects of "structuration". Structuration ensues as a result of gainsaying effects upon the subsequent actions of people that are brought about by an understanding of the conditions under which their actions are constrained. It holds that people, if asked, possess a fairly clear idea of the orthodoxies which support their reasons for acting the way they do. This tendency suggests at least the potential for a high degree of over-determination in human action.

Collaboration in art education is not confined to the relation between theory and practice. The papers delivered at this symposium cannot be neatly classified into one or another of the three categories represented in the schema above. Rather, the schema interprets the papers. Thus a curriculum designer/user can take collaborative action on behalf of the same project in the three aforementioned ways. A paper, for example, might profess a dialectical belief that Australian art education is too easily seduced by the rhetoric of discipline based art education in the USA; or the same paper might be cited as a model for the critical application of discipline based art education in Australia; on the other hand the author might be invited by some department of education to help design DBAE outcomes for a year 12 syllabus.

Curriculum is so deeply praxiological in its ends that a systematic (in contrast to a hierarchical) notion of collaboration, such as the one advanced here, appears almost coextensive with the broad processes involved in curriculum innovation. Thus there is a sense in which a program for collaboration could be deliberately applied as a model of curriculum innovation. I will take the opportunity to recount an innovation in the NSW art syllabus instancing a real world application of these three types of collaboration.

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[7] Foucault argues the Heideggerian line on human action in which any attempt at making the grounds for action too explicit is in danger of breaching its contract with the "unthought", ie., the explication providing new grounds of and in itself for the adoption of an alternative course of action. An infinite regress ensues. See Rainbow and Dreyfus (1982).

[8] Michael Parson's (1987) investigation into children's' and adults' artistic understanding tells us what they say about art but provides teachers with few guides as to what, developmentally, and liberally they ought to say. I am of the opinion that none of what he reports people say about art is what I would want them to say art educationally. Even if Parsons was right, which he isn't, I wouldn't be led by what his respondents had to report.

7.3.1   The "Frames" as an Example of Collaborative Innovation in the Visual Art Syllabus of New South Wales

This example refers to the innovation of the **Frames** in the New South Wales Syllabus in Visual Arts (Board of Studies 1995, 1999). The Frames replace the existing self-evident epistemology of art based on a unified psychology of the aesthetic, with a reflexive epistemology that is respectful of alternative values in the philosophy of art and heedful of current research into children's cognitive development.

Type 1   The "frames" began as dialectic emerging out of teacher dissatisfaction with existing the content of the current NSW art syllabus (1989). It was argued that in the four psychologistic "focus areas" underlying the epistemology of the existing senior syllabus, the precept of solipsism (self reference) was triumphing over the precept of understanding (School of Art Education 1989). Combined with the subsequent exclusion of art history as a separate domain, the art syllabus, some said, was being stripped of interpretive and explanatory content. Students, it was remarked were now electing to do art because it represented an *alternative* to knowing rather than a way of knowing. The frames emerged as the result of dialectical contention that underdetermining structural and solipsistic epistemologies, concealed within the syllabus and assumed on students behalf, were denying (what amounted to) the opportunity for art "learners" to graduate as autonomous "choosers" in their understanding of art.

Type 2   The "frames" have emerged at a moment in the general history of contemporary ideas. The frames represent an interpretive context that is inseparable from an understanding of developments in contemporary culture. The visual arts have evolved within the context of philosophical precepts of this sort only one of which, "the subject" (see Schema 2 below), embraces the solipsism underpinning the existing NSW senior syllabus. The frames stand as an antidote to meaningless pluralism in providing alternative contexts of value in art, "values" which can be brought to bear by students in the interpretation and explanation of art works from any historical period, including their own work. The frames are an explanatory set of beliefs that have been identified with visual art content by reference to parallel work in literary criticism (Lentricchia 1980).

Type 3   The "Frames" have been integrated into the existing NSW art syllabus through consultation between the executive members of the art syllabus committee and the School of Art Education at College of Fine Arts UNSW. Consultation has been fitful, as is to be expected in such a goal ambiguous, agenda ridden, critically motivated project. The Frames are themselves a model of collaboration, integrated as they are within validated structures borrowed from the fields of literary criticism, semiotics and culture theory. They provide a relatively precise solution to a problem

emerging out of teacher discontent with theoretical content in art curriculum, a discontent, nevertheless, with no implications for the precise curriculum solution they represent. Although delivering a top down innovation, mainly through university consultancy, the Frames provide a satisfying fit with teachers' initial concerns.

7.3.2   The Function of the Frames in the Visual Arts Syllabus

1. Rationale

The following section sketches the function of the Frames in the NSW Visual Arts Syllabus (Board of Studies 1995; 1999), expanding on their assemblage of reflexive frameworks of value drawn from the philosophy of art and cognitive theory. The frames are an acknowledgment that a body of conceptual understanding supports the practice of making and appreciating the visual arts. Understanding in the visual arts is conditioned by broad assumptions affecting the way objects are identified, valued, interpreted, created, and made use of, as art. The body of understanding represented by the frames is sampled from twentieth century western discourse about art.

The notion of a discourse about art is consistent with the idea that a field of study and practice such as the visual arts is held together by a more or less coherent set of beliefs. Through the process of constant dialogue among people involved in the field and with interests overlapping the field, these beliefs are debated, codified, exchanged, challenged, and renovated.

People involved in the field of the visual arts are often referred to as the artworld (Danto 1964). The artworld is represented by people with varying degrees of authority and influence as broadly defined across the domain. Artists, art teachers, art critics, art historians, even school students studying art, all provide examples of people with degrees of authority and influence in the visual arts and thus qualify as members of the artworld.

The four frames have emerged within twentieth century western discourse about art and represent various attempts at laying out the basis for artistic belief. Although representative of western artworld dialogue, many of the most influential assumptions underlying the frames do not originate in the artworld but have been taken from their broader setting within the history of ideas. The reason for choosing "Culture, Structure, Subject, and Postmodern" as the four frames for the visual arts syllabus, is explained in terms of their historical significance to the artworld during the twentieth century. Hardly exhaustive of the broad beliefs underlying the field of the visual arts, their selection can be defended as being contemporary, influential and meaningful.

2. The Role of the Frames

The role of the "frames" in the visual arts syllabus is threefold:

2.1. They provide a basis of understanding articulating the content of the visual arts.
2.2. As a basis for understanding and critical value they lay the grounds on which a notion of sequencing from K-12 can be represented in the visual arts curriculum.
2.3. They constitute a body of knowledge in themselves.

2.1. The Frames as a Basis for Understanding the Visual Arts

The Frames Represent Different Sets of Basic Assumptions About Art They provide the grounds upon which questions related to artistic value and meaning can be referred. Answers to questions of value and meaning in the visual arts are addressed differently within the assumptions of each frame. Some artworks made sense of within one framework of beliefs may not be so easily valued or understood within another. While the protagonists of each frame argue its particular supremacy, there are many advantages gained from adopting each different perspective, the Syllabus is at pains to insist that the Frames function as epistemologies and not ontologies and thus avoid interchangeable pluralism and avoid dictation of one by the other.

The Frames Provide a Basis for Practical Choice In locating the source of value and meaning in different settings of belief, the frames provide alternative ways of locating and interrogating the world of content, the world that constitutes for students the object of artistic representation. In other words, the frames provide a heuristic base, that is, alternative grounds for thinking up creative ideas in art. The frames make explicit what traditionally has been assumed on children's behalf as a presupposition of the art curriculum.

The Frames Provide the Basis for the Mediation of Beliefs About Art They lay common grounds between students and teachers for the discursive transaction of meanings, values, feelings, attitudes, and truths in the visual arts. As discursive frameworks they enable art teachers and students to be reflective. That is, they provide a context for the representation of artistic beliefs from another person's point of view. The notion of "frame" is consistent with the meta-representational construct that enables a child to lend human intentionality to art and thus invest artworks with the imaginative properties they could not otherwise possess Freeman and Sanger (1992).

The Frames Foreshadow the Possibility of Aesthetic Explanation, One Going Beyond the Level of Descriptive Report Each frame sets the entities of art into a context of relations. In this context of relations each frame extends to students and teachers different but general ways of reasoning helping explain why things about art, for example certain paint qualities in a particular work, carry the significance that they do.

2.1.1. A Character Sketch of the Four Frames

Culture In this frame art is valued aesthetically as a way of defining and building social identity. The meaning of art is understood in relation to the social perspective of the community out of which it grows. These communities can respect ideological as well as deeply embedded notions of cultural identity. They include class, race, gender and the wider culture of the everyday. Concepts of "superstructure", "base", and "overdetermination" are commensurate with a subtle appreciation of culture.

Structure In this frame art is valued aesthetically as a medium of knowledge. Art is conceived as a system of communication through which particular aesthetic or "dense" forms of information are transmitted. Art is valued as an instrument for knowing about the world. The meaning of art is understood in relation to the system by which the symbols of art refer to the world. Art is a visual, non-notational language opaque to those unable to read it. Thus meaning in art is accessible to those who are visually literate.

Subject Art is valued aesthetically as an immediate kind of experience. Art is valued at a sensed, perceptual or felt level of belief. The meaning of art is understood in relation to the kind of experience that it affords the introspective subject or self. The meaning of art thus inheres in the apprehended character of entities, their aesthetic qualities, immediately recognised. Art romantically interrogates the imagination as the source of its motives and understandings. Art preserves its universality through the immediacy of its apprehension and through the way it is able to expressively objectify human experience.

Postmodern Art is valued as "art". This frame rejects the notion of subject entirely and denies the concept of an "idea", or an "imagination". Art is valued for the extent of the role that it plays in recontextualising other art. Understanding in art is portrayed as comprehension of the ironic return i.e., of quotation by one artwork, of earlier works. The stylistic dominance of an artistic oeuvre is explained in terms of its authority. The meaning of art is attained through its deconstructive critique, that is, in revealing the incoherencies or ironies in its "text" and thus by exposing the pattern of authority by which it is sustained.
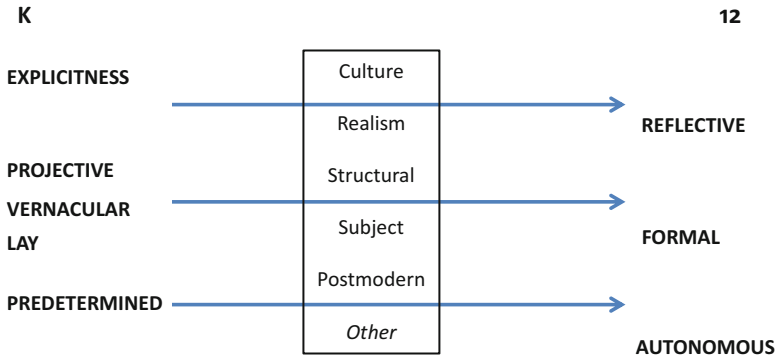
Fig. 7.1 The Frames as useful indicators for the sequence of knowing in art from K–12

2.2. The Frames as a Basis for Sequencing in the Visual Arts Curriculum

In articulating the grounds of understanding in the visual arts, the frames, are useful indicators for the sequencing of knowing in art from K-12. The sequencing of artistic understanding is a contentious issue however, as contentious as the notion of art itself. The general movement from K-12 can be represented informatively in a schema as (Figs. 7.1 and 7.2):

In the schema above the various categories can be interpreted as follows:

1. The Visual Arts identifies the field of content for art education.

   1.1. The categories Art History, Art Practice, Art Criticism identify the different "artworlds" that discipline the content of art education as a field.
   1.2. The categories Artist, Beholder, Work, and World represent functional entities of art populating the three "artworlds". Each artworld represents a different set of conventional ways for interacting with the four entities of art. An artworld can be identified in terms of the pattern of relationships it sets up amongst the four entities of art, and by the different ways in which each entity is described.

2. The frames as outlined above identify different ways of understanding the content of the visual arts. The frames are not so much content in themselves but represent alternative approaches to the description and explanation of the visual arts. Although frameworks of belief originating in the twentieth century, they constitute powerful tools for the analysis of artworks from any period.

   2.1. The identities of the four frames selected are not exhaustive. They could be replaced by other authoritative philosophies of artistic value.
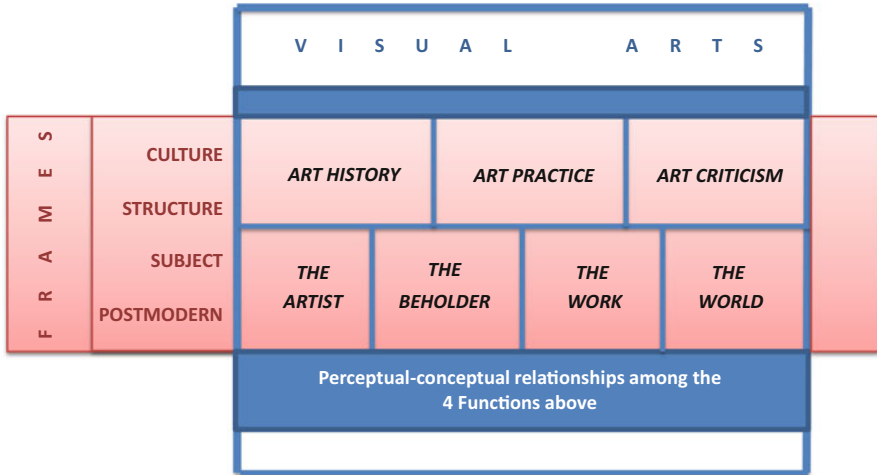
Fig. 7.2 The collaboration of the Frames in art curriculum content

7.4   Summary

It has often been argued that art education is a deeply eclectic field. If this means that in the projection of its goals the field of art education is dynamically dependent upon various forms of collaboration, then the argument is acceptable.

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Chapter 8
Coming to Terms with Visuality in the Content of Art Education

> *To understand is to first understand the field with which and against which one has been formed*
>
> *(Bourdieu 2008, p. 4).*

8.1 Introduction

The paper takes an inclusive approach to the concept of visual education. For instance the very concept of visuality not only crosses borders in Design, English and Visual Arts, it repositions the relationship between aesthetics and culture, aesthetics and technology, aesthetics and the broader environment. The value of the arts and the aesthetic is widened to include communicative and cultural meaning, while the value of media and communication is deepened to embrace the aesthetics of art and design. Thus the visual is a new order shaped by the collision between aesthetics, technology and communication. Digital technology is a significant driver in this new order insofar as while it has de-skilled a number of aesthetic competencies such as the craft of printing it has re-enabled personal communication to embrace the aesthetic. The reshaping of the visual is also a reminder that content in visual arts education curriculum is not defined as a timeless ideal but as a continuing adaption to changes in the cultural and technological circumstances of the arts and society.

The digital revolution of the twenty first century is uniting the world of human scholarship and creativity in two significant ways. The first is the world of scientific knowledge with the origination of new truth and technologies. The second is the creative application of new science through the world of art and design, and through imagery, fashion and aesthetic production. As economically significant as the world of science, the second enterprise is aimed at satisfying the global thirst for entertainment, variety, elegance and marketing edge, as well as the need for meaning, autonomy and the search for cultural and personal identity (Throsby 2006, p. 38–42). In every domain of industry and civic life these two integrated worlds can be seen at work (Eger 2003). The Sydney Morning Herald reports the digital animation industry in 2002 as a worldwide phenomenon generating for Japan $23 billion dollars in exports (Cameron 2006, p. 37). Authorities forecast, that within the next

decade over 50% of programming will be composed of home-based productions made with the use of popularly available but high quality multi media technology. Small businesses as aesthetically unassuming as plumbing are as much engaged with the appearance and attractiveness of their websites as with new grades of PVC pipe. Plumbers are as dependent upon the aesthetics of new tap ware as upon fit-outs and repairs in building up their trade (Florida 2002; Florida 2005 p. 746).

Nevertheless, the concept of visuality in art education is both an evolving as well as a defining factor in the field. This paper illustrates how diversified factors of visuality are historically digested highlighting the eclectic relation between art education and its associated fields.

8.2 The Arts and Visual Education

8.2.1 Historical Contexts

The entry of the arts into Western education began in the Renaissance when the fine arts, including painting and sculpture along with music, science and the humanities were first included within the liberal arts. Inclusion within the liberal arts separated the fine arts and music from vocational arts such as masonry, carpentry and printing, enabling the fine arts to be taught as part of general education (Blaich et al. 2004; Blaich 2005). Entry into the liberal arts and adaptation to general education changed the structure of knowledge in the fine arts (Goldstein 1996, p. 40–45; Yates 1947). The addition of criticism, history and theory to the repertoire of practical skills in the fine arts placed an emphasis on language-based critique in arts subjects, a field in which knowledge was gained previously through folk and religious participation or through watching and listening to skilled specialists in the atelier (Crow 1995; Panofsky 1954; Wittcower 1950). Access to the fine arts, taught through the academy and general schooling as one of the liberal arts, broadened the base of knowledge in the fine arts. However, inclusion within the liberal arts compromised the educational status of practical and technical skills of vocational arts leading to their exclusion from universities and the realm of 'elite' education. Before the introduction of the Wyndham Scheme in NSW in 1966, for example, art qualified as a matriculation subject only on the basis of a three-hour exam in art history. This continued to be the case until recently under John Dawkins' revision of the binary structure in Australian universities (Sinclair-Jones 1996). Thus it was twenty years after the establishment of the first Bachelors degree in Fine Arts in Art History by J.J. Wardell Power in 1968 before the University of Sydney in 1989 offered a corresponding degree in practical art. In The Netherlands art history is still offered in universities rather than academies of art and design (Piet Zwart Institute). Gradual replacement of apprenticeship by formal tertiary models of education in the UK, Scandinavia and Australasia in fields such as architecture, has served to professionalise and diversify the practical arts (Brown 1998, p. 99).

8.2.2   *Visual Education and the Emergence of 'the Arts' as a Field*

The earliest evidence of common reference from one art form to the other is traced to a comment made by the poet Simonides in the sixth century BC that, "painting is silent poetry, and poetry painting that talks" (Ford 2002, p. 246–247). In this often-quoted comment Simonides foreshadows Plato's relegation of painting and poetry to the common task of imitating the world. Imitation associated the arts with the creation of illusions and with the use of deceiving, if beguiling, tricks. United under this imitative role the arts in the classical world were divided off from philosophy and mistrusted with the more serious work of producing knowledge (Ford 2002). Although expanded under Aristotelian poetics to include the representation of ethical dilemmas in human relationships, the yoke of imitation continued as the common purpose in the arts until their transfiguration by the church in the middle-ages (Eco 1986). From the end of late Roman Empire to the fourteenth century, painting, sculpture, architecture and music were subjugated to the spiritual purposes of the church. During this period the sensuous vanity of imitation and representation in the arts was replaced by the iconography of religious piety. Deference to religious iconography was rigorously enforced in the Western arts up until the Renaissance, and is still respected within many cultures (Moore 1977). Spiritual influence over imagery in the arts today remains high (Campbell 2005, p. 51) and cannot be overlooked at a time when globalisation is resulting in a collision between the transgressive role of contemporary art and deeply felt religious beliefs (Zwartz 2006). In traditional Indigenous art, for instance, didactic iconography integral to rich dreaming narratives, carry a multi-layered spiritual signification in which ethical codes, legal sanctions, landmarks and navigational astronomy are woven into aesthetically cryptic imagery framing and preserving community law (Nicholls 2007). In broader pedagogical terms the spiritual encompasses values of religion, identity, heritage, and culture in the educational experience of students (Abbs 2003, p. 26; White 2002).

Despite the diversity of technical and notational skill separating poetry, music, dramaturgy, painting and sculpture, these domains have a long history of unification in the West under the rubric of the "Arts". Often taken for granted, the basis on which subject domains are included and excluded from the "Arts" has undergone continuing change. Nevertheless, many earlier modes of referring to the arts continue to endure and cannot be dismissed as short-lived historical curiosities. Some aesthetic references, such as 'common sense', have survived as catch phrases only to re-emerge influentially after contact with changing cultures, fashions and technologies (Van Gerwen 1999). Other changes in reference to the arts are pivotal in generating and shaping the knowledge, status and identity of individual art forms; in particular the emergence of visuality and its sub-groups in contemporary education. It is within this network of references and concepts that the emergence of visuality in contemporary education is appropriately understood.

8.3   The Emergence of Content in Art Education

The decline of the guild system and the admission of the arts into liberal domains of education vex the process of generating practical content in these fields. This is because practices, unlike formal disciplines, are enacted within ongoing conventions that are neither reducible to axioms nor logically predictable by theory. Significantly, practical fields are inherently historical in nature, their conventions governed by changing priorities and values. The historical eventfulness of practical fields means that links between their causes and practical evidence must be drawn retrospectively in the form of language based explanations. These explanations, although defensibly true, are not entertained as logically deductive modes of reasoning. Thus for centuries the structural informality of art obliges curriculum designers to provide teaching in the domains of art with a framework of narrative epistemologies, the classic *beaux arts* model of the late seventeenth century being the most famous Western example.

The process of overcoming indeterminacy, lending predictability and gaining universal agreement on in the selection of content in art and design education is ongoing. Contemporary approaches include representing practical skills and understanding in the visual arts as **if** they were **axiomatic** dispositions expressed, for example, as the creative process, visual literacy or brain-hemispherical competencies. It is thought that naturalising the domains of art will help them translate more easily into logically determined and thus more formally predictable curriculum. Proponents of "transfer of training", on the other hand, approach the selection of content in the arts on the **instrumental** grounds of its 'proven success' in fostering students' reasoning in more academic subjects, or as a means of therapy. Others base their choice of content on **essential** competencies such as drawing, computer programing, or upon the pre-eminence of a particular art historical canon.

Some justify content selection in the name of **authenticity** for instance, discipline-based art education sponsored by the Getty Foundation. Many choices of content in art education are determined by **pragmatic** contingencies, such as tailoring content to teacher competencies, the nature of students, constraints on local resources, or the dictates of prevailing aesthetic politics such as the concealment of nude images from school age children.

It is believed that the virtue of applying axiomatic, instrumental, essential, authentic, pragmatic and similar criteria to the selection of practical content is realised through the order they bring to curriculum design. Criteria, it is argued, not only bring transparent rules for content selection but also frameworks for content sequencing. These include deciding where and how to start and end a practical subject, staging degrees of difficulty, providing linking passages between content types, balancing depth and breadth and so on. Devices for the ordered unfolding of practical content such as analyses of basic versus sophisticated skills, historical periodisation, protocols of best practice, contemporary relevance, and customary routines are all viewed as more or less favoured under either of these selection criteria.

However, selection of practical curriculum content on the basis of general criteria commits a category mistake. The mistake is illustrated in an example drawn from architectural planning. Suppose an architect, for instance Jean Nouvel a principal designer of the residential towers at *One Central Park* on Broadway in Sydney, is presented with the task of choosing an approach to the redevelopment of, in this case, *One Central Park,* a neglected industrial precinct. The site is adjacent to a built up nineteenth century inner city residential area corresponding, for the purpose of this example, to an ongoing practical context. What would be the structural advantages for the design process, in this instance, of applying one in preference to the other five criteria introduced above? The answer is very little. This is because, as quantitative measures, all five criteria are capable of justifying practical outcomes across all instances. For example, the criterion of authenticity is as applicable to the choice of a revolutionary utopian plan employing modernist towers, as to the choice of a conservative design replicating the pedestrian scale of the existing environment. The application of "authenticity", as would any of the other five criteria, beg the practical question of what to do next.

John Searle argues persuasively that there can be no logic of practical reasoning (1983, 2001). Choosing practical content in the expectation of a predictable outcome, or by inference from practice in the field of art commits the fallacy of implication. In the architectural example above there is no necessary impact on design outcomes resulting from the adoption in advance of one particular criterion. Similarly there is no special advantage to the structure of practical curricula resulting from the use of one content selection criterion over another. Judith Carroll (1997) found in her study of artist/teachers employed on the strength of their artistic reputation, that most turned to a traditional *beaux arts* syllabus rather than to their own practice when choosing teaching content. Matisse, a revolutionary painter of the French *avant garde* was a notoriously conservative teacher advocating strict *beaux arts* discipline in his studio classes throughout his career. Choices of curriculum content are the distillation of judgments the prudence of which may be tested by criteria, but necessarily by criteria applied retrospectively. Content selection is appealed to as a matter of precedent rather than as a matter of principled reason. How then can the selection of content in visual arts education be defended as a faithful representation of art, considering that practice in the field of art carries no implications for content, and that selection criteria beg the question of choice? The question can be reframed in consideration of the four constructs listed below and positioned as headings in a table representing domains of the visual arts (see Table 8.1). The domains of visual arts listed in this table are not universals but historically evolving functions open to debate and revision.

Table 8.1 The emergence of visual education

		Content Domains in the Visual Arts: Factors in the Emergence of Visual Education								FRAMES		
		Plato, Religion & the Arts	The Arts & Crafts & Design as Technical & Historical Disciplines	Creativity & the Arts	Aesthetics, Taste & the Arts	Physiology of the Arts: Art, Perception, Neurophysiology & Pathology	Rebellion, Difference, Transgression & the Arts	The Arts as a Way of Knowing	The Arts as a Form of Communication	Cultural Studies & the Arts	The Arts & Visual Culture	The Digital, Multi-modal & Relational in the Arts
		A1	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**
Early childhood												
Primary school age	**2**											
Early adolescent	**3**											
Late adolescent	**4**											
Tertiary	**5**											
		Iconographic Prescription & Tradition	Apprenticeship Coaching mastery & Accreditation of Skills & Knowledge	Nurturing the Experimental Investigation & Expression of Individual Ideas & Feelings	Critical Transaction & Description of Immediately Felt Experience	Explaining the Pictorial Functions of Imagery, Iconography & Therapy	Art Education as the Alternative To Formal Curriculum	Art as a practical & conceptual kind of reasoning	The Visual Arts as a Non-spontaneous Language That Needs to be 'Written' and 'Read'	The Functional Role of the Arts in Society, Including Art as a Kind of Practice	The Visual Arts as the Cultural Analysis of Popular & Everyday Appearances.	Screen Based, Interactive, Multi-modal, Networked, Design–Centric

The Teacher: Key Pedagogical Factors in the Teaching of Visual Education

8.3.1   Table 8.1 Columns

1. **The world of visual arts is a field of practice existing independently of mind contributing contingently rather than necessarily to the emergence of content in visual arts curriculum**; conversely, determining effects exercised by art educational content upon the world of art are also exercised contingently. A principal concern of content selection in contemporary art education is maintaining an asymmetry in the relation between art practice and art education, thus avoiding dictation of the former by the latter. For instance, by using traditional *beaux arts* teaching methods with his students it was not Matisse's pedagogical intention to promote *beaux arts* conformity in the world of painting (The Arts Key Factors—Top Columns complementing The Teacher, Pedagogical Factors).
2. Visual arts education is an inherently eventful field of practice aimed at adapting **pedagogy to the historically evolving domains of art**. It provides the point of departure for rational narratives of curriculum content in art education. (The Teacher, Pedagogical Factors—Bottom columns The Domains heading the columns complementing The Arts, Key Factors).

8.3.2   Table 8.1 Rows

3. Evidence relating **to current knowledge of child development in art and education** is employed as a qualifier in sequencing the delivery of visual art education curriculum. (Student Stages—Left Rows complementing The Frames—Right Rows).
4. The quality and level of **domain awareness or conceptual autonomy** students bring to visual art education is a significant determinate framing children's cognitive development in art education (The Frames—Right Rows complementing Student Stages).

Table 8.1 samples key factors contributing to the emergence of content domains in visual education. The table correlates these domains with teaching styles, relevance to students by school age, and conceptual frameworks in art. Each cell in Table 8.1 functions as a placeholder within which the character and impact of each factor can be described.

8.4   Narratives of Visuality in Art Education

The Domains heading the columns in Table 8.1 contribute significantly to curriculum narratives of visuality in art education. Although space limitations preclude a full narrative history of all the content domains identified in the table, this section samples two influential narrative histories of visuality (Brown 2006).[1]

8.4.1   Psychology of Perception, Neurophysiology, Pathology and Visual Education

The psychology of visual perception is driven by two broad concerns. The first deals with the nature of visual images as mental representations. The second stems from the unique mental and optical physiology of the human observer. Kosslyn describes imagery as "…internal mental representations that stand in for (re-present) … corresponding objects" in the world (Kosslyn and Sussman 1996, p. 3; Hagen 1980, p. 26–45). He describes visual perception as depictive imagery (the mental representations of pictures). Depictive imagery is contrasted with the mental representations of words, which are referred to as propositional or "descriptional" imagery (Block 1981). Visual perception in the visual arts derives its identity in large part from its unique association with pictorial images such as drawings and paintings. Pictorial images are representational artefacts that are designed to portray, depict, and resemble other things. While this twofold property of pictures enables them to recreate the look of the things they depict it also leads to perceptual ambiguity (Hobson 1982, p. 14; Wollheim 1991). This ambiguity arises from the inevitable 'slippage' between the look of the object depicted and the techniques and intentions artists use for their depiction. Visual perception in the arts is thus concerned with an explanation of how observers understand the relationship between these two representational factors in visual images (Arnheim 1974b, p. 169; Kosslyn and Sussman 1996, p. 404; Paivio 1971).

Pictorial images can be representations of ideas originating in the imagination, or depictions of real things in the world. Images can be depicted in varying degrees of realism or abstraction. Virtual reality systems, for example, can represent nearly all the visual qualities of an experience. On the other hand pictures can be emblematic. Emblems are representations that combine images with a text or "motto" (Arnheim 1974a, p. 151; Judovitz 2001) and function as symbols of particular qualities or concepts. While, psychologists such as Rudolph Arnheim disavow the concept of visual imagery as the simple replica of a percept, and insist that vision is a process of active exploration, they are also keen to point out that the perception of visual qualities is "…not something that the observer adds, for reasons of his own, to static

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[1] See Brown (2006), for a more comprehensive narrative history of all the domains represented in Table 8.1.

images" (Arnheim 1974a, p. 42). In other words, visual perception is not to be confused with *laissez faire*, or arbitrary projections of interpretative fantasy. Rather every percept has "magnitude and direction…tensions [that] can be described as psychological 'forces'" (Arnheim 1974a, p. 11). The point being, according to Richard Wollheim "…any information of which the spectator has need must be information that affects what he sees when he looks at a picture: because it is only through what is seen when the picture is looked at that the picture carries meaning" (Wollheim 1991, 144).

Arnheim argues that the perception of representational imagery in the arts is approached differently through the media of language and pictures (Arnheim 1992, p. 51). Images are approached through language indirectly as the symbolic orchestration of sensory experiences conjured in the mind in the form of a concept. By contrast the visual arts present experiences directly to perception making concepts available indirectly as sensory metaphors (Arnheim 1992, p. 52). Even when closely integrated as they are, for example, in an opera, Arnheim insists that the differentiation between the modalities of language and the visual remain separate and parallel. It is only at the "meta" or conceptual level that a synthesis between different modalities of language, music, and visual arts can be contemplated, (Berti and Freeman 1997; Dennett 1981; Fodor 1975; Karmiloff-Smith 1992; Perkins and Salomon 1989).

However, Kosslyn argues against a strong or 'hard wired' separation of visuality from other modes of imagery (Kosslyn and Sussman 1996, p. 25–39). This is consistent with the fact that objects subject to visual processing do not fit neatly into exclusively visual categories (Cassirer 1953; Hagen 1980). The visual imagery in sculpture and installation for instance, is represented in a variety of different spatial, auditory and performative modes. In short visual perception is a kind of thinking, a functional mode of mentally entertaining objects that is exploratory, takes time, is selective and inferential (Arnheim 1974a, pp. 13–37; Goldstein 2001; McKim 1980).

The second concern focuses on the relation between the observer and their point of view. Perspectivists such as Brunelleschi and Dürer in the Renaissance, and their present day protagonists led by the experimental psychologist J.J. Gibson provide evidence of visual appearances behaving invariantly according to the rules of perspective (Gibson 1986). Any theory of visual perception is bound to acknowledge the reality of vanishing points, horizon lines, and observer viewpoint (Gombrich 1961, 1982). Technical innovations, including the camera, have reaffirmed the reality of perspective and the stability of its laws. When applied by human beings within the environmental context of the real world these laws are subject to a number of ecological constraints. These constraints are affected, for example, by the mobility of the observer, by concealment of objects from view, by the proximity of the observer to objects, and by our common ability to see textural details (see Gibson 1986, p. 302, 303–309). These constraints are dictated by human physiology and work for the perception of pictures in the same way they work for our seeing reality.

From the middle of the nineteenth century a change overtook the reproduction of pictorial appearances that added a new layer of interpretation to the understanding of the single observer's point of view. Artists such as J.M.W. Turner began to use pictorial representation, not merely to represent subjects and ideas according to conventions of optical regularity, but to create an image of the perceptual process itself (Crary 1990, p. 138). Impressionist such as Monet began to represent the impact of light, colour, dazzle, obscurity, movement, structure and imaginative composure as was originated in the unique perceptual moment of their artistic experience. In no way contradicting optical perspective this artistic self-contemplation transcends it, turning visual perception into a window on the artist's vision in addition to that of the world depicted (Crary 1990, p. 141). Thus visual perception becomes intimately associated with the communication of optical experience in which the artist's perception is itself represented as a shared pictorial sensation made visible to the observer.

Visual education is deeply shaped by these two complementary aspects of visual perception. Each has helped secure the place of the visual as a diagnostic tool in psychotherapy and children's cognitive development (Costall 1985; Gardner 1982, p. 265–336). Development in the understanding of the relationship between optics and imagery in visual representation, and by the evolution of the observer's point of view, provides the key to the function of the visual as a mode of conceptual and creative thinking in the educational curriculum (Dorn 1999). Nevertheless, visual perception and the observer-centric point of view have attracted criticism from cultural theory. Cultural theorists believe an over-emphasis on the intentions of artists, observers and correspondingly the child in education, overlooks the imagery of cultures based on the ritual, celebratory, scientific as well as culturally emergent purposes of visual imagery exemplified in screen-based technology. With respect to the dematerialisation of the digital image, Crary observes that

> Most of the historically important functions of the human eye are being supplanted by practices in which visual images no longer have any reference to the position of an observer in a "real", optically perceived world (1990, p. 2).

Though significant, confining the visual to that which is seen through the focus of the observer's eye obscures the expansive scope of culture and science provided by the visual.

8.4.2   The Arts, Digital Culture and Visual Education

Kalantzis and Cope identify the need for change in the definition of literacy to accommodate the visual. They coin the term 'Multiliteracy' in describing the impact of digital technology, globalization and multiculturalism on the use of language. Multiliteracy occurs when visual, audio, gestural and spatial patterns of meaning interface with the linguistic (Kalantzis and Cope 1999). Digital technology (ICT) has made the interdisciplinary skills common to film and media studies, once the

prerogative of specialists, accessible to non-specialist individuals. Kress refers to possession of these interdisciplinary, or skills of multiliteracy, as 'multi modal competence' (Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996; Kress 1997, 1999, 2003). Multimodal competence, he says, is primarily a **design**, rather than a graphic, literary or critical capability—a competence of reading as design (Kress 2003, p. 49–50). Digital technology delivers musical, narrative, and performative images to the designer in the form of fully integrated, post-produced fragments. These fragments can be orchestrated and reassembled by the designer in the manner of a multimodal montage (Weibel 2002, p. 51). Digitisation enables the competent designer to borrow, strip, reverse engineer, and integrate fragments of image, text and sound for intentional reassembly, guided by creative concepts. Thus the multimodal designer is more of a 'post-disciplinary' auteur whose interdisciplinary skills are editorial, rather than conventionally located in traditional domains of artistic practice (Flew 2004, p. 120). For example, Bob Sillerman, an entrepreneur who is contemplating a new movie starring Elvis Presley, says "…digital technology is opening new opportunities for capitalising on a celebrities' fame…. One of the most controversial is "reanimation" where technology can bring a star back to life, at least on screen" (Coultan 2006, p. 28).

Flew reports an AC Nielsen study "…which found that Australian employers believed that the greatest skills deficiencies of new graduates were in the areas of creativity and flair, oral business communication, and problem solving" (Flew 2004, p. 117). This raises the question of whether multimodal competence is best portrayed in the curriculum as a specialised hybrid of visual design, or as an extension of generic skills in media and communication. For instance, media and communication are primarily identified with a commercial industry or an academic course of study. Deleuze, on the other hand, identifies products of media and communication, like films, as eventful objects or expanding "semiotic chains" that are connected in their design to the world they represent (Delanda 2002, p. 59).

The difference is central to visual education curricula in English, where an increasing emphasis is placed on the design and production of multimedia projects in addition to critical analysis of imagery (Ravelli 2006). *Kahootz* is a 3D authoring tool developed by the Australian Children's Television Foundation that allows students and teachers to be creators, designers, inventors as well as storytellers. As an online community, *Kahootz* participants "…can publish their work and exchange, share, collaborate, de-construct and explore with other schools" (Australian Children's Television Foundation). These "machinima", machine and cinema integrations on-line, bring individual makers together into first person expressive and communicative interaction based on goals emerging from shared narrative experience rather than the winning of games (Bernstein and Greco 2004, p. 137–192).

Cinema's aesthetic strategies have become the basic organisational principles of computer software (Shaw 2001). Digital technology, Manovich says, is shaped by software rather than semiotic codes (Manovich 2001, p. 15). The arrangement of data through computer codes such as JAVA script and HTML spatialises information that is encountered by the viewer interactively. At computer interfaces "…radi-

cally different (or multimodal) sources are brought together within a singular cultural object (Manovich 2001, p. 76).

> Contrary to popular images of computer media as collapsing all human culture into a single giant library…or a single giant book…it is perhaps more accurate to think of the new media culture as an infinite flat surface where individual texts are placed in no particular order…. In contrast to the older storage media of book, film or magnetic tape, where data is stored sequentially…seducing the user through careful arrangement of arguments and examples, cultural interfaces bombard the user with all the data at once (Manovich 2001, pp. 77–78).

In digital media space is privileged over linear time, random access over hierarchical organization of information, navigation of space by the observer over passive spectatorship. To be an observer on the Internet is to be an explorer. Nevertheless, Manovich says, the Internet remains intelligible to viewers because it draws upon previous multimodal conventions of text and image, in particular the rectangular frame of the computer screen, that are familiar to users (Manovich 2001, p. 81). Digitisation however can eliminate the distance between the image and the viewer. Manovich argues that telecommunication, or telepresence, made possible by the Internet brings the televised image into 'touch'. Telepresence allows the viewer to interact with the image and to change it (Manovich 2001, p. 168–175). Simple examples include the observer texting by cell phone to change the outcome of live television program (Channel Ten 2006, p. 1020). No longer confined to gazing at a distant object interaction and telepresence in visual education bring a new level of ethical and aesthetic etiquette to bear on the student's relationship with the image (Shaw 2001; Stallabrass 2003). Coleman points out that objects represented on the Internet differ from works generated on the Internet (Coleman 2004). Net based forms of visual expression in examples such as blogs and zines, for instance

> …can be described as art that uses computer networks, in that the network and its content forms the basis for the piece. ….[A]rtists … approach the Internet not as a medium but as a transmission system for data that potentially …fosters many different forms of hyperlink-based connectivity… . It is comparable to conceptual art as they both share an emphasis on audience interaction, transfer of information and use of networks (Coleman 2004, pp. 62–63)

and as currently investigated by design teachers in virtual studios for distance learning (Bennett 2006).

Nicholas Bourriaud refers to these digital developments in art as relational aesthetics (Bourriaud 2002). Bourriaud takes art theory into the virtual space opened up by the immersive, dialectical and relational possibilities of interactive media and the effects of globalisation. He identifies the artist and designer as a "semionaut" (2005, p. 19), a person who explores new pathways through culture. Relational pathways form links between different cultures (Lunenfield 1999; Manovich 2001). They employ navigational tools that are designed for a specific purpose and then discarded. While traditional imagery, such as painting and drawing employ stable techniques digital imagery is fleeting and eventful, similar in form to a musical performance or a recital (Lunenfield 1999; Manovich 2001).

The multiplicity of forms used in digital technology makes the concept of defining or limiting mediums of artist practice in this domain redundant (Manovich 2001,

p. 10). The close relation between aesthetics and practical innovation in digital technology means they develop simultaneously. Where perceived usefulness underlies the development of technology, questions of—"what is possible" directs innovations in aesthetics and content (Brown 1999, p. xiii). The result is that intellectual, symbolic, and sensual elements of practices in art and design are increasingly allied with ICT (National Research Council 2003). Alliances between technology and design practice are visible in new forms of Web-based games (National Research Council 2003). The potential benefits from this collaboration are significant, for example, in industries, exports, "communities that attract the best and the brightest", the enrichment of individuals and communities, global influence and prestige (National Research Council 2003, p. 2). However, due to the cultural revisions implied by new technologies, believing that the key to innovation might be simply a matter of employing equipment and software is insufficient. The increasing dependence on technology requires corresponding development of new curricula and assessments methods in order to engage with these technologies meaningfully (International Technology Education Association 2000). This includes support for "unintended and subversive uses," contributed by artists and designers as means of understanding the new tools and media both culturally and historically (National Research Council 2003, p. 3–4).

Science is centrally involved with the visual and aesthetic representation of ideas (Pauwels 2006). This requires a multidisciplinary understanding of the complexity of representational imagery (Emmer 2005; MacEachren 2004). Examples of interdisciplinarity include "augmented reality, tangible computing, lifelike computer animation… and user-centred evaluation of computer systems" (Emmer 2005, p. 230; National Research Council 2003, p. 10). Multimedia and interactive works in art and design challenge boundaries between 'visual' and 'non-visual' learning (Murray 1998). Digital bridges between art and technology build on traditions established in Germany's pre-World War Bauhaus, Chicago's New Bauhaus, and the Centre for Advanced Visual Studies at MIT (National Research Council 2003; Schwarz 1997). Highly acknowledged among contemporary centres is MIT's Media Laboratory in which new technology is explored in the atelier style of the art studio (National Research Council 2003). A more recent example, The ZKM/Centre for Art and Media in Karlsruhe, Germany was specifically established under the directorship of the Australian artist Geoffrey Shaw as an environment for artistic research and production using electronic technologies of image reproduction. ZKM is seen as a "kind of electronic Bauhaus" (Schwarz 1997, p. 15). For Shaw, interactivity explores the social interactions made possible through telecommunications, and made material through simulation (Schwarz 1997).

Lunenfield claims that the advent of digital media with its computational and network requirements requires new models of commentary extending beyond the issues of consumption and spectatorship (Lunenfield 1999). The view of *representation* in relation to *information* sets out "two opposing goals of new media design" where the immersive quality of an imaginative "universe similar to traditional fiction" is contrasted with "giving users efficient access to a body of information", as for example, in search engines, or on-line encyclopedias (Manovich 2001, p. 17).

Significant differences can attend the conceptualization and realization of new media compared to more traditional media. And "as computerization affects deeper and deeper layers of culture, these tendencies will increasingly manifest themselves" (Manovich 2001, p. 27).

Pedagogy

Max Davison alerts teachers in art and design to the "homogenising" tendency of computer imaging to reduce the differences between fine art and design by delivering powerful graphic software effects into school and home computers (Davison 2006). He argues that digital technology renders traditional distinctions, contrasting the intrinsic values of art with the everyday instrumentality of design, simplistic. Software development allows student work to gain the patina and sophistication of professionally produced material. This is educationally valuable on the one hand as it speeds up the process of skill acquisition and enables students to satisfy their visualisation ambitions at a high level. On the other hand there is a danger that, by removing the intellectual challenge in conceptualizing visual ideas through all stages of material and technical development, new technology will lead to superficial levels of visual understanding. Moving from software to the Internet, Burbules says that the focus on choice, decision, exploration (navigation), collaboration and interaction in the digital distinguishes digital teaching and learning from the "delivery systems" of the conventional classroom (Burbules 2004, p. 179). Thus pedagogy in the digital has three broad concentrations:

- The first is software oriented in which visuality in the classroom is restructured and re-skilled by new digital tools.
- The second is interactivity oriented in which visuality in the classroom is redefined by the Internet and immersion in on-line communities.
- The third is based on a digital revision of Halliday's functional semantics in which teaching and learning in the visual is re-modeled into the design of purpose built multimodal messages (Boyle 2002; Halliday 2004).

8.5 A Summary of the Narrative Purposes of the Visual in Art Education

The field of visual education draws its significance from a diversity of values explicit in the key factors identified in Table 8.1, and listed as follows:

A visual education enables students to:

- Express a diversity of personal, spiritual and religious beliefs, as well as encounter and bring meaning to visual representations of the beliefs of others

- Gain incremental skill in an expanding diversity of performances selected from professional practice in art, design, new media, and the materiality of the crafts, including the disciplines used by the artist and designer, the art and design historian, and the critic of art and visual culture
- Engage in the creative expression of ideas and feelings, and the experimental exploration of imaginative ideas in a variety of representational forms
- Experience and respond to the aesthetic quality of objects in art and design, the moving image, the material, built and natural environment with a view to differentiating their characteristics, and the way in which the aesthetic value of those qualities is both shared and varies among cultural groups over time
- Understand how pictorial imagery is graphically depicted using techniques common to the arts and design; how these conventions are used to portray different physical and psychological qualities of the subject; and how these conventions are perceived across cultures, age groups and individual observers over time
- Express an autonomous position, for example, in relation to, family and school, political views, body image, or one's peers through the exercise of artistic integrity in the making of works of art, design new media, or by critical debate about visual imagery; and to understand the obedience of art, design and new media in relation to ethical standards in the community
- Conceptualise the purposes of art and design with a view to understanding the variety of agents that play an interrelated role in its existence including for instance the artist/designer, the observer, the art work, and the subject represented; and to use these concepts to inform their thought and actions
- Become 'literate' in the varied system of signs used to frame representational meaning in the making and interpreting of works in art and design and new media, and of imagery at large
- Explain how art, design and new media is practiced as an occupation within the social economy, how the occupations of art, design and media are representative of cultural institutions, and how art and design are linked to processes of social reform, such as the rights of groups and individuals, and to represent political and social ideas; and how these cultural purposes, in return help in shaping the aesthetic character of works
- Ascribe meaning to the relations between language and mass culture using sign systems made visible in the form of a wide range of anonymous, popular and commercially produced images
- Acquire multimodal competences, of which the visual plays a key role, in the design and navigation of digital media that draw upon interdisciplinary and editorial skills guided by concepts borrowing from the spiritual, disciplinary, expressive, aesthetic and cultural systems of meaning that form the key contributing factors of the arts.

Insofar as the "visual" in visual arts education misrepresents the modal scope of the field, as it is currently evolving, it is, perhaps, for this very reason important that art education continues to control the changing agenda of visuality and to speak authoritatively for its special place in the arts.

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Chapter 9
The Spectacle of the Artist in Art Education

9.1 Introduction

Theoretical revision in art education is unsystematically correlated with the reality it represents. It is unlikely, for instance, that the theoretical basis for Lowenfeld's taboo on children's copying in 1949, followed by the Wilsons' argument for a relaxation of this taboo in 1977, coincided with dramatic changes in the practical way artist's and children actually drew. Some children and artists must have copied in defiance of Lowenfeld's explanations then, as many still regard it as cheating to copy now. It is thus naive to believe that changes in the constraints on drawing within art education are caused by changes in the reality to which such constraints refer. Yet it is also fair to say that the imposition and lifting of these constraints has a profound impact on drawing in the classroom.

Art teaching, in common with most practices, is a conservative field. Most of the profound theoretical changes in art education originate as intellectual trends that are un-foreshadowed by symptoms of concern within practice. For example, the shift in emphasis from the "creative process" to "art as a discipline" in the nineteen sixties, the displacement of "native intuition" by "nominalistic competency" in the nineteen seventies, and the trend away from artistic "universalism" towards cultural "regionalism" and later "globalisation" in the late nineteen eighties, evidence movements in art education originating as broader changes external to the field. Understanding the motives and engagement of theoretical change in art education thus requires an explanation of success in representing to art educators the benefits of revolutionary change that arise, in most part un-spontaneously, within the field.

This paper explores the representation of theoretical change in art education. It supposes, more particularly, that concepts and approaches to art are admitted and excluded from the art educational curriculum by changes in the agenda of art educational theory. Nevertheless, mere identification of items on this agenda begs the question of the terms under which the agenda is revised. This study proposes that

curriculum in art education is produced as a spectacle of the domain of art, and that theories governing the representing relation between art curriculum and the field of art are promoted, adopted and abandoned, on the basis of their spectacular advantages. The mechanisms of the spectacle employed in this study are those advanced in *The Society of the Spectacle* by Guy Debord (1967). The paper analyses three spectacles of the "artist" in art educational theory as instances of change in the theoretical representation of art within the curriculum.

Although Debord's account of the spectacle is framed by social uses of the media that have been overtaken by advances in digital technology and, although his economy of the spectacle is regarded by some as unduly pessimistic, the employment of Debord in this paper is helpfully constructive of the reasons why curriculum theories are traded so spiritedly by academics in the field. I use the word "traded" because Debord's concept of the spectacle provides a rare opportunity for the application of an economic explanation to art educational theory.

