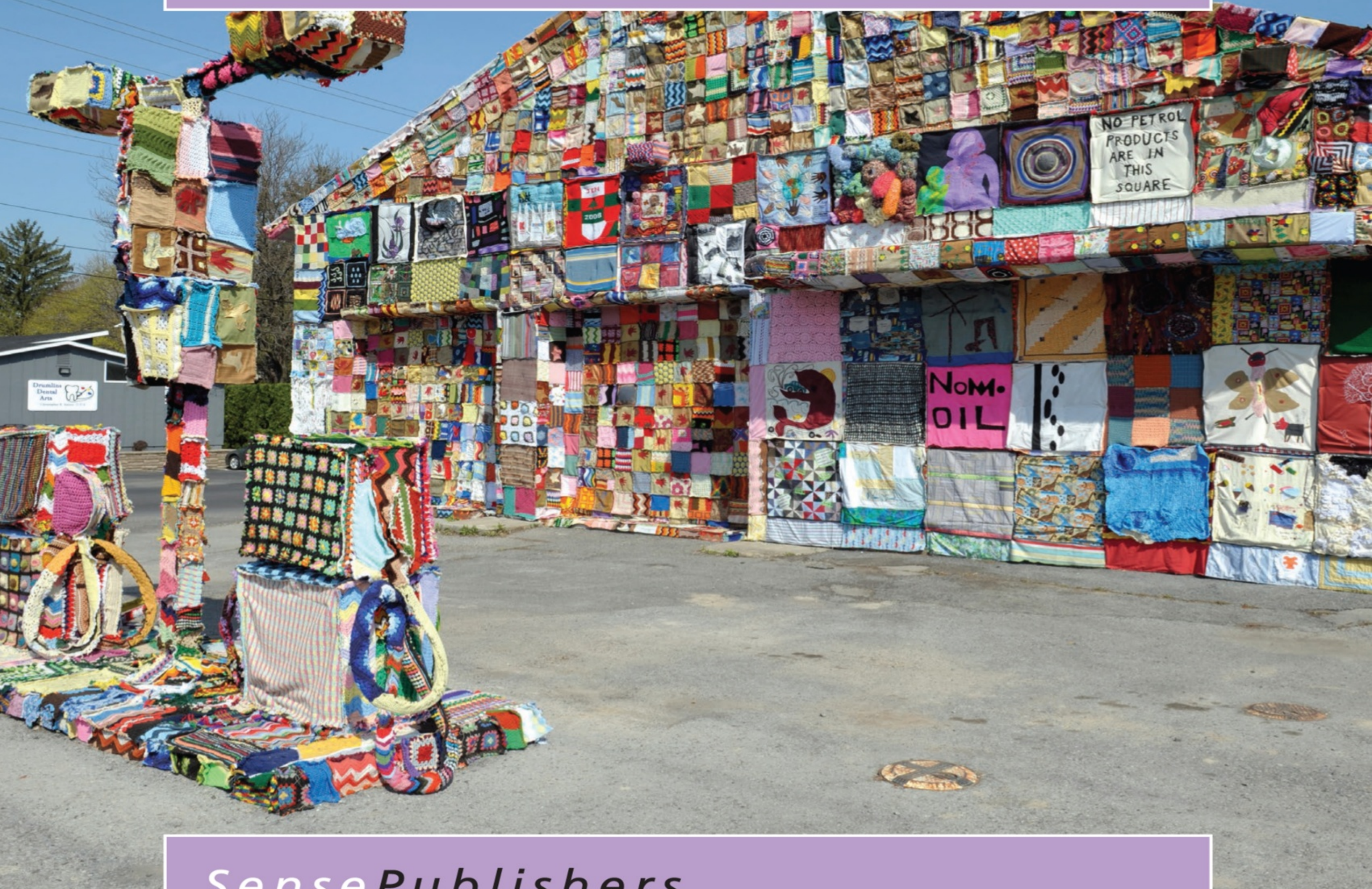
ADVANCES IN CREATIVITY AND GIFTEDNESS

Crafting Creativity & Creating Craft

Craftivism, Art Education, and Contemporary Craft Culture

Courtney Lee Weida (Ed.)



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Volume 8

Advances in Creativity and Gifted Education (ADVA) is the first internationally established book series that focuses exclusively on the constructs of creativity and giftedness as pertaining to the psychology, philosophy, pedagogy and ecology of talent development across the milieus of family, school, institutions and society. ADVA strives to synthesize both domain specific and domain general efforts at developing creativity, giftedness and talent. The books in the series are international in scope and include the efforts of researchers, clinicians and practitioners across the globe.