9.2   The Myth of the Myths of Art Education

Investigating the causes of conceptual change in art education is fundamental to a contemporary understanding of the field. The view of art education as a unified institutional structure built up incrementally out of scientifically dependable components has been discredited. Art educational beliefs are more appropriately described as occupying a diversity of incommensurable historical moments sharing few common links (Brown 1993). Nevertheless theoretical practices exert a tangible influence whatever their shortcomings and period of duration. Considered from this point of view we can no longer dismiss outmoded theoretical practices in art education as earlier "misrepresentations". The dismissal and adoption of new concepts must attach an explanation of change deeper than that implied by a Rousseauean assumption of progress. Why for example, was behaviourism adopted so uncritically by Brent Wilson in the *Handbook on Educational Evaluation* and in nineteen sixty six and then by Rouse and Hubbard, only to be abandoned so abruptly less than a decade later?; and why is the revival of similar behaviouristic forms of evaluation in the outcomes driven National Standards so willing to rehearse these evaluative "mistakes" of the past? (Boughton 1997). Accounts of theoretical revision in art education, if not the political hurl-burly of revision itself, obliges researchers to be reflexive in framing their investigations, and requires contextualisation of the effects of theoretical revision upon knowledge practices in the field.

The necessity for contextualizing change is demonstrated by Diana Korzenik in her survey essay on the concept of artistic giftedness (1995). She concludes: "in reality, giftedness is an adult concept, like taste, child artist, and the artist child" (p. 27). Korzenik informs us that "noticing how each author [in the field] constructs a concept of giftedness will help us realise that no one construct is definitive" (p. 28).

    The historical relativity of artistic "giftedness" is more appropriately described, she says, as a changing concept in the mind of the field. Perhaps, she speculates, it is better to allow concepts such as giftedness to develop freely as prejudices of their time. However, prejudice, Korzenik goes on, provides an unsatisfactory explanation of theoretical change because it obscures the truth. Although Korzenik rejects the solipsism of prejudice as an explanation of change, her position indicates nonetheless her acknowledgment that giftedness can exist independently as a prejudicial kind of reality.

    Korzenik's conceptual realism denies her the answers to contextual relativism otherwise readily available in a post-structural ontology. Philosophers such as Baudrillard and Derrida reject the very idea that referents can exist independently of a formalised discourse. They do not share Korzenik's concern over the pragmatic abuses of prejudice, or the falsification of native artistic dispositions. Their concern arises out of the post-Hegelian observation that theoretical discourses, especially those representing domains of human practice and behaviour, are invariably self-referring. Derrida (1998) argues that representations of practice not so much lose sight of the world they survey, but that the world in fact, is little more than a facade of the references by which it is represented. That in general, there is no such behavioural thing, for example, as giftedness. In their diversity of concepts, images and texts, traditional practices exist as a product of their own forms of objectification. Under these post-structural terms explanation of theoretical change is confined to causes originating as a representational simulacra.

9.3   The Appearance of Reality and the Reality of Appearance

Baudrillard's dismissal of the possibility and Korzenik's quandary over prejudice and reality, as factors in theoretical change, are mirrored in the dilemma presented to the humanities by seventeenth century empiricism. The Cartesian "argument from illusion" laid the groundwork for the modern concept of subjectivity in the formulation and application of theory. In post-Cartesian subjectivist theory, "illusion is not opposed to the individual, but is in fact *created* by them" (Hobson 1982, p. 14). In the radical idealism of the Humean "mind", the difference between illusionistic fiction and the truth is no longer separated into qualitatively different mental events. It corresponds instead to the interplay between two psychological dispositions, "our propensity to feign" or invent, and our capacity to "experience". Thus even the private apprehension of dour reality is understood as being reliant upon the faculty of representational artifice (Hume 1972, p. 34). The visual metaphor expressing the unlikely association between illusion and the truth, between seeing and knowing, is represented under the Kantian processes of the transcendental imagination. Under this metaphor the logical representation of abstract knowledge is redefined as the projection of an imaginative "view" of the world. For the

"knower as perceiver" the faculties of perception and conception seamlessly reinforce each other in the process of converting subjective into objective thought.

The agency of appearances within abstract thought is progressively understood to work in both directions, both for the construction of experience and for its apprehension. The appearance of the external world in the mind of the knower came to be accepted as sufficient evidence for a disciplined body of belief. By the same token, abstract properties originating or "hidden" within the subject such as psychological motives, values, desires and so on, are made knowable by their becoming "evident" for the beholder/observer in the form of image and appearance. Appearances thus become a means for the empiricist of dividing off the tokens of reality from illusion within the imagination.

By the nineteenth century the instrumentality of illusion, once to be avoided, had ironically now become indispensable to the construction of all Cartesian perception, generating a need for the "stabilisation" of appearances in order that they can be looked through clearly as a window to the truth. To ensure perception against deception within the "imagery" of representational thought, a self consciously rigorous form of differentiation between the optics of seeing and the imaginative form of "seeing as perception" is required. A return to the spatial optics of a camera obscura, "fixed angle of focus" or perspectival notion of appearances, is insufficient for the task. What emerges in the nineteenth century to take its place is a process in which the mechanics of optical seeing is re-enacted internally to mind as a system of perceptually based clinical routines (Crary 1996, p. 16). These perceptual routines, or rules of practice, not only differentiate the act of seeing from the processes of contemplative thought they also prolong the process of looking by forestalling premature signification and closure.

The development of seeing as a systematic instrument of knowledge is illustrated in Foucault's history of the clinic (Foucault 1973). Foucault describes how clinical perception, originating as an analytical technique of forensic medicine, becomes applied more generally to the natural world. Formulated into a symptomatic structure of medical inferences, the system of clinical appearances is integrated into the practices of empirical science. In the *Birth of the Clinic* Foucault explains how attitudes to human nature are transformed in medical practice by subjection of the human body to systematic techniques of clinical analysis (see p. 165). Anatomical understanding of the body is constrained to what falls within the visible and "That which is not on the scale of the gaze falls outside the domain of possible knowledge."(p. 166).[1] Making invisible properties visible, however, requires a systematic eye. The disinterestedness of the systematic eye in clinical medicine makes a virtue out of the strategic interpretation of surface clues. Prompted by cues in the protective surface layers that conceal and "defend" the body's secrets, the clinician implies and thereby discloses the body's inner nature. The objectifying gaze of the clinician replaces the traditional Aristotelian markers of human nature. Whereas Aristotelian markers evidenced life directly by instantiating the vital properties

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[1] The gaze for Foucault is extended to include other sensory modalities as well, especially the sense of touch and hearing.

exhibited in being alive, modern medical science through the clinician's gaze, transforms the "concealed life" of the dead body into the objectified appearances of life.

The clinical gaze prolongs the process of judgement by ensuring that the theoretical conclusions of language are exquisitely deferred. To use the clinical gaze as a way of discovering the truth is less to deploy theoretical explanations than to cast them into doubt. This process demands a concept of detachment in the "seeing" eye that is predicated on the empirical neutrality of the observer. Such an eye performs by deploying "…technologies of attention, in which sequences of stimuli or images can produce the same effect repeatedly as if for the first time" (Crary 1996, p. 96). Thus the set piece of theoretical explanation is postponed in order to make room for the pristine discoveries afforded by the clinical gaze (p. 69). As a consequence the language of clinical documentation is attended by the same spatial formality of the systematic appearances to which it refers. A clinical gaze thereby turns the historical narrative of description into a clinically disinterested extension of the visible present.

9.4   The Reproduction of Practice as the Production of Appearances

Just as the body has its nature concealed under enshrouding tissues, the nature of ordinary human practices are also concealed behind the facades of their transactions (Bourdieu 1977, 1990, 1996).[2] Disclosing the conventions of social practice to the clinical gaze equally depends upon the interpretation of cues presented as symptoms in the surface patterns of their transactions. Thus the clinical reproduction of concealed appearances in the observation of social practices is equally dependent upon a dual function. Firstly it depends upon clinical disclosure through the production of a detached spatial map of social events, and secondly upon an interpretive judgement confined to the system that the map reveals.

In other words, the interpretive production of appearances serves in the reproduction of what was initially concealed. The relation between practices and their appearances is open, therefore, to profound misrepresentation unless strict clinical measures are taken. When the representation of what is concealed in social practices is dependent for its revelation upon the interpretation of external appearances, however clinically detached the technique employed in their revelation, the referring conditions that result are ripe for the reproduction of practice as an ungrounded precession of simulacra.

The rule of visible evidence in the nineteenth century, Baudrillard argues, has profound significance for the reproduction of social practices. Even social values such as "happiness" and "leisure" in the nineteenth century came to be identified with the visible signs and objects evidencing their achievement (Baudrillard see

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[2] Contemporary anthropology and ethnography is founded on the same clinical postponement of theory.

Crary 1997, p. 416). A parallel expansion in industrial forms of reproduction led to a state in which the appearances of almost anything could be proliferated in materially identical form. The predominantly **spatial** process of **producing** in the nineteenth century, as opposed to the predominantly **historical** process of mechanical **reproducing**, led to the production of models that shared an identical appearance. These spatial models of production, rather than reflectively reproducing its past, represent the present as a set of permanently displacing fashions, each annihilating its replacement. Investigation of the historical continuity of a social practice under the clinical gaze is thereby disengaged from the narrative traces of memory and universalised into the permanent presence of the anthropologist's clinical perception (Blackmore 1998).[3]

In the twentieth century television, cinema and digital simulation have intensified the precession of appearances. In these technologies the events and objects, the aspirations and transactions, the artefacts of human practice, originate as perceptual artefacts. In their application, the representation of objects as appearances has become indistinguishable from the corporate processes of their technical production. At its most sensational, television news, for example, presents the consumer with a vertical integration of the agencies responsible for its production, distribution and exhibition. The "production values" in these vertical presentations (the reference) double as editorial values (the referent). The *Spice Girls*, for instance, have no evidential contact with the musical talents to which their appearances refer, other than to the appearances of the values which underlie the qualities of the production itself. Perception has become the object of representation and that object is a spectacle. How do we understand this spectacle?

9.5   The Spectacle

To claim that the art educational gaze is preoccupied with its own objectification is not to imply, however, a gaze divorced from hard-nosed reality. Guy Debord describes the spectacle as the outcome of a social relationship that is mediated by its production of images of the truth. Nevertheless, he argues, images produced of the truth are so closely bonded to the real world they represent that, like the reverse side of the same coin, they are joined into a seamless extension of reality. Debord insists therefore that, in the broadest sense, the spectacle of the truth is "both the outcome and the goal" of its production (1967, p. 13). The spectacle deceives itself, however, insofar as being the product of a truth whose significations become the object of its

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[3] Current discussion of "memes", "an element of culture that may be considered to be passed from one individual to another by non-genetic means, by imitation", qualifies but does not entirely contradict the memory-less transfer of practice through their commodified objectification. The spatial reproduction of the spectacle remains, under the motivation of the commodified economy, a form of imitation nonetheless.

own consumption. Reality erupts into spectacle when the consumption of a signified truth is appropriated into its own "economic" system of production.

9.6   A Narrative of the Spectacle

In Peter Weir's recent film *The Truman Show,* Truman Burbank, played by Jim Carrey, is portrayed as the world's greatest media victim (Paul Byrnes 1998, p. 11). Truman is

> …the star of the world's longest running reality television show, but no one has told him or asked his permission. He was legally adopted by the Omnicom Corporation before he was born and the show has been running 10,909 days since the birth which is about the only authentic thing that has happened to him.

Truman is on TV all the time finding himself in a position that his audience only dreams of. Cristof, the fictional show's producer and creator, directs Truman's whole life as a kind of TV heaven. Cristof is able to satisfy all of Truman's needs but ironically, only by using the simulatory power of the television medium itself.

It is a temptation to exclude the whole external fabric of Peter Weir's film itself from the net of spectacular formation that it produces. However it would be a naive to confine the spectacle of the film to the fictional narrative and its representation on screen. The whole infrastructure of *The Truman Show* as a movie is the "true" spectacle. As Byrnes shrewdly observes

> …Hollywood isn't as good an ideological self-censor as some people believe, and a movie questioning the role of the media in our lives is hardly likely to be unpopular.…

In as much as the movie itself is designed to appeal to the consumers of traditional Hollywood plots, the whole movie enters into a spectacle.

If the movie itself and the viewing audience are excluded from the whole spectacle, Debord's thesis collapses since his theory of the spectacle is not predicted in the outcomes of the movie's plot. The plot portrays Truman as increasingly dissatisfied with his life (as spectacle). He wants to recover a sense of his mortality by mounting an existential rebellion against the forces producing his life. That he wants to do this at all is itself a spectacle of traditional Hollywood movie plots. By virtue of his rebellion within the plot, Truman inadvertently collaborates in the production of a spectacle of "subjective autonomy" that Western audiences, including the critic Paul Byrnes, have come to expect in their movie characters. When the seductive content of Truman's spectacular life in the plot is combined with the motives of the whole movie as screened for an audience, it goes on to satisfy the terms of a Debordian spectacle.

9.7   The Spectacle as an Agent of Change

While Debord advances the spectacle as an article of industrial production, there is no reason to deny its application to the production of knowledge as well. The epistemology of the spectacle is "part and parcel… of a global social praxis that has split up into reality on one hand and image on the other." (p. 13). Truth and reality, entrusted to visual experience within the rhetoric of modernity, have contracted the abstractions of scientific knowledge "…to be seen via different specialised mediations" (p. 17). As a form of value added knowledge the mediated spectacle is, Debord says, "the *chief product* of present-day society" (p. 16). Let us be clear on this point. The spectacle is not to be confused with knowledge itself. It is the objectification of knowledge. The spectacle is quite opposite to the dialectical interaction that characterises the individual's typical engagement with knowledge. Rather it is knowledge made or "produced" into an object of passive contemplation.[4] In this important sense the spectacle reifies knowledge and thus objectifies and renders unalterable the authorities that knowledge portrays

> The fetishistic appearance of pure objectivity in spectacular relationships conceals their true character as relationships between human beings and between classes (p. 19).

At this point Debord reveals his materialist leanings (p. 22). The seductive power of the spectacle is to promise, through the production of spectacular commodities such as cars and televisions and so on, but never deliver its workers material access to the world. The world that workers/students etc. produce only leads them, in the end, to alienation. First the spectacle denies workers access to the material nature of the world insofar as their access is limited to a world restricted to a commodified image. Second, because of the contemplative form in which its commodities are produced, the spectacle acts in restricting workers' ability to communicate with each other. The quality of interaction between a consuming subject and a world of objectified appearances is constrained to a solitary and passive form of contemplation.[5] These dual mechanisms of alienation enable the spectacle to secure the dependency of the beholder, and to "manage" its own perpetuation and advancement.

Nevertheless, the spectacle always portrays the "real" managing directors of spectacular production in their best light. The spectacle empowers its director-managers with the authority to oversee the programme of spectacular alienation. This corresponds with the establishment of a political economy that is conceived, according to Debord "…as at once the dominant science and the science of domination" (p. 29).

> The spectacle now corresponds to the historical moment at which the commodity completes its colonisation of social life. It is not just that the relationship to commodities is now plain to see—commodities are now *all* that there is to see" (p. 29).

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[4] One thinks of the visual literacy movement as an exemplar of spectacular knowledge under these terms.

[5] Debord provides a number of examples. Tourism is a good example of the sort of spectacular objectification to which he alludes.

Unlike the increasingly recalcitrant *Truman,* Debord sees the alienation of the individual within spectacular society as emerging coincidentally with the creation of a desire in the proletariat to collaborate systematically in the consumption of the objects they produce. Debord uses the phrase "guilded poverty" to describe workers captivated by the spectacular contemplation of a commodified world. Workers are not only complicit in the reproduction of this world they are also systematically dependent on the production of its objects for their survival (p. 30).

9.8   Change in the Society of the Spectacle

In this systematic society of the spectacle worker dissatisfaction ceases to become a motivation for social change. The Marxist dialectic of a revolutionary need for progress is irrelevant in a workforce pacified by its dependence upon the production of spectacular commodities. Workers are transformed into functional agents of the commodification system of the spectacle. In this system the motives and ends of production are determined by the economy of the spectacle in which the workers are complicit. In short, even rebelliousness itself becomes a commodity

> …as soon as the economics of affluence finds a way of applying its production methods to this particular raw material (p. 38).

As specialised agencies of production, workers are drawn into a system that devalues the heterogeneity of their personality and shows little respect for the diversity of their accomplishments. Despite dismissal by the system in which they toil, worker's complicity in the system is ensured by the irresistible menu of spectacular roles and objects it makes available for them to choose (see p. 38).

True autonomy, however, is inconsistent with and unattainable by members within a spectacular system. The apparent independence enjoyed by international celebrities, for example is, according to Debord, merely an appearance of individuality and freedom, a spectacle that robs the famous of a true personality. The celebrity's fame is an artefact, a "Beckham and Posh" construction of its managing directors. Celebrity denies its recipients the true autonomy that ought to and is dreamed of being the defining authenticity of the star.

The promise of celebrity is exemplified in the art school rhetoric of "creativity". Creativity is the symbolic capital of Western art schools. Schools of art define themselves in terms of their commitment to the transaction and production of creative originality. Outcomes of the teaching and learning practices used in the production of creativity in Western art schools contradict the uniqueness of originality they are employed to produce. Mimicking celebrity, the "creative process" ends up commodifying the uniqueness of student identity, so definitive of creative originality, and making it universally accessible to students as an outcome of art school pedagogy. Student exhibitions are spectacles of creative originality. Ronald Millar writing in the *Sunday Age* in Melbourne ponders the reason why students continue to stream into art schools despite the bleak reality of unemployment in the arts. He

says "The wonder is not that so many artists drop out in despair after a while, but that so many are happy to replace them" ("Applause" 13, 1998). Debord's answer to Millar is simple. Students are complicit in the systematic production of the spectacle of creative celebrity. They are motivated by the contemplation of the spectacle of power and freedom promised by its object—the charismatic artist

> …on the one hand, of competing yet mutually reinforcing spectacles and, on the other hand, of roles–for the most part signified by and embodied in objects–that are at once exclusive and interconnected, evolves into a contest among phantom qualities meant to elicit devotion to quantitative triviality. Thus false conflicts of ancient vintage tend to be resuscitated– regionalisms or racisms whose job it now is to invest vulgar rankings in the hierarchies of consumption with a magical ontological superiority (p. 40).

The spectacle is represented by Debord as a system of production in which the functional elements composing it are complicit in the maintenance and furthering of their own material well being (see Table 9.1). The predictions of the system of the spectacle are twofold. Firstly that all kinds of knowledge including, for instance, theories of art educational curriculum, prosper when they are well adapted to efficient means of production and reproduction. Second, that knowledge systems

Table 9.1 Symptoms of the spectacle

Knowledge of the spectacle
When truth and reality are entrusted to a visual experience whose significations become fetishised into the object of their own consumption.
The spectacle is a "passive" object of knowledge. Reality erupts into spectacle when consumption of the truth is appropriated under "economic" systems of production.
Social reproduction of the spectacle
When the spectacle cultivates a form of objectified social engagement quite opposite to the dialectical relations that characterise social interaction.
The spectacle restricts communication among its producers. Even rebelliousness itself becomes a commodity "..as soon as the economics of affluence finds a way of applying its production methods to this particular raw material" (Debord 1967, p. 38). Real managers oversee this process of alienation.
The subject of the spectacle
The spectacle promises true autonomy. **Yet** autonomy is inconsistent with its spectacle.
The economy of the spectacle
When workers are not only complicit in the reproduction of the spectacle but systematically dependent on its objects for their survival.
When the production of the spectacle is coextensive with values of commodification and is the chief product of a domain. **Yet** values of commodification determine and select the uniqueness of evaluative judgements. It is not merely the relationship to commodities that is now plain to see—"commodities are now *all* that there is to see" (Debord 1967, p. 29)
When it promises its producers (workers, students) a material form of access to the world, through the production of spectacular commodities. **Yet** alienates and pacifies workers by denying them access to the true material nature of the world.
When the object of production promises spectacular abundance. **Yet** offers a false diversity of choice. "Gilded poverty" a phrase that describes workers trapped in the spectacular contemplation of the false abundance of a commodified world.

prosper to the degree they can provide advantages in commodifying the domains they represent. For example, un-commodified "truths" of art, truths maladapted to spectacular production, however factual they might be, are likely to prove irrelevant, even destructive, of successful curriculum practice in art education.

9.9 Three Spectacles of the Artist

In *Patterns of Intention* Michael Baxandall (1985) argues that descriptions of artworks commonly rely upon inferences about the purposes for which they were made. Where the explicit facts about the artist's intentions are either lost or unknown, therefore, it is necessary to consult a concept of the artist. Since artworks cannot speak for themselves, a well-developed concept provides a means by which inferences can be drawn about the artist's intentions from perceptual cues confined to the work. Baxandall's view is that such a concept is sufficient to enable the interpretation of the intentional cues evident in the work. Thus when we talk about an artwork the agency of the artist is part of a broader concept of art that may originate without any reference to existing artists at all.

In the psychology of art, for example, the motives of the artist are typically represented in the form of universal behaviours. While the production of normative evidence of these behaviours may turn out to be wrong and subject to revision it is churlish to accuse psychologists of falsely naturalising the artist. Developmental psychologists, for instance, are all too aware of the theoretical fragility of the role of the artist as a function within art (Freeman and Brown 1998). Nevertheless it is, after all, an expectation of psychologists that they try to disclose the normal properties of art.

Art education borrows extensively from the developmental psychology of art. But it can also misappropriate it. In cognitive theory artistic talent is explained under two broad constructs—modular or domain specific theory; and domain general or constuctivist theory. Modular theorists naturalise the visual arts by attributing features of artistic cognition to biologically determined faculties of mind (Fodor 1975; Goodman 1976; Gardner 1973, 1983). Domain generalists, on the other hand, argue that artistic cognition is a construct of more broadly based mental processes (Piaget 1963). Science prospers when researchers hit upon the level of analysis appropriate to their content. Currently only some modular properties can be systematically applied to art, and even these may be excluded as the result of historico/cultural changes in artistic identity (Pariser 1997; Brown 1993). Art, unlike physics or even music, is a notoriously indeterminate domain (Efland 1995; Karmiloff-Smith 1992). Thus many of the mental resources artists bring to the production of their work are culturally opaque within artistic practice. Art educationists, although respectful of behavioural explanations of art, are also selective of psychological evidence that maintains a credible representation of artistic practice (Perkins 1994).

Three theories of the artist that are symptomatic of the spectacle in art education are set out below.

9.9.1   The Spectacle of the Artist as Modular Giftedness

The Spectacle of Talent

The drawings of Stephen Wiltshire, Nadia and other savant children provide examples of the early appearance of a domain specific gift. However, the graphic realism in Nadia's drawings produce a spectacle of **artistic** precocity insofar as they give the appearance of accelerated maturity in artistic representation.

The appearance of accelerated maturity in Nadia's drawing, however, conceals a profound autism (Selfe 1979). Freeman has drawn attention to the broad spectrum of mental resources that children bring to the solution of graphic problems in drawing (Freeman 1997). The precocious application of these resources is explained, not as a spectacle of mature graphic verisimilitude, as in Nadia's drawings, but rather, by Freeman, as a demonstration of the advance by very young children towards an object independent capacity for solving the abstract problems of two dimensional representation (Willats 1985). Children's normal advances into graphic abstraction make a poor spectacle in art education by comparison with the precocity of Nadia.

The promise of Nadia's imagery for art education lies in the spectacle of modular "giftedness" in art it betokens. These modular tokens are adult judgements. Nadia's works qualify as art on the basis of sharing the qualities of giftedness that adults value in the dominant art forms of their own time. Korzenik warns us to

> …notice when the influence of our own adult aesthetic tastes may be mistakenly defined as what children would do independently of us (1995, p. 28).

Nadia's drawings are well adapted to industrial reproduction. They are immediately intelligible, seductive, and skilful in presentation. They disclose themselves in appearances that endorse popular assumptions about talent. As uniquely graphic and thus "visual", her drawings capture a unique dimension of the cognitive "market" in education. Her imagery is saleable to educational administrators concerned about clearly defined competencies, reproducible outcomes and in differentiating the domain of art education. As a spectacle, her drawings have been able to commodify artistic modularity through the literature of brain sidedness, and serve as validating evidence in the educational politics of multiple intelligences (Edwards 1993; Gardner 1983).

Ernst Kris (see Kris and Kurt 1979, p. 91) argues that the level of artistic virtuosity has always corresponded with the level of conviction in an awe filled spectator. Artistic virtuosity, Kris explains, varies as a condition of the artist's success in engaging the beholder's involvement with the work. A performance is virtuoso when it convinces the beholder of the dramatic plausibility of its content, when it leaves the content of the work unscarred by gratuitous technical bravura, and when it produces a representational form that is seamlessly adapted to its content. However, the spectacle of the work as a virtuoso appearance already prepared for interpretation in the fifteenth century, as typified in the paintings of Piero della Francesca, is entertained by beholders under quite different rules than today.

Fifteenth century painters and their patrons brokered the value of technical virtuosity in painting within a more widely agreed upon convention of "noble accomplishment" than today (Baxandall 1972, p. 41). Beholders looked for facility in an artist. But facile skill was ennobled by being matched against a commensurably difficult pictorial problem within a strict emblematic framework of guidelines.

This less ambiguous context of interpretation in the fifteenth century has been replaced by the relative solipsism of the avant-garde spectator-voyeur in contemporary art. As if to reassure the beholder of their authenticity, the works of artists, like the later Jenny Watson, make their technique obvious in their appearance. They do this by deliberately constraining technique to vernacular levels of skill. However, their often banal appearance requires beholders to work alongside the artist in earning nobility for their pieces, not through technical facility as in the Renaissance, but through a theoretically cryptic, and what usually turns out to be a far from banal interpretation. An assemblage of bottles on a gallery floor may have a banal appearance and be easily accessed, but the reason why its bottles are installed is referentially obscure. His painterly illusion may be diverting, but it is the reason why Lucian Freud chooses to paint with illusionistic virtuosity that is elusive. If a hologram is employed in the representation of an object or event, it is not the veridical illusion created by the holographic image itself that solicits interpretation, but the artistic motive in choosing to use the medium.[6]

The democratisation of taste and the technical certainty of pictorial reproduction resulted in a decline in the need of technical virtuosity for securing the beholder's conviction. As Hobson (1982) points out, however, the classical relation between appearance and reference continues to define the way we think about art. In its mistrust of the superficiality of virtuoso performances, in its drive toward universal accessibility, in its naturalisation of artistic competency; and in its appearances having to be seen "as something by someone", rather than dictating the terms of their own disclosure, even late modernist art remains first and foremost a Platonic problem for beholders to solve. The modernist relation between the work and its beholders, despite its democratisation, the *de rigeur* of "artist's statements", remains a dialectic, a nominalistic abstraction that continues to marginalise the talent of the trade.

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[6] Paula Dawson, a hologram artist, in a presentation to the Conference CRAFT at UNSW in March 1997, was at length to reassure the audience that her holograms were transparent presentations of her unique and personal vision. Dawson's approach was to demystify holography by the use of simplified explanations of the technology. But her explanations seemed curiously unrelated to her actual works. Through her clarification of holographic technique Dawson gave the impression of earnestly trying to avoid the appearance of pretension in her choice of the technology as a medium, yet reap the benefits of technical virtuosity from her use of holography at the same time—a modernist variant on the ambiguities of virtuoso performance. Nevertheless it is not entirely clear from her talk why she chose holography as a medium, especially since she was at such pains in denying that the technical advantages it affords were her motive for doing so.

The Spectacle of Visual Literacy

If the truth about Nadia's autism threatens the spectacle of artistic modularity, its spectacle can be retrieved in the guise of visual literacy. Based on the semiotics of Nelson Goodman and adapted for art education by Howard Gardner in Project Zero (1973, 1983), the pragmatics of visual literacy formulates the knowledge of art into a system of symbolic representation. Nominalists explain art as a conventional system of symbols paralleling the structure and uses of a language. Knowing in art is equated with psycholinguistic competency in reading the imagery of visual artworks as if they were a written language.

Visual literacy arranges the extensions of art, such as the "artist", "audience", and so on, into characteristically "literate" functions. The artist is conceived in abstract terms as an agency for the encryption of images, and the beholder as a competent reader of artworks. The agency of the artist is constrained within two significant dimensions. The first is presented as the innate ability to make *endogenous* representations within the domains of spatial and graphic notation. The second implies an *exogenous* capacity to exercise these abilities through their formulation within differing notational conventions.

Visual literacy produces a spectacle of the modular artist in art education. It promises spectacular abundance for all by systematising the artist's role in the commodification of art as an instrument of information. Artistic competency, granted to all as a modular gift, teams up the innate legacy of visual intelligence with the grant of cultural membership. The faculties of the artist are thereby normalised into a symbolic modularity present and available within each person. Under the terms of normalisation the value of practical judgements in art are subordinated to values of intelligibility. Students are delivered the prospect of artistic achievement as a simple condition of their membership of a culture. Creative diversity, while accessible to all, is thus limited to the "guilded poverty" of communicating trivially singular information.[7]

Under the univocal terms of visual literacy, the artistic diversity of objects, their diversity of originality, quality and value, is systematically produced through language as a symbolic spectacle. Visual literacy promises the power and freedom of an artistic competency that is unchallenged by difficult to perfect technical skills, apprenticeships, interpretative frames of reference and judgements. Just as the digital camera/copier/scanner and its software have perfected the material subtleties of visual representation, visual literacy has restructured the material processes of visual representation into a spectacle of visual information. Led by semiotic theory, and later by the concept of visual culture, visual information has colonised the visual arts (see for example, Duncum 1993, 1999). Semiotic theory commodifies meaning in the visual arts through its production of the field as a systematised spectacle of reading. Young artists can approach the objectification of their material

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[7]Goodman explains origination in art as self-denotation, a form of signature, or as metaphor—the transferred use of one denotation in place of another—what he calls "moonlighting" amongst symbolic references.

practice as a spectacle in the competency of signs. Young art critics find that their struggle in the search for artistic meaning and value has acquiesced into a spectacle of information.

The spectacle of visual literacy as a modular gift has admitted many into artistic practice that would otherwise disqualify themselves for lack of "talent", skill, or the necessary years of vocational apprenticeship. True artistic autonomy, however, is inconsistent with its semiotic spectacle. The paradox of visual literacy lies, on the one hand, in its promise of systematic achievement while, on the other hand, in turning artists into ciphers of the structure (see Bourdieu 1996, p. 181).

9.9.2   The Spectacle of the Artist as Sophisticated Knower

Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) advances a model of the naive to sophisticated artist. The concept of the sophisticated artist is the result of a linear reconstruction of artistic practice into four disciplines along the lines of that advanced by Bruner (1961) and King and Brownell (1966). In order to give greater meaning to the content of each of the four disciplines, Clark and Zimmerman included two additional concepts: "denotative" and "connotative" learning (1979). Denotative learning, they say, is

> …the attainment of increased precision of meaning and understanding about particular aspects of producing, conceptualising, talking, and writing about works of art as the learner moves on a continuum from the naive to sophisticated levels of attainment. Connotative learning is the attainment …of increased depth of understanding of interrelationships among knowledge's and skills… (p. 37).

Interrelated study of all four professional roles, on a recurring cycle of educational activities is recommended, they argue, since interrelation will lead to a greater degree of connotative learning. This is preferred to learning within only a single role. "Learners should be instructed in and experience educational tasks directly related to all four professional roles"(p. 40). Clark and Zimmerman claim that because of the special relationship that exists between the roles, learning in each of the separate roles is therefore strengthened. Clark and Zimmerman's model of connotative integration in DBAE is derived as a theorem from the postulates of Barkan's (1966) four domains of art. In making few, if any, direct references to the field of artistic practice, Clark and Zimmerman's model of connotative integration adds to the suspicion that the disciplines of DBAE and their interrelation form a spectacle of artistic practice.

The spectacle is explained in research by Carroll and Brown (1998) intercorrelating the characteristics of two practicing artists with those predicted by the concept of "sophisticated" practice in the literature of DBAE. Even though the works of both artists selected in the study are critically acknowledged and thus qualify as sophisticated in broad terms, Carroll and Brown find little evidence of sophistication in either the works, views or attitudes of the two respondent artists

and uncover no rigorously disciplined practice, as it is defined in DBAE. The investigators see the works of the artists as merely one agency contributing to the sophistication of the artist's practice. Their whole practice, on the other hand, is revealed counter intuitively as a-rational, conceptually opportunistic, and technically inconsistent. It emerges that the reflective insights provided by the two respondents effectively misrepresent their motives and performances. Cover terms emergent in the study provide evidence of tacit and complex motivation, as well as incoherence and denial in the respondent's maintenance of their practice. The two respondents demonstrate only vernacular levels of aesthetic understanding that are inconsistent with DBAE definitions of connotative sophistication. Carroll and Brown imply no critique of their artist respondents. They merely point out the asymmetry in the relation between the representations made by the two artists, and their works and practice.

The incremental stages in the development of artistic sophistication modelled by DBAE belie any dialectical involvement with the field of artistic practice. They send a formalist message that garners, within its notion of sophistication, no autonomous reflection by students on the developmental process itself. The stepwise teleology of DBAE, which advances in stages towards predictable and measurable outcomes, is well adapted to the production of the spectacle. The level of control afforded by a linear, accreting concept of practice in art, and the guarantees it offers, lend themselves to commodification on a corporate scale. Hamblen (1997, p. 104) writes of what she calls "second generation DBAE". She believes that twenty years of implementation in schools has changed the emphasis of DBAE towards a return to the teaching of traditional content. However the "Getty", she says, has taken a different approach

> There are claims that art study enhances achievement in non-art learning experiences…and result in healthy social adaptation in general.... DBAE has been prompted as a means of preparing students for the twenty-first century workplace of technology and rapid job turnover (p. 102).

She continues

> …wherein, for example, art historical study links nicely to social studies, geography, and history…is politically advantageous inasmuch as art study can be justified as complementary to math, writing and reading achievement… to become less art based (p. 102).

Thus as DBAE has been appropriated and changed by the Getty since its advent in the late nineteen sixties, the "discipline structure" of art has, as Debord would say, overcome its art content to become the chief product of the domain. "…[C]ommodities are now all that there is to see" (p. 29). The spectacle of the discipline of art has become a self-referring production. Truly "reality erupts into spectacle" when consumption of the truth, in this instance, the cognition of art, is appropriated under economic systems of corporate management.

The notion of the artist within DBAE is consistent with its spectacular appearance as an end. The opportunity to mount such an image of the professional artist is attractive to those with the task of managing its reproduction and marketing to education as a commodified object. But the attraction of the image for those actually involved in its production, including students, is deeply alienating. Nowhere does

DBAE consider a need for students to engage with real artistic transaction. Indeed Zimmerman, in two recent chapters (1995, 1999), describes how the artistic sophistication of a gifted student, Eric, has been accelerated by the intervention of art educational instruction.[8] This "intervention", however, provided Eric with privileged early access to artists and university art studios that extended to him a degree of self-direction not encountered in the DBAE literature. Certainly not that favoured by the Getty (Carroll 1991).[9] In her conclusion, Zimmerman cites experiences and opportunities in Eric's art education that sit incongruously with her disavowal of a *laissez-faire* approach to children's development. Nevertheless, the kind of cultivated, uneven, and reprobate art education she narrates of Eric is hardly recognisable in the literature of Getty DBAE.

9.9.3 The Anthropological Spectacle of the Artist

The contract between educational preparation and artistic qualifications at the close of the twentieth century is less widely agreed upon now than it was during and before the nineteen sixties. Joseph Margolis remarks that *avant garde-ism* and the modernist cult of creative originality have deregulated the conventions of art. Arthur Efland has cogently remarked that art is an "ill-structured domain" and it is widely agreed that all human practices are marked by indeterminacy in their references (Deleuze 1988). The deregulation of the technical conventions of art has made it necessary to study art as if a hyper-individualistic practice was itself a coherent culture. Robert Hughes argues that Americans generally and artists in particular in the late nineteen nineties, accept a sectarian division of "culture" almost to the point where they feel that one person's desires may constitute some sort of culture in themselves. Production of the artist as a disciplined sophisticate in art education has been supplemented by the artist as a production of the culture of everyday life. We all have the artist within us and artists are merely differentiated as those who exercise this ubiquitous faculty in a culturally deterministic way.

Culture theorists in art education assert that to become an artist in our contemporary world we have to do more than learn how to do art—we must learn, in the holistic sense, how to be an artist. Rather than mastering a sequence of qualifying knowledge and techniques we must learn to behave as artists do and inculcate ourselves into their characteristic patterns of behaviour. This implies that teaching art is characterised by finding out what artists think and actually do, and in recording how they do it (Sullivan 1996). But it also implies that investigations into artistic culture are founded on unchallenged presuppositions about the fertility of the

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[8] See also Chap. 12, in this volume.

[9] Nor by many such as Noel Carroll who argue that, because art for art's sake in school cannot justify government and private returns based on its instrumental value alone, that art must either transform itself into something competitive in this regard, such as Getty DBAE, or be cut off. Anything less, says Carroll, would probably destroy the artworld as we know it.

expected results of these inquiries for art educational curriculum. Otherwise the search would be left to the anthropologists.

Rather than challenging the truth about artistic culture, therefore, there is a possibility that the current round of phenomenographies and ethnographies of the artist, serve indirectly as the endorsement of curriculum orthodoxies. Used in this way, ethnographies produce an art educational spectacle of the artist. Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital predicts that any contradictions implicit within the culture [of the artist], any findings antagonistic to prevailing assumptions about its habitus, will remain repressed within (art educational) ethnography as a tacit agreement for misrecognition between the agents involved (1998, p. 92). Like the exchange of gifts in Bourdieu's analysis of the Kabylia, art educational analyses of the artist's social transactions are subject to silence about the truth of the exchange.

In the ethnographic study of the two artists already cited above, Carroll and Brown (1998) demonstrate how what it is that two artists say they think and do, over time, can turn out to be a significant misrepresentation of what they really think and do. As a consequence, Carroll argues, results emerging from the study of artists, although of immense interest, have no privileged status as a model for education in art. For example, both artist respondents in Carroll and Brown's study apply stereotypes of the artist in descriptions of their own practice that cannot be sustained by triangulated evidence emergent in the results. As Rosaldo observes, there is a strong tendency for respondents to tell investigators what they expect to hear, as if complicit in the production of a spectacle of their own identity (1993). One artist, for instance, declares her rejection of outside influences on her work, affirms her commitment to imaginative reflection, and is convinced that her imagination is directed by her previous work (Carroll and Brown 1998, p. 25). In fact it emerges in the study that the respondent's rejection of external influences arises out of professional jealousy of another artist's work and from a defensive lack of creative self-assurance. The authors conclude

> …regret and anxiety in which dilemmas posed by reliance upon her own art work and lack of "determination" to do the works turn the artistic process, for her, into a threatening and uncertain activity.... Her works serve as a way of affirming herself as an artist [justifying her career choice], and her [retreat into solipsistic] subjectivity serves as a way of allaying the anxiety created by the patriarchal threat of competing with the [art] work of others [and avoiding the critical attention of the artworld] (p. 25).

As Cassirer writes of Burckahrdt's biographical approach to the history of Renaissance art, "…to him the world of human doings and human sufferings is no mere human shadow; it is, on the contrary, the very core of reality" (Soussloff 1997, p. 82). This is because Burckahrdt's sources were almost entirely taken from the biographies of poets, politicians and artists. For art historians like Ranke and Burckahrdt biography functioned like the narratives of ethnographies.

Like Ranke, Burckahrdt was caught in the contradiction inherent in the conception of history writing as narrative and an essential belief in the objectivity that the historian could bring to bear on the uncovering and interpretation of the written sources from the period of his investigation (p. 82).

In Carroll and Brown's study application of the ethno-methodology ensured that the "strict" artistic roles of the two respondents were integrated into other detailed functions of their life. The authors found that as validity grew, through deployment of more complex triangulations, a radical indeterminacy was inserted into the artistic identity of the two respondents in a form offering few advantages for the art curriculum.

Many art educationists are attracted by the spectacular opportunities promised by the ethnographic study of artistic culture. Hal Foster (1996) critiques the assumption that ethnographies ensure a critical distance towards "the other". He says

> If cultural studies and new historicism often smuggle in an ethnographic model (when not a sociological one), might it be the *common theoretical ideology* that silently inhabits the "consciousness" of all these specialists… oscillating between a vague spiritualism and a technocratic positivism? (p. 183)

When the other is admired as playful in representation, subversive of gender, and so on, might it be a projection of the anthropologist, artist, critic, or historian? In this case an ideal practice might be projected onto the field of the other, which is then asked to reflect it as if it were not only authentically indigenous, but also innovatively political. He goes on

> I have stressed that reflexivity is needed to protect against an over-identification with the other (through commitment, self-othering, and so on) that may compromise this otherness. Paradoxically, as Benjamin implied long ago, this over-identification may alienate the other further if it does not allow for the othering already at work in representation (p. 203).

It comes down to an issue of correct distancing, what Foster refers to as "retaining the proper perspective". Be this as it may, the unchallenged starting assumption that ethnography provides a productive way of uncovering the culture of artistic practice and of systematically representing the truth of content in art curriculum, obliges ethno-methodology in the production of a spectacle of that to which it refers.

This leads to three forms of mythical interpretation. The first is that ethno-methodological insights into the object of study "locates" or will necessarily lend significance to the research being undertaken. Second

> …is the assumption that this site is always *elsewhere*, in the field of the other—… in the ethnographer paradigm, with the cultural other, the oppressed postcolonial subaltern, or subcultural—and that this elsewhere, this outside, is the Archimedean point from which the dominant culture will be transformed or at least *subverted*. (p. 173)

Third is the presupposition that if the ethnographer/researcher is not themselves perceived as culturally "other" s/he can never know what is needed to influence the "struggle", that is, to gain sufficient representational distance. Whereas on the other hand, if the ethnographer is a member of the cultural other s/he has "automatic" access to the cultural terms of the struggle and runs into problems relating to the creation of sufficient representational difference and credibility. The dilemma is acute for ethno-methodology since, taken together, these three problems of interpretation may amount to ideological patronage. In ethnography it is commonly asked of the researcher to: "…assume the roles of native and informant as well as ethnographer" but, Foster warns, identity is not the same as identification (1996, p. 173).

The "…apparent simplicities of the first should not be substituted for the actual complications of the second" (p. 174). The issue highlights the dilemma of production as a form of self prophecy in the interpretation of artistic culture, and that the clinical nature of the techniques of ethnography lends itself to the production of a visual and spatial spectacle of its analysand.

9.10   Conclusion

This paper concludes, more optimistically than it would seem perhaps, that although doubtful of their fidelity to the truth in the visual arts, each new spectacle of art in the curriculum provides at least a practical object for the art educational gaze. I have explored the sub-domain of the artist in demonstration of this assertion in a way, I trust, that doesn't overstate the pessimism expressed by Debord. There is no reason to imagine that art education bears other than an asymmetrical relation to the domains of art that it represents, even in its most lucid moments. In other words, the domain of art educational practice can never be, nor would it want to be, coextensive with practice in the visual arts. I have suggested in an earlier paper that art education, despite what Efland (1976, 1983) has said, is derivative of its own interests (Brown 1993). Even artists misrepresent the cold truth of their own reality, tacitly preferring the public spectacle that their work tends to reflect. There are good reasons for this. In the best sense, theoretical change in art education is driven by an economy of pragmatic self-interest. Theories chosen are truthful to the domain of art within this economy but only up to the limit of their over-capitalisation. Curriculum theorists and administrators, not to mention practitioners in the field, tacitly sense these limits. Change in art education, it is tentatively concluded, is based on a process of choosing and controlling exogenous theories, a process that is governed by the spectacular possibilities they afford.

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Chapter 10
The Frames and Relational Aesthetics

Artistic activity is a game, whose forms, patterns and functions develop and evolve according to periods and social contexts; it is not an immutable essence. It is the critic's task to study this activity in the present

(Bourriaud 2002, p. 11).

This presentation reflects on the Frames, the component of Visual Arts Syllabi in NSW that many art teachers consider most controversial. The Frames are explicit within the secondary syllabi and have at least an implicit presence in the K to 6 Creative Arts syllabus. The frames first appeared in the NSW 7–10 Visual Arts Syllabus in 1994. Their inclusion in the 11–12 Syllabus was delayed as the result of conflicts arising over their ability to deliver a sufficient body of examinable content to the HSC examination. Eventual integration of the Frames into the senior Syllabus initiated significant changes in the way the visual arts is understood in art education. It transpires that these changes have parallels in the wider field of contemporary art and art historical practice.

This paper reconsiders the evolution of the Frames since their introduction a decade ago. It addresses the following questions. What kind of thing is art and how do the Frames explain the meaning of art? Where do the Frames come from and what is their current status; are they stable and universal or do they evolve and decay? What is the basis of the Frame's authority over knowledge in art and design? And how do the Frames reflect contemporary developments in art and design?

10.1   Natural Kinds and Artefactual Kinds

Works of art are artefactual kinds. Artefacts differ from natural kinds insofar as they are the product of human rather than natural laws. Artefacts are produced by actions originating in human practice rather than as the result of natural events. The causes of artefacts are not meaningfully reducible therefore to physical explanations, even though they are inevitably dependent on the physical world for their conduct to some degree (Searle 1995). The issue is effectively illustrated in objects with an ambiguous dependence upon natural agency for their production, for example, cloned sheep, hip replacements, natural harbours, psychotic crimes, aesthetic experiences, and the vernacular drawings of talented or autistic children. The ambiguous identity of these objects arises from uncertainty over the degree of human 'intention' behind the actions and events involved in their production. For instance as a natural harbour is Port Jackson most appropriately explained by its "natural" qualities or by its employment as a "harbour"?

Objects in the world, including artefacts serve no intrinsic purposes. The only purposes they have are those that we ascribe. We understand objects, whether artefactual or natural kinds, out of our beliefs about the proper ends they ought to satisfy and as a meaningful analogy of human purpose (1995, pp.16–17).[1] Thus the proper ends we attribute to objects are cognitive in their derivation.[2] For this reason even the purposes of precisely adapted artefacts, such as screwdrivers and portrait paintings are subject to change. Functions we ascribe to objects invest them with meaning. For instance, it is commonly accepted that the purpose of North Head in Sydney Harbour is to 'protect' Manly Cove from the south-easterly swell. On the other hand real estate agents agree that a view of North Head 'adds' $1 Million dollars to property values in some streets at Clontarf. We say that the swell is smaller at manly Cove in the event of a south-easter 'because' of North Head's 'ability' to provide protection. Estate agents claim the prices are high at Clontarf 'because' of the breathtaking views 'provided' by North Head. Thus attributing oceanographic and aesthetic purposes to North Head provides a reason that helps explain its relation to Manly Cove and to Clontarf.

10.2   What Is the 'Nature' of Art?

Watercolours and drawings are also institutional artefacts that bear meaningful relations with objects in Sydney Harbour. Berry's Bay and Ball's Head on the inner harbour, for example had a powerful impact upon the works of Roland Wakelin and

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[1] When we say 'The function of the heart is to pump blood we are… situating this fact relative to a system of values…' (Searle 1995, p. 15). We approach objects as if they acted out of a sense of ethical obligation to some cause.

[2] That is, first person subjective.

Lloyd Rees in the first half of the twentieth century. Typically we ascribe agency to the harbour in these works as providing glittering light and colour in Wakelin's painting, and forging the urban genre of Rees' paintings and drawings. Because of their representational character the role of the Harbour in Wakelin and Rees' works seems to hardly need explaining. In other words the harbour is ascribed a self-evident role in their works. The self-evident appearance of Sydney Harbour in the work of Rees and Wakelin conceals the fact that this appearance is nevertheless only an agreed upon role, a role that harbours are incapable of playing intrinsically, that is on their own. Despite the evident purpose of the harbour in Rees and Wakelin's painting the harbour's purpose is nevertheless authorised to function in this self-evident way as agreed upon by the institution of art as it was informed by agreements and expectations of practice in Sydney between the Wars. Although John Firth-Smith's and John Olsen's abstract expressionist paintings bare a relation to Sydney Harbour, betokened by their evocation of salt stained ships' sides, the bow wash of yachts on the water, and their evocation of eerie marine depths, the reference to the Harbour in both of these artists is far from self-evident. Does this imply that the role of the Harbour in these paintings is less certain, less factual than the self-evident role of paintings by Rees? How do we know whether the Harbour plays a significant role in Indigenous works before European settlement if its appearance is not self-evident in their work?

Ascribing purpose to artefacts entails establishing relations with other objects. These relations are always mediated by some reason making sense of the link.[3] For instance, it is claimed above that the link between the harbour and Firth-Smith's painting is explained by references to sea qualities in its imagery. Is this explanation sufficient? Not really in as much as it begs a satisfying **explanation** of the referring link between Sydney Harbour, boats, sea, and the abstract painted marks in his paintings. It is not sufficient to claim a role in the relation between objects unless the claim is supported by a reason. The evidence never speaks for itself even though it may 'appear' to do so after the link has been explained. The relation between objects and events must be detectable by some form of agreement warranting a motive for the relation being attributed. To put it more sympathetically it is inauthentic to identify a link between objects where the relation between them lacks an agreed upon meaning or defies understanding.

Talk of reasons may imply that purposeful referring relations in art are determined by logical deduction from rules. To think this way conflates the system of relations among the properties of artifactual objects, with the logical relations found within the functions of closed system of nominal kinds such as mathematics. Reasons enable us to understand how objects are invested with intentions by drawing a meaningful analogy with human action. This accounts for our approbation of qualities in paintings as ones that "work" (or don't "work"), as if they were

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[3] All this talk of reasons and rules implies that purposeful relations between objects are determined by logical deduction when this is not the case. To think this way conflates the system of relations among natural and artefactual objects with the logical relations within the closed system of nominal objects such as mathematics.

successful in doing something of value in relation to other functions contributing to the piece. Even intentions that are illogical can function as plausible, objective reasons.

Both science and art are institutions dedicated to the attribution of purpose and meaning to objects. Thus the identity of objects is determined by institutionally agreed upon purposes in relation to the constellation of the objects and events with which they interact. Extensions to the number and kind of object with which purposeful connections can be made is determined institutionally through the values and facts arising from the impact of their relations between objects. Institutional agreements enable us to predict and determine causes. Reasons enable us to understand how agreements entertained within the field of art and its institutions operate within a system of objects. Galleries, past works, genre, titles, artists, viewers, period, subject matter all vie for a purposeful role in their relation with art. Changes in convention and value subject these relations to constant revision. In art the shear magnitude of the connections and the volatility of technological change render the relations between artefacts indeterminate and unpredictable by comparison with the stable connections between properties underlying natural kinds.

10.3   The Role of the Frames

What then are the systems of reasoning that apply to artefacts within the institution of art? If an institution ascribes a purpose to an object, for instance the role performed by Berry's Bay in a painting by Wakelin, how is this role justified? In other words, how is the sparkling light and colour of the Bay transported into the painting and set to work? On the face of it transportation is provided by Wakelin's skills as an artist. The difficulty is that we don't see the glitter of the water through knowledge of the artist's technique. Rather we see it as the result of the illusion of reality created as **resulting** from the virtuosity of his technique. So if I make a claim about the glittering harbour in a Wakelin painting, my claim is justified by the fact of its immediate visibility, not by a deduction from knowledge about Wakelin's skills. Thus although it appears as if the artist is causing the work it is in fact the representational quality of the picture warranting my attachment of purpose to Berry's Bay in his painting. As already suggested above the evidence cannot speak for itself.

How, then is purpose attached to Sydney Harbour in Firth-Smith's abstract paintings? That is, how are the properties of the harbour transported into abstract paintings? The artist's technique and feeling is as clearly instrumental as it is in Wakelin's painting. But unlike the latter the intention of the harbour is not immediately visible. In Firth-Smith's painting the purposes of the harbour are in large part semiological. In other words it is necessary to acquire the 'harbour' code, deciphered through its application in Firth-Smith's previous harbour works, in order to appreciate the harbour's intention that is nevertheless 'visible' in his paintings.

In order to be visible in paintings Sydney Harbour is thus able to display itself as well as send messages in paintings within agreed upon constraints. Aesthetic display

and aesthetic codes are two among a number of systems of objects at work in art enabling us to understand the relations between the Harbour and the paintings. These systems provide the basis on which the purposes attached to objects by the institution of art as well explain how these objects form relations with other relevant entities. Although purposes are attached to these paintings by agreement only, their factuality is assured by the rules of the system and by their success in explaining the meaning of these relations as a function of them being made apparent in objects. Thus many of the properties of paintings are are subject to agreement and can be taught as knowledge. In the NSW Visual Arts Syllabi these systems of objects are referred to as the Frames.

10.4   The Frames as Navigational Tools

In understanding the Frames care should be taken not to confuse ontology with epistemology. What does this mean? Paintings of Sydney Harbour are artefactual kinds existing in the form of agreements in the relations between objects. However, the emergence of these agreements within the institutions of art is contingent. Unlike natural kinds the properties of artefacts are collected and discarded according to the purposes ascribed to them. This process of ascription unfolds as the result of historical, cultural, geographical, economic and philosophical chance. In art these events are mostly unforeseen, and highly indeterminate. For this reason the formation of values contributing to the existence of artworks must be thought of as directed independently of mind. Artworks are caused by complex and fortuitous agreements that are brought into objective existence via purposeful relations forged between its contributing agents. This is the ontology of artefacts the means by which art comes into being, endures, and is destroyed.

   The Frames organise these relational agreements into meaningful epistemic systems confirming the truth of their existence. The Frames can operate at the vernacular and untutored level (Brown 1992), or they can be informed by sophisticated theories and world-views. Some frames such as the one substantiated by aesthetic experience are tacitly embedded within common sense. Others such as the semiotics of gender for instance remain esoteric and are accessible only via special knowledge. Some frames are subject to challenge and go out of use. Others mount a revolutionary challenge to existing frames. The Frames provide a way of knowing art leading the knower to an aesthetic and artistic space at which the purposeful relations between objects can be shared and affirmed. If an art teacher says a painting by Wakelin is about the harbour, the Frames link up relations between the harbour and Wakelin's painting by providing an explanation. For example, do we sense and feel the link to the harbour, do we read it as a sign or do we simulate how Wakelin must have felt or, maybe, simply learn it from an authoritative textbook? The meaning of 'the harbour' in relation to a mark in the painting will vary in relation to the identity 'the harbour' shares with some system of reasoning; it will vary as some kind of feeling, system of signs, authoritative text and so on. It is a condition of

knowing that a critical description of a work be faithful to the referential basis or frame to which its describing words are linked, and on the understanding that each system imposes constraints on the meaning of particular art works. Thus the frames are about practical reasoning insofar as they are about choosing the most appropriate description among alternative critical claims. Does this choice extend to meta-critical choices, that is, choices between different frames?

Whether the harbour is framed as an aesthetic object, a cluster of formal properties, a module of thought, an attitude, a belief, or a culturally determined text, constrains the features of the harbour that a Wakelin work can possess, and the ways in which teachers and students can legitimately gain access to them. Different frames admit and exclude properties from works according to the way in which they legitimate the purposes and roles they allow artworks to perform. The frames justify claims about what can be seen in artworks, validate explanations of how works are constructed, enable a critic to take up different interpretative points of view, and re-set the benchmarks of artistic value. For example, artworks identified as a type of 'attitude in the beholder' have their meanings searched for within the artistic tokens of a student's felt experience. The meaning in a 'semiotic' type of work, on the other hand, is sought out within its token system of signs. Thus students who can feel the warmth in an image through their experience of an image under one system may find themselves learning of its warmth by reading the denotative labels under another—simulated in the first type and symbolised in the second. The relations between objects in art are believed, intended, entrenched, dreamt, felt, encoded, simulated, projected, theorised, represented, imagined or sensed in different ways, depending on the system of reasoning under which they are conceived. This of course is not to say how the artist thought, or even how the beholder thinks. Nor is it an unwarranted projection onto the existence of the work. It is implicit within the Frames that their claims be justified with independent reality of the work.

To think autonomously within the critical economy of the frames, teachers must avoid entrapment in parallel worlds of artistic identity. Isolation within two incommensurable frames, such as the worlds of visual literacy or hyper-subjectivity for example, confuses an artwork with a single reference in the most rigid way. Choosing the systems under which the relations between objects in artworks can be described, however, requires some sort of meta-map. This map creates an ontological space in which the relations between objects and their descriptions relative to one or another frame can be compared. Within this protective place descriptions can turn out to be wrong, frames can be subject to change and are allowed to be conventionally different without calamity. This lucid, virtual space differentiates knowledge about the work form the independent existence of the work itself. It provides the knower with a road, as Stephen Muecke says, for joining up different frameworks of knowing.

10.5   Revisiting the Current Frames

The frames as they are currently expressed in the Syllabus reflect four broad philosophical systems of knowing that have proven to be historically influential in the field of art. These are systems that have emerged in the humanities over the last two hundred years. Taken on face value these systems are incompatible insofar as they make competing ontological claims upon artefacts about which the critic has to choose. The Subjective Frame was displaced by the Structural Frame, which was challenged by the Marxist Frame and most recently by the Poststructural Frame. Each Frame mounts a strong historically situated critique of those frames placed before and after them. By taking a realist stance the NSW Visual Arts Syllabus has sought to reposition the Frames from ontologies into systems of knowing. Repositioning as epistemological rather than ontological systems transforms the Frames from oppositional into complementary relationships.

What is the authority of the Frames? The Frames are historical entities. They are not universals but grounded systems of value. Their legitimating function stems from their explanatory power. By bringing the knower into touch with powerful sources of critical intuition they provide a basis on which claims about relations between objects can be invested with meaning and purpose—referred to more formally as "intentionality". The Frames bring a theoretical power to art in as much as they enable us to predict ways in which the relations between properties and agencies in art influence each other. They provide critical autonomy to knowers in their encounters with art. Where as art history and iconography have been traditionally organised around taxonomies by period and medium (abstract expressionism, surrealism; painting and sculpture), the Frames enable the rapid, purpose built assembly of agents and properties into relational systems. Some teachers in NSW see the Frames mistakenly as categorical slots into which art works have to be sorted. By contrast the Frames can experiment with claims about the relations between objects and mount reasoned justifications of those claims. The different Frames enable multiple perspectives that can be used to test and amplify the range of possible relations among artefacts. These claims although true, need only serve a half-life. They do not have to be critically defended indefinitely. Once a purpose is fulfilled, framed relations can be reassembled in different configurations, or simply allowed to disperse. Their survival is a condition of their critical usefulness.

Is there any evidence of new Frames emerging? Well I can think of two new contenders. These are the Body and Materiality. The Body challenges the concept of disinterest in aesthetic subjectivity and extends the structure of the current Subjective Frame. Materiality reconciles practical skill in the making of art and design with critical reasoning. To my mind these two examples warrant adoption. Do we have to formally revise the Syllabus and update it every time a significant conceptual change of this kind emerges in art and design? I don't think so. It is time art teachers took over responsibility for maintaining, discussing and extending the Frames from curriculum authorities.

10.6   Relational Aesthetics

The increasing significance of the Frames is supported by the rapid development of new technology in art developments that have transformed the relations between objects and overseen their configuration into interactive systems. Nicholas Bourriaud refers to these developments in art as relational aesthetics. Bourriaud takes art theory into the virtual space opened up by the immersive, dialectical and relational possibilities of interactive media and the effects of globalisation.

Bourriaud is the first of the young contemporary curators and art theorists to treat modernism as a separate historical event. In this way Bourriaud divests modernism of the polemic characterised by the tension between the avant-garde, critical theory, and poststructural transfiguration. Modernism, overturned in the twentieth century, is rendered sufficiently distant by Bourriaud's historical repositioning in 2005, for its contribution to art practice to be reinstated without polemic.

Bourriaud contrasts twentieth century modernism with twenty-first century trends towards globalisation as follows:

- Modernism is based on a system of universal values. Although the modernist concept of universalism contrasts sharply with the contemporary concept of globalisation universalist values may very well make a positive contribution to contemporary practice in art. Other modernist values worthy of reconsideration include the:

  - celebration of innovation and the exotic
  - search for universalist theories in the arts and social sciences
  - valorisation of the present

The vision of progress embedded in modernist universalism qualifies the way in which modernism perceives the differences between cultures. Modernism perceives all cultures as being in various stages of progress towards a Utopian state. Thus cultures are understood as being either relatively 'advanced' or 'late' in their progress towards that universal state. Globalisation, on the other hand, perceives the relationships between cultures as a program of translation and diplomacy.

If cultural difference is the contemporary rule then art should be the exception. Art should break its identity with culture rather than capitulate to culture. Art is about difference and singularity not about plural conformity. Foreign cultures can thus serve as a measure of one's own culture, reflected through art because of their difference.

- The hyper-relativism of our postcolonial and poststructural world strips contemporary art of its dialectical function and of its role as critical transgressor. Dialogue is very difficult to initiate among hyper-relativistic attitudes towards culture; but it is difficult to sustain outside the universalist space provided by modernism. A false universalism has been substituted for globalisation in the format of the computer screen. Artists should reject the format of the screen if

not the Net. The screen is a contemporary manifestation of the "Green Card".[4] Artists should invent new formats as well as new pathways though the internet in reclaiming a dialogical role for art.

- Return to Modernism must accommodate to the recent changes in the economy of knowledge. For instance it is no longer possible to be the scholar/artist, in the traditional sense of being a repository of structured knowledge and technical skill. Skill has been automated and knowledge in every domain has expanded beyond comprehension of the individual scholar. Scholarship is being replaced by ALTER-MODERNISM the navigation of knowledge through the employment of new technology. Bourriaud models the alter-modernist scholar on the artist. He identifies the artist as a "semionaut", a person who explores new pathways through culture. Artists connect and make links between objects by mimicking the editor of screenplays. Art and knowledge is about the production of new pathways—about difference. Artists enhance traceability by reinventing the tools for contacting the past. The artist is a nomad in search of pathways imminent within functional possibilities and purposes of objects. Bourriaud draws an analogy between these pathways and the radicle, a branch or nerve that superficially resembles the root of a plant. Like exploring the path of a new radicle the past always precedes new pathways albeit in the form of reconfigurations.

10.7   Relational Aesthetics and the Frames

Bourriaud's concept of relational aesthetics post-dates the Frames in NSW Visual Arts Syllabi by nearly ten years. Yet the Frames are resonant in his concept of relational aesthetics. Insofar as the Frames are pathways that: join relational objects; form rational and abstract links between incommensurable cultures; are reconciled a-historically as alternative systems of objects rather than mutually exclusive ontologies; are navigational tools rather than scholastic taxonomies of knowledge; are dialectical rather than hierarchical; are able to assemble functional relations between objects that are purpose built and demountable rather than immutable; are interactive rather than didactic; and are subject to evolution—they resemble relational aesthetics as characterised by Bourriaud.

Little has been said about the Frames in relation to multimodality and digital technologies in art. Nevertheless, the practical reasoning that underlies an inherently event based, Net based, interactively constitutive, scalable, editorially based, new media art, reflects the cognitive architecture of the Frames. Figure 10.1 below overprints in blue the place occupied by the Frames on a functional map of art that is familiar to art teachers in NSW. The Frames join the lines between the objects (or functions) art, artist, world and artwork by providing the basis on which purposes ascribed to these objects can be tested and explained. The Frames provide meaning by affirming the value of the functions with which art objects are assigned. To ask

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[4] The Green Card is an emigration permit to enter the United States.
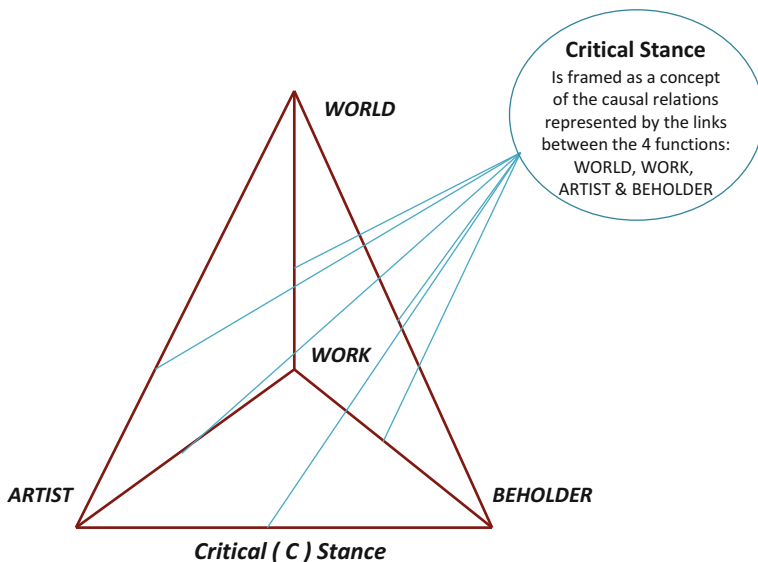
Fig. 10.1   Concept map of art

students whether an artist who has been ascribed as being in a 'depressed' state can, while in this state, make a 'happy' artwork; or to ask the meaning of happiness as a claim made about a work in relation to the artist who made it, is to ask for knowledge of a reason. Reasons enable teachers to mandate knowledge in art. The Frames provide this mandate.

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Chapter 11
The Meta-representation of Standards, Outcomes and Profiles in Visual Arts Education

Schwab claimed that there are six signs by which subjects in crisis within curriculum can be identified:

- 'a flight of the field itself, a translocation of its problems and the solving of them from the nominal practitioners of the field to other men [sic]';
- 'a flight upward, from discourse about the subject of the field to discourse about the discourse of the field, from use of principles and methods to talk about them, from grounded conclusions to the construction of models, from theory to metatheory and from metatheory to metametatheory';
- 'a flight downward, an attempt by practitioners to return to the subject matter in a state of innocence, shorn not only of curriculum principles but of all principles';
- 'a flight to the sidelines, to the role of the observer, commentator, historian, and critic of the contributions of others to the field';
- 'marked preservation, a repetition of old and familiar knowledge in new languages…'; and
- 'a marked increase in eristic, contentious and ad hominem debate' (from Kemmis 1986, p. 55)

In ensuring the judgement of teachers against national standards, outcomes, and similar measures Schwab would be among the first to agree that educational authorities 'define the process of development and learning as if there were no fundamental debate about these processes' and tend 'to define the knowledge needed to live in the modern world (to accept prevailing mores, to develop vocational skills, or to participate effectively in groups) as if these were not also the subject of debate' (p. 55).

The National Curriculum agenda of Government in Australia (1993), and Great Britain (1992), as well as the National Standards programme in the USA (1994), is thought by some, in Schwab's terms, to foreclose on debate deriving curriculum and syllabus structures as if from a single rationale of society. This paper explores the relationship between subject content and outcomes at a time in which 'national standards', 'outcomes' and their concomitant 'profiles' are rapidly firming into a representative of that 'single rationale of society' which Schwab refers to as being 'treated as agreed' (Mayer 1991).

Outcomes constitute a world wide approach to curriculum accountability that is remarkable for its competency based criteria, its measurement of fit in relation to work samples, and for what might be phrased its 'moral conduct of knowledge'. The latter is clearly illustrated by the National Curriculum Programmes of Study of Art in Great Britain in which all bar a few of its 'End of Stage Statements' are marked be an increasingly narrow range of ethical injunctions as to what the student 'should' or 'could' have done to show that they know a particular subject (Mason 1992, p. 85). Increases in the assurance of standards would appear to be inversely related to diversity in curriculum outcomes.

Elliot Eisner (1993, p. 22) points out, with some irony that the term 'standards' has multiple meanings. Standards, Eisner says, can refer to 'icons of student performance', 'something that is common or typical', 'a rite of passage' and so on. He draws a further distinction between standards and criteria. Criteria are different to standards, he argues because criteria make reference to the qualities by which a property can be judged. For example, knowing the nature of 'heat' as experience requires the knower to make reference to criteria of judgement. Knowing 'heat' as temperature, on the other hand requires consultation with a standard of knowledge such as a thermometer (p. 22). The fault in national standards, he suggests lies with the educational policy which privileges standards of measurement over criteria of judgement in the assessment of curriculum outcomes.

There are two important semantic issues addressed by Eisner in these remarks. First, there is little doubt that 'standards' and 'outcomes' do have multiple meanings as he says. Second, criteria, as balance points designed to adjudicate among qualities are little more than standards themselves. The difference between standards and criteria can be expressed as a variation in the degree of inference required in their application. However, when Eisner distinguishes between heat 'as temperature' and heat 'as experience' he is not simply referring to two degrees of measurement, he is making use of two qualitatively different referential systems. Embedded in Eisner's comments is the question of how educational systems of reference affect the meanings of outcomes and standards?

The Eltis Report, an inquiry into 'Outcomes' reporting in curriculum commissioned by the Ministry of Education in NSW (1995, p. 33), devotes a lengthy passage to an analysis of the different ways in which respondents to the inquiry identify outcomes. The Eltis Report concludes that, irrespective of the New South Wales Board of Studies' (NSW BOS 1991, 1996) official definition, widespread variation in the interpretation of outcomes by New South Wales' teachers was likely to have 'implications' for the implementation of outcomes reporting in schools.

For reasons foreshadowed by Eisner, this paper argues that despite the hegemony of official definitions, such as those applied by the NSW BOS above, widespread misrepresentation of official positions on standards and outcomes by teachers is unavoidable for the following reasons.

11.1 Outcomes as Representational Artefacts

Outcomes, like paintings and photographs are representational artefacts that qualify as representations because of the way they refer to something else. As representational artefacts both paintings and outcomes express a representing relation between the particular things they represent and the way they represent them. This relation is distinguished by a number of characteristics. For example, as representational artefacts artworks and outcomes stand in an asymmetrical relation to the thing they represent (the referent) (Perner 1991, Ch. 4). Thus paintings may represent trees but trees do not represent paintings. In much the same way curriculum outcomes may represent subject content but subjects do not represent outcomes. In addition, referents in the representing relation are always representations as something (the sense), so that the reference of a painting of a particular horse may be variously represented as a portrait of *Phar Lap*, as a romantic fiction, or as a view of early Sydney life. Similarly, a particular subject outcome might be referred to as a level of achievement, as a way of bringing teachers to account, as a particular form of reporting, and so on. However, it is a general characteristic of representations that the causal connection between the sense and referent is opaque within the relation and needs interpreting.

In order to interpret the representing relation within standards and outcomes it is important to understand the relation which exists between the referent an outcome represents, and the kind of thing the outcome is represented as. For ease of interpretation it would be helpful if the representing relation between the sense and referent could be explained as a simple influence of one upon other. As if, for example, the cypress trees in a painting by van Gogh were able to cause an insight into the painter's expressive mood, or the content of a subject domain in science, such as 'heat' was able to determine the outcome levels of a student's performance. But if representations not only represent their referents but also represent them in a certain way, then there is nothing in the properties of Vincent's cypress trees that causes their representation as properties of Vincent's mood, nor in the properties of heat as a subject that causes its representation as a level of student performance. Thus, it is typical for a subject in art or science to be referred to in ways for which there may be no apparent reason. For example, an outcome about heat can be referred to as knowledgeable, as an appropriation, as stupidity, as accelerated learning, as teacher incompetency and so on. This asymmetry in the meaning of outcomes needs to be explained.

11.2   Definitions and the Mis-representation of Outcomes

Given the indeterminacy of the representing relation it might seem like a good idea
to follow the line of the NSW BOS and define the relation between curriculum con-
tent and outcomes so that the meaning of outcomes (and perhaps the meaning of
paintings too) could be made unambiguous. On reflection, however, defining the
relation may prove of little advantage. Definition denies the representing relation its
role in opening up a meaningful difference between the things artefacts refer to and
what they refer to them as. Definitions lack meaning because the special senses cre-
ated within definitions form identities with the things to which they refer. Identities,
like tautologies, beg the intuition of meaning motivating the need for representa-
tions in the first place. Defining the representing relation between the cypress trees
and a quality of melancholia in Vincent's paintings at Arles would establish an
identity between the cypress trees and a melancholic mood. Far from interpreting
their meaning, however, an identity between trees and mood would lead only to the
need for further interpretation, or even to the registration of the trees as a new botan-
ical species 'cypress melancholia'.

In establishing contingent identities definitions, like names, fail to allow for mis-
representation within their representing relation (Dretske 1986, p. 74; Dennett 1987,
p. 293). This is because a definitional approach draws up a map that legislates an
arbitrary relation between sense and referent as if it were conferring a name. My
name is Neil but it would be an unlikely circumstance under which I could ever be
misrepresented 'as Neil'. In a similar way defining the relation between curriculum
subjects and outcomes aims to fix the terms on which teachers analyse student's
progress and perhaps, thereby, insure against teacher error. Easy to apply at first,
definitions, nevertheless, leave teachers without a clue as to the overarching system
uniting the relation (Perner 1991, p. 24).

Let us suppose, for example that an educational authority, again say the NSW
BOS, has divided a particular subject into five outcome levels. The division is ran-
dom insofar as at the moment of division the subject matter in level 3 could just as
easily be defined as level 4 or 5, as at level 3. In the beginning, teachers might have
little trouble in interpreting the map and while ever the definition works consistently
the students, parents and principal are satisfied. However, two things can happen
along the way. Firstly, at some point the teacher might be presented with an unex-
pectedly poor student performance at level 5. But the teacher miss-classifies the
poor performance at level 5 as an average performance at level 3. Is it that level 3
outcomes are really poor level 5 outcomes, or that outcome levels are qualitatively
different allowing for degrees of performance not equating with performances at
lower levels and so on?

The question then arises—is it the teacher's error or the student's poor perfor-
mance which causes the level to be wrongly classified? Insofar as things (level)
cannot cause their representations (performance) it cannot be the latter. On the other
hand, how is it possible for the teacher to be wrong when s/he has applied the stan-
dard consistently? The student at level 3 is performing well only insofar as they are

not misrepresented as to their outcome level. Does it matter if all we are concerned about is the outcome performance?

It is now possible to see that it is because of the teacher's consistency in applying the definition that s/he misrepresented the student's level of performance as average level 3 as opposed to poor level 5. The relation between the particular subject (referent) and its representation as an outcome level (sense), which was established arbitrarily under the initial terms of the definition, has gradually begun to carry an interpretation. Because performances represented by levels are intricately interdependent and the causal history of actual student performances, although consistently assessed by the teacher under the terms of the definition, are nuanced the misclassification has opened up the randomness of the original definition to interpretation. By itself and to begin with the definition of outcomes provides an infallible yet meaningless interpretation of performance. Later on, however, the definition was made fallible, not by the change in sense from level 5 to level 3, but by the functional use of the definition by the teacher in the context of mapping student performances (Davidson 1984).

These changes in the relation can be expressed schematically on a concept map of 'outcomes' as:

The agency of the outcome > to > subject relation of the definition is expanded under the terms of the misrepresentation into an outcome > to student > to subject relation. In other words, the outcome of level 5 is caused, by the teacher's assessing of students' performances over time, to refer to the subject content at level 5 as level 3. The teacher's background of experience in applying the definition to actual student performances has added a functional complexity to the reference that the arbitrariness of the definition concealed.

However tightly they are pinned down by definitions, outcomes and standards remain representational artefacts that will eventually require interpretation by the teacher and which, to be meaningful, must be able to be wrong (misrepresented).

Secondly, the fallibility of definitions gives an insight into the way in which a misrepresentation satisfies the same relational conditions as a representation that is true. The difference between a fictional and a real map of 'outcomes' is structurally minimal. The former differs from the latter only to the extent that it is an unreliable construal of the world to which it refers (Jackendoff 1988, p. 83). However, the reliability of fit between a 'standard' and 'subject content' is not determined by the subject content to which it refers but is interpreted as a function of the compatibility between content 'as being' and the content 'as evident' in some way (Lakoff 1987; Perner 1991, p. 29; Minsky 1982).

Thus, whether concealed in a definition or not, the representing relation of an outcome is simply a map for representing a body of subject matter (such as 'heat') as a level of performance, but it is the functional compatibility of that relation that determines its meaning. A concept of 'outcomes' and 'standards' is a model of the functional compatibility within their representing relations and that model is constrained by a concept of some kind.

11.3   The Ontology of Outcomes

The possibility of misrepresentation, Perner (1991) argues influences reference in a number of important ways. One way is that a model of outcomes, once considered to be a good fit with subject content, can subsequently come to be seen as a bad fit and be duly modified. Another is the ontologically interesting possibility of the existence of different kinds of outcome, that is, the possibility of more than one model of outcomes existing as several competing 'fits'. The latter possibility not only gives rise to different senses of outcomes, the content to which outcomes refer, but also to different ways of referring to outcomes themselves.

Perner (p. 35) describes representational stories about representations as meta-representations. Stories about outcomes become meta-representations when 'outcomes', as representational artefacts themselves are made into the referent. Earlier in this paper Eisner was quoted as remarking that standards could be referred to as 'icons of student performance', and 'something that is common or typical' and so on. Opaque within these different senses of standard are the meta-stories explaining their meaning.

11.4   Meta-narratives and Outcomes

Among the ways outcomes and standards can be educationally meta-represented are—as propositional attitudes, as forms of communication, as post-structural texts, as naively real entities, as behavioural dispositions, among others. Educational meta-narratives are not the preserve of educational experts. Narratives may also include folk theories of education held by parents, employers, and students. Nor are educational meta-narratives limited to specific, isolated conceptions. They are stories establishing external relations with other concepts such as 'teacher', 'student', 'subject matter', 'employer', 'parent' etc., which are woven together into explanatory plots (Duit 1991; Boyd 1984, pp. 9–11).

The completeness and coherence of a meta-narrative is characterised by the extension of concepts it weaves into its net, mindful that different narratives may sample the same concepts and, by the theoretical consistency in its explanation, of the relation between them (Keil 1989, p. 42). An outcome that is meta-represented as a naively real kind of thing, for example admits properties of the referent, such as the reality of a distinctive subject content ('heat'), that a post-structural outcome would exclude.

11.5 Predicting the Referents of Outcomes Within Educational Meta-narratives

A number of questions can be framed using the concept map schematised in Fig. 11.1 modelling alternative relations between relevant functions 'teacher', 'student', 'employer', and 'outcome'. The purpose of these questions is to explore variations in the meaning of standards and outcomes among different educational meta-narratives. Variations in meaning are characterised by sampling the properties transported between the sense and referent of 'outcomes' within each narrative.

For instance, consider the relational question 'can a bad teacher make a good outcome?' This question tests the conditions under which the properties of teacher competency are transported between the functions of 'teacher' and 'outcome'. The significance of the representing relation in this question challenges the belief that standards serve as a hedge against indifferent teaching. A second question—'can an individual student make an individual outcome?' inquires into the terms under which the unique properties of the student are able to be represented as an outcome, and tests the concern that national curriculum standards may be harmful to the
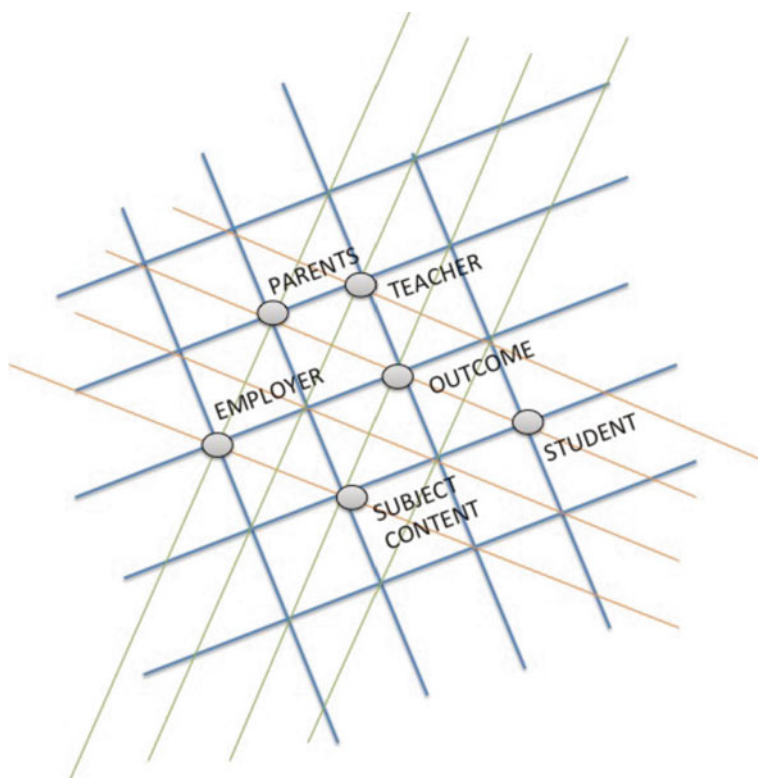
Fig. 11.1 A concept map of 'outcomes' and 'standards' as a homeostatic cluster

individuality of students. The conditional question—'could a general outcome satisfy the needs of a particular employer?' ponders the different educational terms under which a liberal curriculum has vocational relevance; and so on.

Take the following relational question:

'*Can a difficult subject make an easy outcome?*'

This particular question challenges an understanding of the relation between the properties of outcomes and the properties of the subject content that outcomes represent (emboldened on Fig. 11.1). The following five educational meta-stories give five different explanations in support of their yes/no answers (A1, A2, etc.).

A1   *No. Just as there are some trees that are more difficult to draw than others so more 'difficult' subjects like mathematics have more difficult outcomes.*

This is a typically naive realist explanation. It explains the relation between trees and drawing, subjects and outcomes, in terms of a—tree > to > sketch—direction of causal agency on the concept map. In this explanation, the thing represented, the tree is causally implicated in its representation, the drawing. It suggests, for example that hard subjects make hard outcomes. Naive realists omit the role played by student abilities, teacher competencies, social context and other agencies that might be counter intuitively opaque within the referent, and violate the condition of asymmetry in the representing relation. 'Common sense' or naive explanations of this sort are most likely to be given by young students, some employers and parents. Employers and parents who believe that subjects like mathematics and art are of little value to vocational education, may labour under the naive realist misapprehension that abstract subjects cause abstract outcomes. Naive realists represent outcomes as something that the properties of a subject cause students to know. Any debate about this is likely to puzzle naive realists because the relevant subject matter is unable to provide them with a common sense reason why the relation is being misrepresented.

A2   *Yes. If students understand how to draw trees then the properties of the particular tree being drawn are irrelevant to the difficulty of the drawing. Outcomes nominating understanding as an 'end' increase the accessibility of a subject to students.*

This narrative is typically idealist. It is founded on the relation believed to exist between types of subject content and their representation as tokens in the student's mind (Scheffler 1973). Idealist outcomes are typically narrated in the psychological language of intentional objects, beliefs, understandings, states of mind, and propositional attitudes. Seen as reflective things outcomes represent a private transaction between student and subject matter. Idealists explain the answer to the relational question as a—subject > to > student > to—outcomes direction of causality where students cause the representation of subject content as outcomes of their understanding. Thus the drawing of a particular tree is seen as behaviour caused by intentional belief, rather than as a naive outcome caused by the tree being drawn. Educational outcomes emphasise the gestation, revisiting, and mental

re-description of content, finding absolutely no place for outcomes as end on teleology. The language of outcomes employs the descriptions of 'underlying', 'basis', and 'grounding' and picture outcomes in terms of a deeper grasp rather than as successively higher levels of performance. Idealists argue that outcomes represented as steps and ends foreclose on the potentiality of students' imagination. To attempt the representation of understanding itself as a competency, outcome or standard is futile for it would merely invoke the need for an intermediate set of new understandings and begin the entry into an infinite regress. As Wittgenstein acidly reflects—understandings are a condition of knowing in addition to being an end, as stated in Answer 2.

A3   *Yes. Students are habituated to tree drawing genres at school. Tree drawing genres serve to impose a structural convention on the particular qualities of the tree being drawn. Different purposes for the tree drawing are co-extensive with different genres of tree representation. In much the same way, semiotic outcomes impose different structures of meaning on particular subject content. These structures sort out different references according to the purposes that they serve. Hard subject matter can always be framed within easy conventions of reference.*

This is a typically semiotic narrative (Kress 1993). Semiotic outcomes are represented as a narrative of translation and communication. Students are trained in the conventions of tree drawing, imposed as a conventional interpretation on particular trees. The narrative explains outcomes as—subject matter>to teacher>to>student>to>outcomes—linkage of causal relations. Easy outcomes are made possible by the clarity with which difficult subject matter can be communicated through entrenched codes of representation. Genre approaches to pedagogy represent an expansion of the old formalist semiotics of language into a social semiotics of communication. A social semiotics understands subjects as a series of culturally recognisable genres of exchange. For example, the introduction of functional grammar into the wider curriculum in New South Wales fosters the translation of outcomes in subjects other than English into a series of recognisable communicative routines. In functional grammar there are "tree" ways of drawing and "geography" ways of writing—about trees (Gombrich 1962; O'Toole 1994). The differences in meaning between the art and geography is marked not so much by their content but by their communicative purpose, and their purpose is shaped not so much by psychological intention as by cultural convention. The communication narrative constructs the information of a subject, rather than seeking to interpret the structural history of information inherent within a subject.

A4   No. *No, tree drawings in school are simulacra of other tree drawings in school. Profiles and work samples actually develop their criteria by reference to an average school based performance and not by reference to the artworld. Consequently there is no point at which tree drawings ever reach a referential reconciliation with real trees or even 'real' drawings beyond the school. Outcomes are texts that mutate by quoting other texts in ways that are unsystematically related to subject content. 'ARTEXPRESS', the annual*

museum exhibition of high school student's art in NSW, for example, may be a self-quoting multi-text, that never properly engages with the subject of the visual arts until the point when it leaves the school and comes under the curatorship by staff of the Art Gallery of NSW.

This is a typically post-structural explanation (Giroux 1993). The specification of outcomes cannot be attributed to the achievement of either students or teachers specifically because the learner is not considered to be a primary agent in the achievement of outcomes; nor even in their failure to be achieved, as Paolo Freire points out. It is characterized on the map in Fig. 11.1 as a—subject > to > outcomes > to > outcomes—direction of causality. The satisfaction of outcomes can be explained by reference to the politics of sovereign and knowledge power, without needing reference to mental events or students' abilities at all. National standards, in all of their precision, may have hoped to arrest sovereignty over inappropriate 'outcomes' from teachers in New South Wales schools. However, from a post-structuralist point of view, the gradual insinuation of 'standards' and 'outcomes' into the art curriculum, as an end based representation of subjects, is more plausibly explained as the mutation of a Thatcherite doctrine from the United Kingdom than as an autonomous choice made by local education authorities. Indeed, an epidemiology of 'outcomes' would show them as a virulent strain of corporate textuality infecting most professions during the 1990s. Outcomes, they would say are recognisable by their 'can do' guarantees to stakeholders or 'your money back'. Post structuralists would argue that it remains to be seen how standards, outcomes, profiles and other educational texts can refer to subjects systematically. Many art teachers have yet to be convinced that outcomes are about subject content and not about other bureaucratic texts. For a post-structuralist pedagogy outcomes are not demonstrable as end state performances but about the mechanisms of textual transmission in the politics of education.

A5   *Yes. Drawing a tree is co-extensive with 'knowing how' to make a hard tree easy to draw. For instance, knowing how to choose from a repertoire of documentary approaches including, for example, photocopying; how to manipulate one copy, chosen in consultation with the teacher, which is nearest in similarity to drawings from the late 1970s expressionist revival; then to be able to apply a graphic mark that satisfies demands for freshness and expressive spontaneity, not to be attempted on the final drawing until a sufficiently spontaneous level of quality is able to be reproduced, and only after extensive practice in reference to a 'scaffolding' of spontaneous measures portrayed in late abstract forms of graphic representation; to be included in a final work, on completion, appearing to make knowing references to the German artist Anselm Kiefer's sombre metallic planes; and applies a technique of rendering which refers to criteria developed in workshops on Kiefer quality rendering, using school based graphite simulation.*

       An art gallery owner is left in little doubt as to what a candidate satisfying this outcome can do. The gallery owner, usually a small business person, would perhaps not even need to see a portfolio of works from such a candi-

date since their abilities are stated so unambiguously in the outcome. A student embarking on their journey toward this form of tree drawing outcome is made to feel confident that the level of participation required of them is equally unambiguous. Student's can be secure in the assurance that a high quality artistic outcome is guaranteed.

This answer is described in the narrative of 'knowing how'. Taking Gilbert Ryle (1949) to heart, it resolves the mind-body problem by collapsing 'knowing that' (idealism) into performative, or enactive knowing. In other words, knowing how tends to replace the assumptions of conceptual understanding with a range of heuristic to algorithmic performances. Wherever judgements are required of teachers on these terms, they are assisted by criteria represented as a repertoire of abilities. The power of a student's understanding is disclosed as a set of methodologies in which the knower demonstrates competency. Idealism is rejected on the well-worn grounds that, for example—knowing the rules of chess is categorically distinct from competent chess playing.

The 'knowing how' narrative explains outcomes as a network of—subject > to > outcome > to > student—causal relations on the map. Tree drawing in the accompanying example (A.5) carries no implication of a coherent body of content, but, through its representation as a sub-routine or "scaffolding" of performative abilities, is made over into outcomes that make it appear as if it does. Concepts, values, judgements, and so on are all externalised as performative abilities. Rather than a metaphor of deeper understanding, the narratives of knowing-how use the rhetoric of computer games where achievement is expressed as a stage like movement toward higher performative levels.

As a Neo Tylerian form of soft behaviour or disposition, knowing how lends itself to criterion referencing because it offers the benefit of revealing the internal mechanisms of thought for objective assessment. Outcomes of knowing how not only present teachers with the right answer to grade, but lay bare all of the sub-routines of thinking to mark as well.

Sub-routines make the identification of levels easier because of the way in which they separate performances into a temporal sequence. In 'knowing how' narratives, subject matter is represented as series of stepwise accomplishments, rather than as an integrated network of relations. After all a student can only do one thing at a time. Instead of the one conceptual understanding, reintegrating and changing qualitatively over time, a knowing how understanding can he stripped out into any number of sequential levels of performance or as performances of a distinctive kind.

Even though performance outcomes can range from protocols though to innovations, as enactments they nevertheless represent knowledge and understanding as good practice. 'Thought', for example, is more likely to be narrated instrumentally as 'solving relevant problems by using the school library in a precise way' rather than as 'private contemplation' or as a quality inferred by the teacher from a student's 'thoughtful drawing'. The "true" of subject content is represented as the "good" of curriculum. Competency based outcomes, as noted in the commencement

of this paper, are marked by the language of 'ought' and 'should' in national curriculum documents, rather than by the language of 'is'.

11.5.1   Concerns About Answer 5

A currently favoured rationale, 'knowing how' is not without its flaws. Autism and its concealment is an ever-present concern in such a pragmatic pedagogy. Whenever understanding is represented as polished performance there is a danger that limitations in students' power to generalise and abstract may be glossed over. Every art teacher knows that drawing from photographs guarantees sophisticated looking results. However, there may even be an inverse correlation between the ability to draw from photographs, and the ability to draw imaginatively, and from life (Selfe 1985). For example, ostensibly the same quality of graphite mark made by copying a photograph of a tree, assessed as outcome level 2, might be assessed at level 4 if it appeared in a life drawing. On the other hand, the very same mark sensitively applied in a montage might be assessed at level 5.

The difference between levels is assessable against the context of understanding in which the imagery is made, what Ellen Winner (1986) refers to as domain awareness. Karmiloff-Smith (1992) theorises this context as the result of different capacities for "representational redescription" in students and adults (p. 23). She argues that there are multiple levels at which the same knowledge in a domain is represented or redescribed. Behavioural mastery in drawing a photograph of a tree, for example, does not mean that the 'underlying representations' in the drawing are like the sophisticated artist's, even when the two levels of drawing are apparently and behaviourally identical. Karmiloff-Smith (1992) says

> Successful performance can be generated by a sequence of independently stored representations that will ultimately have to be linked to a more coherent system. Later [phase-3] behaviour may appear identical to phase-1 behaviour. We thus need to draw a distinction… between *behavioural change* … and *representational change*, because behavioural mastery is not tantamount to the end point of the developmental progression in a given micro domain. (p. 19)

A student's power to appreciate the aesthetic significance of a drawing may be out of developmental sequence with a behavioural capacity for making beautiful drawings. Karmiloff-Smith goes on

> This notion of multiple encoding is important; development does *not* seem to be a drive for economy. The mind may indeed turn out to be a very redundant store of knowledge and processes' (p. 23).

Thus a teacher is not entitled to see implications in a student's performance that are based solely on the behaviours a student exhibits. Even the most accomplished performances are insufficient in explaining outcomes of meaning and value in artworks. It may be a pedagogical agendum of competency standards, profiles and outcomes statements to render complex nets of judgement into transparent, low

inference forms of measurement. However, the satisfaction of standards and outcomes may be an unreliable basis on which to imply their achievement.

Both teachers and students can be cosseted into a benevolent tyranny of ends by pre-set performances. Teachers, whose recognition as good teachers was once based on their 'mastery' of a subject, can be willingly converted into ones who gain approval by being good at profiling average students at various levels. Good teachers are assessed as being instrumental in the reliable delivery of average and predictable student performers at each level in their subject. Teaching under these terms is based on grooming. The efficiency of grooming students in outcomes and standards may seem to be compromised by the introduction of 'irrelevant', especially hidden complexities. Outcomes and standards signal to teachers that they will be rewarded for coaching students in end performances, not for the development of critical reflection.

It is the success of the profiles in this simplification that must have prompted the enthusiastic elementary school teacher who declared to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, late in 1994 that she had handed over the Australian *National Curriculum* standards to students in her year 5 class and who, after close examination of the profiles and work samples in some subjects had, in only one month progressed from (year) level 4 to level 6 (National Curriculum scale of levels) on their own. This rather nasty example demonstrates that problems with outcomes and standards lay with their success not their failure.

11.6   A Preferred or Plural Narrative?

It would be easy to take the conciliatory ground adopted by the cultural pluralist and argue the virtue of competing meta-narratives in curriculum analysis. In reference to modernism, postmodernism and feminism, Giroux says

> Each of those positions has much to learn from the theoretical strengths and weaknesses of the other two discourses. Not only does a dialogical encounter among these discourses offer them the opportunity to re-examine the partiality of their respective views. Such an encounter also points to new possibilities for sharing and integrating their best insights as part of a broader radical democratic project… Similarly, at issue is also the important question of how the discourses of modernism, postmodernism, and feminism might be pursued as part of a broader political effort to rethink the boundaries and most basic assumptions of a critical pedagogy consistent with a radical cultural politics. (Giroux 1993, p. 42)

This paper analyses outcomes and profiles as representational artefacts from a semantic point of view. Despite its semantic focus it has, nevertheless, tried to avoid privileging the approach to representation of outcomes and profiles as a kind of a mentalistic super-narrative (Fodor 1976). It takes the view that while alternative pedagogies tell significantly different stories *about* outcomes and standards as "representational entities" these epistemic stories are not to be confused as interchangeable ways of misappropriating their autonomous existence as representational entities. Therefore it is questionable whether different educational narratives ought to be reconciled in the 'spirit of democracy' as Giroux suggests. Marking off curriculum in a "spirit of democracy" is a form of pluralism amounting to little more

than rearranging the deckchairs with respect to the analysis of national outcomes and standards. Until entities, such as national outcomes and standards are disentangled from the values used in representing them analysis amounts to the mere translation of their existence rather than a critique of their truth as representational entities.

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Chapter 12
Bodies of Work and the Practice of Art Making

A dramatic shift occurred in the evaluation of student art in New South Wales secondary schools during the late nineteen seventies. Previously based on tasks designed specifically for evaluative purposes art assessments began to refer to works made by students outside of invigilated examination conditions. The subsequent use of art diaries and portfolios of artwork, similar to those employed in the Arts PROPEL project in North America, widened the scope of "in school" assessments in NSW. The inclusion of diaries and portfolios moved assessment beyond the compilation of finished art works to include diverse material incidental to the processes involved in their origination (Gardner 1990, p. 44).

12.1 Process as the Incubation of Artistic Ideas

"Process" approaches claim to sample the incubation period of artworks (Bellanoff and Dickson 1991). The claim is based on the assumption that 'lead-up' routines to the production of more significant works provide a way of observing the artistic abilities of students more directly. Process assessment is prompted by doubts that aesthetic judgements made about finished works provide a satisfactory basis for inferring the cognitive resources used in their making. The reasons are twofold. Firstly, there is a belief by cognitive theorists that cultural agenda underlying the aesthetic judgements of the assessor are quite likely to overstate or understate the latent artistic motives of young children (Freeman and Sanger 1995). Secondly many educators believe that, when set against a theoretical backdrop of late

modernity, aesthetic judgements provide an overly narrow approach to framing the relationship between the intentional properties of artworks and those of artists. On the face of it, then, assessments of process are believed to enhance the validity of artistic evaluation. This is because they not only model a commonly used practice of annotation in Western art making, the artist's diary/notebook/portfolio, they open up a more transparent and thus fairer window into artistic ability (Taylor 1960).

12.2   The Nature of Process

Is the role of the artistic process in externalising student's ability justified? The search for true achievement in art making is coloured by the artifice of the 'artistic process'. It is further clouded by the historical uncertainty of the "artistic disposition" that these processes are designed to make visible.

To begin with it is unclear that the incubation process in art making can be differentiated as a distinctive class of artistic activity (see Wollheim 1980, pp. 61–62). Artistic performances and works classed as preparatory are often differentiated from their companions by the fact that they are comparatively unresolved. For this reason measures of "process", far from eliminating the need for inferential judgements in assessment, can compound the requirement. Furthermore, the assumption that artistic processes are complemented by a distinctive set of internal artistic dispositions is a historically fragile one in art education.[1] This fragility is exhibited, for example, in the tradition of favouring imaginary over theoretical explanation in the artistic process. The favour shown to imagery has down played a conceptual role in art making and led to the privileging of behavioural and social over cognitive references in the educational assessment of art). (Duncum 1999).[2] Legitimating one class of processes in art making tends to naturalise, or universalise the abilities to which they refer. The tendency to naturalise artistic ability conceals the ethical basis on which value is imputed from work to student in artistic assessment.

12.3   Assessment and the Representational Duality of Art

The assessment of student performances in art is marked by the complexity of the relationship between the artwork and its student maker. Problems of attribution in this relation spring, in part, from representational duality within art itself. It is often the case that, by its artfulness, the more successful a work in disclosing its meanings the more securely it hides its means of doing so, including the artistic abilities employed in its preparation. Assessors realise they must look to the significance of

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[1] One only has to think of the demonisation of copying in the middle of the twentieth century.

[2] The current cultural studies agenda in art education, with its emphasis upon the "art of the everyday", partitions off cognition from the making of art. See Duncum (1999).

the meanings as well as to the signifiers in assessing student works. They understand that the artistic performance of a student makes little sense if it is assessed independently of its critical success within their artwork (Harrison 1978, p. 184). While it may, for example, seem churlish to deny students credit for their devotion to the task, a quality of aesthetic dishonesty in a work is hard to reconcile with a sincere performance in the student, no matter how earnestly committed the actual process of its preparation (see Wollheim 1987, Chapter 2).[3] Thus it is reasonable to assume that the artistic ability of students is emergent within the meanings of their work to some degree.

Nevertheless, the work of most children is sheltered from the influences of time, reflection, failure, persistence and revision that shape the production of mature artists. Limitations in the breadth of children's educational experience of making art deprive their work of the opportunity to benefit from the character and continuity these influences afford. The art children make in school forms a body of work that falls between the stools of process and finish in a way that, by comparison with their mature colleagues, under-determines the scope of their artistic ability.

12.4   The Need for the Body of Work

12.4.1   Challenges to the Validity of a Single Work

At a meeting of a syllabus evaluation committee of the *NSW Board of Studies* in 1998 the Dean of the *Sydney College of the Arts,* Professor Richard Dunn, expressed concern at the validity of apportioning grades in the Higher School Certificate (HSC) examination based on only one submitted "major" work. He argued that the evidence provided by one "overworked" object was of little use as an indicator of artistic performance and was a poor basis for an assumed knowledge of the field. Traditionalists from the Board replied that the conventions of curatorial selection and the entry of single works into competitive art prizes was an accepted practice in the world of art and, more than this, was a process not dissimilar to competitive examination in schools. Dunn went on to draw a distinction between the educational uses of artistic assessment and its competitive use in the world of art. He was surprised, for example, that the Visual Arts Process Diary, a mandatory component of the Visual Arts syllabus in New South Wales, was formally excluded from student's final grade. Although students are obliged to maintain a "diary" throughout years 11 and 12 (a kind of portfolio annotating their developing ideas) the Board claims that it wants to confine the use of the diary to in-school assessments. It argues that shielding the diary from public exposure in the external examination is a way of protecting its personal function from formularisation. Dunn, however, claimed he

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[3] Richard Wollheim's concept of "fulfilled intention" in which a property in an art work is not only intended to be seen by the artist in a particular way but is furthermore a property able to be seen by beholders in the way intended.

was not so much mandating reference to a diary, notebook or portfolio in artistic assessment, but arguing in general that a single work provided insufficient evidence for the assessment of artistic identity. The HSC, he says, no longer entirely reflects the legitimate purposes of art.

Others agree arguing in addition that, in line with other subjects in the curriculum that the Visual Arts and, in particular the single finished work, is increasingly obliged to service the corporate goals of school education rather than the discipline it represents.

Unless they work at home, and even then, students in New South Wales have their artistic identity shaped by the structure of their art experiences in school. Schools in turn are increasingly obliged to satisfy the demands of "national standards", "outcomes based learning" and other low inference curriculum 'reforms'. These reforms, foremost in New South Wales being the implementation of the McGaw Report in 2000, are conducted within a context of devolving school management and in a climate of competition among individual schools. Compliance with the McGaw Report has concomitant effects upon the subject matter, teaching and student experience insofar as the major performance indicators listed in its reforms are satisfied by levels of achievement described in terms of subject content within the syllabus. The "three unit anomaly" in the recently amended Visual Arts Syllabus, and the emergence of *ARTEXPRESS* details the impact of recent educational reforms on assessment in the Visual Arts in New South Wales.

12.4.2   The "Three Unit Anomaly"

The McGaw (1996) review of the New South Wales Higher School Certificate Examination drew attention to what it saw as a major flaw in the validity of the examination—that there was no demonstrable link between the rankings achieved by candidates in the HSC examinations and the level of conceptual demand embedded in the content examined. Of all subjects Visual Arts was one of the most poorly defended against McGaw's claim. According to McGaw there was insufficient differentiation between the content of "three unit advanced" and "two unit ordinary" study in the practical art strand. In principle, three unit Visual Arts was supposed to present students with more challenging work. However, the examination rules for three-unit study in art merely required the submission of two artworks as opposed to one. Thus there was neither additional content nor more rigorous criteria applied to the assessment of three unit works by comparison with two unit works in the HSC. As it was impossible for examiners to show how the artistic abilities of two unit candidates differed from three unit candidates, merely by the submission of an additional work, the case for the retention of three unit Visual Arts collapsed.

The Visual Arts has always applied a system of panel ranking as the means of apportioning grades in the HSC. In panel ranking a brace of high inference aesthetic judgements are used to place each work into ostensive (comparing one with the other) relation to all others in its category. Ostensive ranking of this kind is a valid

and reliable assessment procedure in the Visual Arts that, nevertheless, translates poorly into predictable criteria. Ranking is retrospective. As a grading procedure it is unable to explain in anticipation how grades attracted by three unit candidates would fall two to three standard deviations above the scores in the two unit exam.

However, the application of predictable standards and benchmarks to the Visual Arts is of concern to many art educators (for example, Music Educators National Conference 1994). Outcomes based approaches to learning treat knowledge in the Visual Arts as if it was formulated and agreed. Outcomes approaches applied to the Visual Arts raise questions as to what is being judged. If a correlation is fixed between specified abilities of students and certain properties of their works what, if any, are the 'ability-determined' properties that a high scoring creative work should possess? There is resistance to the very idea of this kind of prediction in the creative arts. The selective post examination exhibition *ARTEXPRESS* helps allay this question. It provides a kind of holistic scale or benchmark to which HSC candidates in subsequent years can refer in making their works. This existing 'scale' militates against indeterminacy in grading the Visual Arts.

12.4.3   ARTEXPRESS

The prestigious exhibition *ARTEXPRESS* is selected from among student art works ranking in the top fourteen percent of HSC candidature. Exhibited at large museums and in other "world of art" settings, *ARTEXPRESS* serves as a benchmark of high artistic achievement in the HSC.[4] *ARTEXPRESS* plays a large role in setting the standard, content and character of student art in New South Wales insofar as it has become as much a determinate as a reflection of HSC performance in the Visual Arts. Over recent years the popularity of the exhibition, along with pressures to satisfy the commercial agenda of its sponsors, has split the exhibition into specialisations such as multimedia, drawing and so on. Institutions exhibiting *ARTEXPRESS* select from within these specialisations on the basis of their own curatorial criteria. In recent years the "curators" of *ARTEXPRESS* have requested more control over the way student works are chosen for the exhibition. Some curators have asked the Board if they can choose works scoring below the fourteen percent cut off. Curators believe there are as many pieces worthy of exhibition falling outside as inside the top ranking entries. If the curators of *ARTEXPRESS* were permitted to sample from the full range of submitted works in the HSC curatorial policy would mount a serious challenge to the status of traditional HSC assessment. The challenge arises from the differences in process between curatorial choice and ostensive ranking as a way of distributing value to works. While the curatorial approach adopted by *ARTEXPRESS* pays lip service to the value of each individual work, and so to the ability of the student who made it, the single work is regarded more as a unit of curatorial policy than a representation of the individual abilities of students. Thus

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[4] Exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington DC in 1999.

the curatorial policy driving *ARTEXPRESS* institutionalises the relation between the artistic ability of students and the properties of their submitted works. By idealising the single work, yet simultaneously viewing it as a functional unit within its curatorial agenda, *ARTEXPRESS* conceals a conflict in its agency.

The desire by *ARTEXPRESS* to include works below the fourteen percent cut off is evidence, on a grander scale, of its emerging belief that the artistic identity of students is represented more convincingly by a diversity of works. *ARTEXPRESS* is increasingly disposed to treat the single, finished submissions of individual candidates as if they cohered into larger bodies of work. Through curatorial approaches to 'assessment' *ARTEXPRESS* is able to simulate a body of work that exhibits those influences of time, reflection, failure, and revision, and thereby feign the influences that shape the works of mature artists.

12.4.4   The Facade of the Single Artwork

The "three unit anomaly" exemplifies the way the single polished work currently struggles to satisfy the evaluative demands of contemporary curriculum. In its struggle the submitted work is increasingly revealed as a facade of the outcomes it purports to assess. It hides its dysfunction by retreating even further into the unanalysable uniqueness of the aesthetic object. The single work idealises creative authenticity thereby fostering a romantic understanding of artistic ability. The romance of the single work represses significant educational and late modern contributions to the process of art making that might otherwise be legitimately declared. Symptoms of concealment in senior school art is found in the:

- unhealthy repression of valuable influences on student's work including educationally significant teacher collaboration in the production of ideas;
- privileging of intuitive expression in works that are diversely driven by a variety of historical, cultural and disciplinary motives;
- understatement of conceptual knowledge as a referent of the abilities assessed in the making of artworks;

In sum, the single work faces a growing range of expectations in the NSW HSC that it is unable to meet alone. As a vehicle of assessment the single work is caught in a circle of conflicting obligations to curriculum that compromises its authenticity.

12.5   The Concept of the Body of Work

12.5.1   Working Documents

An artist's work provides the grounds but not the reasons upon which judgements of their artistic ability are based (Toulman et al. 1979). Although it is a function of artworks to shape our knowledge about artists, artworks themselves are not

responsible for the functions attributed to them. Neither is the artist. It would be as naive to believe that art works speak for themselves about their artists, as it is to believe that artists are fully accountable for their works. Thus it is impossible to conceive of artists intelligibly outside of some functional system of their works; that is, to conceive of artists outside some view of what their artworks tell us about them. Our capacity to capture an artist's ability is limited, therefore, by the purposes and values we believe are enacted through their works. Recovering artistic abilities always depends on some form of interpretation of their works. An interpretative practice decides what properties of a body of work are attributable to the artist, and what properties ought to be left out. For example, the portfolio, the diary and the theme are three functional representations of the body of work that impose correspondingly different interpretations upon the kinds of artistic ability that underlie it.

12.5.2   The Body of Work, the Portfolio and Artistic Ability

Portfolios do more than simply bundle works together indiscriminately they sample them. Portfolios are largely designed to function as a kind of marketable presentation. 'Unsuccessful' works are usually omitted from portfolios. To represent a body of work as a portfolio is to place editorial conditions on what is significant about it and to adopt a particular interpretive point of view towards the works it contains. Artworks represented within portfolios serve specialised rhetorical purposes. For example, many works included in portfolios are reproduced and reformatted for reasons of size and convenience. Changes in scale through reproduction are notorious in their seductive effect upon a body of work. Works in portfolios are not passively 'contained' within it but are 'chosen' because they demonstrate either diversity or coherence relative to the others. For instance, the portfolio is able to imply a 'series' in a body of work where none is originally intended. The need to complete a 'series' implied by companion works in a portfolio can act like a fetish for the original body of work. A portfolio can determine the direction of new works. For these reasons artistic abilities denoted in the making of portfolios are quite distinctive from abilities involved in the production of a body of work. This is not to discredit the portfolio. It is to point out that portfolios have a readily detectable agenda that once understood can lead to formulas in their production.

12.5.3   The Body of Work, the Artist's Diary and Artistic Ability

Diaries, like portfolios, are artefacts that bring purposes of their own to bear on bodies of work. The artistic purpose of a diary is not necessarily confined to its preparatory phase in the production of more substantial works. Diaries are used as much in reflection on past practices as they are used to test solutions and to collect data. Diaries are not neutral mediators of artistic thought, however. Notebooks and

diaries borrow from the annotative conventions of natural history, conventions that rub off onto the artworks and the artists who employ them. Diaries lend an intimate, responsive, notational, and abbreviated character to the art making process. The purposefulness of diaries shapes the representation of artistic ability into its own functional image. When observing artistic ability from the perspective of a diary we tend to see only what the diary allows us to see. Students readily come to understand this and quickly learn how to produce a 'good' diary. The artistic abilities learned incidentally by students in the production of diaries and notebooks are as much imposed by the annotative convention of diaries as by the content they annotate.[5]

12.5.4   The Body of Work, the Heuristic, and Artistic Ability

Heuristics (systems of educational inquiry used by students) also add function to bodies of work. When sorted into different kinds of heuristic, a body of work can appear to call upon different kinds of artistic ability. For example, by calling upon problem solving such as—"works produced as freestanding objects 500 mm in height that meet the following conditions", or by calling upon knowledge of semiotic referencing—"artefacts with masculine references in the landscape" a work can be framed to exercise different artistic abilities. By imposing different thematic and heuristic functions on a body of work through simple changes in pedagogical design, teachers can manipulate the artistic abilities that underlie the process of artistic production. Themes and heuristics can also be imposed retrospectively as well as prospectively. By posing questions such as "what problem is being set by the student in these works?" the assessor is framing the body of work against an established set of cognitive assumptions that carry with them a baggage of pragmatic artistic abilities. Without consulting any of the processes actually entertained by student artists themselves the assessor can make the body of work serve particular kinds of artistic ability.

12.5.5   Documenting Works

ERIC and *MERILYN* are two successful artists providing frank reports of their school experiences in art for use as examples in this section. *ERIC* is a university professor at the forefront of innovation in the field of video gaming in New York and the son of distinguished art educationalist Professor Enid Zimmerman. *MERRILYN* is a university professor and distinguished multimedia artist in Sydney. *ERIC's and MERILYN*'s work, referred to in this publication are neither portfolios, nor diaries nor themes. They are case studies. *ERIC's* case is presented as a biography written as a biography and *MERILYN*'s is presented as an autobiography. Biography

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[5] Foucauldian understanding of textual practices is significant to the development of this point.

achieves its ends through narrative. Professor Zimmerman's struggle to is noteworthy. The unifying story she tells about *ERIC* is of his pursuit of artistic authenticity in the face of educational adversity. The actual chronology of *ERIC's* artistic development is nonetheless haphazard and deeply affected by external influences and his progress is marked by many false starts and regressions. The development of *MERILYN's* body of work is chronologically, if not aesthetically, incoherent as well. Her work seems to embark on a number of different directions simultaneously. While there appears to be an over-arching purpose to her artistic progress, many of her new works are creatively opportunistic. At certain moments in the process, even at the moment of their exhibition, some works inexplicably sever all connections with their past. That both *ERIC's* and *MERILYN*'s artistic lives often seem lacking in continuity is no fault of the candidness of the narratives. Each narrative reveals an intimate acquaintance with the inchoate events surrounding the process of production—often speaking though the subjective voice of the artist. Each maps the process faithfully. Nevertheless, the function of a case study is to tell a coherent story even if it is one of discontinuity.

Nor is there any reason to believe that *ERIC's* ability as an artist is more validly represented by descriptions confined to events surrounding the origination of his works. Faithful descriptions are obliged to make sense of the relations between inchoate events insofar as even originating events do not speak for themselves. Making sense of descriptions entails the use of an appropriate interpretive practice of which the narrative of authenticity in the visual arts qualifies as a mature form. However, the artistic abilities disclosed about *ERIC* in Zimmerman's narrative of authenticity are no less an interpretation of his artworks than are the abilities projected onto a body of work by the portfolio and the diary. *ERIC's* work acquires its authority to function as an agent of his artistic ability through Zimmerman's narrative of authenticity.

12.5.6   *The Counter-Intuitive Way in Which Art Works 'Make' Students*

What, then, are the proper terms under which the properties of a body of work are attributed to properties of the student? The answer is that there are no privileged ways of accessing artistic abilities through a body of work. Artistic abilities are inevitably imputed from the meanings attributed to artist's works. Bodies of work cause artistic abilities as a condition of these attributed functions. This counter-intuitive proposition is qualified by the fact that the capacity of artworks to determine artistic ability is a function bestowed on them by an interpretive practice. Most importantly, these practices change.

The retreating tides of interpretive practice litter the shores of art education with abandoned artistic abilities (Korzenik 1995). Premature obsolescence in an interpretive practice can be mitigated by framing the evaluative function of works from

a number of different points of view. The adoption of some evaluative perspectives, however, requires courage. Unorthodox functions attributed to bodies of work may be subject to censure by the field and risk being labelled as heresies. One function of assessment currently in danger of falling into this category, the "teacher", is worthy of closer inspection.

12.6   Reassessing the Functional Shape of the Body of Work

12.6.1   The Functional Relation Between the 'Teacher' and the 'Student' in the Body of Work

Professor Zimmerman narrates the positive and negative influence different teachers have had upon the development of *ERIC's* work. She reports that *ERIC* did not get on very well with his high school teacher and makes it clear that the break down in their relationship had a negative impact upon his work. It follows from Zimmerman's interpretation that teachers may exert an agency in the production of student works that is quite separate from the one they intend, insofar as it is likely that *ERIC's* teacher believed she was doing her best. According to *ERIC*, however, his art teacher fell short of the ideals of best practice. It is reasonable, therefore, to attribute the declared beliefs of the 'person' teaching and the 'teacher's' influence on the student being taught, as only two among a number of contributing 'teacher' functions. In other words, the performance of the teacher is a function that needs to be recovered from the body of work through interpretation, as indeed Zimmerman's narrative does. It is the task of those engaged in the assessment of a body of student work to put forward a strategy for recovering the 'teacher's' role. To begin with, the 'teacher' function recovered in a body of work is not fixed. Ideals of best practice and nationally standardised routines are merely two interpretive practices for accrediting 'teacher' functions to a body of work. Nor is the teacher reducible, as *ERIC's* case implies, to the romantic testament of the actual teachers and students involved. National standards and romantic attributions are not the only legitimate teacher attributing functions to a body of work.

Once it is accepted that some properties of *ERIC's* work are attributed to the teacher by Zimmerman's narrative, the way is clear to address dilemmas in the orthodoxy of teaching the creative arts (Gardner and Nemirovsky 1991). For example, what is the authentic relation between the teacher and the student in artistic production? In the atelier of Jacques Louis David, for instance, apprentices were expected to produce work of a standard that brought praise upon the teacher (Crow 1994). Today that direction of praise is reversed even though many of the teaching methods remain the same. How would *ERIC* fair in David's class? In short, the 'teacher' is attributed to a body of work as the extension of some evaluative precept. Properties of a body of work are neither necessarily (logically), nor naturalistically (empirically) co-extensive with the artistic ability of students and, even if they are, it remains to be determined which ones shall be allowed to count.

At various moments in the assessment of students we can attach additional functions to their body of work such as the "state curriculum", the "assessment criteria", and the "conventions of contemporary art". These functions mitigate in favour of student ability only to the degree that functional properties are attributed to them. The 'student' can acceptably claim—"the conventions of contemporary art" as a property of their artistic ability, for instance, only insofar as two conditions of interpretive practice are met with respect to the body of work. One, that the "conventions of contemporary art" are accepted as a legitimate extension of a 'body of work' for students in school. Two, that a relationship is understood to exist between the 'body of work' and the 'student' that admits "the conventions of contemporary art" in their work as evidence of artistic ability.[6]

12.7   Assessing a Body of Work

In recent years cognitive theory in the visual arts has focussed on the challenges to understanding presented by different kinds of artistic knowledge (see Karmiloff-Smith 1995).[7] Within a cognitive framework the relation between a body of work and its student maker are considered as an extension of the influence exerted by the epistemology of the visual arts upon the psychological disposition of the art student.

Consider the following example. When linked together the two properties "conceptual strength" and "material resolution" form into a provisional system for the assessment of a body of work. Note, however, that "material resolution" and "conceptual strength' are functionally attached to the body of work for a particular evaluative purpose. They serve as a basis for the imputation of artistic abilities. The interrelation between these two properties can be schematised in the following manner (Fig. 12.1).

12.7.1   The Epistemic Properties of the Body of Work

The reproduction of different kinds of artistic knowledge in a body of work makes little sense when it is teased out for its own sake. Knowledge reproduced in a body of work not only differs widely in its individual nature; it is rendered complex by its integration into strategic relationships. Innovative knowledge, so prized in the visual arts, is nonetheless dependent on artistic conventions and protocols. Nevertheless, the strategic expression of knowledge in art calls upon the integrating mechanism of conceptual and material resolution. Knowledge in portraiture, for example, is

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[6] Franz Cizek was notorious for denying students access to contemporary imagery in the making of their works.

[7] See Chapter 11 on Karmiloff-Smith's concept of "representational redescription".

CONCEPTUAL STRENGTH

Fertility of ideas

	High	Low
High Degree of resolution	Conceptually complex forms of representation. Sympathetically and coherently resolved. Strategic and representational autonomy. 1A	Conceptually banal. Lacking strategic autonomy in the use of technical skills. 1B
Low	Technically unresolved. Representationally complex. Significant ideas. Lacking autonomy in expression and closure. 2A	Low fertility of ideas. Conceptually directed by the object being represented. Technically unresolved. Lacking in representational autonomy. 2B

(Left axis label: **MATERIAL RESOLUTION** — Degree of resolution)

Fig. 12.1 The body of work

characterised by different genres of aesthetic integration. Students must be conceptually as well as technically ready to participate congruously in the genre of portrait painting demonstrating what Ellen Winner et al. (1986) refers to as levels of domain awareness. As children emerge from the developmental constraints of naive realism they begin to understand that making portraits, for instance, poses difficulties that close attention to the sitter cannot resolve. Different kinds of pictorial references to the sitter set constraints on their artistic representation within the portrait. Abstract references to the sitter such as gender, race, class and politics, have a largely theoretical presence that is opaque within the perceptual properties of the sitter's pose. Putting race into pictorial use in a portrait, therefore, calls upon high levels of representational autonomy in order to act independently of the sitter's appearance.

In recent decades artistic dependence on aesthetic intuition has been diversified. Different systems of artistic reference provide students with alternative mental strategies for the collection of creative resources in their works. For example, although many students may continue to search for artistic references within their aesthetic experience, late modern concepts of art authorise them to borrow from creative resources that were previously outlawed in the field of art education. By contacting

alternative systems of signs, citing the imagery from existing art works, and integrating the traditions of other cultures, students can uncover a wealth of artistically legitimate resources that are otherwise opaque within traditional aesthetic forms of reference. Qualities of warmth may still be sought within the subjectivity of felt experience. But they can also be collected from the 'labels' of other representational forms. Borrowing through experience calls upon quite different artistic abilities than collection through the readership of symbolic labels.

Thus the quality of material resolution in a body of work is responsive to different ways in which artistic knowledge is contacted conceptually. Artistic abilities are correspondingly believed, intended, entrenched, dreamt, felt, encoded, simulated, projected, theorised, represented, imagined, or expressed in sympathy with the demands imposed by different conceptual frameworks of artistic reference. In this sense, then, the function of a body of work is structured by the background knowledge underpinning it, including both the material and conceptual skills required in its expressive resolution. It is by means of these functions of the work that claims of artistic ability about the student are validated.

12.7.2 *Psychological Properties of the Body of Work*

Cognitive theory establishes an intimate relationship between knowledge and knowing (Efland 1995; Wolf 1989). The provisional interpretive system schematised in Fig. 12.1 above provides a way of inferring the cognitive performance of a student. Conceptual complexity refers to the representational layers of meaning as well as to the shear fertility of the ideas imported into the work. Material resolution refers to the skills deployed in its expressive achievement. When brought into interrelationship these two properties function within a body of work to form the beginnings of an integrated psychology of artistic ability.

While the single finished work strives to satisfy the conditions implicit in Cell 1A, a body of work is more likely to register significantly across all four cells. For instance, Cells 1B and 2A form a diagonal of artistic incoherence insofar as the functional relation between the two properties is uneven. However, in this instance incoherence is not always bad within the context of a body of work. Incoherence between the two major functions can be a sign of risk taking and is often the pretext to experimental advances in artistic ideas. Incongruity in Cell 1B can also arise when a student seeks expressive resolution of their ideas within an artistic genre lying outside their conceptual understanding. The reverse is also true. *ERIC's* high school teacher, for example, failed to allow for sudden *advances* in the subtlety of the artistic references *ERIC* brought to his work.

Levels will vary holistically. Naive realists typically occupy Cell 2B. The imagery of naive realists is conceptually guileless and narrowly directed by the objects it represents. With some notable exceptions naive works are consistent with a range of energetic, often meticulously laboured, cognitively resourceful, yet nearly always technically vernacular skills (Berti and Freeman 1997). There comes a

point, however, at which any body of work can regress into this category. Regression may occur as a consequence of radical departures in artistic direction by the artist. For instance, students often find difficulty in transferring into digital technology graphic skills they have refined for use in conventional media. Lack of technical expertise has a retrogressive impact on the autonomy with which imagery can be representationally redescribed (Karmiloff-Smith 1995). Being thrown back onto an explicit use of the technical rules in art compromises their tacit use in the imaginative re-composition of artistic ideas.

On the other hand it is quite possible that work falling into Cell 2B could possess high levels of aesthetic merit. For instance, assessors often project high levels of artistic value on the fortunate, but unintentional, 'accidents' of naive artists (Gardner 1980, p. 11). However, it is equally possible that art works made by school age children at early developmental levels may possess high degrees of artistic coherence. This is consistent with their location in Cell 1A. Even though their work may appear aesthetically simplistic by mature standards the symmetry of its conceptual and material resolution, adjusted for developmental constraints, may satisfy high levels of expressive coherence (Berti and Freeman 1997). Thus some functional attributions of artistic ability may apply to the aesthetic quality of student's works in ways that have little functional significance for students. In other words cells 1A and 2B demonstrate how there is no automatic correlation between artistic value and artistic ability. Although there is a correlation it is one that is functionally moderated in assessment by interpretive practice.

A full discussion of the permutations within the four cells of Fig. 12.1 is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the following point needs to be kept in mind. Even though the four cells represent the extreme poles across a continuum it is incorrect to regard them as a bald system of ranking works. It is a misrepresentation implicit within the rhetoric of the single finished work, and of the portfolio, to regard the four cells as a graded hierarchy in which 1A is awarded to the 'best' work, B2 for the 'worst' and so on. The four cells contextualise the variations in cognitive demand that are normally anticipated within a body of artistic work. These four cells are emblematic of the two nominated functions of the body of work that, through varying degrees of resolution, characterise the artistic abilities of students. Thus while aesthetic judgements based on ostensive ranking reliably predict the relative merits of student works, there is no necessary reason why this ranking should be expected to say much about the abilities of students.

12.8   Summary

In sum, the assessment of a body of work differs from the assessment of other assembled modes of student artworks. Although the body of work brings fewer interpretive assumptions to assessment than the single finished work, the portfolio or the diary, it is more accommodating of different interpretive practices. Zimmerman's narrative of authenticity and *ARTEXPRESS'* curatorial policy are

advanced as two functions of artistic ability that are allowed a more flexible assignment within a body of work. Portfolios, on the other hand are, to some degree, beset by the desire to assemble the most coherent presentation and to put the best gloss on the artworks they contain. When assigned provisional functions such as "conceptual strength" and "material resolution" portfolios are more likely to edit out the kinds of unflattering work that would fall into cells 2A and 1B. In these cells, unhappily, it is the very asymmetry between the two functions that is most revealing of the student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses.

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Chapter 13
Distinguishing Artistic from Vernacular Performances in the Visual Arts: A Classroom Perspective

Syllabi are often written in behavioural terms. The current NSW K-6 Art Syllabus [1990] is no exception. The Syllabus describes content in the visual arts in terms of perceiving, responding, organising, manipulating, and evaluating. Each behaviour is an example of a kind of action. Primary teachers in particular, with their limited access to the artworld, may be forgiven for feeling uncertainty about these behaviours. Purported to be a foundation of the Visual Arts Syllabus, it is apparaent that these five behaviours are not particular to art but generally relevant to all subjects in the curriculum. Thus because of the generality of its behaviours the Art Syllabus appears to provide an insufficient basis for meeting its major obligation, that of distinguishing content to be taught in the visual arts.

However, while the K-6 Art Syllabus may be insufficient it is by no means irredeemable. It is toward the redemption of the question of art in the Syllabus that this Occasional Seminar is directed. What then are the visual arts?

The answer to this question entails the resolution of two problems. The first problem addresses the ethical nature of human activity. The second is concerned with distinguishing artistic practice as a particular kind of human activity. In addressing the first problem it will be shown how the things that people do are deeply bound up with the theoretical and technical means needed to enact them. It will be argued, however, that success in any human activity is not dictated to by the means, but governed by values which represent its ends.

The solution to the second problem builds on the answer to the first and is divided into two sections. The first section explains how the technical means of the visual arts are shared by vernacular activities and by practices in other fields of study. As a consequence even the traditional techniques of drawing and painting are not sufficient in themselves to function as a basis for artistic practice. It is argued for

example, that the notion of an *inartistic* drawing is not a contradiction and is a concept well within the perception of young children.

The second section entails an identification of the value sources of the visual arts. These value frameworks represent the basis for the cultivation of artistic ends. Within their parameters teachers and students are able to negotiate the distinctive character of artistic activities and refine practices in identifiably artistic ways.

13.1 Actions as Ends

In his book *Drawing and Cognition* Peter van Sommers (1984, Ch. 6) emphasises the importance of motive in the study of human activity. People are given to act, he suggests, because of the significance their actions assume within structural, social and psychological contexts. To deny human actions a context of intent is to deprive them of meaning. To have meaning human actions, like moves in a game, are made coherent within some interpretable framework of laws. To act is to do something intelligible. It is to play the game as opposed to merely identifying the moves and reading out the rules (see Searle 1981, p. 17).

Motives irrevocably transfigure the technical moves out of which actions are composed. For example, sometimes we doodle idly during a lecture. At other times we struggle to copy down a diagram accurately from a chart. Actions are often modified to adapt to the context of their application. During a lecture our doodling may become emphatic with irritation at what transpires. Or as a result of some confusion our copied diagram may have to be simplified. Contexts, in other words, not only transform actions but also provide the framework in which actions are criticised, decided, refined, regretted, practiced, and timed. In short actions have to be judged (see Bourdieu 1977, p. 1–22).

Aurel Kolnai believes that the relationship which applies between actions and motives resembles the relationship between means and ends. Let us say for example, that money resembles a move in a game. He says

> Money [a move in a game] *is* in one sense a pure means…; yet precisely for that reason, by virtue of its quite indeterminate and neutral convertibility, it actually stands for an indefinite manifold of *ends.....*It is a question, not of possessing or not possessing the means to an end, but of having to choose between goods…. (1978, p. 46–7)

We take action when we are motivated toward ends, but not ends which are dictated to by natural laws. Action is a kind of practice which is interpreted by, but not dictated to, by rules. Determining the effectiveness of our actions always requires interpretation. The interpretation of an action taken is negotiated within the broad critical limits of what success in the end game is considered to be. Even when a technique appears to suggest itself as a possibility, its value can only be recognised within some framework of needs.

Technical moves and theoretical understandings make up the means chosen to achieve ends. But technical and theoretical means considered in themselves are

dictated by conventional and logical rules. An end which is entirely dictated to by a means has a predictable outcome and is therefore one which is relatively devoid of human intent. This is because in being dictated to by some predictable method we are deprived of the exercise of free will. But in deliberating about ends we subvert the dictates of technical moves and expose their lack of inherent value. The technique of riding a bicycle, for example, can be described as protocolic, that is, conforming to a predetermined pattern. But *in* riding a bike we must ask why is it being done? What is our motive? Is bike riding reducible to the technical protocol of bicycling? Many of these motives or ends may be apparent to the practitioner. However, many have to be attributed to practices by critics retrospectively.

All human actions, as van Sommers reminds us, represent the modality of some human intent. We can ride a bike badly, ride to impress, ride dangerously, ride like a dork, be a cool rider, ride to race, to win, for exercise, for transport, to be a Comanchero or, of course, ride as an interpretable combination of the above. To technically ride is implicit within all these applications. But technical riding is trivially related to these ends. Bike riding, to make sense, is contingent upon the ends for which it is engaged.

A repertoire of human actions such as drawing, painting, perceiving, responding, and organising, studied for its literal meaning, is a repertoire deprived of pragmatic context. It is composed of moves in a game un-played, actions without meaning. It is practice without judgement (Grundy 1987, pp. 12–15). Simply asking children to 'paint' on a Friday afternoon typifies the kind of literal application of technical skill alluded to above. In its baldest form the mere injunction to paint is stripped of pragmatic context. It is assumed that painting as an activity is transparent in its motives and projects the judgemental bases for attesting to its success implicitly. Children will invariably ask, "paint what" or "why paint"?

Yet on this account the actions of young children are particularly disadvantaged. Not only do they lack the experience that provides the wisdom behind adequate choice, but because of their immaturity children are frustrated by their lack of technical proficiency. In drawing, for example, most children seem to be dictated to by the limitations of their skill. But aren't we all at some level? It is here that we find a clue to the problem. Although children may be limited in their technical performances it doesn't mean that they are *necessarily* so. Citing the studies of G.H. Luquet, Norman Freeman (1991) argues that

> children may draw differently in different contexts. Drawings produced in the classroom may be very different from those drawn on a back lane wall. Accommodation to context occurs, as it does in patterns of speech. The child's theory of what she can produce as an *appropriate* and *authoritative* depiction contains more than one register. (p. 3–4)

Freeman is suggesting the possibility that children operate representationally within the framework of a theory. Although most children's theorising is likely to be conducted below the level of reflective awareness it does not preclude the possibility of them using it as a basis for action. From Freeman's position it is easy to see, albeit at a proto-functional level, how children could act within the auspices of a critical concept of value. It is thus an error to mistake the unsophisticated nature of

children's performances for an absence of judgement and choice. Michael Parsons is consistent with Freeman's view that children are reflexive of their representational actions (1987, pp. 20–21). We can conclude with some confidence that children are, within their developmental constraints, interpretative of the things that they do.

13.2 Ends as Artistic Value

Unlike adults whose working world of action is marked within contexts of professional responsibility, children distribute their activities far more equitably between the disciplined and the vernacular. Disciplined actions are distinguished from vernacular not by the dictate of their means, but by the way in which their significance is interpreted. The latter are governed by common sense and play, while the former are regulated by formally accumulated wisdom.

For example, bike riding is a common vernacular activity among children. Yet for a small few riding has been disciplined into an identifiable field of practice. In BMX competitions the motives and ends of bicycling are brought within a more precisely articulated framework of success. The theories and technologies of competition riding are transformed by wise BMX officianardos, into tactics reflecting the competitive pragmatics of the sport.

Good BMX'ers, good physicians, good teachers or good visual artists are competent in the technical and theoretical means relative to their fields. Good practitioners are able to take responsibility for their judgements. Responsibility requires them to interpret their actions reflectively against the value sources of their field. Even scientific practices, because of their involvement with human action, have deep ethical undercurrents (Ingram 1987, p. 9). In short good practitioners, whose judgements are interpreted by a disciplined framework of values, are engaged in what are considered to be the practical arts.

Activities conducted in the vernacular are not considered to be as responsible for their ends as activities in the practical arts. Relative to the practical arts, the ends of commonplace activities are often technically incompetent and poorly apprised of theoretical means. Vernacular judgements tend as well to be contingent rather than reflective of their ends. In other words the vernacular is limited in the extent to which it can be regulated under a disciplined framework of values. Thus although all human actions, including the vernacular, can be considered as artful there are differences among them both in character and degree of responsibility.

Children who draw according to vernacular ends are popularly regarded as doing art. This is because drawing as a means has come to be thought of as synonymous with art. But children draw in the vernacular for a variety of reasons. Ends may be tacit or calculated. Ends often intertwine with such complexity that a child's initial intentions are subverted. The ends of a drawing may 'emerge' as it progresses. A drawing of a fish can begin as an illustration for a school project. As the drawing develops it may be re-registered into the vernacular as a game. In the vernacular the

fish may be recontextualised by the child into a graphic story with him or herself as the narrator. Even with young children vernacular play of this sort, however important, can be included within the visual arts only to the extent that its ends are reflectively registered within visual arts sources. There is little doubt that with very young children the distinction between the registration of vernacular and artistic value may be slight. For the art teacher however, the distinction makes quite a difference.

Conflict in value registration between teacher and pupil is common. Consider the following example. If a child draws a spitfire the teacher may praise him or her for the wonderful freedom in the treatment of its camouflage. The child may respond to the teacher's praise by promptly erasing the commended part and replacing it with a carefully copied set of rivets. Both the camouflage and the rivets are technically competent. The teacher need not be offended. The child may well have appreciated the value perspective from which the teacher was making her commendation. But from the child's point of view her perspective was simply inappropriate. The spitfire was serving other ends. If, after corrections, the plane appeared less artistically valuable to the teacher, then it probably had less to do with the skillfulness of the drawing, and more to do with the vernacular motives behind it.

On what grounds is a teacher eligible to negotiate practical advice with young pupils in the visual arts? Teachers have been wary of intervening in children's art making, restrained by the rhetoric of sanctity in the creative act. We know what grounds for intervention apply in arithmetic. But in arithmetic ends are reduced to means. In maths where ends are determined, the appeal to value is unequivocal. A good answer is a universally right answer.

In the visual arts it is possible to isolate three major frameworks of value, the structural, typified by the work of Nelson Goodman (1976); the socio-cultural, explained by Arthur Danto (1981); and the psychological, by Monroe Beardsley (1981). These frameworks represent governing rather than determining bases for interpreting and judging the ends of artistic activity.

Structural (sometimes referred to as semiological) sources are founded on the assumption that all objects share a similarity with the universal structure of language. According to structuralists, artworks, like all other objects, have a linguistic configuration composed of a grammar (or syntax), a meaning (or semantics), and an application (or pragmatics).

Structurally objects, including artworks are recognised for their power to represent meanings to our understanding symbolically. Objects make sense by virtue of their capacity to act as signs within a sign system. However, as with language, objects have little inherent meaning. Like words they carry meanings which have been conventionally assigned. From a structural point of view artworks can be universally distinguished from non-artworks by the peculiar characteristics of their sign systems. To simplify, structuralist sources of artistic value are identified by the unique character of their symbol systems.

Goodman (1976) sets out the distinguishing characteristics of artistic symbol systems. According to Goodman, objects have a tendency to be artistic when they conform to the following conditions: When they have multiple and ambiguous form (syntax), and meaning (semantics); when they are configured into symbol systems

which tend to be idiosyncratic and unique; when the very way they are configured seems crucially relevant, even down to the last detail; and when what is symbolised tends not only to be represented but presented, as if it were given in an example.

Structuralist values in the visual arts represent a basic reference for teaching and negotiating artistic ends with children. For example, let us imagine a child playing with a plastic model kit. The kit might be anything from a dinosaur, a doll, to a tank. Model kit making is a useful example because it is usually derided as uncreative and thus an inappropriate artistic activity. But kit making could be re-registered as an artistic activity given the appropriate structuralist reorganisation of its ends. How might a teacher make a structuralist reformulation of a kit in an art lesson?

The teacher would need to set, encourage and criticise outcomes for the model kit, which resulted in its 'structural' transfiguration. Artistic transfiguration of the kit would concentrate on the representation of richly imaginative and idiosyncratic narratives of meaning. These narratives of meaning in their uniqueness, would be in direct opposition to the convergent meanings dictated by the narrative contained in the kit's assembly instructions. In addition, the model kit could be enhanced by encouraging the reconfiguration of its setting, its construction, its ornamentation, and its associations with other objects, in ways that further subverted the dictates of the instructions in the box.

The kit could be artistically transformed by drawing the maker's attention to the interrelation of moves being made, that is, to its repleteness. In order to meet structuralist criteria for the visual arts it is imperative that every transformative act be sensitively responsive to changes affected in the finest nuances of meaning and form (what Goodman calls autographic consideration). The addition or deletion of the tiniest mark would, in an art work, register as a significant change.

Finally, the teacher would intervene by refining the child's capacity to exemplify the quality of meaning represented. That is, the purposes to which the model is directed encouraging, in short, the power of the kit to signify the unique intention of its ends. Whether the kit is exquisitely finished or roughly assembled is artistically relevant only to the extent that its end character is symptomatic of structuralist conditions of artistic representation.

The second source of artistic value is the socio-cultural. Socio-cultural sources can be considered as additional to structural sources, but are really an alternative paradigm of value in the visual arts. The difference between structural and socio-cultural values of art originate in the universality of their sources. Rather than seated in deep universal characteristics of language and symbol, or in general psychological dispositions of the individual subject, socio-cultural values are community based, culturally pluralistic, and often incommensurable with each other.

The origins and priorities of cultural values, the ideologies of a society, are always relative to the forces which dominate its institutions. The forces which direct institutions are listed within elements of class, race, gender, religion, generation, corporate and nationalist economics. Thus the social sources of artistic values, due to the ideological forces involved in their origins, are traceable to political power. According to one's ideological perspective an artwork such as Vincent's *Sunflowers*

can be taken, for example, as either a popular icon of expressive individuality, or as a unique and priceless possession.

In the arts, claims Danto (1981), the most powerful institutional source of cultural values is the artworld. The artworld is an institution composed of all those people aspiring to the arts, who have managed to secure a recognised place within it. Yet within our western context the artworld's prevailing theoretical, practical, and critical agenda represents our major legitimating source of artistic value.

For students enrolled in an art college final success in their course depends on being accepted within the institution of the artworld. For a primary teacher and pupil, however, artistic activity is simply translated into being *aux fait* with artworld practice. Teachers and pupils need only choose to participate within the arts at an appropriate level of comprehension. For example, it is reasonable to expect a nine year old to be capable of making an abstract sculpture. Making an "abstract" involves knowing what the artworld concepts 'abstract' and 'sculpture' mean. More importantly, it assumes an appreciation of what good or critically acclaimed exemplars of abstract sculpture look like.

Returning to our model kit example, it is easy to see how its parts could be reassembled within the auspices of abstraction. Yet not all artworld concepts are as easy to assimilate. Beliefs in the artworld, as in the world of science, are ever changing and sometimes obscure. For this reason curriculum is dedicated to interpreting the gradual processes necessary for their inculcation. But the disciplined beliefs of the artworld always reassert their legitimating authority.

The sociocultural politics of art not only relates to the artworld but also to individuals within the community. While it is important to recognise the pre-eminent role of the artworld in the politics of artistic value, it is equally important to remember how individuals and community groups can have the meaning of their activities subverted by the ideological hegemony of the artworld. As the primary teacher and his or her pupils choose their "abstract sculpture" ends, for example, they should be on the alert for an artworld dictating to them by sheer force of authority. Just because it is the artworld that deprives you of your personal artistic ends doesn't make its dictum legitimate. This right to personal and communal relevance is what Habermas (1972) calls the need for emancipation. Following Habermas, Shirley Grundy (1987, Ch.6) cites the creation of local relevance for subject matter, or praxis, as one of the major functions of curriculum.

It is also clear that a most important aspect of the curriculum will be the promotion of a critical consciousness. Thus while traditional forms of knowledge may, within an already established educational system, initially provide a basis for study, the legitimacy of the construction as well as the selection of pieces of knowledge for acquisition.

In summary, art teachers and students are appealing to socio-cultural sources when they are free to choose appropriate art activities, within a framework of artworld values, made relevant within their personal and community context.

The third source of value is the psychological. Like the structural and unlike the socio cultural, the psychological source is universally relevant. Thus the psychological source applies to all cultures and to all individuals. A preeminent account of

the psychological source of artistic value is provided by Monroe Beardsley's (1981) concept of the aesthetic object.

Psychological sources are located within the personal experience of the subject causally related to the impact of aesthetic qualities of objects. Experiences are not 'read' structurally or 'understood' culturally, they are felt. While experiences in their subjectivity cannot be shared, it is agreed that they are accompanied by vividly sensed imagery. The vividness and repleteness of experiential imagery is exemplified in the character of dreams. John Dewey (1958, Ch.2) argues that experiences are compulsively driven and unified by emotive intent. For Dewey experiences, while intentional and unique, are manifested in an irredeemably subjective form.

Experiences are the foundation of the aesthetic because they provide the subjective origins of awareness with their origins in the aesthetic character of the world, in particular artefacts. Psychological foundations of value have their origins in the Cartesian view that inevitably all human belief must be confirmed deeply within the self consciousness of each individual. In the visual arts psychological or aesthetic value is manifested in ends that lend intersubjective form to what would otherwise be incommunicable ideas. The value of artworks is their power in mediating felt experience as aesthetically causal objects.

A drawing is artistic from the aesthetic perspective when it possesses the emotive compulsion, the imaginative vividness, and the unique character that is normally recognised within an experience. We do not have knowledge about the value in artworks, we experience it directly. Art works are valued because they tend to affirm within us the truth of felt ideas. Without artistic forms of representation experience, given its intractability to discursive (theoretical/technical) forms of knowledge, might otherwise be dismissed as neurotic illusion.

In our kit example, artistic value would be registered psychologically whenever it was assembled in ways that transfigured it expressively. The kit would need to present a vividly unique kind of experience to the viewer. In judging the progress of its ends the pupil and teacher critic would interrogate their own experience as it was challenged by each new transformation of the kit. They would consult this process steadily as the basis for judging the direction of further changes in the work. The kit would be valuable artistically to the degree that it was able to evoke in its audience an aesthetic kind of experience.

The application of psychological sources of artistic value is often mistakenly believed to be totally relative to the individual. It is a misconception commonly heard in popular remarks like, "I know what I like" and, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder". When children in defending their work claim that, "art can be anything, as long as its all right for me" they are adopting this point of view. It labours under the romantic misapprehension that art is easy because it is the one activity where value doesn't govern. We have shown the error in this position. Psychological values are in some ways the hardest to meet. They are resistant to rhetoric. They are unavoidable and impossible to disguise. A work which is cliched, obvious, incoherent and boring may well have to be judged so at the subjective level. But in an arena like the classroom, where the work is opened to the scrutiny of experiential interpretation, its limitations are immediately apparent.

13.3 Conclusion

All human activity carries meaning. Human activity is inherently ethical in that its ends are rule governed rather than rule determined. Human actions are identified and judged by their ends not by their means. Thus the same means can be used to different ends. The visual arts shares technical means with other human activities, including the vernacular play of children. There is no doubt that competence in technical skills and conceptual understandings is valuable in itself. But the most damning criticism one can level at artists is that their work is merely competent. Means become artful only when their ends are governed by value sources of the visual arts. It is through the acquisition and cultivation of these values in relation to means, like drawing, that teacher and student participate in art learning. This paper has identified three main sources of artistic value, the structural, the socio-cultural, and the psychological. It is anticipated that the talks and workshops that follow will extend practical meaning to these ideas.

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Chapter 14
Similarities Between Creativity and Politics as Forms of Praxis

14.1 Some Similarities Between the Politic and the Creative

Among those general theories of political action set forth by writers in social theory themes of judgment and communicative action serve as useful analogues for creative enactment in the practical arts. The work of social theorists Gadamer, Habermas and Arendt of the continental school, critique the dependency of the Anglo-American social sciences' on the methods and standards of natural science. In a field that has resisted as subjective the intervention of phenomenological reduction in research, these three German philosophers have sought, through the measures of dialectics and hermeneutics, to reunite the social sciences with the humanities. Hermeneutics is a process rather than a method. This process is entailed in three moments, which are respectively, understanding, interpreting, and acting. Each moment is appropriately performed when it addresses the unfolding of some text or culture. Hermeneutics is not a procedure able to guarantee certainties of outcome like research methods employed in the natural sciences, yet it shares with scientific investigation the goals of finding truth and building knowledge. As a form of inquiry hermeneutics has been called by Richard Rorty "weakly textual" (modernist as opposed to post-modernist) because it shares with the natural sciences an assumption that within each text there is to be sought one exclusive and refinable essence (Bernstein 1985, p. 201). Whereas the sciences are concerned with the instantiation of universals the focus of hermeneutic inquiry is on disclosing transcendental truths in context.

Social theorists of the continental school fear that the absence of hermeneutic approaches in the study of social issues has led to a disastrous category mistake,

whereby realms of inquiry more appropriately directed towards moral and political policy have been replaced by the quest for scientific and technical kinds of control. Thus praxis, otherwise called the practical arts or practical reason has, they believe, been hijacked by the mechanistic and law like solutions of science. For Gadamer (1975) practical action, the last in the three moments of hermeneutics is exemplified in Aristotelian *phronesis. Phronesis* or practicability, involves the making of wise decisions. Wise decisions are based upon assessments of the truth in relation to some state of affairs, more specifically, truth that has already been exposed to understanding and interpretation. Wisdom is bent on the **recovery** of the truth, explained as the application of tradition to the historicity within a situation. The hermeneutic is seen as an essential element in knowledge. It acts in weighing the significance of facts pertinent to a circumstance in recognition of the necessary role played by practical reasoning in determining the truth. Critical theorists are thus, as was Aristotle in his ethics and politics, concerned with a resolution of the ought with the is. Habermas sees it as reconciling the technical with the ethical, or with praxis.

This paper claims that praxiology or practical reason, argued by Habermas and Arendt as a model for political action, shares similarities with creative enactment. Practical reasoning, like creative enactment, while simultaneously claiming truth or significance for its deliberations is at the same time particular to a context. Creativity is comprehensible to others as part of the normative tradition of a field, text or culture, yet it is contextually revolutionary within that normative tradition. Like politics creativity builds reflectively upon *techne* and upon theory. But creativity cannot be reduced to method out of *techne* or theory since there is no implication for practice in either two. Creativity could thus be likened to a Utopian form of political action (Utopian because popular party based politics cannot necessarily be equated with good action).

Habermas (1979) argues that it is an illusion to think that in grasping other horizons and other standards of rationality we can assume the position of disinterested observers simply by bracketing out our pre-understanding. We must adopt, he believes, the performative attitude when describing other forms of life. According to Habermas the performative attitude is always adopted within **particular** contexts and is therefore always made apparent through dialogue. Thus the apprehension of other horizons and perspectives beyond our local norms involves, because of the dialectical nature of understanding, participation in mutual understanding. Understanding, like description is, then, something achieved within parliamentary forms of transaction and agreement.

To engage in a dialogue a speaker (writer, artist) must first come to an understanding with his/her opponent. But full dialogue demands that the speaker go on beyond understanding to evaluate the validity of his/her opponent's opinions. The validity of an opinion is determined by the implicit reasons underlying it. Reasons are validated on two levels. The first level involves an understanding of the context in which a validity claim upon a speech act is made. (For example, into which kind of aesthetic culture is a particular artwork inculcated? What aesthetic system of discourse is underlying a particular work?) The second level of validation demands an evaluation of the goodness or badness of the reasons themselves. The evaluation

of reasons is conducted in accordance with the system of discourse (even non-discursive systems) within which reasons are given. Habermas' objective, it appears is attacking relativism while preserving perspectivism.

Within dialogue any discourse or communicative action must first be rationalised for the believability of its expressive character. Believability is mostly a function of comprehensibility and truth. But in providing an adequate framework for believability rationalisation of communicative action must take place within the **norms** of rationality, that is, within what constitutes the 'good' or the 'bad' of the discursive system assumed by the speaker. Ordinary conventional practice (communicative action) presupposes a background **consensus** of norms among speakers. However, discourse (political or, analogously, creative action) ensues only when a normative consensus of suppositions is challenged and the validity norms of the system have to be redeemed. Practical discourse or action, stakes its redemption by establishing the comprehensibility, truth, sincerity, and appropriateness of its acts, necessary stages in the redemption of its implicit norms (Habermas 1973). In this way discourse resists being mistaken for the merely popular being seen, instead, as the redemption of good within the system. Thus discourse (political action) involves redemption of the normative system itself, a coming back into touch with the norms of rational speech (or the dispositions of the aesthetic) that we must suppose if we are to be able to engage in discourse at all (Thompson and Held 1982).

Creative action, considered as an analogue of political action, may be similarly validated as rational, meaningful, and redemptive of the normative traditions of a particular discourse and, as an inherently dialogical performance, also involve transaction and agreement amongst its parliament. *Ex nihilo* communicative action, according to Habermas, would be impossible since without dialogue and shared agreement among other speakers within a culture, action is impossible. Under these terms creative enactment entails communicative action.

Where for Habermas action is dialogue, for Arendt (1961) action is equated with debate and is inherently political. Unlike work (subsistence) and labour (techne), Hill suggests, to act is to engage others in debate in order to communicate (1979). Action is the preserve of individuals. Groups cannot act. However, the innate ability of individuals to act gives rise to plurality in action for, in action, people mediate their singular identity among one another. **Singular** mediation arising out of **plurality** represents the inherently political element in action and for this reason action between individuals requires the context of a polis for it to take place. It is the plurality of action, its political and contextual nature that parallels the creative (Arendt 1958). Equality, freedom, citizenship, and power are all political constructs. Each is a collectively created achievement of an immanent component of individual actors. For Arendt the political and the creative, arising from the public rather than the unique character of enactments is indicative that plurality is a concurrence, not to be confused with a relativistic, diversity of truths.

Political action, according to Arendt (1961), supposes the generation of right opinion. Facts have no privilege in the generation of right opinion and have no implication in politics; analogously neither does evidence in creativity. Opinions are formed through the processes of representative individual thinking. Representative

thinking is the imaginative supposing of views held by absent (hypothetical) others. These 'others' represent the diversity of particular views of individuals whose separate opinions are entertained for reflective consideration. Similarly even though one might work alone, a plural consciousness is afforded through the mechanisms of representative thought. In this way even the solitary artist can turn his/her canvas into a polis.

Reflective consideration is exemplified for Arendt in the concept of intersubjective taste in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, (Bernstein 1985). Arendt believes that judgment, while limited to the estimation of particulars (some would say qualities), is validated (objectified) on the grounds that although what is judged may not be accepted as universally valid, a 'particular' (opinion, quality etc.) gains validity when presented to others for their consequent and separate judgmental consideration. Arendt believes, that through the hypothetical imperative of representative thought, a plurality of judgments can settle into the formation of a validated opinion, a kind of truth. Thus a *telos* of induction, gained through the reflectiveness of judgment, can bring to light new concepts out of the individual ideas and opinions of others.

Habermas (1975), however, expresses concern at Arendt's omission of the concept of "agreement" among judges. Judgment, in order to be a political or, analogously, a creative enactment must liberate itself from subjectivity, that is, from the idiosyncrasies which naturally determine the outlook of each individual in private; to enter into the market place and be debated there.

Judgments, in order to function as political and analogously creative enactments (to be a praxis), must also enter into the market place and be debated (Arendt 1978). Judgment is the opposite of Methodism. Judgment, while not opposed to the theoretical and the technical, consults the latter only in relation to demands for action arising out of some **particular** state of affairs.

Habermas and Arendt regard praxis as respectively dialogue and debate. For Habermas the redemption of rational norms, and for Arendt the plurality of individual judgment, frames their inherently value based approaches to cognising in the social sciences. The 'creative' parallels the 'political' insofar as in being a kind of enactment seeking the redemption of norms, it implies a critique of present understanding. Both are public concepts seeking validation through agreement in the market place. Individual enactment for Arendt cannot become political until it achieves plurality in the forum of debate. Thus the underlying taciturnity of intersubjective eighteenth century aesthetics cannot pretend to be creative. Plurality attacks relativism at all levels thus, Arendt believes, affirming the cognitive pretensions of judgment in politics. Pluralism, as described by Arendt, affects a similar role in creative action.

14.2   Comments on Creativity as Practical Judgment

To begin with, creativity in itself can never provide a sufficient value base for the visual arts. As a kind of knowing the creative is properly classed as a performance. In this sense it is of a general kind, subject to the wider principles that act as the warranting values of a field. A good performance, for example, may be anathema to action in a field if, in contravention of the norms of the field, it is imprudently applied. What, in other words, distinguishes the merely creative from the significantly creative? Even a smoothly accomplished performance meets only technical criteria. As Nietzsche (1968) remarks, creativity is not the most distinguishingly human of accomplishments. Creativity as a performance entails judgment insofar as it is concerned with the origination of types requiring the intelligent and politic application of knowledge. As a way of 'knowing how', creativity is the most difficult to do. It almost always requires, at the minimum, the application of great wisdom and experience. Because it is of a general performative kind, creativity is inclusive of all fields and distinctive systems of value.

It seems hardly worth remarking that it is just as possible to perform creatively in geography as in video, as it is possible to act conventionally in those fields. Yet creative and conventional performance do not necessarily originate in the values of the field with which they are most closely associated. To know conventionally is to be able to act accordingly within predetermined pathways. Although performances such as oil painting have come to be linked with the visual arts and photocopying with commerce, the conventionality of these two kinds of enactment refers to the predetermination of the paths by which the set moves in each performance are enacted. As a result the same performance can be conventional to a variety of fields and their value bases. Thus to identify a merely conventional or creative performance with the visual arts is to beg the question of artistic identity.

The significance of any performance is found in the value base justifying its use. In the visual arts, significance is traceable to norms of aesthetic value. In his 1987 exhibition at Roslyn Oxley's Gallery in Sydney, artist Mike Parr made use of a photocopier in the preparation of his portraits. Upon consideration of its role in the development of his works his photocopying could be considered as both conventional and innovative. Valued by themselves, his actions can at best be smoothly accomplished, artful maybe, but only within the conditions set down for each sort of performance. The significance of Parr's photocopying performances, their eligibility as objects of the visual arts, is marked by aesthetic value and hinges upon the power of his judgment in using them. In other words, the meanings offered in Parr's self portraits reside in the significance of the performance selected in their making. Whichever way the aesthetic is represented, psychologically, linguistically or sociopolitically, the institutions of the arts comprises the only disciplined fields of praxis whose objects the aesthetic, as value base, serves in justifying. As Habermas would put it, an artwork is redemptive of those values validating aesthetic reason.

To free spirits in the arts who reject as presumption the notion of authority residing in a validating aesthetic (of any complexion), the visual arts are always an

inherently ungoverned field. While to some extent it is clear that no system of authority (either aesthetic or artistic) can cause, in an empirical sense, anybody to do anything, as Weber (1962) points out

> There can be orientation toward valid authority even where meaning [as generally understood] is not necessarily obeyed [as with a thief concealing his actions, or a delinquent graffiti-ing a train] …and [We can] recognize within the same social group the existence of several possibly mutually contradictory, valid systems of authority (pp. 72–73).

It is highly unlikely, for example, that Aboriginal artists, following ritualized pathways to the realization of their works, may also acknowledge the orientation of their pieces to a western psychological aesthetic. Both orientations can be acknowledged without cynicism. In cases where the probability of an orientation toward a validating authority is highly unlikely, however, the authority may cease to be valid. And in a case where the institutional backing of a field whose validity norms were called into this degree of question, the authority of the institution would either languish or be withdrawn.

Theoretical aesthetics, however, remains only a representation of the imminent and rational judgments artists make. The diversity of theoretical explanation in aesthetics is misused if taken as the sign of a pluralist norm dictating authoritatively to the decisions made by artists in their work. It is no less mistaken to take the evidence of disciplined technique or the application of theoretical principles in a work as a denial of the imminent nature of aesthetic judgment. The visual artist shares the angst of decision making with professionals in other fields, but varies the source of his/her angst originating within the character, rather than the purposeful nature of the work. Thus artistic performances provide the competence and art theory, the anticipation, for aesthetic judgment. All these 'mediums' of knowing come together in objects and characterise them as objects of the arts. Yet it is the values within which the **characteristics** of art objects find significance that **identifies** them.

From a praxiological perspective any single performance or theory may fail to qualify as necessary, let alone sufficient to the arts, yet it is implicit in the assumptions of many art educationalists that creativity is a necessary and sufficient condition of all artistic activity. At its highest level, creative enactment combines a mix of theory, skill and judgment in some particular context, lying beyond direct tutorial possibility. Meeting these conditions of 'creative' performance at this level requires a qualitative revolution, a transformation of pathways that nevertheless continue to serve the necessity of the work. Creative performance bares little relation to the simple joining of disciplines or to the romantic indulgence in sensory expression. In the stronger sense of creative performance, the creation of types (of style), satisfaction of creative conditions by a student would most likely pass unnoticed or even be suppressed by teachers responsible for recognizing them. In the field of critical theory it took some time for Barthes' theory of the reader to gain acknowledgement by the world of literary criticism since its innovation not only revolutionalised critical process it changed the perspective from which critical moves could be viewed. New models can threaten the very authority, if not the viability of an institution, as Weber (1962) has shown.

'Creativist' art educationalists in Australia (Cowie 1987) have recently emphasized 'evidence' of the novel and the subjective as characteristics of creative performance. This has been at the expense of the epistemological and cultural momentum of the art object. Adorno (1984) points out the confusion in romantic views falsely equating creativity with the unique subject conceived as universal genius. While in the late eighteenth century everybody was considered a potential genius and each soul was thought to mirror the unconventionality of nature, the insufficiency of a mere state of mind as the main agency at work in art has since become increasingly apparent. Adorno (1987) notes

> To be a genius also means to be able to cause the new, on the strength of its novelty, to appear and shine forth as though it had always been there … [even] the achievement of fantasy is not ex nihilo creation, but an imagining of authentic solutions in the framework of the pre-existing totality of the work. (p. 246)

Experienced artists, Adorno continues, "castigate the irruption of fantasy into the logic of the work without it being fully integrated". (p. 246).

Causing 'the new' is a special amalgam of the automatic uniqueness of individual style with the culturally new that which, in the collective consciousness of a historical context, has never existed. The truly creative production 'aims' at the generation of new types not an *ex nihilo* fantasy or the merely unique. However, as new types, their status is nevertheless embodied, objective and knowable. Although not open to pre-specification, the creative is discovered (redeemed) operating in objects in ways that are more understandable at the level of technique and construction and, on balance, less at the level of invention. The fantastic, original and the creative in art are best likened according to Adorno "to carving out a sphere of freedom in the midst of determination." (1987, p. 249).

Even allowing for Adorno's ideological emphasis on the material role of artistic work (labour), the likelihood of the innovation of new types (remote in the art educational context) is more likely to be advanced in the long term through a combination of deeply disciplined conventional actions and wide judgmental experience. The formularized techniques, the automaticity of synesthesia and the lottery of interrelated disciplines referred to erroneously as the 'creative process' in arts curricula, subvert the ethics of aesthetic judgment and deny the cultural impetus of the work.

Disaffection with the idea of artistic discipline expressed by 'creativist' art educators works on the one hand in discrediting the conventions of technique and theory, the cultural 'languages' of art, while exhausting artists of their textual resources on the other. Why do 'creativist' art educators deliberately set the moves related to the invention of imaginative ideas into conflict with the conventional moves of a field? Why should the mystical transfiguration of an image be automatically hindered by competence in the language systems used in its conceptualisation? The two areas are not mutually exclusive. Indeed one of the more pressing duties of art education is to help sort out the politics of the various but important realms of knowing in the visual arts.

Creative performance is a trace, left in an object, of the politic moves made within the authority of a field, set against the background of a particular cultural context. As a kind of enactment, creativity gains identity in the visual arts through the redemption of aesthetic and artistic value. The business of creativity in the arts often, but not always, entails a gradual dialogue or debate set among the value frames of the visual arts, and whose verdicts are often conferred retrospectively. This debate is usually led by the individual artist speaking from the plural stage represented by what Adorno describes as "the pre-existing totality of the work" (1987, p. 246).

The materials of artistic creativity are embedded in the many technical and theoretical conventions in and outside of the field. But the business of creativity has its beginnings in the ethics of practical action that serve, through art education, in bringing the unique judgments of individual artists and art students to cultural maturity.

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Chapter 15
Creativity as Collective Misrecognition in the Relationships Between Art Students and Their Teachers

Neil C.M. Brown and Kerry Thomas

15.1 Background to the Study

Descriptions of the creative disposition are caught in a dilemma. If, on the one hand, the spontaneous origination of ideas is a product of discrete mental dispositions how, on the other hand, are these intentional traits made intelligible within conventional discourse? In art education this dilemma is rehearsed as follows. On the one hand art students are obliged by teachers to find creative authenticity inside their own intentional resources. On the other hand students, with increasing maturity, begin to realise that the originality of their achievements is rewarded in conformity with art educational convention. How, in other words, do art students overcome the contradiction implicit in "learning to be creative"? Creativity acquired its identity as a quality of human imagination from Kant in the late eighteenth century. Although conceived by Kant as the representational basis for all knowing, the transcendental imagination is most exemplified within the concept of artistic origination. A psychology of creativity has, nevertheless, been difficult to realise.

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15.2   Creative Kinds of Performance

The term 'creativity' refers to a particular kind of performance. Included among the properties of a creative performance are the products and artefacts that it enacts. Because artefacts are always produced within a particular historical context creative performances are invested with cultural in addition to intentional causes and properties (Gardner and Nemirovsky 1991, p. 2). Creative performances, therefore, derive their extension via a combination of semantically related properties and empirically underlying traits. For this reason they are most appropriately identified as non-strict natural kind terms (Norris 1992, p. 5). It makes little sense, then, to investigate the empirical properties of non-strict natural kinds in isolation from their semantic properties. Creative traits, in other words, only make explanatory sense when understood within some particular field of production. As a result creative performances straying beyond the intelligibility of their domain will go unrecognised.

15.3   The Creative Disposition

Psychological investigations into creativity traditionally seek a systematic account of the relation between the creative properties of the performance and properties of its performer. Biographies of creative individuals provide a fruitful source of inquiry (Gardner and Nemirovsky 1991; Ciselin 1952). But the teleological 'necessity' of historical relationships is not sufficient. We know what occurred and when but we don't know why. Experimental investigation into creative behaviour, on the other hand, relies on criteria generated from inductive factors, such as "elaboration", "lateral thinking", and so on (Guilford 1967). When applied to artefacts produced under experimental conditions these criteria produce precise but unsatisfyingly recursive descriptions. Berti and Freeman (1997) found, contrary to expectations, that the ability of nine year olds relative to five year olds in elaborating a cross-categorical drawing of a "house-man", increasingly consulted the representational resources of a mental framework. This 'framework' could be consciously reflected upon and spontaneously generated by the older children without being prompted by the use of external examples. Thus elaborated drawing, even when performed under experimental protocols, reveals the use of complex mental redescription or generative frameworks that are not simply coextensive with the innovative properties of the products they represent. This means that the validity of inductive inferences about creativity drawn from artefacts and performances entails some kind of additional warrant.

15.4   Discriminating Creative Dispositions

Let us assume that creative ability is a condition of the theoretical terms under which the creative properties of a situated performance are transported into mental properties of the performer. A difficulty faces the theoretical transportation of

properties between the two. The extent to which the imaginative resources of mental redescription are brought to bear on **all** kinds of performances may be concealed if unilateral attachment of these imaginative resources is reserved for creative kinds of performances alone (Karmiloff-Smith 1991, p. 23). Thus because creative performances supervene on non-creative performances, they cloak the manner in which mental representations in creative performances draw upon conventional resources. This possibility relocates the centre of creative agency within the logical space managing the relation between the resources of thought and artefact (Oxman 1999, pp. 108–09). Creative thinking is repositioned as a species of ordinary thinking made creative by its employment in the production of creative kinds of performance. Art students come to know the peculiar demands in originating art works, for example, and know, therefore, that making them presents special difficulties.

15.5   A Developmental Critique of the Creative Disposition

Vygotsky's critique of psychological method gives shape to the latter proposition (1978, p. 65). Vygotsky argues that the structural relation between two agencies, illustrated in the relation between the performance and the performer, is explained in the conceptual space linking the two agents. Phenotypic characterisation of the "outer features" of the two agencies begs an explanation of the causal influence each one exerts upon the other. The simple co-occurrence of either one is not enough to show cause. Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi, for example, found no predictive covariance in the relationship between measures of the person and measures of the work (1966, p. 363). They conclude that the most effective understanding of creative ability must eventually come from the study of reciprocal interaction among the person, the process and the product. Genotypical explanations, Vygotsky argues, emerge in the history of the performance. Thus the relation between performer and performance are developed through ongoing reference to the context in which they are transacted (1978, p. 84). In other words, there is a contextual micro-history underlying the functional relations of creative performances in which the creative faculties of performers are transformed by the recruitment of new agencies into the relation.

How can we identify which functions are recruited into the relation between the creative performance and the performer, given the complexity of socio-cultural agency emergent within the semantic properties of creative products? In the course of his historical biography of Sigmund Freud, Howard Gardner (1986) identifies the social field of the late nineteenth century as a critical agency in the formation of Freud's creative achievement. Gardner says, "Just as projects serve as the intermediary between an individual and the domain, social institutions serve as the intermediary between an individual and the field" (p. 111). If semantic properties have a causal impact within the creative relation then, according to genotypical methodology, it follows that psycholinguistic properties will be concealed within performances and artefacts.

15.6 The Agency of the Teacher Within the Creative Performances of the Student

The art teacher's pedagogical role in the production of their students' art is notoriously ambiguous. For example, responsibility for the creative activity of students is thought to be either dependent on or corrupted by the teacher at various historical moments (Lowenfeld 1949; Barkan 1962). The art teacher is represented in the literature as fostering, collaborating with, or appropriating the student's creative originality. For instance, is it because the teacher already believes that students are "problem finders" that they decide to adopt an inquiry based pedagogy (Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels 1971, p. 52)? As a result of this decision how is—'the teacher's decision to adopt an inquiry based approach' introduced into the creative artefact as a semantic property and, consequently, entertained as an empirical trait of the performer?

15.7 Theoretical Framework of the Study

Pierre Bourdieu provides the socio-cognitive framework for this study. Bourdieu challenges the assumption that the intentional actor is the sole originator of the cognitive resources that people bring to bear in the practices of their lives (1990, p. 47). He relies on two central concepts of social competency. The first is the habitus. The habitus explains how the practical agency of individuals is shaped by the social formations of their existence (p. 63). The habitus "… is the source of these strings of 'moves' which are objectively organised as strategies without being the product of a genuine strategic intention…" (p. 62). Inculcated into a particular social formation the individual is able to harness the conventional regularities of their habitus to tacitly guide their actions and choices. The individual uses these pragmatic regularities to affect a semblance of certainty in how to go on and what to do next. It is impossible to secure a pure model of rational action. Weber shows, Bourdieu says, that this "pure model of rational action cannot be regarded as a rational description of practice" (p. 63). In other words, it is a profound mistake of scientific method to reduce the explanation of cognitive dispositions subtending the practices of any particular social formation, such as creative practice, to an intentional logic. Creative practice is a disposition that is not strictly obedient to rules but can be conceived as the enactment of regulated improvisations. Although an objectively organised series of strategies the habitus of creativity lacks a genuine strategic intention. Nevertheless, there are, Bourdieu says, usually good objective reasons for the irrational things that social agents do.

15.7.1 The Exchange of Symbolic Capital

Bourdieu's second explanation, the theory of symbolic capital, is entailed within the first. Symbolic capital is the primary currency of exchange in the social economy. It is expressed in the types of social value underlying the habitus. Social values are redeemed or 'cashed in' in the token exchanges of day-to-day social relations. Cognitive competency required for fluent participation in this exchange is explained as the ability to judge the difference between the material properties of the tokens of social transactions, from the symbolic properties of the underlying social types they represent. A cornerstone of the exchange of symbolic capital is its reciprocity. The notion of reciprocity is shaped around the archaic "project of the gift" (p. 114). A person who participates in the project of gift exchange is marked as one who is "…socially disposed to enter, without intention or calculation, into the game of the exchange" (1998, p. 98). The gift is only a token however. Thus the reciprocity of symbolic transactions, such as gift giving, involve expectations of mutual understanding on the part of the giver, about the motivation or 'causality' of other social participants, otherwise the token quality of the gift might be misrepresented and taken as an insult by its recipient. In gift giving it is always a question of whether what has been given is appropriate to the symbolic content of the occasion. To be respectful of others is to possess social reasoning of sufficient subtlety to nuance the tacitly agreed order betokened within an exchange.

15.7.2 The Asymmetry of Social Reasoning

Symbolic asymmetry is expressed in denial of the instrumental value of the token exchange for relevant social 'reasons'. The agent "…either ignores or denies its objective truth as an economic exchange" by leaving its motive implicit or, by stating it through euphemisms—the "language of denial…" (p. 98). As Bourdieu says

> Practical euphemisms are a kind of homage rendered to the social order and to the values the social order exalts, all the while knowing that they are doomed to be violated" (p. 98).

However, rationalisation of social transactions 'pays back' the other in kind. Paying back in kind reverts to a logical symmetry that reduces the meaning of social transactions to a phenotype of their tokens. Social rules, on the other hand, are based upon the shared understanding that social transactions signify deeper symbolic meanings opaque within the instrumental reality of their token exchanges. Social transactions are by necessity, therefore, susceptible to profound misrecognition. Misrecognitions turn a blind eye to the material truths of token exchanges that can be destructive of useful social institutions if taken at face value. In the movie *The Life of Brian*, Brian, fleeing from his captors is delayed by a hawker in the bazaar who, when Brian offers the hawker the full asking price for his wares in order to

escape from his pursuers, berates Brian for his failure to misrecognise the symbolic capital of commercial transactions conventional to the Bazaar. "You have got to haggle", the hawker tells Brian, the former preferring to deny himself the full money rather than jeopardise the valuable social practice of haggling. Haggling, although deliberately misrepresentative of the 'real' price of goods plays an important social role through the exchange of symbolic rather than economic capital in the bazaar. Rationalisations reducing underlying social values to the material level of their token exchange do symbolic violence, as does Brian's expediency, to their social meaning. In the field of art education there is a symbolic gap between how student works are instrumentally produced in the classroom and the way in which art educational narratives explain it. As in the bazaar, the 'narrative of creative autonomy' gives legitimacy to the instrumental realities of social transactions in the art room.

15.8   Creativity as Misrecognition Within the Practice of Art Education

Art classrooms are sites for the exchange of symbolic capital. The symbolic economy of the art room can be likened to the 'archaic' economy in which everything takes place as if "…economic activity cannot explicitly recognise the economic ends in relation to which it is objectively oriented" (Bourdieu 1998, p. 113). In the field of art education the technical reality of the teacher's pedagogical role may be repressed in the interests of maintaining the subjectivist narrative of the autonomously originating student. In the repression of this explicit economy, to paraphrase Bourdieu, we forget to question all the non-creative presuppositions of the creativity narrative (p. 130). It is not surprising that when it comes to the objectification of creative dispositions in the student, the teacher's agency is either omitted from the relation or it is thoroughly mystified. There are many distinguished instances of misrecognising the art teacher's agency in the creative performances of students. Howard Gardner (1982), for example, concludes that the art teacher must help to unfold the child's creative potential as a naturally developing competence (p. 217). Gardner himself, as earlier theorists such as Lowenfeld and most art teachers continue to do, turns a blind eye to the instrumentality of teaching art in his respect for the autonomous student. This is not to imply criticism. On the contrary there are very good reasons for the maintenance of contradictory social practices of this kind in art education. It is not the object of this study to expose these tacit misrecognitions with the purpose of condemning them as hypocrisy. Rather it is to understand them as complex social reasoning exercised in support of a valuable art educational institution.

15.9   Hypotheses of the Study

Satisfying the narrative of the creative young artist—while meeting the obligations of instructional outcomes—entails the use of teaching and learning strategies that call upon creative resources falling outside the exercise of laboratory defined dispositions. It entails the mastery of a cultural tradition requiring the exercise of tactful social reasoning. In particular that:

- Misrecognition of creative autonomy in various emergent forms, takes place in the transaction between teachers and students; students and students, students and teachers, teachers and teachers, as well as teachers and others.
- Students of different developmental ages respond with differing frameworks of "tact" in the misrecognition of creative autonomy in the art room.
- Social reasoning relative to maturity is adaptive to different contextual "points of view". That the expression of "denial" and "open secretiveness" in the misrecognition of creative exchanges is sensitive to different classroom contexts and to wider educational situations.
- That the aesthetic value of creative products will correlate positively with the increasing subtlety of misrecognition possessed by their creators.

15.10   The Pilot Study

This study reports on a pilot investigation into the symbolic transactions between a Visual Arts teacher, her senior art class, and their art making. We have chosen to observe the interaction between these three 'functions' in a classroom, without presuppositions other than of producing a clinical characterisation of their transactions. Our reasoning is based on the need in establishing objective benchmarks of exchange among the three agents that can be used as a guide to the future viability of our proposal. The issue of symbolic capital has been set aside until the concluding discussion of the results.

15.10.1   Methodology

The pilot study employs an emergent qualitative design. Guba (1978, 1985) argues that qualitative methodology is well suited to the characterisation of complex situated dilemmas. Qualitative methodology rests on two planks of validity, triangulation, and semantic analysis. Triangulation subjects a variety of discrete observational methods and independently audited ethnographies to crosschecking and mutual reinforcement. Crosschecking helps in objectifying interpretive methodologies and as a clinical measure for delaying the rush to theoretical explanation. Semantic analysis is used in the production of emergent concepts or "cover terms"

underdetermining interview responses. Transcripts of the unstructured interview; structured interview; records of observations; other documentary evidence; and photographic records of students' artworks were coded and provide the textual content referred to in the analysis. Detailed observations were made of a number of 75 min long lessons in which the Visual Arts teacher introduced a new unit of work on "Collections" to her senior class. Photographic records were also taken of the classroom spaces, and of selected examples of the students' artworks. Protocols of confidentiality were observed as part of the design and reporting of the study that secured ethical approval from UNSW (Punch 1994).

15.10.2 Instructions

Respondents were asked if they would agree to being interviewed. The teacher was interviewed twice about her views on art making, and on her approach to the instruction of senior art students and agreed to follow up interviews. She was also asked if she would agree to being observed while teaching her senior art class. Teacher and students agreed to participate in the study unreservedly. Neither the teacher nor her students have any formal knowledge of the "habitus", "symbolic capital", "misrecognition" or "social reasoning" elaborated in the theoretical framework and hypotheses of the study. The art department's programming documents and records were reviewed, and handouts circulated by the teacher to the students at during the observations, were sampled. The most developed and resolved of the students' artworks were closely described and documented. Data from these texts and images were considered by independent judges in conjunction with data from the teacher's interviews and from the descriptions of the lessons observed.

15.10.3 Respondents

The visual art teacher, whom we shall refer to as (R1) has taught for over twenty years and has a specialist degree. She is female, in her mid 40s, married with two children in primary school. She is Head Teacher of the Visual Arts Department in the school. Students in the senior art class were willing to be observed and are used to having outsiders in the room. The class is one of two Year 11 Visual Arts classes in the school. There are 19 students in the class: twelve girls and seven boys. Students are from predominantly Anglo-Celtic backgrounds from a middle socio-economic stratum.

15.11   Results

The results of qualitative studies do not lend themselves to the abbreviated format of conventional reporting neither to the editorial limits placed on conference proceedings governing this paper. Four cover terms emerge out of the data retrieved from the art room and its respondents:

1. lead up exercises and formulas
2. subjective experience
3. making artworks and creative activity
4. teacher knowledge/teacher's strategic decision making

15.12   Interpretation and Discussion of the Results

It emerges from semantic analysis that R1 conceives of her longer term intentions for year 11 students, in producing competitive artworks for the Higher School Certificate matriculation the following year, as "lead up exercises and formulas". With this in mind, her planning and programming through the Year 11 course focuses on offering students a range of formulas and techniques, and upon introducing students to the work of selected artists that R1 believes will be later adapted by students into production of their own artworks for the HSC.

R1 focuses upon particular techniques: for instance the use of the "viewfinder" to frame up formal and abstract qualities for enlargement into images in finished works. The value of the viewfinder is conceived of in different ways by the teacher depending on the time at which it is introduced into the year 11–12 course and on how it fits the intentions of a particular student/s who use it. For example, viewfinders provide students with a tactical way of designing compositions; they reduce the threat posed by the blank white sheet of paper; they offer an opportunity for students to act as autonomous artists insofar as students get to 'choose the bit to use'; viewfinders have a respectable tradition of application in the artworld; and students would not have come upon them spontaneously. Students needing to be spoon-fed sometimes use viewfinders more than others suggesting that viewfinders are equated with a lack of imaginative autonomy.

Other formulas used by R1 include strategies for recontextualising aspects of existing sculptures into new works by students. These procedures, disguised in R1's discourse as student 'experiences', are based on teacher directed programs in the use of her collections, installations and other resources. Students also undertake different 'direct' experiences of the local area through structured exposure to iconic qualities of the urban environment providing pictorial qualities lending themselves to printmaking experiments. The teacher was asked three structured follow up questions testing the cover term "teacher knowledge/teacher strategic decision making". Her reply can be summed up in her phrase: 'guided democracy'. As an overarching concept, guided democracy provides R1 with a "way to explain" the importance of

building students' confidence in year 11 by praising work that is good, assisting students in how they could go forward, and help in maintaining a rapport with students. She emphasises the negative effects of a poor rapport stating 'it seems to stymie them in their work'.

She identifies some constraints on guided democracy in respect of students who remain less involved. Particular students may remain less involved, she says, because of their nature, the art department itself, the social demographic of the area, or a perceived lack of interest in the visual arts in students' homes. She also notes that some students selfishly take whatever ideas they can at the expense of others in the class. Rewards for good work are systematised and have been 'naturalised' within the art department through an award system. 10–20 % of students receive awards for different tasks including, for different reasons, a small few additional to those who have worked really hard.

R1 faces a dilemma relating to students' reliance on her approval (particularly in Years 11–12). She notes on the one hand their dependence on her for her knowledge about what is regarded as good and, on the other hand their perceived need to do their own thing. She also says that she won't just let them do (make) just anything otherwise, she says, they would continue to do what they have been doing here for "thirty years" (which is banal). R1 comments on how she will 'push' some students and suggest a host of different approaches whilst with others her advice, although still suggestive, is more direct.

The evidence is strongly supportive of R1's strategic command of her class. There is urgency (driven by the imperative of the forthcoming HSC) in her need for accommodating students to a series of tactical measures that will lend predictability to the process of producing original works, works of sufficient quality in satisfying criteria of "creative success" in their examination year to come. It is evident that the teacher and the class are spending year 11 aligning themselves with the 'classroom culture' of creative achievement in year 12 Visual Arts. In the teacher's mind students' creative success is deeply dependent upon their ability to "make the leap" into her particular classroom mindset of creative achievement. However, 'making the leap' is a double-sided notion that R1 and her students misrecognise as the capacity for the spontaneous origination of ideas. It is applied as a euphemism for students' capacity to grasp the reasoning behind the strategic imperatives or the 'strings of moves' R1 advances in the face of the pending Year 12 examination. From these preliminary observations there is sufficient grounds for us to infer that in her partitioning of critical discourses, and in transacting 'the leap' with students, the teacher is engaged in the exchange of pedagogical tokens that, for the very best art educational reasons, both she and her students misrecognise as creative capital. The system of practical reasoning underlying their creative misrecognition warrants further investigation.

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Chapter 16
The Meaning of Transfer in the Practices of Arts Education

This study examines the role of cognitive transfer within the practices of education in the arts. Borrowing from the social realism of Searle (1996), Bourdieu (1977), and Boyd (1988) it takes an anti-reductionist approach to the explanation of institutional practice. Rather than reducing explanations of practical causation to raw evidence and theoretical ideas, social realists are more interested in the institutional terms under which evidence and ideas are applied. Understanding how evidence and ideas are put to work within a practice involves disclosing the ways in which institutions' meanings, values and intentions are **ascribed** to them. Variations in these ascriptions explain how facts and theories are able to exert their influence over the conduct of practice within a domain. The value ascribed to scientific evidence by a practice is expressed as a function of its symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1977, pp. 176–181). The symbolic capital attributed to evidence is composed of properties that can be traded in exchange for the advantages they contribute to the field. Thus the symbolic capital ascribed to cognitive transfer is redeemed through the value of the role it transacts in the arts educational "economy". It is argued in this paper that the redeemability of cognitive transfer, its meaning for practice in arts education, varies in significance according to the terms under which the arts are valued within the curriculum.

The paper begins with a sketch of the arts as a kind of practice and goes on to rehearse the values underlying three established arguments supporting the inclusion of the arts within education. After a brief introduction to the transfer of knowledge in the arts, the paper proceeds to analyse the significance of cognitive transfer from the three aforementioned value perspectives. It concludes with a summary of policy on transfer outlining the ways in which different approaches to practice are likely, often for very good practical reasons, to misrecognise the cognitive evidence.

16.1 Educational Practice in the Arts

The arts are part of a wider group of practices historically referred to as the practical arts. The practical arts include fields such as medicine and engineering (Brown 1997). It is rare to find any of the present day practical arts, other than the visual and performing arts, represented in the curricula of elementary and secondary schools. Because the practical arts are vocational they have been historically separated from the education of children. Their tradition of apprenticeship relegates them in most instances to post secondary education. Practical skills need to be rehearsed and coached. Practices are not easily reduced to the sequential rules and principles commonly found in school subjects. Although children learned pattern drawing and choral singing at school in the nineteenth century, singing and pattern drawing were regarded as general accomplishments at a time when mechanical means of reproduction were limited (Smith 1966). Before the advent of child psychology there was no tradition of acknowledging children's spontaneous expression in practical domains (Fletcher and Welton 1912). The psychological repositioning of the concept of childhood early in the twentieth century, however, changed the role played by subject matter in children's education (Cunnignham 1995). Subject matter began to be chosen for its contribution to the development of the child (Thorndike 1914). This created a tension between psychological evidence and standards of specialised knowledge in the arts that continues to resonate in the literature of arts education today.

16.2 Three Claims of Value for the Arts in Education

16.2.1 Claims of Inherent Value in the Arts

There are three contemporary arguments supporting claims for the importance of education in the arts. The first claim argues that educating children in the arts exposes them to subject content, qualities of experience, conceptual structuring, ways of life, depth of participation, and forms of subjective reasoning that cannot be gained through other subjects or by accidental exposure to the arts in everyday life (Eisner 1972; Clark and Zimmerman 1978). However, the claim for the educational particularity of the arts is not enough to make their inclusion within the curriculum a necessity on its own. It requires the additional claim that children accomplished in making and understanding the arts transfer their abilities to everyday life in ways that enrich it uniquely. This view is referred to as the educational claim of inherent value for the arts. According to this strong claim the quality of life is diminished in children who are denied the opportunity for serious engagement in the different artistic modes. Incidental immersion in the arts through play, entertainment and leisure is considered insufficient. Because of their different expressive modalities and their disciplined history, full participation in the individual arts depends upon

being schooled in their specialised techniques and expressive traditions. In this sense education serves the arts as fields of practice.

16.2.2   Claims of Instrumental Value in the Arts

The second claim argues that while the arts possess their own idiosyncratic modes of expression, provide unique kinds of experience, and offer children singular opportunities for participation they, nevertheless, call upon the use of mental skills and abilities that share a common structure with other subjects. The arts, for example, tend to share in the educational history of other disciplines. The arts had a high profile in the child-centred reforms of the nineteen thirties and forties, and were instrumental in redressing the plight of minorities in the social reconstructionism of the nineteen seventies and eighties (Geahigan 1992, p. 14). While presented in the form of different visual, kinaesthetic and auditory modalities, instrumentalists argue that subject matter in the arts is mentally represented by children in ways that call upon similar frameworks of reasoning used in the humanities and sciences. It is claimed that the visual arts, for instance, place the same emphasis upon the need for literacy and critical thinking as other subjects do. However, when these general skills are adapted to the particular visual/spatial content of the visual arts, for example, they are converted into "domain specific" forms such as "visual literacy", and "visual thinking" (Arnheim 1974). Metaphors of 'reading' and 'communication', even the 'recital' in music, are commonly used in reference to the interpretation of artistic content in music, drama, literature and dance (Hodge and Kress 1988; O'Toole 1994). The educational justification of the arts underlying this claim is twofold. Firstly, the arts provide children with the opportunity to round out their repertoire of mental skills. Secondly, the arts are valuable insofar as they provide children with the opportunity to further exercise the general skills that underlie competent involvement in everyday life (Diblasio 1997, p.103). In this sense the arts serve education. This view is referred to as the claim of instrumental value for the arts in education.

16.2.3   Unified Knowledge in the Arts

The third claim is a softer amalgam of the first and the second. It is agreed that the arts have inherent value but that this value is shared amongst the different art forms as a generic disposition of knowledge. According to this position the arts are a field in which the properties of individual member arts are unified under a number of over-arching dispositional concepts. It is these concepts that lend the arts their educational value. The two most important of these distinguishing concepts are the "creative" and the "aesthetic" (Reimer 1992, p. 25). For example, while many disciplines outside the arts place a high value on creative thinking their subject matter

is not devoted to the production of creative artefacts to the same degree (Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi 1966). It is also commonly assumed that the arts are transacted educationally through aesthetic kinds of experience (Broudy 1972; Ecker et al. 1969; Aesthetic Education Program *Lincoln Center* 1999).

Despite the complexity of their underlying structures and their differing expressive modalities it is believed that art works, in general, are presented to children as a form of educational content prepared for immediate interpretation. Both the creative and the aesthetic are thought to correspond with native dispositions that allow young children to engage with artworks spontaneously. Under the unifying mechanisms of the creative and the aesthetic children experiencing one art form are understood to be sympathetically rehearsing another. In this way the arts are able to capture the creative and expressive agenda in school education under the one umbrella. Similar claims of unification among the arts are advanced under the theoretical and disciplinary umbrella of Cultural Studies and Multimedia. However, these latter structures are unaccompanied by especially dedicated behaviours. In this sense the arts serve generic dispositions. These generic positions can be referred to as claims of unified knowledge in the arts.

16.3 The Transfer of Knowledge within the Arts and Education

Subject disciplines are included within the curriculum in the belief that the knowledge they provide has a relevance to wider human competencies. Nevertheless, it is also generally held that transfer of abilities between one group of specified skills and another only happens when these skills share a level of surface similarity (Hebb 1949).

It is important to point out, however, that some subjects have wider, even if not necessarily deeper, relevance for other disciplines. "Thinner" subject domains, for example, have less difficulty in demonstrating their application to other fields than "thicker" subjects (Geertz 1976; Goodman 1974). The thinnest subjects of all are mathematics and written language. Mathematics is based on a universally applicable system of notation. The rational syntax and tautological semantics of mathematical notation is so transparent that it transcends cultural boundaries. Written language systems share common notational structures too, but unlike mathematics their systems have different notational conventions. Because of their semantic thinness other fields can use mathematics and written languages without imposing separate meanings upon their specialised concepts and ideas. This means that the wider application of maths and written languages in education is assured. However, it does not mean that mathematical calculation, reading, and writing are general skills. The skills of counting and spelling, for example are very narrow skills. It is merely that the subject domains in which they can be applied are very wide (McPeck 1992, p. 204).

On the other hand, the thickest, densest and most notationally inflexible subjects are the arts (Goodman 1976; Geertz 1976). The arts trade in singular outcomes and original solutions that, while valuable in themselves are not so easily bent into use by other fields. In other words, the notational systems of the arts have more dedicated uses. The arts lack the wider application of the semantically thinner and more notationally articulate subjects. For example, there is little use for the second movement of Brahms *Symphony Number Four* other than in the playing, appreciating, and understanding of it. The same could be said of the meanings which artworks and performances represent. Artistic subject matter is largely self referential or fictional. While the arts rehearse significant personal and cultural values these values are satisfied in idiosyncratic ways through images and stories, rather than as general claims about reality and truth. Correspondingly the arts benefit less from the precise forms of explanation that notational languages provide.[1]

Elizabeth Steiner points out that for the reasons set out above the arts fit within the distinctive category of qualitative as opposed to quantitative knowing (1981 p. 56). Darby and Catterall, for instance, cite work by the *Galef Institute*. The *Galef* is dedicated to testing the effectiveness of the arts when used by 'at risk' students as a way of coming to learn about social studies (1994, p. 306). It is not clear, however, that the Galef project appreciates the holistic and interpretive potential of the arts as a way of engaging with the world. In this project the arts are used in the simple illustration of social issues rather than for their potential as a distinctively qualitative way of investigating social concepts.

The marginal position of the arts in education is thus as much an implication of the kind of knowledge they represent as anything else. The search for evidence of transferability in supporting claims of educational value in the arts is motivated by the realisation that, one way or another, the arts are more obliged than other subjects to spell out their wider educational relevance. The political use of transfer to redress the marginalisation of the arts is usually accompanied, therefore, by strong attempts to redefine and broaden their knowledge structure. For example, even A. Graham Down, the chief executive of the *National Standards for the Arts Project* in the USA, uses the commonalities of shared standards between the arts and other disciplines to promote the significance of the arts (Smith 1995, pp. 1–2). Different ways of valuing the arts emphasise different aspects of their knowledge structure by highlighting either their cognitive uniqueness or their generalisability. Thus the facts of the transferability of knowledge and skills between the arts and other domains make little sense outside their interpretation within frameworks of artistic value.

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[1] Extremists argue that this hyper-singularity of the arts, in particular the visual arts, makes them resistant to teaching because it isolates them from the tutorial advantages provided by linguistic knowledge. Teaching programs are inefficient in the arts by comparison with other disciplines, it is suggested, because the resources of written knowledge offer few guarantees of producing artistically valuable outcomes (see Brook 1999, pp. 34–36).

16.4 Three Perspectives on Transfer

1. The Transfer of Knowledge in the Arts as a Domain of Inherent Value

Those who consider art to be inherently valuable usually take an isolationist point of view about the generalisability of its skills and competencies. Elliot Eisner, for example, agrees that aesthetic perception in the arts may very well exercise deep faculties of mind in common with other subjects. Nevertheless, the value of the arts, he says, does not reside in their subconscious linkages with enhanced skills in numeracy and literacy (1992, 1994). The transferable benefits of the arts need to be demonstrated more directly for the educational gaps in the curriculum they fill. Specifically the arts are absorbed in characterising the world whereas most other subjects are bent on breaking it up into analytical pieces. Best agrees that the arts share with other subjects a foundation based on defensible reasoning. But it is feeling rather than knowledge that constitutes their primary referent (1996). Even if it were possible to explain how artistic perception enhanced performance in other domains, and Eisner insists the experimental challenges in such a demonstration makes it unlikely, these explanations miss the point of the arts as a distinctive domain of knowing (Eisner 1998; Burton et al. 2000). It is not in Eisner's interest or those who support his inherentist position to promote the educational transferability of knowledge and skills in the arts, quite the opposite.

Neither, for the inherentist, is the educational value of the arts merely reducible to what is left over after their generalisability is taken out. Whether skills in the arts are verifiably transferable to other fields or not is incidental to their position (Brown and Haynes 1990). The value in studying the arts depends upon arguments which show firstly the value of the niche they fill, and secondly that the educational experiences they provide are unavailable through any other fields of study. The arts "… promote the child's ability to develop his or her mind through the experience that the creation or perception of expressive form makes possible…and skills are developed to give form and feeling" (Eisner 2001, p. 35). To this end the arts drive cognition. Eisner warns that if the place of the arts in education is defended as a way of enhancing achievement in other disciplines, then the advent of more efficient forms of enhancement will inevitably lead to the redundancy of the arts and their abandonment within education (1998).

2. The Transfer of Knowledge in the Arts as a Domain of Instrumental Value

Given that the arts are marginalised in the curriculum by the aesthetic density of their knowledge, to some extent, the deepest inroads into their marginalisation has been made by reconception of their cognitive structure. This reconception, eloquently supervised by the North American structuralists, repositions the arts alongside other disciplines as a symbolic system of thought (Langer 1952; Arnheim 1974; Goodman 1976; Gardner 1973, p. 114–115). This reconception focuses the instrumentalist proposition that the arts serve cognition proscribed, for example, in the universalist credo of visual literacy. Since the nineteen eighties, however, universalist psycholinguistic models of thinking have been progressively eroded. The

distinguishing features of artistic thinking and thinking in other fields is thrown into relief by the structural differences, rather than similarities, between domains of knowledge and by the challenges they pose for representational thought.[2]

16.5   Cognitive Reconstruction

A feature of recent cognitive theory is its return to the intuition, first set out by Franz Brentano in the nineteenth century, that when a person thinks they must be thinking about something (1973). From Brentano's point of view the 'intentional' processes of thinking are indivisibly united with the structure of the content being thought about. As a result cognitive theorists have begun to revisit the content of subject fields in order to survey the vast array of physical and mental performances, or "intelligences", involved in their mental representation (Gardner 1983; Harré 1983; Keil 1989; Perner 1991). The abstractions in which intelligence is couched make little sense, therefore, until expressed within their concrete modes of knowledge practice, for instance, in the fields of physics, psychology, or the arts. What emerges from this review of knowledge practices is an inventory of more or less discrete and parallel cognitive domains. For example, when children reflect upon and speculate about other people's motives it is figured that they are engaged in a vernacular kind of psychological reasoning. This 'folk' psychology takes on a separate identify as a new domain of thought (Bruner 1990; Wellman 1990). The search for these domains within cognitive science has helped to restructure the traditional fields of knowledge from which they are drawn.

16.6   Cognitive Reconstruction in the Arts

Needless to say the arts are far from a discrete domain. Cognitivists argue that the arts are divided by their spatial, temporal and kinaesthetic modalities of expression. This diversity is matched by the view that all of the arts, despite their modular diversity, are unified in the mind of the knower by powerful intentional nets or concepts of one kind or another (Gardner 1982, 1983; McClelland and Rumelhart 1986; Boyd 1988). These systems serve to do two things. First they invest each modality with representational content. When drawing, for example, children call upon mental resources to solve spatial problems in the graphic representation of real objects and imaginative ideas (Freeman 1997; Freeman and Brown 1998). Under

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[2] In post-structural epistemology critical reasoning is enacted as a function of the **causal** relations between the network of agencies which make up the knower's extension of a relevant concept, for example, in their concept of art (Searle 1996, Chapter 1). In structuralist epistemology critical reasoning is conceived of as the pragmatic rehearsal of entrenched **rules** embedded within conventional codes (Goodman 1976).

this representational aegis drawing, for example, is perceived as a domain of spatial reasoning backed up by a repertoire of graphic notational strategies (Willats 1997, p. 288–319). Many of these notational devices in drawing are conventional, some are innate, others are worked out creatively on site in order to satisfy the localised needs of a particular drawing task. Some eventually emerge as a mature personal style. Music has a rigorous notational convention supporting native intuitions within the temporal domain, such as an ear for melody and tempo (Catan 1989). Dance has its own repertoire of kinaesthetic notations, and so on for language and the other arts.

Secondly children, with maturity, begin to expand their understanding of art beyond the horizon of technical control to reflect upon the contribution of cultural agencies 'hidden' within artistic production. They begin to pose questions, examine evidence, hypothesise answers, evaluate possible outcomes and debate the merits of what it means more generally to function as an artist. Thus, in tandem with a growing mastery of notational and technical skills in specific domains, children begin to understand what it is to use these skills in ways consistent with a concept of practice in the arts (Freeman and Sanger 1995).

16.7   Metacognitive Transfer

Cognitive analysis of the arts has consequently opened up a way of understanding how children come to grasp the relationships between different expressive modalities in the arts. These linkages only make practical sense if they can be understood against a solid background of experience within the traditional modes of artistic expression. Even in musical theatre, the cinema and in multimedia, where multiple artforms are commonly synthesised, it is knowledge of the differentiated routines of the arts that enables their synthesised production. The reverse is not true, however, insofar as management techniques and higher order concepts in the arts are not able, in return, to generate conventional skills in particular domains. In general, then, it is from high levels of accomplishment in the specific skills of the arts that a more abstract and reflective conception of their artistic function emerges.

Annette Karmiloff-Smith refers to this reflective ability as "representational redescription" (1991, pp. 15–26). Until automaticity is acquired in a skill children's attention is too self consciously distracted by the complexity of the task to conceive of the skill as a whole and thus of the uses to which it can be put (Staines 1999, p. 126). Perkins and Salomon refer to representational redescription as the "low road"-"high road" mechanism of transferability. Skills tacitly mastered in context, the "low road", are committed to memory where they are clumped into the "high road" of a generalised principle (1989, p. 19). When confronted with a new but seemingly relevant context where they are alerted, for example, to a different musical interpretation by the teacher the child is able to conceive of ways of redeploying their skills. It is with growth in this increasingly reflective or "metacognitive"

ability, under relevant conditions, that the most fertile possibilities for transfer are to be found both in the arts and in education.

16.8   Constraints on Metacognitive Transfer

Thus there are a number of conditions attached to metacognitive transfer both among the arts themselves and between the arts and other domains. Firstly, the direction of transfer is unidirectional. A fairly high level of artistic skill in playing the clarinet, or in reading a musical score, for example, is necessary before such abilities are ready for metacognitive redescription and thus available for transfer to other domains. Secondly, the meta-descriptive mode in which automated levels of mastery are transferred is broadly theoretical (Karmiloff-Smith 1988). Children "go about their task as true scientists do, building theories about the physical, social and linguistic worlds, rather than reasoning as inductive logicians" (p. 193). The transport of specialised skills into other domains by children is effectively described as a kind of theoretical speculation. This is born out in surveys of research into the instrumental impact of the arts on educational outcomes (Staines 1999; Hamblen 1993; Tunks 1992, Wolff 1978). For example, Hamblen reports that the instrumental benefits of transfer are almost exclusively described in the literature at the level of higher order cognition (p. 192). She cites how Perkins and Leander, Palinscar and Brown, Rollins, Eisner and Finke, Hagaman and Lankford, Bodenhamer and Corwin, for instance, report that study in the arts results in the enhancement of conceptual development; that arts based knowledges embrace a wider base of cognitive skills; and that art works present qualitative and imaginative material to children which engages them at higher levels of relational, philosophically conjectural, as well as expressive ways of thinking.

Insofar as the arts "increase[s] vocabulary skills, critical thinking, and writing skills" in these studies, the arts appear to be exercising transfer at higher order conceptual levels rather than at the level of domain specific skills (Hamblen 1993, p. 193). These observations reinforce Karmiloff-Smith's view that the processes of mental redescription become increasingly domain general with each descriptive level, thus rendering specific skills more amenable to inter-domain transfer (Fogarty et al. 1992; Burton and Horowitz 1999).

16.9   The Design and Analysis of Studies into Transfer in the Arts

Winner and Cooper conjecture that, apart from the brevity of most investigations, the reason why experimental studies have failed to demonstrate that the arts lead to academic improvement is largely due to their universal adoption of low inference

measures in the scoring of achievement. Thus most studies are unable to register the deep reflective levels at which children engage in the arts, the divergent quality of artistic outcomes, and "thinking outside the box" implicit within the performative process of the arts (2000, pp. 63–64). However, Winner and Cooper are not clear as to whether they consider experimental difficulties in these studies are confined to the quality of the measures, or whether the difficulties extend to underlying categorical errors in their assumptions about knowing in the arts, an issue taken up in this section.

A number of studies have been conducted into the enhancing effects of drawing upon children's reading achievement (Langan 1997; *The Economist* 1996). Many of these studies are conducted with school children in grades two and three (Hamblen 1993, pp. 194–195). The quality of analysis in some of these studies is simplistic (Eisner 1998; Winner and Hetland 2000). There is a categorical difference, for example, between the performances of vernacular drawing and reading. This difference is often concealed within experiments that cite positive but unexplained correlations between these two outcomes. Speaking in a given language is even quite unlike reading, let alone drawing. When reading, the child has to treat a given passage as a cognitive object, isolated from its immediate setting. Speaking, on the other hand, is full of communicative innuendo. Speaking entails the production of meanings that have to be judged relative to their immediate context (Flavell 1987, p.27). Unlike drawing both speaking and reading are restricted to the manipulation of fixed relations between sounds, words and their given meanings (van Sommers 1984). In speaking a given language children are not able to change the relation between conventional sounds and the things in the world to which those sounds are dedicated to refer.

The vernacular process of drawing, on the other hand, is partly mimetic and more dependent for its meanings upon the final shape the drawing takes (Schier 1986, pp. 141–157). Unlike things spoken or written about the things to which drawings refer are actively involved in directing the way drawings are made, in solving the representational problems drawings pose, and in determining their final appearance (van Sommers 1984, pp. 96–114). For this reason drawing is ruled out from some expressive uses entirely. Unlike drawing, language, with its abstract relational structure, is freed from its representational dependence upon the structure of the objects it represents, enabling it to be used in subtle forms of hypothetical reasoning. How could, for instance, a drawing as efficiently express the simple intention—"I doubt that my mother will be able to help my sister attend church on Sunday", without laborious caricature and repetition (Harrison 1991)? Freeman and Adi-Japha elegantly demonstrate dramatic modular differences between the mental accession of the same graphic act when executed as a drawing, that of drawing two circles as scuttles on a ship, as opposed to writing, that of pencilling in two circles as letters in the word "look" (2000).

Nevertheless, the constraints on pictorial representation do not preclude the role of mental imagery in reasoning and other non-graphic processes (Whitaker et al. 1992). Non-verbal mental models play an important role in the making of autonomous inferences such as the ability to reason from counterfactual or false premises

(Johnson-Laird 1996). Reasoning, usually presented in the verbal mode, is located in the right hemisphere and can be enacted as imagery without the accompanying need for the verbal comprehension of premises. Imagery also appears to be enacted through the same mechanisms and located in the same centres as perception. There is strong evidence that perception of reality is thus forearmed by imagination. This suggests that perception is a kind of representational dialogue conducted between sensory information and imagination (Kosslyn and Sussman 1996, p. 1040). The linkage between perception and reasoning implies that the mental mechanisms involved in the efficient processing of different subject matter in the curriculum, entail executive forms of redirection and overlap that are far more subtle than the bald modal divisions among school subjects imply. For instance, just because the visual arts nominate a visual mode doesn't mean that an accomplished artistic performer doesn't recruit complex layers of reflective mental processing (Zeki 1999, pp. 13–22).

Van Sommers is also keen to draw a distinction between the vernacular and artistic purposes of drawing (1984, p. 233). Artistically directed drawing is respectful of hidden practical conventions. These conventions originate outside the drawing context somewhere within the history of art. The values underlying the concept of "abstraction", for example, run counter to young children's search for graphic verisimilitude. The notion of abstraction is counter intuitive within vernacular drawing and therefore opaque within the drawing process. In other words even although children are quite able to learn how to make 'abstract ink drawings', and may stumble across them in the process of drawing spontaneously, they are unlikely to register the importance of their 'discoveries' without tuition. The message here is that the arts cannot claim a mandate on innate abilities such as spatial and temporal reasoning, since what the arts bring as complex content to children doesn't fit neatly into the boundaries of native intuition. Thus studies into the enhancing effects on general educational achievement, through exposure to 'the arts', may suffer from taking insufficient account of the complex theoretical and historical relationship that art forms share with their various expressive modalities (Letts 1999, p. 24).

For instance, there is little evidence that explains how skills originating at sub-automated levels in music generalise into other disciplines, let alone from instrument to instrument within music itself (Wolff 1978; Staines 1999). Even though mathematics and music share abstract notational systems Staines, citing recent 1995 studies by Rauscher et al., sees little grounds for accepting claims that ordinary levels of musical experience correlate with enhanced logical reasoning (p. 129). Weinberger argues, however, that there are good biological reasons why musical cognition has at least the potential to transfer across disciplines. The musical instinct is deeply embedded he says. Even animals demonstrate primitive musical awareness. Musical aptitude crosses cultural boundaries.[3] Weinberger claims that the

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[3] Studies conducted in early childhood reveal the innate ability of infants to "chunk" melodies into smaller phrases and to recognise rhythms. At neonatal levels the mental faculties responsible for the discrimination of musical pitch are shared with those that underpin the phonemic stage in learning to read (Lamb and Gregory 1993).

"functional architecture of the brain honours music as much as it honours language" (p. 37). Nonetheless, he all but concedes that transfer is as yet only a musical hypothesis of neuroscience (p. 36). After all, the reciprocal advantages reading offers for the enhancement of musical understanding are enormous but for some reason barely rate a mention outside the literature of music education. This point is not lost on Burton et al who reflects on the difficulty of sorting analytically among those "indicators of learning [which] are situated within the arts alone and which are more generally implicated" (2000, pp. 230–231).

More significantly, Catterall's claim that children's exposure to educational experiences in music correlates with enhanced performances in unrelated fields is, in contrast to the research designed by Freeman and Karmiloff-Smith, based on experiments in which the reflective involvement of the children participating is largely set aside (1998, 1996; Boston 1996; Weinberger 1998). The degree to which abstract reasoning can build a bridge of understanding between different levels of skill in the arts governs the extent to which children are able to **reflectively** transfer artistic abilities to domains in other fields of study. Thus far it is accomplished virtuosity, rather than the simple practice of domain specific skills in piano playing, reading music, keyboard skills, drawing, and theatrical role playing, that appears to influence children's ability to meta-represent and thus transfer these skills among other fields.

In this respect the specialised skills of the arts do not have a monopoly on transfer. Skills in the arts become transferable at higher levels of reasoning in which the cognitive character of artistic involvement more closely resembles higher levels of reasoning in other fields. At these higher levels the emphasis shifts to the interdisciplinary transfer of **content** through teaching (Erickson 1998, pp. 315–319). Therefore, what is cognitively differentiated about the arts—their domain specific skills— have little to offer other subject domains. However, what the arts and academic subject domains share cognitively, ironically, academic domains already possess. Global trends towards the increasing importance of imagery within cognitive transactions, for instance, will test the authenticity of instrumentalist's commitment to furthering other academic skills as a good way of promoting art.

3. Transfer Conceived as a Claim of Unified Knowledge in the Arts

When they are considered as a collective domain of knowing the "arts" carry quite different implications for the transfer of educational skills. The umbrella concepts of "creativity", "the aesthetic", and the "cultural", the latter used in its wider sociological sense, have a salutary impact upon the particular ways in which the arts are understood, valued and performed. These unifying concepts are nearly always applied as positively marked terms. That is, their use in reference to the arts attaches an implicitly high level of value. Umbrella concepts lend value to education in the arts because it is believed they foster the feelings, originality, judgement, and cultural identity of the children who participate. This is because it is assumed that children possess intuitive mental traits that share the same creative, aesthetic and cultural identity (Csikszentmihalyi 1971). The origin of these traits is thought to be both social and psychological. Creative dispositions such as—intense absorption in

listening, observing or doing; intense animation and physical involvement; the use of analogies in speech; bodily involvement of an intense nature in writing or drawing; the tendency to challenge ideas of authorities; and the habit of checking many sources—are notions as easily transported across into different academic subjects, as they are transported into the varied disciplines of the arts (Torrance 1969, p. 36). Even scientists idealise scientific investigation as a process of origination rather than discovery. Not so widely distributed, but nonetheless critically valued in all disciplines, is the trait of aesthetic sensitivity (Cunliffe 1994, p. 170). It is difficult to imagine how effective decisions relating to the preservation of the natural environment, the architectural heritage, the design of industrial and commercial products could be made without making aesthetic judgements.

Nevertheless, whereas most academic subjects respect but put to one side creative freedom in their syllabi, the "creative" arts make it a priority and thereby claim something of a mandate on the creative and the aesthetic in education. Their mandate is entrenched in the popular belief that education in the arts plays a special role in the generation of imaginative ideas, in developing a respect for the idiosyncratic responses of participants, in being considerate of feelings, and in the toleration of a diversity of critical points of view (Broudy 1972; Boston 1996).

Unifying constructs in the arts have a tendency to favour art appreciation over performance in education. Generic approaches thrive best in their vernacular form within the elementary school, in general education, the community arts, and under their application within the ready-made imagery of digital technology (DeNardo 1997). In these settings participation in the arts is shielded from the specialised rigours of technical competency and from the deeper conceptual understanding required of the actor, dancer, musician, visual artist and art historian. With steady increases in the demand for specialised knowledge in secondary school, the arts in education are forced to shed their generality and reaffirm their separate identities.[4] By contrast mathematics and writing, for example, manifest no comparable generic levels of spontaneous expression. Although learning to write depends on memory and other intuitive mental resources, literacy itself is a conventional routine that is only acquired through deliberate instruction. Literacy continues to ellude many millions of people in possession of otherwise rich artistic traditions.

As the arts return to their disciplines in the later years of schooling the spontaneous contribution of the aesthetic, the creative and the cultural in the arts is reduced to an increasingly emblematic role within education where they survive as critical ideals. With the demand for greater specialisation the native support they lend to children's spontaneous artistic activity diminishes correspondingly. More

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[4] Hargreaves describes this transition in music as "The distinction between generalist and specialist music education." The distinction has led to tension within the music teaching profession (1996, p. 167). Music education is polarised on the one hand by children's normative or native access to musical explanation, and by their access to specialist explanations on the other. Normative versus specialist sides of musical knowledge are accompanied by their own parallel vernacular and specialist theories of developmental reasoning as well.

challenging to the validity of umbrella concepts in the arts are the flawed psychological assumptions that underpin them, an issue taken up in the following section.

16.10   Generic Concepts of the Arts and Postmodernity

In the last 40 years challenges to the validity of universal concepts in the humanities have resulted in greater contextualisation of knowledge in the arts. Actions, events, and facts in the visual arts, for example, are invariably contextualised in relation to the beliefs of particular times and places. Cognitive theories have been compelled to respect these changes and to find ways of accommodating to the historical embeddedness of knowledge. The notion of intelligence as a kind of generalised mental disposition embraces obsolete psychology (Piaget 1970; Chomsky 1976) that fails to portray intellect as a meaningful interpretation of content (Neisser 1976). Since the early nineteen seventies the notion of intelligence has been described as competency in the use of different systems of meaning. It is accepted that the knowledge represented within these systems, although securely anchored within specific domains, is constantly being reshaped. Consequently reference to the aesthetic and the creative as stable, discrete mental abilities is unlikely to be found in contemporary art theory or in the literature of cognitive psychology (Danto 1964; Goodman 1976; Gardner 1983).[5]

Once conceived as autonomous acts of imagination, creative and aesthetic abilities in music, the visual arts, drama and dance are now described as forms of domain specific abilities, that are acted out within the practices of particular artistic, musical, and dramatic traditions (Fodor 1975; Perkins 1994). These artistic traditions are subject to unpredictable and catastrophic change. Nevertheless, it is the way in which children represent these traditions within their actions, and the way that changes in these traditions redescribe the representational demands upon children's' performances that defines the flux of knowing in the arts (Koroscik et al. 1992). Gardner and Nemirovsky go so far as to admit that the influences shaping the world's most outstandingly creative achievements are so embedded within their historical contexts that their causes cannot be confined to the intentions of their creators (1991). Lev Vygotsky (1978) and his contemporary disciples such as Barbara Rogoff (1982), see intellect as so profoundly bound up with the problems arising out of knowledge at hand, that local constraints upon knowing as much shape mental abilities as are shaped by them. The generic stories of creativity and the aesthetic in the arts are thus being retold as small intertextual narratives (Burgin 1986, p. 204). Local narratives provide the basis on which children and adults of different cultural

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[5] Michael de Certeau attacks the monolithic compartmentalisation of creative activity. Compartmentalisation disconnects creative activity from cultural practice. It is the diversity of everyday social practices, he says, that invest creative activity with meaning for those who effectuate them. Creativity without context disabuses creativity from a place within intentional thought thereby relegating it to a marginal role within cognition (1997, p. 67).

origins are able to conceptualise what it is to function within the arts (Pariser 1997). They are what children use to give artistic meaning to what they make and see.

The doctrinaire cultural relativism of the nineteen eighties has given ground as well. Cultural authenticity is accepted as a more reflective appropriation of sources that "insist upon the mixed and displaced character of modern selves and cultures" (Thomas 1999, p. 16). It allows indigenous cultures to participate in the art educational process, at individual levels, in ways that enable them to take from the modern experience of the Western arts yet retain their "radically different ground" (p. 17).

Others are less generous in their attitude to generic concepts. David Best heads the list of philosophers who question the genus of the collective "arts" themselves, the grandest of all the umbrella narratives (1995, p. 38). He states bluntly that "For example, the activities of playing the clarinet, composing poetry, creating a sculpture, performing or choreographing dance…" are not in the least similar, but nevertheless "…some defenders of the theory resort to the unintelligibly occult in postulating purely private "inner," subjective mental processes" (p. 37). Grand assumptions unifying the arts are not only logically flawed, he insists, they are dangerous. They suggest that the

> …distinct art forms can somehow be adequately learned in an exclusively combined/integrated context. Small wonder that such a contention is so dangerously popular with politicians and administrators. It would save money, but so far as one could make sense of it at all, it would lead to an arts ghetto, where nothing substantial is achieved in any of the arts (p. 38).

Best is careful not to denigrate integrated work among the arts but such ventures, he says, derive from "an adequate education in independent disciplines" (p. 38). In placing this caveat on integration in the arts Best falls into line with Perkins' and Karmiloff-Smith's approach to transfer.

The cultural tide has begun to ebb on the concept of 'talent' as a creative predisposition in the arts.[6] Many markers of 'artistic ability' in the visual arts including, for instance, a sense of colour, an extrovert personality, precocious draughtsmanship, and so on, are left stranded (Korzenik 1995).[7] In sum, there are no thoroughly culture independent measures of mental ability in the arts. While there are mental skills such as 'critical thinking' and 'problem solving' that some educationalists believe continue to generalise across the subject matter of different fields, many arts educationists believe skills of this sort remain abstractions that possess little

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[6] Whereas, for example, tertiary institutions in the visual arts once believed drawing to be the universal predictor of giftedness, drawing has been replaced by tertiary entrance rankings as the basis for selection into programs of art and design (College of Fine Arts 2000).

[7] Music education has long accepted that musical giftedness is indivisibly linked with accelerated opportunities in musical training. This view is evidenced through its continuing support for conservatorium schools. However, musical giftedness only makes sense as it is differentiated within the localised and changing practices of musical performance. This is not to overlook the fact that within the biology of music there is convincing evidence, at neonatal levels, of mental faculties responsible for the discrimination of musical pitch (Lamb and Gregory 1993).

meaning outside the cultural details of artistic performance (Tunks 1992, p. 444; Brown 1994; Parsons 1987).

16.11   The Practices of Cognitive Transfer in Arts Educational Policy

16.11.1   Misrepresentation of the Facts in Social Reasoning

Pierre Bourdieu has criticised the scholastic arrogance of demythologising the logic of socially valued practices on the basis of 'rationally superior' evidence (1998). Social rules are based upon the shared understanding that entities and events referred to in social transactions signify deeper symbolic meaning. Social transactions are by necessity, therefore, susceptible to "misrecognition" of the facts. Misrecognition is the tactful turning of a blind eye to material truths underlying social exchanges. Misrecognition is tacitly employed in social practices when evidence is felt to be destructive of useful social institutions if taken at face value (p. 130).

16.12   Inherentist Policy on Transfer

Inherentists are unconvinced by the value of cognitive transfer in the arts, even when presented with indisputable truth of its possibility. Protagonists of inherent value are critical of cognitive transfer insofar as its claims are currently unsupported by the evidence. Nevertheless their critique of the evidence is largely fortuitous. Inherentist's concern with the validity of transfer is not evidential but ethical. For inheretists such as Eisner the value of the arts is axiomatic. Being axiomatic their value cannot be overturned empirically. Any instrumentalities attributed to the arts are confined to their causal impact upon the aesthetic experience of the beholder. For the connoisseur collector, the arts and their artefacts neither benefit nor suffer from the instrumental spin-offs that participation in them affords, including their potential for cognitive transfer. However, in representing themselves as stewards of artistic integrity inherentists can be easily boxed into a conservative corner on arts educational policy. Thus in their opposition to instrumentalism in arts education inherentists may be obliged to misrecognise contemporary developments in cognitive transfer, that in other social contexts they are more openly willing to acknowledge.

16.13   Instrumentalist Policy on Transfer

Instrumentalists, embracing the cognitive value of the arts, are finding that shifts in cognitive theory over the last 10 years, supported by recent evidence from neurophysiology, have reconstructed our understanding of knowing in the arts. Domain specificity has delivered a blow to structural metaphors that conceive of the arts as kinds of universal symbolic language, a once unifying call by the arts to other school subjects. The evidence for modal differentiation in the arts has become more firmly attached to the localised practices within which each mode is enacted. Localisation has focussed cognitive research on the constraints imposed by particular spatial or temporal domains on the knower.

Matters are complicated for the instrumentalists insofar as arts practices are currently subject to dramatic cultural, political and technological change. These changes are repositioning subject content in the arts in relation to their underlying mental modularities. For instance, in the visual arts the growing status of imagery as a primary mode of communication is poised to capture centre educational stage on its own merits. However, instrumentalist policy in arts education may reflect a need to misrecognise the educational utility of these developments. In the face of the new cognitive evidence, instrumentalists may still cling to arguments based on transfer in the, nonetheless, sound belief that arguments based on transfer are more persuasive of political authorities who hold conservative opinions about the arts.

16.14   Genericist Policy on Transfer

Post-structuralists attack generic traits in the arts as falsely normalising cultural practices. Generic traits are also out of step with current notions of domain specificity in cognitive theory. Furthermore, the genericist rhetoric of immediacy and the vernacular is inconsistent with the growing theorisation and textual informality of contemporary arts practices (Fuller 1988, pp. 208–215, Manning and Cullum-Swan 1994). Nevertheless, generic concepts continue to attract popularity outside of the arts. They link the arts into more centrally valued educational traits and provide "poor man's" evidence of cognitive transfer, especially **among** the different arts.

Thus there are still sound political reasons why educational administrators continue to misrecognise the growing cognitive evidence against unifying discourses in the arts. Generic approaches represent romantic ideals in which many institutions and individuals continue to invest. Notions of creative autonomy, aesthetic immediacy and the artistic personality have entered into the popular educational folk law, particularly among the lay community. As popular beliefs, they represent the root metaphors on which the arts have been and are still currently admitted into government-funded programs. The weight of their popularity provides independent

evidence of their own social reality.[8] The community is not ready to let go of generic concepts in the arts. Thus, it is wise to treat the popular mythology of the arts with respect inasmuch as there may be very good practical reasons for not disenchanting the public in this regard.

16.15 Conclusion

Arguments in favour of cognitive transfer, as well as arguments against, commit a logical error insofar as they seek to naturalise the basis of their claims in the facts. As kinds of institutional practice, the arts import evidence into their discourse on the grounds of its value to their fields. As I have shown the evidence of cognitive transfer means different things to practitioners in the arts and education. Although practice must be informed by an accurate scientific understanding of the world, the bald truth of the evidence does nothing to challenge these differences. Once it is understood that the same evidence may satisfy quite different academic and political purposes in arts educational practice, educators can more readily grasp the meaning that issues of relatively narrow scientific interest, such as cognitive transfer in the arts, have for their field.

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[8] Entire university faculties, for example, identify themselves as the "creative arts". In Australia the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs has commissioned reports into the "creative arts", and K-12 school syllabi are united under the category of the Creative and Performing Arts (Strand 1998).

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Part III
Philosophical Realism and Its Implications for Practice in Art, Design and Education

Chapter 17
Pragmatism and Privilege in the Practical Arts

The current social status of the artisan is a legacy of the standing of the crafts in ancient Greece. The ability to know in archaic thought relies upon the artisan's skill in uncovering a world in which the truth can be likened to a hidden adversary. Homeric forms of truth, as depicted in epics of discovery are enacted within a hierarchy of clearly defined social roles. For this reason the socially codified skills of the archaic artisan poet are deeply implicated in the portrayal of knowledge. Classical thought, however, overturns the concept of knowledge as a practical pursuit in favour of knowledge pursued as a form of abstract thought. Nonetheless the classical pursuit of knowledge remains a socially codified activity. It is an activity exclusive to aristocratic amateurs. Only the aristocracy possess sufficient economic independence and leisure to be entrusted in satisfying the condition of knowledge as a noble and disinterested ideal. Thus the contemporary association between the power of abstract thought and superior mental resources, commonly drawn in education today, originates in ancient Greece as a profoundly social relation.[1]

Not least because of its classical legacy of privilege John Dewey challenges the dominance of abstract reasoning in his goal of restoring practical action to the forefront of human intelligence. In his critique of the classical division between the virtue of thought and the falsity of labour Dewey seeks in conferring new intellectual status on the crafts and trades. Dewey argues that the social oppression of the Greek artisan is "purely and unfortunately" responsible for subverting the development of scientific technology during the classical period, and for delaying its development in Western culture (Hickman 1992, p. 36). In a radical inversion of classical orthodoxy Dewey asserts that it is the practice of the artisans, rather than sophists in fourth century Greece, that is paradigmatic of intellectual thought.

[1] The TER/SAT measures for competitive university entry in North America.

At the core of Dewey's proposal is his notion of "ends in view".[2] The concept of ends in view is at once ontology, ethics and epistemology. "Ends" for Dewey are the active representation of an ongoing engagement with live events. Authentic ends are experienced and made intelligible by their enactment within local contexts. Ends are not universals forecast teleologically through contemplation. Ends may only be treated as formal abstractions in retrospect as reflections on the experience of practical experience. The existence of ends is coextensive with their endurance as an ongoing cycle of reflexive ("in view") interactions between humans with their environment. The truth of ends is tested in their reference to the solution of practical problems. Thus truth emerges within particular rather than universal contexts. Dewey's belief in the conventionality of "ends in view" reaffirms his pragmatic faith in the virtue of the tradesman whose skill and knowledge, he believes, are derived from habit rather than theoretical principle.

Deweyan pragmatism is distinguished from the essentialist truth of classical epistemology by knowledge conceived as a diversity of particular forms. For Aristotle, the possession of *techne* did not mean that artisans had control over the ends of what they produced. The essential form of artefacts, their teleology, was a question for philosophers to ponder not artisans. Dewey, on the other hand, regards teleological principles as tools and methodologies, not as rules. There are occasions where a rule might be valued "as a principle" but only in the result of its usefulness.[3] Dewey's (1916) pragmatism converts the sciences and humanities from bodies of knowledge and traditional skills into modes of inquiry. Art, even "thought" itself, Dewey views as a tool. In this sense he is a thorough going instrumentalist whereby the existential properties of things are considered to be redeemable only when re-applied as functional grist to the mill of further inquiry. The nature of things is shaped and reshaped by the conditions of their use. As tools, artefacts, even ideas themselves, are invested with properties and made valuable by their repeated application at a particular time and relevant context.

Dewey is consistent in his view that even the value of an artwork is judged against its success within the conventional contexts of its commission. There are no good or bad pretexts for art and thus no hierarchical distinctions between fine art and the crafts (Hickman 1992, p. 68). The purposes and values of art are contemplated retrospectively. The design of a kitchen table is artistically authentic if it sets to its ends in ways that "work". A design "works" when it integrates the relation between ends and means in a manner that keeps faith with the context of its inquiry. Significantly, Dewey thus holds the beholder/consumer as much responsible for the success of this inquiry as he does the skill of the artisan.

Even 'completed' artworks require confirmatory "re-creation" through beholders' personal experience for their satisfactory conclusion. Aesthetic immediacy, for instance, must be re-worked into "an experience" because the aesthetic cannot work

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[2] Dewey's concept is well developed by Monroe Beardsley (1981).

[3] This view has been attacked for being politically naive and for ignoring the obvious hierarchy of significant, purely theoretical innovations in every endeavour.

unless repositioned into a form that can be wielded as a reflexive tool of inquiry (Dewey 1938, see Chapter 2).

Pragmatists assess all knowledge and skill as if it were a tool at hand. They treat artistic conventions and technical skills as if they were at the unqualified disposal of the maker for the solution of localised problems. They are unsympathetic to the fact that, materials, tools, the secrets of the guilds, even artefacts themselves, constrain the maker by imposing their own existential 'authority' upon a solution. Architects reassuring each other that "CAD" systems are harmless tools at their command can mistake the way the built-in expediencies of CAD software favour resolution through more expedient forms and, that even the simplest building materials, can 'corrupt' their designs. Architects not only use brick because it represents a good fit with some 'problem' at hand. By choosing to build in brick they also surrender to brick's two thousand years of 'authority'.

In the domain of furniture, for example, tables are not necessarily designed to serve a need, nor solve a 'problem' at all. To some extent domestic needs are constructed by the 'neurotic' demands imposed by the conventions of tables. Solutions to practical problems at hand, in other words, are as much constructed by the rhetoric of everyday objects as they are shaped intentionally by the imperatives of problems at hand.

In contrast with the later Heidegger and other pragmatists, Rorty (1991) portrays Dewey as a kind of "superscientist" (p. 74). Dewey's scientism places faith in the empirical realisation of nature. Dewey attributes a limited social origin to meaning and to the objectification of nature. Cultural agency in relation to meaning and objectification is confined to the socially agreed practice of language in which meaning remains first and foremost a flux of qualitative experience and critical reflexion.[4] The agency of history and society in Dewey's formulation of reflective meaning is expressed through the instrumentality of language.[5] In this regard any partitioning of the practice of language and, by analogy, practices at large from the service of reflective experience, is to be resisted. Partitioning practice from reflection causes an imbalance in the relation between human thought and nature. The mere cultural imitation and rehearsal of practical knowledge, overlooking ends, represents for Dewey a betrayal of what it means to understand nature, to exercise individual autonomy, and build an ethics of the good life (see Conkin 1976, p. 358–367).

But Dewey rejects the very idea of practical conventions imposing constraints on intention or upon the deployment of practice for particular ends. Dewey's 'blindness' to historical irony ensures that the value of cultural tradition, in the form of either knowledge or practice, can never stand alone on its merits. The judgement of practical virtue requires that it be removed from the dogmas, habits and the moments of its performance, for determination in the higher court of its instrumentality. Practical virtuosity obfuscates, even begs questions of the good life and plays no

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[4] See Chapter 6 for a discussion of Monroe Beardsley's pragmatic position on the relation between experience and critical analysis.

[5] And by association the institutional processes of education.

inherent role in the objectification of nature. Thus for Dewey the gratuitous exercise of virtuoso performances in the practical arts is regarded with suspicion as deceitful. While Dewey and Aristotle share a suspicion of practice, Dewey differs from Aristotle's insofar as for Dewey practice is 'objectified' and made egalitarian within the universal consciousness of individual experience. Whenever access to experience is blocked or dictated to by Aristotelian principle where, for example, ideals of beauty overrule an intentional experience of beauty it is, Dewey believes, representative of the conceited self-serving nature of metaphysical schemes.

Dewey's opposition to grandiose metaphysical schemes extends to the expressions ethical and practical values as well as truth. Rorty (1991), however, argues that other pragmatists like Heidegger would never ascent to a scientistic "study of human nature" (Dewey 1922). Heidegger rejects any form of instrumental interpretation of forces exercised by society and habit as just another attempt at rationalising ethics. He would reject the way in which Dewey proselytises experience as the essence of what was done, what is likely to happen and what ought to be done next. Heidegger, says Rorty, sees the calculated appropriation of experience in the crafts, including the "use" of language itself, as producing little more than so much static, drowning out the voice of time and culture at work within their practice. *Being and Time* was "…a proposal to teach us a new way of talking—one that would let us ask about God or Being without thinking of ourselves as superscientists" (1991, p. 73). Heidegger rejects the **use** methodologies for metaphysical ends. He views putting the *habitus* 'to work' the way North American pragmatists do as impertinent. Heidegger embraces experimental science but only as a way of generating knowledge. Experience cannot be used for adding truth to metaphysics, but only as a way of testing propositions against "explicitly formulated public criteria" (Rorty 1991, p. 74). Thus Heidegger's rejection of Deweyan pragmatism is not so much an attack upon technology as such but an attack upon its scientistic misappropriation. Truth and value, induced from ends by the use of practical means, regresses into self-justifying rationalisation of those means where, in other words, the values implicit within a practice are determined by explanations based on the outcomes of its deployment. It represents a corrupting form of instrumentalism Heidegger sees as originating with the reification of thought in the Roman world, one that he despises. Heidegger regards instrumentalism as yet another attempt at replacing an ethics of tradition with an ethics of justifiable reason.

The Platonic uniformity of interpretive thought in the classical world gathered intensity in the Hellenistic period. The reification of thought imposed increasing ethical constraints upon the structure of Roman epistemology. "This conformity became involved with the notion of truth as *rectitudo*, correctness, *adequatio*. Truth as *veritas* and *rectitudo* passed over into the *ratio* of man" (Zimmerman 1990). The gradual transfiguration of archaic *metis* into the *ratio* of the Roman world, Heidegger argues, attached a superior morality to rationalised truth reserving the expression of moral virtue for the practice of theoretical sophistry. Domains of activity that were unsupported by the virtue of a *ratio*, that is, domains unendorsed by theoretical frameworks, such as the traditional trades, were tainted with the ignominy of false-

hood and unreason. Trades persons were numbered among those lacking control of their own identity because, for something "to be" meant knowing the causes or reasons effecting the way things took up their teleological form. Divested of past cult meanings and deprived of control over their own rational explanations the handicrafts were stripped of virtue and relegated to the status of servitude. No amount of technical skill in the practical arts could compensate for this lack and the social division between virtue and virtuosity was cemented.

Issues relating to practical authorship of meaning and the rationalisation of value re-emerge during the latter half of the twentieth century in the realist philosophy of Donald Davidson (1984). Davidson highlights the egalitarianism implicit in the role played by the everyday use (practice) of language in formulating assertions about the world. Egalitarian questions are raised where ever the assumption prevails that some form of privileged conceptual scheme is required to arbitrate the relation between a spoken language and the objects to which it refers. The very idea of the existence of these schemes is framed against what Davidson regards as the false separation of language from the world. Self-consciously framed conceptual schemes, groomed by a specialised philosophy, constitute questionable metaphysical systems begging the question of reference in language. Referential truth is found more simply, Davidson insists, outside of such reifying schemes, in the every day practice of language in the field. All that is required is the generous concession to those "practicing language in the field" through the belief that the motives underlying their practice are authentic. Communication of meaning is merely a matter of translation. Davidson asks, what if all those in the field, including linguist anthropologists, were to find themselves in a foreign culture encountering for the first time a new language spoken in its natural setting? Foreigners encountering a foreign spoken language in this way, without lexical support, would have no recourse to universal meaning structures, such as those detailed by Lévi-Strauss, nor recourse to some principled conceptual framework in their translation of native assertions. When all is cleared away, a foreigner's only support is the generous assumption that when speaking of their local encounters, native speakers will refer to them honestly. Insofar as the objects of native speakers' beliefs are inferred from what is said by them, within the context of a mutually shared experience of real objects, it is, in the final analysis, real objects themselves that cause beliefs about the way in which language refers to the world (Davidson 1984, p. 184).

Thus there is nothing more to grasp about meaning than the relation between the use of language and the reality to which it refers. Nothing more, that is, than can be accommodated in the relation between real objects and what we say about them. There are no middle terms arbitrating what form, in general, these relations ought to take. Objects cause references made about them to be true on the basis of there being an interdependence between what words mean and the way the world is. Language becomes a practice dependent upon a mind independent world.

But this doesn't imply that the truth of an assertion is not subtended by "explanation". The assertion that a painting is cool, for instance, doesn't imply that arrival at this insight is not superseded by a trail of critical debate or that such an assertion can

be wrong. It is just that the truth of an assertion of coolness in reference to the paint-
ing, although arrived at through the earnestness of insights and linked together by
explanations, is exhausted in the relation between the assertion and the reality of the
work as a mind independent entity. For example, if we say that 'an artist captures a
feeling of coolness in a painting', or that 'a teacher uses an appropriate analogy' we
can state the meaning of these assertions insofar as they are assumed to be referring
to 'the feeling of coolness' or by 'the appropriateness of the analogy' in a "disquo-
tational" sense (Kripke 1972, p. 125). It is the connection to the independent 'real-
ity' of the painting and the teacher's utterance, rather than to the ideal existence of
explanatory reason, that seals the truth and meaning of the reference. By unharness-
ing the existence of reality from its instantiation of conceptual schemes, Davidson
foreshadows ways of unhitching not only language but also practice at large from
the need for such schemes of their own.[6] Unless this is done explanations end up
using reality to instantiate the nature of conceptual schemes rather than using
schemes in illuminating the nature of reality.

It further unhitches meaning from explanations that language is employed to
provide. This avoids the conceit of explanation expropriating the world as well as its
constructing the practice of language itself.

Following Davidson the meaning of a practice is affirmed in the generosity
extended to those who perform it. That the motives underlying the relation between
the performance of a practice and the objects and artefacts to which it refers—and
in which it results—are assumed to be authentically driven. The truth of a practice
and its artefacts does not lie in their reduction to a set of privileged rationalisations.
It is evident in the quality of its accomplishment not the ends to which it is put.
Simple examples in art education bear this out. For instance, the concept of "Line",
identified by Wesley Dow as one element in his grand scheme of the "Seven
Elements of Design", is often identified as a property in paintings. However all
paintings possess line. Thus the meaning of a line is not determined as an instantia-
tion of linear theory but awaits demonstrating in the work. This asymmetry is a
necessary condition of practical reason and of scientific explanation.

Bourdieu's (1998) theory of symbolic capital makes this praxiological point in a
slightly different way. Symbolic capital is the primary currency of exchange in the
social economy. It is expressed in the types of social value underlying the *habitus* of
any community (see pp. 77, 114). Social values are redeemed or 'cashed in' during
the token exchanges of day-to-day social relations. Fluent participation in this
exchange is explained as the ability of members of a community to distinguish the
materiality of the tokens of social transactions, from the underlying social types
these tokens represent. A cornerstone of the exchange of symbolic capital is its reci-
procity. The notion of reciprocity is shaped around the archaic "project of the gift"
(p. 94). A person who participates in the project of gift exchange is marked as one

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[6] In order to avoid an infinite regress of explanations the practice of theorisation as a form of expla-
nation must be freed from dependence upon conceptual schemes.

who is "…socially disposed to enter, without intention or calculation, into the game of the exchange" (p. 98). The gift is only a token however. Thus the reciprocity of symbolic transactions, such as gift giving, involve expectations of mutual understanding on the part of the giver about the motivations of other social participants. Otherwise the token quality of the gift might be misrepresented and taken as an insult by its recipient. In gift giving it is always a question of whether what has been given is appropriate to the symbolic significance of the occasion. To be respectful of others is thus to possess social reasoning of sufficient subtlety to nuance the tacitly agreed social order betokened within an exchange.

Nevertheless, the key to reciprocity in the giving of gifts is registered in the symbolic asymmetry of the exchange. Symbolic asymmetry is expressed in the participant's denial or at least repression, of the instrumental value of the token exchange. Its instrumentality is denied for highly relevant social 'reasons'. The participant "…either ignores or denies its objective truth as an economic exchange" by leaving its motive implicit or, by stating it through euphemisms—the "language of denial" (1998, p. 98). Practical euphemisms are a kind of homage rendered to the social order and to the values the social order exalts, all the while knowing that they are doomed to be violated

It is no accident Bourdieu remarks, citing Benveniste, "that the vocabulary of the archaic economy is made up entirely of double-sided notions that are condemned to disintegrate as, over time, the "social mechanisms sustaining them are weakened" (p. 113). The meaning of symbolic capital is far from the representation of a concept used by participants to instantiate their experiences. Nor is it a concept used by participants explicitly for the realisation of ends in view.

Teachers and craftsmen are handed back the opportunity to advance and refine their professional practice under Davidson's radical proposal by dispensing with the rationalisations of grand theory. However, a hint of Deweyan scientist experientialism lingers implicitly in Davidson's otherwise equalitarian principle of charity. The Quinean processes under which experience is converted into the terms of practical explanation are culturally naïve. What is missing in Davidson is the European legacy, represented in Bourdieu, of imparting the agency of entrenched knowledge practices to practitioners. Power and tacit agreements, the tricks embedded in practice, invade practitioners' social space and appropriate their ends in view. But it is by no means clear under pragmatism how and under what cognitive terms these cultural agencies or habits are able to enter prospectively into the practice of crafts persons or to whether individual practitioners have sufficient autonomy for stepping far enough back from their *habitus* to instrumentalise their motives.

Recent explanations underlying the teaching of visual culture in the humanities stumble into this confusion (see Duncum 2002, p. 6–12). Deconstructive pedagogy, attempting to bring the socio-economic critique of culture to students, is only able to justify the instrumental use of deconstruction as far as it informs and emancipates student's individual experiences pragmatically. Of course the reflective **use** of cultural agency for purposes of critical deconstruction needs to be differentiated from the forces **exerted** by cultural agency insofar as they enter tacitly into the actions of

teachers and students (see Janks 2002, pp. 7–27). For instance, when teachers alert their students to the way in which children's naive palates are commercially exploited by the food served at *McDonalds*, teachers are not merely warning students against the abuses of a global corporatisation. Teachers are also being critical of their student's childish tastes. While on the one hand, under the pretext of a cultural critique, teachers may claim the food served by *McDonalds* ought to be respected through the democracy of student's popular choice, teachers simultaneously imply, on the other hand, that the food at *McDonalds* ought to be condemned for pandering 'irresponsibly' to the values underlying that choice. How does a child reconcile the emotional gratification provided by a *Big Mac* with its rational disavowal as an instrument of corporate exploitation? The link between experience and critical reflection, explanation and practice is not assured in the equalitarian world of pragmatism.

Pragmatism overturns many of the classical assumptions about the crafts. The pragmatic egalitarianism and practical simplicity of Dewey's attitude to art and craft contrast dramatically with the classical elitism of his British contemporary, Collingwood (1938). However, in reifying the ethics of practice within the solutions to problems at hand, it is questionable whether pragmatic instrumentalism provides the professional redemption for the crafts it promises. Pragmatism fails to detail how the individual artisan, even one working within a liberal and bureaucratically uncomplicated community can be ensured against corruption by expediency. How does a pragmatic system evolve and transform itself when, in Dewey's own terms, the "tools" of thought, broadly defined, have no implications for the direction of practice (Dewey 1938, p. 527)? The crafts may function within the deterministic context of real life, but their content, solutions and significance depend for their survival upon conventions embedded deeply within their own traditions. Real contingencies, such as the ends and means that, for Dewey, authentically determine the shape of a kitchen table, have no implications for the practice of a trade or a craft, because the shaping effects of practices emerge inexplicably within their enactment. In a similar way, the values of *McDonalds* are emergent within the consumption of its food, just as the value of gifts emerge within the history of their exchange. External contingencies such as commercialisation and privatisation, for example, impose constraints on a practice that can just as easily destroy as reform it (see Heywood 1997, pp. 72–73).

Pragmatists provide no behavioural evidence that their methodological attitude towards knowledge will slow the momentum of social and intellectual prejudice levelled against the crafts. In particular, there are no pragmatic grounds for believing that a theory of intelligence modelled on practical inquiry is likely to favour an extension of the presence of traditional crafts and trades in universities, nor raise their professional status. It is more likely that the crafts, under Dewey, have lost their principal advantage, namely their deeply conventional virtues. Dewey has done, in instrumentalising the crafts, what Derrida could see should not be done in

theorising texts. Rather than re-theorising the "*differance*" that furnishes the various crafts and trades with their singular histories, Dewey, in exploiting the trades as an instrument of experiential thought, just as if practices were another theoretical domain, provides grounds for their expendability.[7]

The legacy of pragmatism in recent cognitive theory lends credence to this assertion (Norris 1992). In one current learning theory, for example, domain specific knowledge in the disciplines is rationalised into clusters of innate modular "thinking skills" or multiple intelligences. Modular skills are mentally employed as tools in the solution to tacit representational "problems" of knowledge. Conceived as innately uncommitted domains of inquiry, modular intelligences appear to model themselves on the pragmatic instrumentality of the crafts, in as much as 'thinking' is made over into an allegory of virtuoso performance applied within a history of culturally relevant ends in view. In effect, "modular thoughts" are little less than functionalised forms of rationalised universal, self-regulating Cartesian mechanisms that refer thinly to the idiosyncratic and embedded virtuosities of the crafts. Despite its fair-minded promise to the trades pragmatism adds yet another form of *adequatio* to be used for their academic and professional marginalisation.

North American pragmatism fails to explain how social agency, lying ironically at the heart of pragmatic understanding, enters into the actions of individuals. Maybe Dewey was in error in abandoning the historical idealism of the Young Hegelians. Perhaps it is irony itself that escapes the puritanical pragmatic sentiment. The democratic ethic in North America blocks the possibility of an epistemology of praxis from entering into the actions of individuals in any other way than corresponding with free choice through reflexion. It is not so much a lack of recognition of social agency at work in the critical practices of practitioners. Rather it is that a politics of subversion is automatically ascribed to any agency that thwarts the intellectual autonomy of the individual other than through its mobilisation towards the good life. Epistemology is rendered evangelical by walling off pessimistic explanations of human practice from expedient explanations of how to go on (Dewey 1967, p. 316). Learning through experience imparts a gloss to the past in the belief that the past's only value is pedagogical. Habits are co-extensive with 'good' habits and good habits are evidenced in their instrumentality. History provides us with lessons to be learned rather than emic accounts of why we do what we do. Insofar as their values lie submerged within their cultural history, pragmatism has little to confer on the crafts and trades after their pragmatic use-by date, other than their eventual extinction.

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[7]One thinks here of outcomes based teaching.

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Chapter 18
The Relation Between Evidence and Action in the Assessment of Practice

The need for "active, creative, and critical workers" places the emphasis on knowledge as practice. Despite the rhetoric it is rare in education to find any of the present day practical arts, other than reading, writing, and the visual and performing arts represented in school curricula. Because the practical arts are vocational they have been historically separated from the education of children. Their tradition of apprenticeship relegates them in most instances to post secondary education. Practical skills need to be rehearsed, coached and critically judged. Practices are not easily reduced to the sequential rules and principles commonly found in the liberal arts subjects of schools. Although children learned pattern drawing and choral singing at school in the nineteenth century, singing and pattern drawing were regarded as general accomplishments at a time when mechanical means of reproduction were limited (Smith 1873). Before the advent of child psychology there was no tradition of acknowledging and respecting children's judgement in practical domains (Fletcher and Welton 1912). The psychological repositioning of the concept of childhood early in the twentieth century, however, changed the role played by subject matter in children's education (Cunningham 1995). Subject matter began to be chosen for its contribution to the development of the child, creating a tension between

psychological evidence and standards of specialised knowledge in the curriculum that continues to resonate in education today (Thorndike 1914, MCEETYA 2005).[1]

While nobody challenges the benefits of critical thinking and creativity to the workforce, those endorsing these benefits are not always so willing to embrace the commitment to practical reasoning that such endorsements involve. Creativity is a kind of practical reasoning requiring commitment to the intelligent rearrangement and making of things. The impact of practical reasoning on school subjects shifts the emphasis from deriving and instantiating conclusions relative to beliefs, to the making and framing of conclusions relative to desires.

Actions are conducted within the constraints of more or less defined institutional frameworks. Actions are performed at particular times, and within a relational pattern of motives, intentions, desires, dispositions, commitments and obligations. Practical reasoning models these underlying relational patterns. Action focuses on what John Searle (2002) identifies as the "gap" in the pattern of practical reasoning. The gap refers to the reflective space within which all actions, including creative actions, are autonomously but nonetheless rationally decided. It is an intentional space in which motive is self-consciously ascribed to particular facts and events. The attribution of motive determines what it means for objects to adopt an agentive function, especially those attributed to one's self. While an agent's actions can be driven by sub-intentional motives, the intentional attribution of motive by agents underwrites the decision to act.

Nowhere is practical reasoning more delicately poised than in the practice of scientific research. The outcomes of research reflect a tension between the way the world is expected to be and the way the world actually is. In this respect research mirrors the ancient paradox between belief and desire, and between evidence and theory (Brown 2004). Realising believable degrees of fit between theory and evidence requires refinement in the relation between motive and evidence. In scientific research this refinement produces outcomes more closely resembling nominal rather than artefactual kinds. The level of fit is made easier in scientific research by the close connection between the rational structure of belief and the logical structure of theory (Searle 2002, p. 262). Research balances the need for outcomes that both maintain the independence of the evidence while simultaneously satisfying the desire for explanations. Maintaining this balance requires experimental manipulation of the practical context of action from an open into a closed system. Manipulation is designed to eliminate the conflicts confounding actions in the real world and iron out the dilemmas obstructing the sought after logical entailment between theoretical prediction and the evidence. Theoretical logic in scientific research reduces an agent's reasons for acting to the facts whereby causal explanations are made true.

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[1] MCEETYA agrees that social and economic progress in Australia is increasingly dependent on a well-informed and active citizenry consisting of individuals who are able to: Communicate well, think originally and critically, adapted to change, work cooperatively, remain motivated when faced with difficult circumstances, connect with both people and ideas and capable of finding solutions to problems as they occur.

Research models a relation between practice and evidence that some see as a pathway towards best practice in the wider world. For instance, Deweyan scientism seeks to explain the way experience and habit can inform practical action (Rorty). Evidence based medicine shifts the moment of practical evaluation from the imponderables of process to the observables of outcomes (Cochrane 2002).

18.1 Searle on Practical Reasoning

This paper agrees with Searle that there can be no deductive logic of practical reasons. It argues that conflicts in the ascription of causality to objects impose special conditions on the use of evidence in practical reasoning. These conditions, which apply across fields such as the arts, teaching, medicine, and even scientific research, are twofold. First, the fact that it is reasonable for me to entertain two or more conflicting desires, for instance I may wish to go to bed because I am sleepy and I may also want to stay up talking, disqualifies the use of logical entailment from evidence of those desires in determining a course of an action. In practice, even when entailment conditions ensue, there is no necessary commitment by an agent from desires held as a premise, to corresponding desires held as a conclusion. This is because in real life a logical commitment to a means ends relation is nearly always overridden in practice by more compelling obligations to the reiteration and revision of the conclusion. Stephen Toulmin expresses it as the error of validating substantive arguments (arguments among substantive fields that address the rational link between evidence and conclusion) by invoking logical principles (1958, p. 227). Elizabeth Steiner (1977) calls it the fallacy of implication in practice. In substantive judgements the making of predictions and retro-dictions are necessarily unentailed.

Second, the explanation of voluntary actions cannot be provided by desires. Particular desires sit within a dependent chain of underlying secondary and overarching goals that denies any one desire a deciding role in motivating personal action. Thus a desire is never a sufficient reason for action.

Practical reasoning enables events, appetites, institutional norms, and moral principles to function as a pretext to personal action only through the agent's commitment to them as motivating reasons. This **'creation'** of motivating reasons fills the gap opened up by the removal of entailment from of desires as pretexts for action. As Searle remarks, "Once a motivation is created, its recognition provides an internal reason for acting" (2002 p. 183). This doesn't mean that motivating reasons are reduced to mere solipsistic artefacts. Motivating reasons are "factive" in the sense that not only can they be composed from the publicly declared norms of institutional obligations and from evidential beliefs they are also rendered factual through their demonstration. Under these demonstrative terms even fantasies can be made real as motivating reasons.

   The indeterminacy of desire as motivating evidence and corresponding dilemmas of practical reasoning are illustrated in the following three examples:

1. On the east coast of Australia *Air Services Australia* (an administrative agency of the Australian Federal Government) is engaged in a dispute with *Qantas Airlines* over changes in the practice of controlling regional airspace. The wisdom of the pilots, who favour conventional procedures is matched against the authority of the bureaucracy favouring the introduction of more efficient practices. This dispute is unsettling for the general public who believe, naively perhaps, that best practice in air navigation is settled by evidence relating to the safety of the scheduled movement of aircraft. Although both parties express safety as their first concern changes to the practices of air navigation are economically as well as workplace inspired. The truth about the safe movement of aircraft is caught in a dilemma of two conflicting desires.

2. The dilemma currently facing surgeons in the treatment of prostate disease provides a variant on the air navigation dispute. Evidence that men older than sixty who contract prostate disease are still alive after nine years, with or without surgery, has failed to settle whether treatment which favours "watchful waiting" is superior to "surgical intervention". Ironically urologists turn to the evidence in seeking resolution of the practical dilemma arising from the desire for a cure.

3. The Sydney Morning Herald reports "Doctors are routinely delivering breech babies by caesarean section because they fear being sued, even though there is often no reason why there should not be a normal birth. In this instance changes to the practice of delivering breech births are motivated by legal implications. The concept of "legal implication" however is a practical consequence of "normal birth". As mitigation against risk the "legal implication" imports an unwanted level of hesitancy into the otherwise assured technique of normal delivery. Thus the advantages of a reduction in risk are balanced by the threefold cost of an increase in caesarean sections, a loss of practical skill in breech birth deliveries by doctors, and a general decrease in normal deliveries. In this case evidence of normal births and breach births, as well as evidence of risk, does little to help resolve the practical dilemma (Robotham 1998).

   The practical dilemmas illustrated in these three examples seek the resolution of conflicting beliefs and desires. In the first case the pilot's desire for air safety appears to overlook the irresponsibility implicit in a parallel desire for preserving their jobs. Similarly, *Air Services Australia* overlooks its obligations to treasury in a commitment to increasing efficiency in air traffic movements. While not exactly lying about possible reductions in air safety resulting from their actions, Air Services Australia chooses to overlook them nonetheless. The two protagonists reason an acceptable relation between the motives underlying their interests and the safe movement of aircraft. "The job of desire is not to represent how things are, but how we would like them to be", Searle argues (2002, p. 261). In both cases the protagonists employ practical reasoning to convert evidence of the safe movement of aircraft into the

realisation of desired outcomes. Both cases incorporate the evidence into the content of the desire.

Practical reasoning sets out to formulate a causal link between the object of desire and the evidence by enabling the evidence to be reframed so as to state the aspects under which an action is desired. Thus safe aircraft movement, absence of prostate disease, risk free births, and proven theories in research in the above three examples can be converted from evidence based on what is the case, into a state of what it is to satisfy the desire and thus a reason to act. Only through such a conversion can the dilemmas of action in each example be resolved.

18.2 Deceit and Ambiguity in Action

In mythic thought ambiguity in meaning is not regarded as irrational but is accepted as complementary. In the *technai* of archaic painting, "the most adept artist is 'one who knows how to deceive (*exapatan*) by making things that, for the most part, resemble the truth (*homoia…tois alethinois poieon*)" (Detienne and Vernant 1991, p. 6). Adeptness in poetic complementarity is identified as *metis* the archaic concept of wily intelligence (p. 12). Marcel Detienne attributes the unification of knowledge and practice in archaic thought to the function of ethical ambiguity in *metis*. Detienne uses the narrative in the *Iliad* Book XXII to illustrate what he means. In this example Nestor lavishes advice on his son Antilochus about the discipline of racing a chariot and of dealing with horses before a race. Although Antilochus' adversaries possess faster horses and greater strength, Antilochus has the advantage of his father's shrewd advice—his *metis*. Before the race Antilochus is reminded by Nestor that

> It is through *metis* rather than through strength that the wood cutter shows his worth. It is through *metis* that the helmsman guides the speeding vessel over the wine-dark sea despite the wind. It is through *metis* that the charioteer triumphs over his rival (Detienne and Vernant 1978, pp. 11–16).

During the race Antilochus, heeding his father's advice, takes advantage of a storm-narrowed section of the track to drive in front of his rival Menelaus, to cut him off and win.

Detienne argues that this episode exemplifies the features of ethical ambiguity in *metis*. First it shows how, in any practice, *metis* can be used to reverse the natural outcome of an encounter, whether it is in competition with an adversary or in the fashioning of a material substance such as clay. Defying the natural outcome can be seen in two different ways. In competition it can be seen as cheating since trickery is used to subvert the natural order. On the other hand, it can also be seen as a victory by the weaker party over the forces of inevitability, thus inspiring hope and admiration in others. In the fashioning of materials, for example, *metis* can be derided as artifice. The use of illusionistic and deceptive means, such as those used by the painter, can be thought of as subverting the natural disposition of material

substances, by diverting their realisation into artefacts. Alternatively, *metis* can be seen positively as the ability of the potter to overcome constraints in the natural behaviour of clay that limit its realisation into practical forms.

By the classical period, however, the archaic complementarity of illusion and resemblance in painting is rationalised into the theory of *mimesis. Mimesis* rejects the ambiguity of resemblance in art because of its rational indecisiveness. Representational art is consequently relegated to the epistemologically less important role of imitation (Baudrillard 1988).[2] The transition from ambiguity in resemblance, accepted as complementarity, to ambiguity in resemblance, portrayed as irrationality, indicates the declining level of philosophical confidence in poetic and practical forms of reasoning during the fifth century.

Action and artifice are natural bedfellows. Intention cannot escape the derogatory imputation of assigning calculated, premeditated and designing motives to the believable world. Insofar as the goal of action is seeking a 'mind-to-world' direction of fit, practical reason is seen as taking control of and elaborating on the facts and creative 'artefacts' are regarded as intentional 'deceits' played on the existing world. Thus in Popperian epistemology the creation of new knowledge begins as an artefact that a suspicious research seeks to disprove.

18.3   Intentionality and Conflicting Desires

Practices serve a quasi-theoretical function by hedging against uncertainty in the control and regulation of future events. This point is crucial to the **creation** of reasons for action. The fact that conflicting desires can coexist in practice means that it is necessary to take up a committed point of view in advance of action taken in their regard. However, one can have a reason for performing an action that one never enacts (Searle 2002, p. 100), just as one can have reasons for acting that are inconsistent with the reasons why it was in fact done. How do we convert our conflicting desires to act in particular contexts into actual reasons for acting?

Bourdieu captures the ambiguity of practical reasoning in action though the processes of repressed desire. "Practical euphemisms pay homage to the social order and to the values the social order exalts, all the while knowing that they are doomed to be violated" (1977, p. 98). Practical transactions are, by necessity, susceptible to misrecognition and paradox. Misrecognition turns a blind or diplomatic eye to

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[2] Jean Baudrillard explains the way in which *mimesis* and *trompe l'oeil* represents a diversion from the representational purpose of art (1998). The rules of *trope l'oeil*, exemplified in the rules of perspective are ultimately antagonistic to the representational function of art. The rules of *trompe l'oeil* are simulatory rules functioning within a closed representational system. Under the terms of simulation, the appearance of art works disguises the representational cue that the presence of ambiguity in "complementarity" ensures. The seamless control of ambiguity in *trompe l'oeil* suppresses representational difference such that rather than enhancing the representing relation between art and reality, the relation is turned back upon itself into an infinite regress of simulacra. See the concept of "production as" introduced in sub-section 2 of this paper.

material and evidential truths of practical exchanges. Misrecognition represses evidence that would otherwise be destructive of useful social institutions if taken at face value. In a scene from the movie *The Life of Brian,* Brian, escaping from the Romans through the bazaar, is accosted by a hawker with an offer of nine shekels for some gourds. To speed his escape Brian gives the hawker the full asking price for his wares. The hawker refuses the money berating Brian for his failure to haggle. In an apparently irrational rejection of Brian's offer, the hawker prefers to deny himself the full money rather than jeopardise his commitment to the practice of haggling (Brown and Thomas 1999).[3]

How is the hawker's desire for less money rationally justified? It is justified by the hawker's obligation to haggling as a binding custom of the bazaar. In misrecognising the true price of the merchandise, haggling fills the explanatory gap by oiling the commercial expectations of the bazaar. The insertion of this event incongruently into the narrative highlights the double coded conflict of commitment and desire confronting the two characters. But there is risk of descent into a regress in this example. How do the norms of the bazaar become a reason for the hawker? In practical reasoning an intentional action, in other words an action that is other than neurotic, compulsive or tacitly driven by the *habitus* of the bazaar, requires the commitment to a reason, the recognition of which is also a reason for desiring to perform the action (Searle 2002 p. 190). An institutional explanation of the hawker's actions is insufficient to explain why the hawker himself acted against his apparent financial interests. The hawker's haggling becomes an intentional reason for acting 'against' his financial interests in this context only if he is committed to haggling as a reason. It is the hawker's explicit **commitment** to haggling ("you've got to aggle") that converts his accepting a lower price for the gourds into a motive and thus a reason for acting. The hawker creates a commitment to haggling that enables the norms of the bazaar to double as an explicit motive for action. Thus the motives of the hawker's action are grounded on his (mis) recognition of the reason for it. The scene is funny because although absurdly incidental to the narrative, the cultural significance of haggling also causes a practical conflict for Brian that is sufficiently distracting to cause him to repress his need to escape.[4]

18.4   Protocols, Evidence, Desire and the Commitment to Act

Protocols are performances in which the roles of agents acting in a local context are formally prescribed. Evidence of a fire in a plane or hotel, act as mere triggers or "cases" in which precise protocols are recognized and set in train, whatever the context. Protocols are designed to 'affect' a logic of practical reasoning. This is

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[3] See Chapter 15 in this volume.

[4] In the movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* a similar scene employs the same conflicting motives for black comic effect, when roving undertakers convert the tragedy of victims of the plague into a Marxist economic transaction over the collection price for the bodies.

because the relation between facts and actions in protocols is honoured by actions following a single correct observance. But although triggered by recognition of defined events protocols are not implied by those events. For example, the practical reasoning that dictates preparation of an airliner for landing is prescribed within the specifications of the aircraft and by flight regulations. These protocols are ratified in advance of the aircraft's release into service. Facts that emerge locally during landings have no bearing on these protocols insofar as likely emergences are themselves prescribed by secondary regulations. In emergencies it is critical that landing regulations are even more strictly observed. The need for uniformity in protocolic regulations is highlighted in the events preceding the crash of a Swissair flight on approach to Halifax Airport in 1999. Crash investigators revealed that as the result of a cockpit fire the pilots were placed in what has been subsequently identified as an inappropriate evidential dilemma. It turns out that in the event of a fire on board it was protocol on the one hand for pilots to land as soon as possible. On the other hand it was also protocol to complete a prescribed checklist to secure the condition of the plane. The two independent protocols were converted into two conflicting instructions in the context of the fire. The dilemma obliged the pilots to choose between the two. In the event they chose to conduct a checklist rather than to land without delay. The fire took hold resulting in the loss of the plane. More precisely, obliging the pilots to choose among protocols required the exercise of practical reasoning when it was believed that 'logic' was in play. In this case the pilots were denied access to the terms under which the appropriate motives could be ascribed to the fire. For instance, there was nothing in the apparent facts of the fire that signalled to the pilots which protocol to choose. Conversely there was nothing in the content of the two protocols that aided the ascription of an appropriate cause.

18.5   The Creation of Reasons to Act

Active, creative and critical workers are those able to compose what is recognised as valid reasons for acting. The following section refers to three examples of practical reasoning, "navigational", "pictorial", and "forensic". These examples illustrate the way in which motive is ascribed to evidence, beliefs, appetites, events, institutional norms, desires, and moral principles by an agent. Not only is motive apportioned to entities by way of providing explanations, it is also attributed in such a way as to account for the creation of a commitment to action by an agent, including oneself. Not to be confused with *reductio,* the making of universal rules, laws, and moral principles, these examples refer to the commitment to action, taken in a particular context at a particular time. This commitment alone is coextensive with the wished for outcomes of the action in each example. Insofar as practical reasoning is enacted iteratively in real time (rather than recursively in intensional and tautological 'time'), it functions quasi theoretically in each case as a hedge against the unknown to some degree.

18.5.1   Navigational Reasoning

Evidence that emerges during an action can acquire a new functional status that alters in turn the reasons for acting.[5] In this iterative system a course of action requires continual reassessment as a result of unforseen circumstances that, ironically, are sometimes precipitated by the action taken. This is likely to be the case in the navigation of uncharted territory. What, for instance, is the co-evolving balance between the evidence and competing obligations to practice in navigational reasoning?

When James Cook left *Endeavour River* on the northern leg of his voyage along the eastern coast of *New Holland* his overriding purpose was to get clear of the inner waters of the *Great Barrier Reef* and make for the open sea. Sailing in the deep water outside the reef, he reasoned, would avoid the hundreds of miles of shoals that had imperilled *H.M. Bark Endeavour's* progress in the previous months. In the event Cook's experience outside the reef turned out to be even more dangerous, prompting him to turn back inshore. Cook remarks

> It is but a few days ago that I rejoiced at having got without the reef, but that joy was nothing when compared to what I now felt at being safe at anchor within it, happy once more to encounter those shoals which but two days ago our utmost wishes were crowned by getting clear of, such are the Vicissitudes [sic] attending this kind of service and must always attend unknown Navigation [sic] where one steers wholly in the dark without the manner of any guide whatever (Cook's journal, in Parkin 2003, p. 421).

Cook unintentionally misrepresented the agency he had previously ascribed to evidence of the inner shoals, precisely as a consequence of his actions in avoiding them. Unfolding experience of the *Great Barrier Reef* not only reconfigured the threat ascribed to evidence of the reef, it reconfigured Cook's navigational reasoning.

But Cook was not steering "wholly in the dark" as he claims. The precipitation of evidence within practice falls within a proximal and distal continuum. Exploration of the unknown coast of *New Holland* resulted in the innovation of unplanned actions by Cook based on evidence that unfolded proximally during its event. However the vast bulk of the navigational resources Cook used as he cruised northward were protected from the influence of local events, even from those that posed life-threatening dangers. Facts and beliefs emerging during the course of Cook's exploration have little influence over the conduct of naval protocols per se. It is moot as to whether the motives Cook ended up attributing to emerging events might have been sufficient to override his obligation to the navy. The navigational methods Cook used in avoiding unknown shoals were skills already mastered by *Endeavour's* crew even before they left England. Protocols and conventions are not validated by evidence precipitated proximal to their performance. Rather they are justified by distal evidence whose precedents are honoured in the virtuosity and commitment with which they are performed at a particular time and place. As such these prac-

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[5] In game theory this is called "reinforcement learning".

tices are not to be hurried into reassignment by the practitioner, whatever the circumstances. Even as *Endeavour* was threatened with disaster only metres from the outer reef, and despite the anxiety felt among its crew, the formalities of navigational practice aboard ship continued as normal. To quote Parkin, "We see that Cook's decisions are made not loftily and coldly but with the doubts and feelings common to all—yet made resolute by responsibility and tradition" (p. 422). Cook's reassessment of the dangers of navigating the inner shoals, although a dramatic change in decision, also served to endorse his commitment to the traditions of ship handling consistent with best naval practice. Thus although the motives that obliged Cook with an intentional reason to act were attributed to the agency of the reef, we also know in retrospect that those intentions were not the only reasons he had for acting as he did.

The distal relation between evidence, protocols and conventions is common within all institutional practices including, for example clinical diagnosis, experimental research, weather forecasting, horse racing, painting as a fine art, teaching and so on.[6] For instance, concealed within the changes proximal to Cook's reasoning are his duty to explore the northern coast of mainland Australia, his desire for

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[6] In a recent study into boys' literacy, Dr Ken Rowe of the *Australian Council of Educational Research,* found that the hearing of young boys, suffering with developmental problems in processing sounds, developed physiologically differently to the ears of girls (2003). The phenomenon of selective hearing in boys was found to have a neurophysiological base that was uncovered in a large-scale clinical trial in conjunction with the Royal Children's Hospital in Sydney and the National Acoustic Laboratory. Boys' behavioural and learning problems are attendant upon an inability to hold, sequence and accurately process what is heard. Rowe asked the clinical question of school teachers as to how they might better accommodate these auditory problems in their students. He found that there is only so much information teachers deliver at one time that can pass through students' auditory "gate". Teachers who had been specifically trained in the traditions of measured and clearly delivered "chunked" information, gaining eye contact and waiting for compliance before adding information, were found to bring about the greatest improvements in the boys' comprehension. Skill in these traditional teaching methods have less currency in teaching practice, Rowe claims, and their usage has declined. Jewish schools, on the other hand, with a rich oral culture that places emphasis on verbalisation of knowledge and social expectations, are able to capitalise on the increased quality of attention and other auditory benefits that these traditions are able to afford. Imputation of a correlation between traditional teaching and learning is not however to confirm a logical basis for a commitment to traditional teaching. Considered in relation to teaching practice, then, why is it that teachers' experience of behavioural problems in boys hadn't already implied a return to the traditional methods suggested by Rowe? Would Rowe have suggested the use of these traditional teaching methods as a practical solution to auditory problems if these traditional practices had not existed? Teaching practices valued in Rowe's study are given clinical agency by the facts of his findings. But the evidence of their success is formulated in the skill with which they are enacted, not in the outcomes of their use with boys. Even if Rowe found proximal evidence that traditional teaching methods had no benefit for boys with selective hearing, traditional methods would still stand as evidence of what it is to practice as a virtuoso teacher. Rowe admits as much claiming that all students benefit from these traditional practices, irrespective of their developmental problems. Evidence of good practice in teaching, as with good navigation, is honoured in its performance. The evidence of its desired value originates in distal relations forged in pedagogical antiquity, as well as in agency ascribed to it by clinical research. Thus the relation between traditional teaching and the clinical evidence remains one determined by practical reasoning, despite the high levels of clinical correlation.

finding a passage between New Holland and New Guinea, and his concern for the welfare of the ship's company. Cook's judgement is not only influenced by emerging experience but is expressed as an emerging synthesis of constraint-satisfaction resolutions. Despite his adherence to naval practice, Cook's practical reasoning is not confined to logical implications following from the facts, or even from evidence emerging from the facts of his situation on the reef. Neither are they reduced to "caused choices" (Churchland 2002, p. 233). In a rare moment of reflection Cook himself, in returning through the reef, ponders the dilemma in resuming a course along the mainland. In a rich soup of 'irrational' motives his reflections help explain the new evidential spin he places on navigating the inner passage and his reasons for qualifying his previous estimation of its relative dangers

> The world would hardly admit of an excuse for a man leaving a Coast [sic] unexplored he has once discovered, if dangers are his excuse he is then charged with *Timorousness* and want of perseverance and at once pronounced the unfittest man in the world to be employed as a discoverer; if on the other hand he boldly encounters all the dangers and obstacles he meets and is unfortunate enough not to succeed he is then charged with *Temerity* and want of conduct (Parkin p. 421).

Practical reasoning is formally advanced within a framework of professional practice integrating among its functions the institutional protocols, conventions, innovations, and feelings relative to the context in which it is enacted. This web of institutional traditions and responsibilities is opaque within self-evident experience local to a practice and inaccessible to naïve practitioners. Unpicking the links between means and ends—underpinning the attribution of motive to evidence, is a task akin to apportioning culpability based on legal precedent. What James Cook made of his unfolding circumstances in New Holland is mitigated by the unknown dangers of sailing outside the Barrier Reef. Cook's decision to go outside the reef is excused as a genuine misrepresentation of his prior experiences rather than as a dereliction of duty. However, if he had known of the dangers presented by both options in advance, Cook's choice of sailing outside the reef, as an uncaused action, would have been condemned as unprofessional and foolhardy.

18.5.2 Pictorial Reasoning

Pictorial reasoning is required whenever images are used as a means of giving visual form to complex personal scientific, spiritual, cultural, and poetic ideas. In addition to that which is immediately accessible to vision, three key factors determine visual decision-making. One is the quality of the marked surface itself, for instance, the way in which technology, material practice, and artistic conventions trigger the recognition of meaningful objects (Gibson 1979). A second is the prevailing culture animating artists and viewers (Freedman 2000). A third and increasingly important factor in cognitive aesthetics, is the intentional domain (Freeman 1995). The intentional domain enables individuals to confer upon images of things the same beliefs, desires, and feelings they confer on the things that images represent (Searle 1983).

Just as, for instance, children's actual feelings about things are identified with the visual representation of those feelings and imaginings (Harrison 1997).

Pictures are artefactual kinds. Artefacts differ from natural kinds insofar as they are produced by an agency originating in human action rather than as the result of natural events. The causes of artefacts are not meaningfully reducible therefore to physical explanations, even though they are inevitably dependent on the physical world for their conduct to some degree (Searle 1995). The issue is effectively illustrated in objects that are ambiguously dependent on natural agency for their production. For example, cloned sheep, hip replacements, natural harbours, psychotic crimes, aesthetic experiences, and the vernacular drawings of talented or autistic children which are all causally ambiguous. Their ambiguous identity arises from uncertainty over the level of human 'intention' in their production. For instance considered as a natural harbour, is Port Jackson most appropriately explained by its "natural" qualities or by its employment as a "harbour"?

Objects in the world, including artefacts, serve no intrinsic purposes. The only purposes objects have are those that we ascribe. We understand objects, whether artefactual or natural kinds, out of our beliefs about the proper ends they ought to satisfy and as a meaningful analogy of human purpose (pp. 16–17).[7] Even the purposes of precisely adapted artefacts like portrait paintings can turn out to be wrong and subject to change. Thus the proper ends we attribute to objects are derived through practical reasoning. For instance, a commonly accepted purpose of North Head in Sydney Harbour is to 'protect' Manly Cove from the south-easterly swell. On the other hand real estate agents agree that a view of North Head 'adds' $1 Million dollars to property values in the adjacent suburb of Clontarf. We say that the swell is smaller at Manly Cove in the event of a nor-easter 'because' of North Head's 'ability' to provide shelter. Estate agents believe that house prices are high at Clontarf 'because' of the breathtaking views 'provided' by North Head. Attributing oceanographic and aesthetic purposes to North Head provides a reason that helps explain the value of its relation to Manly Cove and to Clontarf.

It is important to be reminded that the functions we attribute to artefactual kinds are much more freely reassigned than those attributed to natural kinds. The quality of protection that North Head provides Manly Cove is less free to vary and has more of a determining impact on North Head than a view of it has upon property values in Clontarf. Functions attributed to artefacts are normative properties. This means that the aesthetic impact of North Head upon values in Clontarf is asymmetrically related to its causes (Searle 1995, pp. 8–19).[8] In other words, although the aesthetic agency of North Head may affect land values at Clontarf those values are emblematic of the headland, rather than oceanographically determinate.

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[7] When we say, 'The function of the heart is to pump blood we are…situating this fact relative to a system of values…' (Searle 1995, p. 15), we approach objects as if they acted out of a sense of ethical obligation to some cause.

[8] For example a function of computer graphics is to make images. Image making consists, in part, as the deliberate distribution of pixels on a screen. But it does not follow that the function of computer graphics is 'to distribute pixels on a cathode screen'.

The attribution of meaning to artefacts functions symbolically (p. 21).[9] Before the First World War houses built at Clontarf were oriented on the block such that the living rooms faced the main road and their laundries faced the harbour. Since the Second World War most of these houses have had their back laundries converted into living rooms with views overlooking the harbour. The reason for their renovation can be explained in terms of a shifting environmental aesthetic over the previous fifty years. Commitment to these environmental changes re-ascribed motive to North Head enabling it to function as an institutionally recognised reason for financing the renovation of houses.

In the examples above North Head appears to play dual roles as an artefactual kind and a (non-strict) natural kind. The question arises as to who and what determines the ontological status of North Head? The answer is that the headland is swept up into relationships with other kinds according to the different roles it is assigned to play. Thus North Head functions as a natural kind when the purposes ascribed to it are determined as those originating naturally, as if nature had 'intended' it or as if the Headland was speaking for itself. On the other hand when the headland functions as an artefact the roles ascribed to it are assigned by way of human actions and agreements. These agreements can be established through local understandings, can emerge historically, or be deemed by institutional charter. Examples of institutional agreements are money, property, marriage, art and design. Although assigned by agreement facts about artefacts are objective nonetheless. They are not dependent upon opinion or reduction to physical causes in order to exist (Searle 1995 pp. 2–3).

In addition to the skills of ordinary vision pictorial reasoning depends upon the imputation of practical reasoning at work in the making of pictures, that is, the attribution of artistic motive to works. In this sense pictorial reasoning is a two-folded reasoning about the 'reasoning' of artists. These reasons are based on attributions from visible evidence of the marked surface. The verisimilitude of Roland Wakelin's paintings of Sydney Harbour conceals the fact that the appearance of the harbour depicted in them is at the same time an agreed upon pictorial role that harbours in this oeuvre are appointed to play. Harbours are incapable of playing their own role in paintings and must wait for one to be apportioned. Sydney Harbour didn't always play this self-evident role in paintings. For instance, Sydney Harbour does not play a self-evident role in Indigenous painting two hundred years ago; and although the abstract expressionist paintings of the artist John Firth-Smith bear a relation to Sydney Harbour, with their painterly evocation of salt stained ship's sides, their references to the Harbour are far from self-evident. Does this imply that the role of

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[9] Ironically contemporary practice in art and design has shifted to embrace a more functionally internecine character. Nicholas Bourriaud (2002) has coined the phrase 'relational aesthetics' to describe this shift towards interactive dependency in art. Art is set free from its cultural determinacy on the one hand and its field-classified idealism on the other Bourriaud argues, to assume a more eventful, collaborative, screen immersed, globally transactional yet locally situated character.

the Harbour in abstract paintings is less certain, less factual than in representational paintings?

Wakelin's purpose in painting the harbour is to make the harbour appear self-evident. But it is actually Wakelin's commitment to the preference for pictorial verisimilitude in the oeuvre of the late nineteen thirties that provides the reason for his action. Yet it is not enough that we simply learn of his reason. The reason must be demonstrated through the harbour's role in the painting. In this sense the meaning of the picture is coextensive with Wakelin's ability to ascribe motive to his pictorial desire (Wollheim 1987).[10] To reiterate, practical reasoning sets out to formulate a causal link between the object of desire and the evidence in a way that enables the evidence (harbour) to state the aspects (painting) under which an action is desired.

The same conditions apply to the abstract paintings of John Firth-Smith. The artist's commitment to the harbour is as strong as it is in Wakelin's painting. But unlike the latter the intention of the harbour is not immediately visible. In the oeuvre of Firth-Smith's painting the purposes of the harbour are less accessible to normal vision and require the imputation of institutional motives to apportion them. In other words it is necessary to 'see' the harbour by deciphering Firth-Smith's institutional obligations to the oeuvre and its impact on the painter's reasons.

This does not imply that abstract painting functions as a predictive **law** connecting events classified as causal (the harbour) with events classified as reasons (the painting). For example, shape of the all-metal Douglas Dakota aircraft in 1935 is a reason for the designer Henry Dreyfuss' contemporary streamlining of the Hudson locomotives for the New York Central Railroad, but it is hardly a predictive reason (bypassing the designer's intention). Neither does the existence of such a reason imply that this particular reason was the one that motivated Dreyfuss to streamline the locos. However, it is still necessary to advance a warranting motive to the evidence of "streamlining" and the "harbour" to account for their effect on locomotives and paintings (Davidson 1990, p. 16–17).

18.5.3   Forensic Reasoning

In Edgar Allen Poe's short story *The Purloined Letter* Dupin, a gifted analyst and friend of the narrator, is able to recover a stolen letter the city police have been unable to find. Even though the authorities know the thief's identity the political sensitivity of the letter requires that the police investigation remain discreet. Police employ every investigatory technique without success. After listening to the police inspector's tediously methodical but fruitless report Dupin is able to produce the purloined letter himself which, to the astonishment of the inspector, Dupin claims

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[10]Richard Wollheim (1987) argues intentionality in a picture must demonstrate "twofoldedness". Wollheim's concept is of 'fulfilled intention' in which a property in an art work is not only intended by the artist to be seen in a particular way but is furthermore a property able to be seen by beholders in the way intended (1987, Ch. 2).

to have found without any difficulty. The inspector is bewildered by Dupin's success. How could Dupin have found the letter so easily when its discovery had resisted the best forensic procedures? Once presented with the letter the inspector rushes away leaving Dupin to explain to his friend why the police investigation failed.

According to Dupin, the police failed to find the letter because of an error in their practical reasoning. The police mistook the search for the letter as a hunt for good hiding places when what they should have been investigating, he says, was a particular kind of practical reasoning in the thief, in this case the practice of concealment. By limiting their investigation to a search for good hiding places the police restricted evidence of the letter's whereabouts to its spatial and material properties. They saw as irrelevant, for instance, evidence of the context which led to the letter being concealed, of the significance of the letter for the thief, and of the tactics of concealment he entertained. The police overlooked this evidence because they were unable to attach a reasonable motive to it. For Dupin investigation into human action, including the criminal misappropriation and concealment of letters, requires the attribution of motives. It is essential that these motives be tailored to fit the intentional context of the practitioner.

Thus the causes underlying the concealment of the letter, according to Dupin, are not simply properties to be discovered, they require the imputation of intentionality. In Dupin's explanation this imputation is bi-directional insofar as the attribution of intentions is open to both the investigator and the practitioner. The investigator is able to impute motives to the thief in retrospect, just as the thief is able to plan his actions in anticipation of the investigator's potential imputations. In other words, when investigating the practical causes of letter stealing there is always a bit of the investigator in the thief and visa versa. Dupin began his investigation by rehearsing the motives that drove the thief, in this case a ruthless and subtly minded government minister, to purloin the letter. Possession of the letter gave the minister power. But the letter was able to realise its power only while so ever it remained in the minister's possession and its content was kept concealed. Indeed recovery of the letter by Dupin obliged that it be 'stolen' back form the minister insofar as anything less would have publicised its sensitive content. Publication was to be avoided at all costs as it would have scandalised the queen from whom the minister stole the letter. Dupin surmised that the minister would most likely 'conceal' the letter by lodging it in a very public place. Dupin's reasons are threefold. First a public place is so obvious that the police, whom the minister knew as blinded by the complexity of their own forensic technology, would never look there. Second, a public place would give the minister a better chance of identifying who ever tried to steal the letter back. Third the minister anticipated that a shrewd sleuth, such as Dupin, although guessing the letter would be lodged in a public place, would recognise the minister as a dangerous and vindictive opponent and be hesitant in taking the letter from under his gaze. Thus in the actions they both take the minister and Dupin anticipate each other's reasoning.

Precisely as Dupin grasps that all hiding places are supported by a practice of concealment, so the key to understanding many of the entities for which we search

are also unlocked by their role within practical action. Practices are accessible to explanation just as Dupin describes. Explanations depend on the attribution of causal agency, in other words upon vernacular theory. Praxiological theories predict causality by determining and attributing motives and by describing the relations among them. Theories of this kind do not have to be grand, nor are they the exclusively property of the investigator, as Dupin's bi-directional theory of mind attests. Even every day practices, tailored to their local contexts are framed, like theories, into patterns of reasoned possibility. The minister's strategy for concealing the letter is no less a theory than the one preposed by Dupin for its disclosure. Indeed it is the coherence of the minister's theory of concealment that is the very object of Dupin's investigation.

The ontology of evidence within practice is attendant upon the ascription of a motive to the assembled facts. In criminal law a prosecution that fails to assemble its facts under a plausible motive and opportunity fails to establish authorship and thus the existence of the crime. Motives are ascribed to practice as agentive functions identified under a variety of substantive political, economic, aesthetic, and psychological fields. For very good reasons the extension of relations between a practice and the facts varies widely as to the agent held critical responsibility for the link.

18.6   Concluding Comments

Practical reasoning is ubiquitous in life. The need for "active, creative, and critical workers who are 'life-long' and 'life-wide' learners" falsely suggests perhaps that workers and students lack the ability to employ practical reasoning in schools and workplace. On the contrary, it is not so much a need for workers able to satisfy the requirements of practical reasoning, but more the need for schools and workplaces willing to accept and reward it that matters. Why, in contrast to the oft-stated rhetoric, would schools and workplaces baulk at the endorsement of practical reasoning?

In ancient Greece there is a clear dependency between the social status of the artisan and the epistemological standing of their crafts. The ability to know in archaic thought relies upon the artisan's skill in uncovering the world. In this world the truth can be likened to a hidden adversary. Archaic truth is depicted in epics of discovery enacted within a hierarchy of clearly defined social roles. It is hardly surprising, then, that the socially codified skills of the archaic artisan are deeply implicated in the portrayal of knowledge. In classical thought the hunt for knowledge gives way to private contemplation in as much as knowledge becomes attached to the properties of things rather than socially codified skills. But even in classical thought the exercise of rational autonomy in the contemplation of universals is nonetheless socially exclusive. The Platonic ability to disengage from the detail of everyday practical affairs is not restricted to individuals with the aptitude for abstract thought, as is widely believed today. Rather it is an opportunity reserved for the

aristocratic amateurs who have the wealth providing them with the freedom and time for noble reflexion. The association between the power of abstract thought and superior mental resources normally made in contemporary education is revealed as a profoundly social as well as psychological relation.

Drafting evidence into the service of practice in the hope of removing practical indeterminacy deprives practice of its ethical ontology. Practical reasoning is about risk rather than certainty. It is conducted in a forward direction through real time rather than through the abstract instantiation of existing concepts. Even if skilfully conducted practical reasoning can turn out to be wrong. It is about changing the world to fit into models of truth and value, and about making things, as Nietzsche insists. It is about designing, reassembling, and ascribing motive to evidence rather than being constrained by evidence in the conduct of predetermined outcomes. It is about obligation and commitment expressed in the autonomy to act, rather than as the compliance to act. It is about navigating, investigating and critically pondering information rather than the collection and sorting of information.

In education practical reasoning is relatively unpredictable, expensive to present and inefficient by comparison with traditional scholarship. All around there is evidence to the contrary of the strident call for a creative workforce. New technology is designed precisely to replace workers who have become too "active, creative, and critical". In industry, as one small-business man was reported as saying—the time when workers begin to come up with original ideas is the time for them to move on. In Australia the PhD has been 'reduced' to research training where rewards are given for the act of completion rather than the quality of discovery. In their uniformity national curricula nod more to the interests of corporate investment than student autonomy. I trust I do not seem too cynical in reminding educationists that the political and legislative goals of action were never intended for the likes of workers and children. Aristotle believed that practical reasoning should be kept out of the hands of tradesmen. The tradesmen's duty is to reproduce the world befitting of the model originated by their superiors.

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Chapter 19
The Representation of Practice

This paper characterises design as a network of institutional practice. From the outset it acknowledges that institutional networks and the artefacts they produce, are relatively indeterminate kinds of objects and accepts that they are difficult to explain. Nonetheless, it takes heart from the belief that the workings of institutional networks are accessible to systematic explanation, albeit on a local scale. While the work-a-day practice of designers is normally supported by inquiry into the work at hand this is not what is understood by research in this paper. Rather, it takes the view that the possession of a powerful concept of design practice is central to the professional autonomy of individual designers. In line with its role in other professions the role of design research is to provide practitioners with the resources that enhance their autonomy to act.

Consistent with most inquiries into practical networks, design research seeks a faithful description of the relations among its institutional components. The most commonly represented of these components are the "designer", the "design", and the "heuristics of the design process". Descriptions of interdependency among these kinds of components are a function of the institutional roles they play. Purposefulness in the relations among these components, however, is not confined to designers and other people in the institution. Intentional roles can also be assigned to a wide range of abstract categories. For instance, the consumer, the brief, the technical methods, the industrial economy, and the ideological forms of heuristic employed, can be seen as contributing agencies within a design practice. The purposes or functions attributed to these "non-intentional" components may render them even more accountable for the product than the designer. However, the properties of institutional components within any practice of design, including the intentions of the designer, are not self-evident. They are subject to inquiry, interpretation and thus

open to misrepresentation. What passes as a relevant component, what accounts for its motives, and what determines the extent of its influence upon the functional roles of other components in the design network, needs to be recovered through inquiry.

The public significance of representational inquiry into design, however, is two-fold. It is both dependent upon its legitimation as a kind of university research, and on its benefit to practice in the field.

In order to satisfy these two requirements, it is argued, design research needs to address a number of conditions. First, is the necessity of assuming the existence of design practice as a real object and the field of design as an institutional kind. Second, is to select from sympathetic narratives in the reality of practice—aware that the most beneficial of these narratives are unlikely to emerge transparently from the field of design practice itself. Third, is to consider how narratives of institutional practice explain the relational terms among components in the field. For instance, illustrating how an extension to the properties of the "the designer", impact on the properties of the "design".

19.1   On the Reality of Practice as an Object of Investigation

19.1.1   The Legitimation of Design Research and the Reality of Practice

In his chillingly prophetic essay *The Postmodern Condition,* Lyotard forecasts the terms of legitimation within contemporary university discourse (1987, pp. 46–47). Current university research, he says, is legitimated by its "performativity". Performativity is a neologism referring to the narrative rules underpinning the com-mercialised production of evidence in the sciences. These rules form the basis of national reporting systems currently used in the ranking of universities and in legiti-mating academic discourse (p. 45). Even if the discourse of science has yet to invade the arts and humanities, the link between the authority of a discipline and its funding under a competitive granting system bring art and design into the same orbit of capi-tal production as science. Under these terms the production of proof in design research is determined by the precision and efficiency of its published output. According to Lyotard, research domains possessing the most technically proficient ways of realising their outcomes attract the most funding.

It is the demand generated by a monopoly on being "right" that funds a domain of research. In this regard technical proficiency is not the only variable relevant to increasing performativity. Lyotard explains performativity as the "equation between wealth, efficiency, and truth" (p. 46). If research into design is to raise the level of its performativity it must be prepared to make, albeit qualified, truth claims under the auspices of research. In furthering these claims in design it is important they be entertained within a narrative of research able to assert the objective reality of insti-tutional practice.

Descriptions of design as a real practice capture higher levels of explanation in a field under-represented by causal interpretation. Explanation leads to control insofar as power, through the predictability that explanation affords, is the commodity that those who fund university research seek as a return on their investment. The question asked by designers is at what cost does the delivery of explanations construct the outcomes of practice in the field?

A great deal of research in design is classified as action research insofar as it is concerned with enhancing the efficiency of production or in stipulating best practice. Applied on a local scale in other fields, prescriptive research is pivotal in design. There is a continuing demand for formula that can be used in the systematic generation of practical ends in design. It is a motive seeking to combine what Lyotard refers to as the denotative and the prescriptive "game" (p. 46). These are precisely the games that action research hopes to unify. Methods of validation used in prescriptive projects tend to divide into two methodological clusters. The first is a retrospective group that couches its proofs in case histories (Gardner & Nemirovsky 1991). The second is the causal cluster, typified by the use of experimental methodology (Sternberg & Frensch 1991). Despite its trappings of validity, prescriptive or action research is relatively self-serving. Design research, in particular, has never been daunted by the naturalistic fallacy of grounding justifications of creative discovery on descriptions of universal processes (Csikszentmihalyi & Getzels 1971). An error in the field of design research is its failure to see instrumentalist inquiry into design practice as a relevant token of the reality being investigated. Action research devotes little time to aspects of practice that it sees as inefficient or irrelevant to its particular project. It imposes technical goals on institutional practice that are more likely to conceal the complexities, irrationalities and absurdities that social researchers, such as Rom Harré (1983) and Pierre Bourdieu (1990) see as critical to practical reasoning.

19.1.2   The Reality of Practice and the Autonomy of the Designer

Secondly, what practical help is non-instrumentalist research to designers in the field? Designers seek help in being able to think their own way around the field of design. They want to be able to approach the field in ways that are respectful of the complexity and paradox of what it is to practice as a designer. Nevertheless, a causal concept of design practice is as important to practicing designers as it is to executive funding bodies. Writing proposals and submitting tenders, if nothing else, requires designers to speculate about the ramifications of adopting a particular approach. Thus designers require a generative apparatus for representing relations among components in the field. However, a generative concept of practice is not to be confused with a constraining set of deterministic competencies. Designers need autonomy rather than the technical censorship of "best practices" (even though this may

be the desire of their clients). They want cognitive sovereignty over their own particular place within the network. Research has more to offer the professional designer than the validation of foundationalist management regimes and formula of step-wise problem solving (Roy 1993, p. 443).

Designers need an ontology of design practice that does not oblige the designer to the pragmatic agenda of cultural studies, emancipation, or eco design, for it to exist. Reframing the ideology of practice is a strategy reserved by designers for repositioning their work within the field. Designers need to be able to reconceive of their practice without having to mount a challenge to the existential fabric of the field each time they do. In short, they need to locate themselves within a real object of practice.

Nevertheless, there is a view that realism implies technical determinism. How can design research increase its performativity without subjecting design practice to scientific reductionism? To begin with, there is no need to reduce causal explanations to the laws of physics. Just because the complexity of practice resists reduction to universal laws doesn't prevent it from explaining the functional relations among its own properties. Secondly, realism is consistent with conceptual reframing and theoretical revisability (Putnam 1987, p. 85). Reframing does not imply relativism insofar as theory is necessary, but not sufficient, for verifying beliefs about complex institutional entities. It is perfectly feasible to possess an idea that is consistent with the way a practice functions without having that idea holding its actual function to ransom. Thirdly, realism is not obliged to foundationalism. It is not a condition of a practice being a real entity that there exist a set of self-warranting, a priori or incorrigible beliefs underpinning all other assumptions and methods used in its investigation. In other words, the notion of the truth in design research is not any more fundamental than verified examples of reliable, plausible theories about the world of design practice. Thus foundational theories of the creative disposition, for example, are no more significant to successful origination in design than designers' own generative theories of practice.

In sum, a real institutional practice promises objectivity, marketable proof and the prospect of enhanced performativity; it promises autonomy for designers insofar as the field of design is presented to practitioners as an unconstructed entity open to interpretation. Finally, it promises revisability inasmuch as a real practice does not presuppose, as a condition of its existence, the search for a single invariant system. On what is this promise based?

19.2   Key Narratives in the Reality of Practice (the Limits of Truth)

This section brings together five contemporary narratives of institutional practice and concludes by listing their similarities. Even though these contemporary portrayals vary markedly, they share a number of striking resemblances. The narratives

selected sample from anti-representational Postmodern theory and from contemporary theories of representational realism. They, nevertheless, agree in assuming the reality of institutional practice, and appear willing to defend the truth of their assertions about its properties.

19.2.1   Bourdieu

Bourdieu argues that the social reality of practical transactions is more precisely represented under a relational rather than a structuralist mode of thinking and that the motives underlying transactions within social practice are often deliberately disguised within their appearances. This is because the medium of return for labour in social economies depends upon symbolic rather than material forms of capital (see Bourdieu 1982, p. 171; 1998, p. 98). The reality of social economies is destroyed by the introduction of material mediums of exchange because objectified and generalized forms of value, such as money, attack the essential specificity of practical occurrences. Thus objectification of symbolic economies overlooks the inefficiencies, unique agreements and deceptions necessary for the success of localised exchanges. In creative practice, for instance, the appropriation by one designer of another designer's work might be falsely objectified or ruled as plagiarism when, in reality, its "plagiarism" is "misrecognised" by the other designer as an exchange of symbolic capital (Brown & Thomas 1999).

Thus Bourdieu is opposed to forms of research, including research into creative forms of design making the unique practitioner (designer) in any social relation "disappear" as the result of "scholarly" rationalization. The active/inventive capacities of participants within institutional practices require investigation through the context of their localized habitus. The scholarly attitude must not be allowed, Bourdieu says, to instantiate the unique web of transactions in the field. This is why action research methodology is potentially destructive of localised practices. Action research is, in effect, a highly prescriptive extension of practice. Action research understands the moment of practice as a "project" by its projection of scholastic values into an understanding of situated practices (Bourdieu 1998, p. 136). It privileges an imported "truth" over the willy-nilly network of practical reasoning within the context of transactions themselves. Action research is distracted by ends and committed to "correcting" the beliefs and actions of those involved. Its blend of political reform erases the complex reality of existing transactions.

19.2.2   Deleuze

Deleuze advances the "problematisation" of practice within the relationships of institutional power Kant, Deleuze says, argues that a "purely practical determination is irreducible to any theoretical determination or knowledge" (1991, p. 15). The

next step in the understanding of practice, therefore, involves the cautious reunification of power with knowledge inasmuch as the difference between the two "…does not prevent mutual presupposition, and capture a mutual immanence" (p. 47). The kind of power immanent within practical knowledge, however, is not open to methodological appropriation by the practitioner. The complexity of motives causing practice cannot be represented to mind because these motives are the forces underlying knowing itself. Nevertheless, power articulates the practices of knowledge. Institutional power aligns, homogenises, and sequences knowledge into its characteristically archival forms. Thus creative design knowledge is not to be confused with the network of motives realising it in practice.

Thinking and acting within a practice can only be autonomous when thinking simulates the mutability of institutional power itself. Creative activity must embrace power insofar as resisting power forecloses on solutions. When it drifts into the influence of new institutional territories creative action risks the invasion of new schema. Deleuze's approach to power is slanted toward his notion of "becoming", the view that starting to do something is always to start in the middle (see Deleuze 1988, p. 39; 1995, pp. 146–148). We come to the "beginning" of any practice as an implication within some fully assembled practical formation. Consequently creative changes to practice involve alterations to the middle of it in a usually catastrophic way.

19.2.3   Baudrillard

In his introduction to the *System of Objects* (1996), Jean Baudrillard sets out the relation between an institutional practice and what he refers to as the properties of real objects. Real objects are contrasted with "technemes", artefacts of pure technical determination. Technemes faithfully "realise" the form and function prescribed by their technical descriptions (1996, p. 7). Technemes represent a perfect reconciliation between predictive theory and practice. Only the production of artefacts that are entirely insulated from the compromises of day-to-day practice could possibly realise the degree of structural determination characteristic of technemes.

Unlike technemes, the design process is invaded by the influences of commercialisation, personalisation, and utility. These "connotative" processes, normally thought of as part of the post-productive history of an artefact, are woven back into the network of its production. Baudrillard evidences the way technical production processes are responsively retooled to accommodate the vicissitudes of personal fashion. The "design phase" of an artefact is merely one among a number of causes contributing to its final "design". The institutional practice of design is a pattern of production made up of disjunctive pathways. The production of objects is not the instantiation of a beautifully conceived hierarchical plan—but a contingency of localised iterations. It is the "…ways in which techniques are checked by practices—that account for reality here" (p. 10).

The autonomy of the designer is thus as much an expression of their ability to accommodate and cajole the assistance of these otherwise post-production agencies. A human science, says Baudrillard, is a combination of both the intentions of the practitioner and of whatever "counters that intention"(p. 10).

19.2.4   Boyd

Boyd argues that we never return to first principles in our understanding of a real entity. It is not necessary for a realist to return to a first cause, a historical beginning, nor a teleology from ends. Rather entities are fully formed at any point of entry into their definition. Their properties are not mapped into a linear hierarchy but held in what he calls a "homeostatic" relation.

Entities do not have to possess a necessary set of true properties to earn their identity. The properties clustered in a definition are included for contingent, theoretical reasons. These may turn out to be wrong and may be revised without challenging the entity's existence. Homeostatic definitions are strung together into networks of sub-concepts. The presence of a property in the network is accepted on the basis of its empirical contribution to the causal explanation. For instance, there would be no necessary properties of originality in a design practice (Boyd 1988, p. 196). Properties of originality would be distributed according to the theoretical function assigned to them. Thus properties do not have exclusive membership in a particular definition but are free to be represented in other definitions according to the functional role they are theorised to play. Explanations about design practices, for instance, are as much about its relations with conjoint kinds such as the "artefact", "consumer", "subject matter", "employer" and "fashion", as they are about the abilities of the designer.

Boyd's homeostatic "mechanisms" make it possible to establish cross category links. Consequently, theoretical clusters of properties are open to catastrophic extension without sacrificing their relevance to the object to which they refer (p. 197). For example, a concept of origination within the practice of design ought to be complex enough to show whether the individual preferences of the consumer can contribute to the authorship of a work, as Baudrillard suggests. Properties are added and subtracted throughout the life of a definition. As Boyd insists, the relevant set of properties is never likely to be complete, especially in reference to institutional practices (p. 199).

19.2.5   Searle

Artefacts, John Searle argues, are institutional objects insofar as their constitution is dependent upon some level of institutional support. Artefacts are objective facts but, unlike natural kinds, are facts by institutional agreement only. Examples of

objective artefacts are, money, property, marriages, art, and design. Although objective by agreement this does not mean that institutional objects are dependent upon opinion or ideology in order to exist (see Searle 1995, p. 2–3).

We refer to the ability of an object to affect our experiences as its "function". However, functions are never intrinsic. Even in nature there are no intrinsic functions, only the functions we attribute. When we say, "The function of the heart is to pump blood we are…situating this fact relative to a system of values…" (p. 15). In the end facts and causes are not functional *per se* insofar as the heart pumps blood just because it does. Functions in nature are purposes or meanings we attribute to the facts and causes of objects. We attribute functions to objects out of our beliefs about the proper ends facts and causes ought to satisfy (see pp. 16–17). But the functions we attribute to the facts and causes of natural kinds are not as freely reassigned as those to artefactual kinds.

Functions attributed to the practice of design are normative properties. This means that the functions attributed, for instance to the materials and techniques designers employ, are asymmetrically related to their facts and causes (see pp. 8–19). For example, a function of computer graphics is to make images. Image making consists, in part, as the deliberate distribution of pixils on a cathode screen. But it is not the case that the function of computer graphics is "to distribute pixils on a cathode screen". Thus, unlike natural causes, there are no intrinsic functions that the properties of a graphic design are obliged to have. A scanned Aboriginal bark painting is as free to be used as a tea towel as it is to have its uses restricted for spiritual reasons. The multiple attribution of meaning to practices and artefacts of design enable them to function symbolically, that is, in the representation of things independently of themselves (see p. 21).

19.2.6   The Reality of Institutional Practice

A reality of institutional practice can be distilled from the five narratives set out above. The following conditions sketch an ontology of practice on which to base true assertions about the field of design. In sum, a real practice:

- Is composed of transactions that are:
  - local in their significance
  - likely to conceal their underlying motives
  - linked together by the largely uncodified rules of institutional power that are typified by a relational rather than a structural mode of thinking
  - eventful insofar they must unfold in practice before their motives can become clear
  - susceptible to false rationalisations

- Is not coextensive with the structure of knowledge in its field. Practices are enacted within constantly mutating networks that, although played out in a field

of knowledge, neither report to, nor are respectful of, conventions of knowledge. Realism hereby differs from pragmatism.

- Is a network in which the transactions within any practical field begin at the middle of an already existent practical formation. It is not necessary for a realist to return to a first cause, a historical beginning, nor a teleology from ends in the representation of practice. This is because the properties of a practice are not mapped into a linear taxonomy but held in a "homeostatic" relation. This causes problems for practical education insofar as practices present curriculum with no step-wise structure. We cannot sustain, in actuality, a functional separation between the design phase of a practice and its consumption phase in the production of artefacts.

- Does not have to possess a necessary set of properties to earn its identity. The properties clustered in a definition of institutional practice are included for theoretically contingent reasons only. These may turn out to be wrong and may be completely revised without challenging a practice's existence.

- Attributes normative functions to its properties. This means that the functions attributed, for instance, to a designer's materials and techniques, are asymmetrically related to their facts and causes. Counter intuitively, then, practical methodologies have no strategic implications for practice. Neither, for example, do psychological facts and causes about designers have any necessary bearing on design practice. These, among other facts, await the attribution of a functional role.

- Attracts theoretical explanations that base the relations among components of a practice on normative functions rather than naturalised causes. These theories are not constructive of practice inasmuch as their claim to be true is subject to independent proof and can be wrong.

- Attributes multiple functions (meanings) to its materials and techniques enabling them to function symbolically, that is, to represent things independently of themselves.

- Is composed of objective facts that, unlike natural kinds, are facts by institutional agreement only.

19.3 Two Conceptions of the Designer as a Function Within Design Research

The theoretical terms of practice are determined by the normative functions that are attributed to them. However, the processes of attribution are not straightforward insofar as functional properties are opaque within day-to-day practical events. Attribution is further complicated by the multiplicity of sources eligible to contribute. Design research, therefore, is interested in critical disclosure of the sources of functional attribution within practice. Cognitive approaches look at functional attribution as a mental representation in the mind of the designer (Karmiloff-Smith

1991). Cultural approaches seek to reveal the social and economic attributions of a practice (Baudrillard 1996).

This section considers the different ways in which researchers allocate different functional properties to the "the designer". The designer is not considered in this instance as a person but as an abstract function. Of course, this does not preclude the attribution of personal characteristics. Unquestionably the person of the designer plays a central role in design practice. However, the agencies attributed to the "designer" vary widely. Variations in function alter the relation between the designer and other significant functions within design practice such as "the design". The following two studies illustrate how different functions of the designer alter the manner in which the properties of "streamlining" find their way into the designed artefact and influence its properties.

19.3.1   The Intentional Designer

The first is a study by Linda Candy and Earnest Edmonds (1996) into the creative design of the Lotus Bicycle by Mike Burrows. The Lotus is acknowledged as contributing to the preeminence of the UK Cycling Team in the London Olympics due to the speed advantages arising from its innovative streamlining. Their study aims to characterise the processes leading up to the realisation of the bicycle's design. The functions of "the designer" in this study are captured through Mike Burrows' reflection on his experiences during the bicycle's production (p. 74). Burrows' creative achievement is represented by the study as the successful resolution of a previously un-thought of association between aerodynamics or streamlining, and the concept of the bicycle.

Candy and Edmonds use research methodology, derived from theory of mind studies, that a respondent's recollections provide a valid way of reporting on their overarching motives (Perkins 1981). The events leading up to the creation of the Lotus bicycle are treated by the researchers as symptomatic of an intentional process in the designer. Thus the creative process is regarded as a kind of syndrome in which the history of Burrows' design is approached as a clinically representative case. As signaled by their methodological choice, Candy and Edmonds believe that the scope of Burrows' practice is circumscribed by what he knew, and what subsequently became accessible to his consciousness during the design process.

Initially the researchers report that from Burrows' point of view there were no ideal conditions for generating the ideas he followed during his creative process (Candy and Edmonds 1996, p. 78). Perhaps for this reason, the two researcher's interest in Burrows' portrayal of his creative process is short lived. After a brief reference to Burrows' capacity for drawing analogies with other fields, and for maintaining a repertoire of parallel thinking about them, Candy and Edmonds soon abandon the stratagem of clinical method as a way of capturing Burrows' emerging ideas. They quickly postulate an analytical schema entitled "Elements of Creative Design" which they use in re-structuring Burrows' narrative. Their schema poses

five elements "ideas generation", "strategies", "methods", "expertise", and "problem formulation" configured into a circular diagram. What has emerged from Burrows' clinical account to this point is subsequently analysed into this model.

The way the function of the "designer" is attributed in their schema is salutary. The schema models the intentionality of the designer but not as Burrows attributes it himself. Where Burrows himself credits external resources as making a contribution to his practice, these contributions are automatically redescribed by the researchers, according to the assumptions ascribed in their model, as Burrows' creative intent. Thus the researchers' redescribe Burrows' account of the design process in mentalistic terms such as "thinking laterally" about "aerodynamics" and "taking" a "higher point of view" which they locate on the schema within the category of "problem formulation". "Strategies" are specifically converted from direct functional influences in the process, into actions Burrows **performs**, such as of "thinking with my hands", "opportunism" and so on. **Methods** are defined by the authors, not in terms of what the methods can contribute, but in terms of what the researcher **does** with methods (p. 77). Thus methods quickly revert into strategies of the intentional "designer" (p. 79). Expertise is attributed as a function at the **disposal** of the designer insofar as even the "technical literature" becomes something that the "designer **read**" (p. 81). Even the function of "other experts" is constructed as something that Burrows "**kept in contact** with".

By reconstructing the clinical history of Burrows' creative practice into their narrative of the intentional process, the intentionality Candy and Edmonds impute to Burrows' first hand reports, shuts out other possible interpretations that Burrows may have ascribed. Who ascribes the intentionality to Burrows' practice in this study? Is it Burrows, as the case methodology implies? To what extent have Candy and Edmonds been able to evidence a network of normative functions at play? The researchers are seeking to naturalise their claim and reject any thought that their model of creative practice has anything less than universal currency. The properties attributed to the designer in Burrows' practice are mapped onto their "Elements of Creative Design" model of creative intentionality, as an agreed on authority, without the clear intercession of a causal explanation linking the evidence emergent from the clinical study to the intentionality of the creative process. Every piece of evidence that emerges is grist to the intentional mill. Whatever their assumptions it is enough to say that the functional virtues of streamlining or even aerodynamics itself, plays a secondary role in Candy and Edmonds' account of the "designer" in Burrows' practice. Thus intentionality is 'evidenced' as the key agency responsible for the transportation of streamlining into the Lotus design.

19.3.2   *The Designer as a System of Objects*

In the second study Terry Smith presents the designer not as a person but as an abstraction (1993, p. 376). He explains how the characteristic properties of streamlining in the USA during the nineteen forties evolved into a principal function of

"the designer". Impelled by the popularity of commercial and industrial images "…
originating elsewhere in the visual culture", streamlining disengaged itself from its
technical association with industrial design to become a spectacle of its original
function (p. 378). As a fetish of industrial efficiency, streamlining reassigned itself
to the task of shaping the appearances of artefacts in general. Design practitioners
such as Raymond Loewy and Henry Dreyfuss, who propagated the image of stream-
lining were, it seems, as much an instrument of streamlining as being its architects.
Smith explains the appearance of streamlining in household artefacts, not as the sole
work of designers, but as attributions of commercial and popular demand. In a
Baudrillardian sense the agency of the consumer enters into a practical system in
which consumers share a functional seat at the designer's table. Thus Smith identi-
fies functions of streamlining that include its "ability" to act as an independent
source of origination. Function is attributed to "the designer" as the momentum of
popular style.

Smith argues that key tendencies in the arts and crafts of the nineteen twenties,
such as purism, the Bauhaus, and Swedish Design, converge into a genuinely new
"modern style". This style spread to all aspects of everyday life in the subsequent
decade (p. 361). The practices subtending the "obviously modern" are not driven
exclusively by the creative intentions of its key designers Loewy, Teague, Monel,
and Fuller, however. They are placed under the autonomous influence of certain
dominant icons that these designers were merely instrumental in creating. Icons
such as the Chrysler Airflow, the DC-3 airliner, and the Chrysler Building, indepen-
dently strengthened their popular authority by attracting the affirmation of the insti-
tutional gatekeepers of design practice such as MOMA and the New York World's
Fair, not to mention the commercial imperatives of the manufacturing industry. The
dominant icons of modernity gained their currency through the expansion of adver-
tising during the Great Depression. Industry, Smith argues, bowed to the power of
their own advertising by substituting production of its standard artefacts for the
objects of their advertised spectacle.

Streamlining imposed styling changes upon industry that far outweighed the
underlying requirements of its engineers and the creative desires of its designers.
Mass production, packaging, and surface attraction collided with the influences of
global standardisation, and the imperative of market appeal. Design production
became annexed into the streamlining of commodities captured from the market
place. The streamline "brief" could be drawn on by industrial designers as an insti-
tutionally agreed upon stock of functional properties. For Smith the properties of
the "designer" are dictated by the competing powers within institutional practice.
These emergent powers stylise into orthodoxies to become a functional presence in
the practices of individual designers.

19.4 Conclusion

Candy and Edmonds portray the importation of streamlining into Mike Burrows design practice as an act of imaginative intentionality. The properties of aerodynamics are able to enter into the design of the Lotus bicycle by virtue of Burrows' creative reasoning. Streamlining is brought into modernity by Smith, on the other hand, as a function of its iconic popularity in the USA where streamlining acquired its own stylistic impetus. Its autonomy was made possible by the peculiar circumstances of the commercial economy during the nineteen thirties and forties. Smith represents streamlining as being able to enter into the design of artefacts on its own "intentional" initiative.

Designers' immersion in their practice renders much of what contributes to their work invisible. While designers can never bring all the contingencies that influence design practice under their control, research can help them understand how to coax other autonomous functions to work on their creative behalf. Revealing these functions and clarifying their properties represent the marketable proofs design research can offer an industry. However, this can only happen when research reflects rather than constructs the institutional reality of the field. Otherwise design research is part of the problem rather than the solution.

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Chapter 20
Paradox and Imputation in the Explanation of Practical Innovation in Design

20.1 Outline of the Paper

The paper is divided into five sections. It begins in supporting the need to maintain a valid separation between the practice of research **into** design and the practice of design. Section two considers the central role played by artefacts in the identification of innovation and creativity. Section three stipulates the place of the artefact in realist ontology of design practice. Section four sketches a cognitive framework of research by pulling a number of research functions into a network of interrelated causes. Section five concludes with an example of the way in which a functional analysis of innovative practice in design is formulated, and extended.

20.2 The Relation Between Research and Practice in Design

Donald Schön argues that there is a difference between the act of reflection in one's practice, and reflective deconstruction of the system in which one's practice is conducted (1983). This difference is precisely that which is currently dividing the conduct of practice from research into practice in university schools of design. In contemporary schools of design the division is being steadily closed. Schön states prophetically 'practice institutions may come to see themselves increasingly as centres of research and education' (p. 324). In these centres, Schön argues, a different level of discipline may emerge, one attendant upon the model of applied science in 'stable zones' of practice such as dentistry (p. 325). However, Schon remarks

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It seems to me that the processes which maintain the constancy of individual organizational systems of knowing in practice are also the ones that keep the art of practice mysterious…. The remedy to the mystification of practice and to the constriction of reflection-in-action is the same: a redirection of attention to the system of knowing-in-practice and to reflection in action itself' (p. 282).

Although Schön is aware that explicit descriptions of practice risk exposing practitioners to uncertainty and even paralysis as the result of hyper-reflection he nevertheless adopts a clinical 'reflection in action' approach seeking the "problematisation" of practice. Schön's problematisation of practice exemplifies the pragmatist belief, rejected by European historicists such as Heidegger and Bourdieu, that 'mystifications' of practice need 'remediation' rather than explanation.

20.2.1   The Legacy of Pragmatism in the Philosophy of Design

'Stable zones' of practice defend their status by forming close relationships with a body of dependable theory. Research into design practice during the 20th century has built strong theoretical links with philosophical pragmatism (Dewey 1916). Pragmatism, with its Deweyan focus on the control of convention through experience and its attendant theme of problem solving in regard to ends in view, contrasts with non-instrumental philosophies of art in Baudrillard's system of objects (1997), Bourdieu's logic of practice (1990) and in the contemporary 'design as art' movement (Balkema and Slager 2001). As a species of applied research Schön's concept of reflection-in-action not only exemplifies pragmatism but also shares two of pragmatism's important difficulties (Brown 2003). Reflection-in-action is either too self-conscious to surrender to the virtuosity of tradition, or too solutions driven to be truly sceptical of convention.

The ideal of bending conventional practices to the solution of problems can easily descend into scientism.[1] Scientism, rather than science, refers to the use of theory as a way of naturalising or reifying ethics. With its origins in the Roman world the project of scientism is one of bringing predictive precision into practice. Heidegger embraces science, not as a way of adding truth to metaphysics by naturalising practice, but as a means of generating knowledge, (Rorty 1999, p. 47). Bourdieu refers to scientism as false scholarship. False scholarship, he warns, mistakenly seeks to 'rectify' practices rather than understand their subtleties.

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[1] A criticism of Habermas' concept of communicative action.

20.2.2   Art and Design as Research

While the work-a-day practice of designers is often supported by inquiry into the project at hand this is not what some artist academics understand by 'design as research'. They see design **as** research, arguing that to make art and to practice design doubles as a form of systematised inquiry (Denzin 1989; Sullivan 2004).

Labelling design **as** research is insufficient to re-classify design as a **kind** of research. Labelling design as research merely makes a note on a particular way design is interpreted. Wittgenstein (1968) argues that to act according to the rules of a practice is not to engage in the interpretation of an action. Obeying a rule or following a practical convention is necessarily public in its enactment. To appropriate a convention or to follow a practice for private purposes (for the purposes of research for instance) could be satisfied by merely thinking one was obeying its rules. He says language (interpretation) is a labyrinth of paths in which to know your way from one side is, when approached from the other side, no longer to know your way: 'As things are I can, for example, invent a game that is never played by anyone' (p. 82).[2]

Wittgenstein alerts us to the pitfalls of nominalism. Conflating an interpretation of practical conduct with the reality of conducting it converts practical reasoning into a confabulation of self-realising constructs. The agency of a practice rests on its system of protocols and conventions and their ever-shifting manners across time and place, its *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990; Searle 1995). Thus a large proportion of the agency driving any practice is concealed from the practitioner. Practitioners play little part in determining what contributes to the substrate of their practice, and claims of controlling it amount to a modernist conceit. Research into practice is not to be regarded therefore as a bid for political control of a field.[3]

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[2] Wittgenstein illustrates the point: "But now imagine a game of chess translated according to certain rules into a series of actions which we do not ordinarily associate with a *game*—say into yells and stamping of feet. And now suppose those two people to yell and stamp instead of playing the form of chess we are used to; and this in such a way that the procedure is translatable by suitable rules into a game of chess. Should we still be inclined to say we were playing a game? … This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with a rule…[I]f everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can be made out to conflict with it. …[and] in the course of our argument…we give one interpretation after another; as if each one contented us at least for a moment, until we thought of another standing behind it. What this shews [sic] is that there is a way of grasping a rule which is *not an interpretation*, but which is exhibited in what we call 'obeying the rule' and 'going against it' in actual cases" (1968, p. 81). Thus I could do design and call it research, or do research and call it design. But to do either of the latter is to make a symbolic claim on the practice at the meta-level.

[3] It is more likely that whenever similarities are drawn between art and research they are being drawn by way of analogy. In the philosophy of ethics practical analogies are drawn at the meta-level. Research and art, for example do not change their identities when used as meta-level analogies. On the contrary successful analogy depends on the identities of its examples being kept intact.

If Heidegger and Wittgenstein are right then it is important to differentiate research **into** design practice, from the reflective experience of professional designers.

20.3 Origination: Innovation and Creativity

Description of origination in design is caught in a dilemma. If the origination of ideas occurs as a spontaneous disposition in designers, how are these dispositions picked out against the backdrop of convention in design practice?

20.3.1 Original Kinds of Performance

The differences between innovation and creativity are subject to disagreement. Jol Elster (1993) for example, defines innovation as the substitution of new types and constraints within traditional performances. Substitutions, he says, result in the emergence of new conventions. He defines creativity, by contrast, as the exercise of particular aesthetic choices and adaptations made within existing conventions. (165).[4] Elizabeth Steiner (1977) takes a stronger position on creativity, one more in keeping with Danto's (1978) concept of transfiguration. Creativity, Steiner says is the satisfaction of a totally unprecedented but significant purpose.[5]

Although used widely as a term of approval creativity refers to a categorically distinct kind of performance.[6] Creativity is not simply a way of measuring the value of performances at large across a continuum. Neither are strict protocols merely a degraded form of creativity. Landing an *Airbus* and navigating a computer require the mastery of protocols in which skill is celebrated and originality disqualified as a 'false' move. Creative performances, on the other hand, can vary in value from the trivially to the significantly creative. While every performance of Prokofiev's *Violin Concerto Number Two* is unique, only some unique performances of it are original.[7] Creative performances also supervene on their underlying protocols. Although a

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[4] For instance, Gestetner's novel cladding of the office printer in the early twentieth century represents an innovative substitution of a design constraint. As contrasted with the design of the contemporary *Canon Ir2200,* which although an aesthetically unique printer casing, is nevertheless chosen within Gestetner's original constraints (see Smith 1993, pp. 353–384).

[5] For instance, Duchamp's revolutionary declaration of everyday objects as art revolutionised both means and purposes in the field. Duchamp left the concept of art intact but transfigured its conventions and purposes.

[6] There is a derogatory sense of 'creative', that is, when the term is applied to a poorly executed conventional performance as a deliberate mis-categorisation, or to falsely embroidered descriptions.

[7] Elster (1993), for instance, classifies a musical performance as creative, but reserves innovation for musical composition, arrangement and improvisation.

creative performance of a concerto amounts to more than the sum of its techniques the performance remains dependent upon conventional protocols of bowing and fingering. To further complicate matters, critical determination of what passes as creative in a performance is constrained by its intelligibility for the field.[8]

20.3.2 Original Kinds of Artefacts

Central to the creativity in a performance is the artefact it enacts.[9] Because the production of artefacts is always situated within some field of production performances are invested with cultural in addition to psychological causes (Baudrillard 1997; Gardner and Nemirovsky 1991:2). Let us define creative ability as the terms under which the creative properties of an artefact are transported across into the mental properties of the performer.[10] Two difficulties face their transportation. First, the restriction of creative input into creative performances overlooks the fact that all mental representations possess imaginative content (Karmiloff-Smith 1991:23). Thus it is hard to tell which mental representations of the performer are uniquely attached to creative performances and artefacts.[11]

Second, because creative performances supervene on non-creative performances they cloak the manner in which mental representations in creative performances draw upon conventional resources. Many mental traits contributing to creative performances are concealed within the properties of creative artefacts.[12] The corollary is that modular dispositions of thought, such as 'elaboration' and 'independent thinking', often considered as distinctly creative, are possibly called upon in conventional performances also. This possibility relocates the place at which judgements of creative agency are made, out of the mind of the performer and into the relational space between thought and artefact (Oxman 1999:108–09; Cross and Clayburn 1996).

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[8] *Torvel and Dean* the great British ice skating adagio team are famous for obliging Olympic judges to apply creative-aesthetic as well as established technical criteria in the adjudication of their performance of *Bolero*. See also Morris Stein's (1966) essay *Creativity and Culture*, in which Stein emphasises the role of 'the audience' and 'communication' in proselytizing creative products.

[9] I use the term artefact to refer to the products of practice as distinct, for example, from its use in computer science where the term is applied to an object produced on the evidence of false data.

[10] In this instance a musical or theatrical performance functions as an artefact.

[11] Domain generalists such as Brentano, and Piaget would overlook the division.

[12] Concealed in the Sydney Opera House is the 'poor historical timing' that denied Joen Utzön and Arup the consulting engineers access to the digitized design technology available to Frank Gehry that would have made realization of Utzön's original design for the roof sails feasible.

20.3.3   A Vygotskyan Critique of the 'Creative Process'

It is implicit within Paul Torrance's (1969) symptomatically creative performances that when behaviours such as 'Intense absorption in listening, observing or doing; Intense animation and physical involvement; Use of analogies in speech; Bodily involvement of an intense nature in writing', and so on co-occur with other creative dispositions, the mere weight of their association is sufficiently predictive of creative outcomes (p.36). Vygotsky would disagree and argue that the creative relation between the artefact and the performer is most appropriately explained in the conceptual space that opens up between them (1978 p.65). Description confined to the phenotypical or 'outer features' of the two agencies, such as those characterised by Torrance, begs an account of the causal influence each one exerts upon the other.

Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels found no predictive covariance in the relationship between measures of the person and measures of the work (1971). They conclude that the most effective understanding of creative ability must eventually come from the study of reciprocal **interaction** among the person, the process and the product. Vygotsky goes further by arguing that interactive or genotypical explanations emerge in the history of the performance. Thus the relations between performer and performance are developed iteratively through ongoing reference to the context in which they are transacted (1978, p. 84). In other words, there is an in situ or contextual micro-history underlying the transactions of creative performances, in which the creative faculties of performers are transformed by the recruitment of new agencies into the relation.[13] Genotypical methodology searches for tendencies in the way designers, for instance, augment or scaffold their conceptual resources when practicing a task.

Post-structural theory relocates the centre of creative agency outside the mind of the performer entirely (Freedman and Wood 1999)). Baudrillard argues that the origination and design of artefacts is never actually completed. Artefacts undergo continual cultural and economic reiteration throughout the history of their consumption (1997, p.6). Given the complex background of socio-cultural contributions to the production of creative artefacts, how can we single out and identify which functions are at work in the relation between the creative artefact and the performer (Vygotsky 1967 p.5)?

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[13] In his biography of Sigmund Freud, Howard Gardner identifies the social field of the late nineteenth century as a critical agency in the formation of Freud's creative achievement. Gardner says, 'Just as projects serve as the intermediary between an individual and the domain, social institutions serve as the intermediary between an individual and the field' (1986, p. 111).

20.4   Ontology of Innovative Practice in Design

20.4.1   The Relation Between Works and Practice in Design

It is often the case that, by its artfulness, the more successful a 'work' in disclosing its meanings the more securely it hides the complexity involved in its making. What are the grounds for arguing a functional identity between works and practice?

1. In his analysis of the concept of 'expression', Alan Tormey (1971) argues that a principled relation exists between the thing represented, such as the quality of expression, say 'fear', 'joy' and so on, and the expressive agent or actor. This principled relation governs the terms under which an expressive inference is entitled to be drawn from a performance by the observer.[14] Without some sort of principled entitlement the expressive meaning of an action, Tormey says, would be ambiguous if not opaque. Actors cannot portray an expressive role and simultaneously express that role in some additional confirmatory performance. Artists and actors, Tormey argues, do not attach an auxiliary testament of their sincerity to each work. They embed their achievements within the artefacts that they make. Thus the intent of a performance demands imputation by the observer from a work.

2. Critics in art and design understand that the practices of designing make little sense if they are judged independently of their critical success within a work (Harrison 1978, p. 184). An absence of aesthetic integrity in a work is hard to reconcile with a successful performance no matter how faithfully it mimics the institutional conventions of design.[15] Practices are value-laden, normative objects. Innovative practices in design can only exist as judgements of good and bad, success and failure and so on within the institutional values of design. Thus it is reasonable to assume that innovative practice is emergent within the critical meanings and evaluations of its artefacts to some degree.

3. The boundaries of practice within design are legitimated, as in most practices, though some form of 'published' accreditation. Publication necessitates review by a constituted institutional authority. Tendering, commercial production, exhibition, citation, critical appraisal, and academic accreditation all qualify as publication. Most systems of practical accreditation require institutional endorsement of or through an artefact or performance. It is no exaggeration to claim that

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[14] '…there is no descriptively distinct class of performances or bodily movements that constitutes expressive behaviour. The concept of an expression implies the warranting of certain inferential structures, and it cannot be located by scrutiny of the descriptions of behaviour alone, unless those descriptions include among their truth conditions the relevant inferential moves. Explosive laughter, a facial grimace, a shudder, or a periodic tic are, in themselves, neither expressive nor nonexpressive, and only if we have reason to connect the behaviour inferentially with some desire, belief, intent, or conflict are we entitled to treat it as an expression' (Tormey 1971, pp. 44–45).

[15] Richard Wollheim's concept of 'fulfilled intention' in which a property in an art work is not only intended by the artist to be seen in a particular way but is furthermore a property able to be seen by beholders in the way intended (1987, Ch. 2).

publication is a necessary condition of the ontology (existence) of design practice.

4. It is unclear in designing whether the incubation process can be differentiated as a distinctive class of means from ends. The creative process, Baudrillard believes, is more like an iterative link between a complementary series of works differing in timing, focus and scope.[16] Non-cognitive (psychologically causal) references to the creative process, that assume the existence of a parallel set of pre-dispositions for each iteration, far from eliminating the need for inferential judgements from artefacts compound the requirement.[17]

5. The historicity of practice is significantly influenced by events and actions over which the designer has only indirect control and in some instances is only a minor player. For example the fact that Charles and Ray Eames worked with steamed plywood during WW2 identifies WW2 as a significant agent in the shaping of their iconic chairs.

20.4.2 Realism

Research into practice is allied to forensic models of detection. According to inspector Dupin in E. A. Poe's short story *The Purloined Letter*, the police failed to find a stolen letter because they mistook the search as a hunt for good hiding places. What they should have been searching for, says Dupin, was a particular kind of criminal practice, a practice of concealment (Brown 2002, p.2). It is insufficient for detectives to explain the cause of a crime as an action or event alone. It is necessary to advance a reason warranting a conceptual link between the event of a letter being stolen and the context in which the event occurs (Brink 1996, citing Williams p. 274).[18] Davidson puts it as follows

> The reason [that an]… explanation is … good, it seems to me, is that motives explain an action only if they cause it, and in a very special way. A person may have certain motives for an act, and yet perform it either by accident or for quite different reasons. So reasons explain an action only if the reasons are efficacious in the situation. And even this is not enough; a man's motives for acting in a certain way may cause him to act in that way without it being the case that those were his reasons for performing the act (Davidson 1990, p.264).

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[16] For instance, sometimes works classed as preparatory in design, can only be differentiated from their companions by the fact that they are, for example, comparatively unresolved. Is Joen Utzön's lyrical first sketch of the Sydney Opera House a process or an iteration of the building's design? If Utzön's sketch is an iteration does it possess its own nested ensemble of processes, and so on into infinity? See Wollheim (1980) and Wiggins (2002, pp. 219–220) on the differences between means causing ends, as contrasted with those states which accompany a means, such as 'good health', that are necessary but not directly instrumental to the realization of ends.

[17] One only has to think of the demonisation of copying in art education in the middle of the twentieth century.

[18] Otherwise the mere denial by the thief might be accepted as the true explanation of his role in a crime (Brown and Carroll 1998).

This does not imply the need for a predictive law connecting events that are classified as causal with events classified as reasons. The advent of the all-metal Douglas Dakota aircraft is a reason for Dreyfuss' streamlining of the Hudson locomotives for the New York Central Railroad in 1935, but it is hardly a predictive reason. Neither does the existence of such a reason imply that this particular reason was the one that motivated Dreyfuss to streamline the loco. However, it is still necessary to advance evidence of some reasoned link covering the truth of the relation, if it is believed that such a link exists (Davidson 1990, p. 16–17).

Ethical and practical realism posits that there exist facts and causes of a kind x; and that these facts and causes exist independently of the evidence for them (Brink 1996). The realist is a non-reductionist for whom institutional norms, practices and agreements, of which design is an example, are considered as institutional kinds existing independently of mind. Motives and intentions causing institutional objects are not confined to those originating within the non-cognitive, that is, the spontaneously creative intuitions of the designer (Brink 1996, p. 3). The realist is able to contemplate normative particulars, such as the practical causes in an Eames chair directly, without reducing these particulars to the motives of the Eames exclusively.[19]

The advantages of realism for research into practical innovation are threefold. Realism can answer seriously sceptical claims about the nature of design practice; realism can apply explanations that respect the cognitive form of ordinary [design] practice without the necessity of idealising practice into a theoretical object; realism allows inquiry into the outcomes of particular practices without the need for positing more critically successful outcomes (as in action research); and realist explanations can be wrong without catastrophic consequences for the existence of the object.

20.5   A Cognitive Framework of Research

I have argued that the actions and events of innovative practice are emergent within its artefacts. In search of a framework for determining which actions and events play a causal role in artefacts, this paper turns to the philosophical realists Boyd and Searle (Brown 2000).[20]

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[19] The visual culture movement questions the causal dominance of the designer. This is an important departure from orthodox assumptions in art and design where the artist and designer are tacitly identified with the origination of a work.

[20] See Chapter 19 this volume.

20.5.1   A Functional Concept of Research into Practice

Boyd (1988) argues that we never return to first principles in our understanding of a real entity. It is not necessary for a realist to return to a first cause, a historical beginning, or teleology from ends. Rather entities are fully formed at any point of entry into their definition. Their properties are not mapped into a linear hierarchy but held in what Boyd calls a 'homeostatic' relation.

Entities do not have to possess a necessary set of true properties to earn their identity. The properties clustered in a definition are included for contingent, theoretical reasons. Homeostatic definitions are strung together into networks of sub-concepts. The presence of a property in the network is accepted on the basis of its empirical contribution to the causal explanation.[21] Thus properties do not have exclusive membership in a particular definition but are free to be represented in other definitions according to the functional role they are believed to play. Explanations about design practices, for instance, are as much about the functional impact of its relations with conjoint kinds such as 'artefacts', 'consumers', 'subject matter', 'employers' and 'fashion', as they are about designers.

Boyd's homeostatic 'mechanisms' make it possible to establish cross category links. Consequently, theoretical clusters of properties in definitions are open to catastrophic extension without sacrificing their relevance to the object to which they refer (p. 197). Properties can be added and subtracted throughout the life of a definition. As Boyd insists, the relevant set is never likely to be complete, especially in reference to institutional practices (p. 199).

Searle (1995) argues that artefacts are objective facts but, unlike natural kinds, are facts by institutional agreement only. Examples of objective artefacts are, money, property, marriages, art, and design. Although objective by agreement this does not mean that institutional objects are dependent upon opinion or ideology in order to exist (pp. 2–3).

We refer to the ability of an object to affect our experiences meaningfully as its function. However, functions are never intrinsic. Nor are they non-cognitive.[22] Even in nature there are no intrinsic functions, only the functions we attribute. Functions in nature are purposes or meanings we ascribe to the facts and events of objects. We attribute functional agency to objects out of our beliefs about the proper ends facts and causes they ought to satisfy and as a meaningful analogy of human intention (pp. 16–17).[23]

It is important to emphasise that the functions we attribute to the facts and causes of artefactual kinds are much more freely reassigned than those attributed to natural

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[21] For instance, there would be no necessary properties of originality in a design practice (Brink 1996, p. 196). Properties of originality would be distributed according to the theoretical function assigned to them.

[22] That is, first person subjective.

[23] When we say, 'The function of the heart is to pump blood we are…situating this fact relative to a system of values…' (Searle 1995, p. 15). We approach objects as if they acted out of a sense of ethical obligation to some cause.

kinds. Functions attributed to practices such as the practice of design are normative properties. This means that the functions attributed, for instance to the materials and techniques designers employ, are asymmetrically related to their facts and causes (pp.8–19).[24] Thus, unlike natural causes, there are no intrinsic or logically equated functions that the properties of a graphic design are obliged to have. The multiple attribution of meaning to practices in design enables them to function symbolically, that is, in the representation of things independently of themselves (p. 21).[25]

However, the normative properties of objects such as innovative practice do not change their character on the whim of a single ascription, but are attributions deeply endowed through what Searle refers to as the 'background' and Bourdieu calls the *habitus*.

20.5.2   *A Functional Schema of Research*

Before deciding on the elements of a functional schema for research in design it is appropriate to be reminded of the role such a schema is expected to play.[26] The target of our investigation is particular cases of innovative practice in design. Our goal is to uncover their innovative causes by tracing and reassembling their relevant fragments with the help of triangulating evidence (Brown 2004). For these reasons our program requires the use of an analytical research framework able to cast a broad imputational Net (Massumi 2002, p. 225).

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[24] For example a function of computer graphics is to make images. Image making consists, in part, as the deliberate distribution of pixels on a cathode screen. But it does not follow that the function of computer graphics is 'to distribute pixels on a cathode screen'.

[25] Ironically contemporary practice in art and design has shifted to embrace a more functionally internecine character. Nicholas Bourriaud (2002) has coined the phrase 'relational aesthetics' to describe this shift towards interactive dependency in art. Art is set free from its cultural determinacy on the one hand and its field-classified idealism on the other Bourriaud argues, to assume a more eventful, collaborative, screen immersed, globally transactional yet locally situated character.

[26] It is **not** its role (except indirectly) to:

- solve a particular design problem, do action research, or arm designers with reflective tools;
- conduct aesthetic or cultural criticism;
- use particular examples of design practice to induce general laws predictive of innovative practice and creativity;
- employ design practice as a way of doing research.
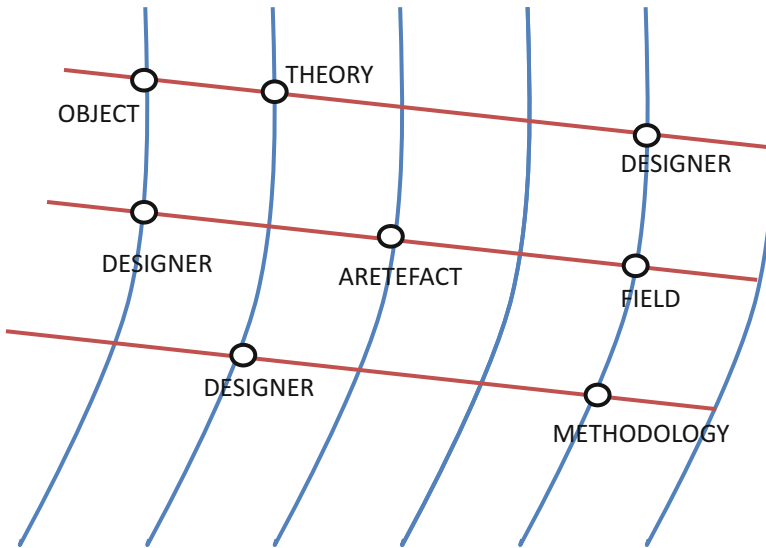
Fig. 20.1 A functional net of innovative practice in design

20.5.3   An Intentional Net

The following schema, Fig. 20.1, maps a network of six interrelating functions contributing to the practice of research. These functions can be added to and subtracted from the Net. The functional Net is not tailored to the analysis of design practice specifically but provides a generalised system of functional categories.

The numbered headings stand for practical functions in the Net. These functions are abstractions, not people, to which intentionality relating to a particular artefact can be ascribed. There is nothing necessary about the functions chosen other than their successful track record in investigation. They are:

1. **The field**—representing the literature, discourse, professional associations, and institutional authorities that accredit value and legislate the agenda in a particular domain or discipline.
2. **Theory**—representing principle, assumption, inference, prediction, forecasting, hypothesising, well formulated guessing, borrowing and linking, inductions from the evidence, statistical tendencies, and neurotic compulsion.
3. **The object**—representing what the artefact is about. Represented as constraints exercised by: the brief, the tender, scope and focus of purpose, context/site, exceptions or adaptations, external regulation, traditional use and application.
4. **The 'designer'**—Divided into three sub-functions:

    4.1. The **psychological**—the uniquely emotional and cognitive aesthetic of the 'designer'.

4.2. The **socio-cultural**—the period, place and status under which the practice was conducted.

4.3. The **economic**—the consumer, beholder and the market, commodity/symbolic exchange value transacted within the artefact.

5. **The methodology**—protocols, conventions, technology, materials, rules of validation.

6. **The artefact**—the primary outcome, publication, authentication, iteration, and valuation, of design practice.

These functions tread on each other's toes to some degree. For instance, the cognitive style of the 'researcher' overlaps with 'theoretical' agency. However, the interaction among functions is an explanatory strength of research, according to Boyd, who would most likely recommend composing the six functions into a relational net:

20.5.4 Using the Functional Net in Determining Causality

Deciding how broadly to cast the Net and how densely to knot its functions is a judgement based upon the characteristics of the artefact and the interests of the investigator. Nevertheless, since they are all integrated in some way, the link between one function and another can be used to pose relational questions attributing intention to the schema. For example, Fig. 20.1 locates the 'artefact', as the *de facto* of 'innovative design practice', near the centre of the schema. Imagine the mobile phone as the artefact in this instance. For example, we can posit a Designer to Artefact relation. The *'DESIGNER (Economic) –> to –> ARTEFACT'* relation questions the causal impact of the latter upon the former. In simple terms we ask 'Can a consumer (for instance a young adult) make a causal change to an artefact (the mobile phone)?' The 'consumer' is represented in this relation as a 'function' implicated in the 'design' of the mobile phone, as indeed 'they' were.[27]

The relational power of the Net can now be put to work. The above example can be expanded into a simple hypothesis, for instance, *'DESIGNER (Economic) –> texting –> ARTEFACT'*. This schema proposes that—originally included as an incidental specification in all digital cell phones, 'texting' has subsequently ascribed a particular agency to the Designer. By enabling the consumer to extend the conventional use of the mobile phone the relation implies, 'texting' provides a causal link

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[27] Note that the artefact is 'knotted' into the Net as merely one among the other functions, even though the artefact is the focus of our investigation. Insofar as I have argued the artefact provides the most reliable location for the existence of innovative practice. Understanding the innovative causes of the artefact depends upon imputation of the effect of its relations with other functions in the field. That is, relations with other functions knotted into the same net.

imputing intention to the 'Designer' in its relation to the Artefact.[28] Other relations on the Net can go on to be explored. The fertility of the Net lies not only in its functionality in testing agentive links in design practice, but also in exploring innovative possibilities through hypothesising new links.

20.5.5 Experimental Departures Using the Explanatory Power of the Net

Analysis and extension of the literature is the common departure point employed in scientific research. The Net helps frame a concept of localised practise, the 'literature' of design. The power of a concept of localised practice lies in its potential for improvising departures from the original artefact (practice), via the deliberate (cognitive) manipulation of one or more of its functional relations.

Consider this brief example of research by the artist and architect Richard Goodwin from his *Porosity Studio*.[29] Supported by a grant from the Australian Research Council, Goodwin's *Porosity Studio* explores, as the **object** of its research, the division between publicly accessible and private spaces in Sydney city buildings. Goodwin has chosen the Commonwealth Bank precinct bordered by King and George Streets in the Sydney central CBD as the **artefact** and *de facto* **practice.** The precinct serves as a 'practice' even though no single person is identified with its authorship. Goodwin observes that public access in buildings, the **object** of innovation, varies according to its bureaucratic, social, moral, legal, commercial, and aesthetic constraints. These constraints are sometimes imposed as a declared function of the planning, are sometimes emergent within the use of the building, and sometimes merely hybrid spaces contingent to the design. He notes how buildings in the precinct function as orthodox pedestal objects. Pedestal buildings in the modern city serve the pragmatic agenda of corporations, and represent an economic dependence between the corporate **consumer** and the architectural **field**. This agenda is omnipresent in the CBD, and arguably the most influential agency of 'architectural design' at work in the precinct. Goodwin grants little **stylistic** or **cognitive** autonomy to the agency of the original architects whose contribution, he believes is largely incidental to public spaces in the precinct, and to his study. Consequently Goodwin downgrades the influence of high architectural **theory** in the precinct to the force of a prevailing yet respectable architectural genre.

The survey of public space in the precinct requires the production of a qualitative index and computerised map of its empty foyers, annexes and leftover spaces in

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[28] Note that **pre**suppositions made about process and intention, in relation to texting and the consumer are not constructs of the evidence but hypotheses to be tested. Thus 'process' and 'intention' are the objects under investigation and in need of explanation. They are not the grounds for explanation.

[29] *Porosity Studio* provides a good example because it shows how Goodwin's practice as a researcher informs, yet is distinguished from, his practice as an artist and architect.

subways, and car parks. Goodwin is close to completing a functional analysis of the underlying 'practice of public space' in the precinct sufficient to enable its experimental test and extension.

The study builds directly on Rosalind Krauss's **theory** of 'axiomatic structures'. A condition of axiomatic structures is that they intervene in the real space of existing architecture. The study also builds on the works of Gordon Matta Clark, Lebbeus Woods, and the writing and works of Vito Acconci.[30] Goodwin proposes a **theoretical** manipulation of existing architectural practice in the precinct to test Krauss' proposition that axiomatic structures involve penetration into existing architectural space. Testing Krauss' proposition includes an experimental design that attaches a habitable armature or 'parasite' to the existing public spaces of the precinct. Goodwin's possession of a functional concept of public space in the precinct enhances the predictability of his experimental program. By manipulating the **theoretical** function in his Net of practical causation for the precinct Goodwin is able to hypothesise a significant experimental departure for further research into its practices of habitable space.

Further elaboration of the details of this project is beyond the scope of this paper.

20.6   Conclusion

Goodwin's CBD investigation pieces together the 'practice' of public space. While acknowledging evidence of adaptive ingenuity among the buildings he has chosen, Goodwin is searching for agencies of practical origination in public space that extend beyond the reflective work of individual architects in his example. Goodwin takes a realist position with regard to innovation in the precinct nevertheless. The 'practice' of public spaces is not a construct of the evidence but an existing network of functions for which evidence is being found. In sum Goodwin's project:

1. Is propositional and explanatory of causes and thus differentiated from the architectural practice it analyses;
2. Advances a well-formulated hypothesis based on a secure theoretical footing;
3. Employs an experimental design appropriate to the analysis and testing of normative outcomes in architectural design;
4. Is respectful of a background of evidence and practical reasoning;
5. Is explicit and replicable;
6. Addresses a demonstrably significant aspect of a particular practice.

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[30] Goodwin writes: 'Gordon Matta-Clark's physical attacks on architectural fabric illustrate graphically how vulnerable architecture can be to redefinition via art. The image of an artist physically cutting slots and holes in a range of buildings, changed for all time the relationship between art and architecture and reduced buildings to armatures for future actions' (2004).

In common with more stable zones of practice Goodwin's *Porosity Project* draws its support and experimental departure from a clearly differentiated analysis of practical innovation.

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