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Crafting Creativity & Creating Craft

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OVERVIEW

This nine chapter volume will explore creativity in art teaching and contemporary craft. It will provide the reader with a wealth of resources and frameworks for utilizing craft media (fiber, ceramics, baskets, needlepoint, knitting, etc.) and craft approaches (grassroots projects, digital communities, craftivism, etc.) within contemporary K-12 art education, museum and community programming, and teaching artist residencies. Authors representing a variety of specialties in craft, art, and education will examine the resurgence of the handmade and homemade in contemporary youth culture, digital implications of how we define and teach craft creatively, and the overlap of design, function, and beauty in artists' work.

The anthology will particularly:

* Describe the challenges and potentialities of working with craft in education settings, including the overarching craft of teaching
* Provide a range of creative frameworks and practical models that educators can use: from dynamic digital resources, to community groups, and lesson plans and activities in craft with art classes and special needs classes
* Provide a working definition and rationale of the functions of craft in daily life, popular and youth culture, and larger social issues (including craft, D.I.Y, and activism/"craftivism").

PROLOGUE: MY BEGINNINGS WITH CRAFT

In college and graduate school, I worked as the director of summer arts programs at sleep-away and day camps near the ocean. A paint shortage halfway through one summer led me to sort through seemingly ancient art supplies boxed and forgotten from a predecessor's supply stash. It was there that I located several dusty half-made baskets and additional unwoven reeds. One of my staff members expressed great joy at this finding. Obliging her interest and initiative, our students trailed out of our art cabin later that afternoon, into the cool and shallow water along the shore, equipped with reeds and her helpful guidance on basket-weaving. That day, a calm washed over us as we wove water-softened reeds into baskets and discussed the history, use, and look of them along the sun-bright beach. Weaving in beads, shells, and scraps of colorful paper over subsequent sessions, we were spellbound by preliminary explorations of the process Meilach (1974) described as "revising creative methods used centuries ago" (p. 1). I have since encouraged pre-service teachers to explore basket-weaving to create practical, beautiful objects for their classrooms. Craft enables us to explore some important themes as artists and educators. As you work with craft media, you may wish to explore some preliminary questions about your own practice as an artist and educator. Questions and examples are listed along with each chapter in this volume to connect the authors' work to implications for your own teaching and art making experiences:

1. What is your unique craft history and experience to bring to teaching? (For example, many craftspeople or artisans come from traditions of making baskets, pots, jewelry, and other objects within families or collectives, others are drawn to the DIY or Do-It-Yourself movement, while others have been trained within schools and craft leagues. You might ask an elder relative and be surprised by the hidden artistic lineage that brought you here.)
2. How can particular craft materials teach us something special about form, color, texture, value, harmony, and other elements and principles? (E.g. How is clay work particularly suited to texture explorations, or how can embroidery teach us about pattern and color in a very rich way?)
3. Issues of form and function – How will you lead students in creating objects that explore both process and product, that serve a purpose/function or are beautiful (or grotesque or spooky or quirky etc.) for their own sake?
4. Roles of tradition and innovation – Where will a repeated technique or process be adhered to (e.g. stitching, knotting, coiling, etc.) versus a new way of doing or intentionally subverting a technique (think of a pot that's meant to be off-center, a basket with intentional holes in it, or a garment that's not meant to ever be worn).

NICK JAFFE

INTRODUCTION

Humans are makers; craft has always been at the center of our making. Whether consciously or unconsciously, our subjective way of seeing the world becomes part of anything we make. We cannot make things without in some way embedding ourselves.

By "craft" I mean a combination of function-driven design and aesthetics; a direct connection (real or imagined) between the maker and the user; and an implied universality—we are all constantly engaged in some type of "crafting," whether we acknowledge it as such or not. There are and must be specialists in crafting, but it has never been the province of specialists alone.

In his exhaustive, brilliant and provocative book The Nature of Paleolithic Art, biologist and artist R. Dale Guthrie (Guthrie, R. D. (2005). The Nature of Paleolithic Art. Chicago: University of Chicago Press) makes a compelling argument that cave and other Paleolithic art, far from being the province of shamans or specialists was made by children, adolescents and likely everyone. Functional art was part of the picture from the beginning too. His book is full of illustrations of arrow-straighteners and other tools decorated with tremendous skill and often a great sense of humor. Ancient makers would use the shape of tools or the cracks in rocks to create visual double-entendres and depict such absurdities as animals eating their own tails. Life for people living 30,000 years ago appears to have been full of craft and art in spite of what must have been a very difficult and often precarious existence.

The development of agriculture and some measure of material surplus made a division of labor in society both possible and necessary. Technique in such areas as pottery, weaving, wood and iron working became more complex and craft became a more specialized activity. In many cultures an artisan class emerged along with codified methods of production that could be passed on through generations. But even as the production of some objects became more specialized, design and aesthetics became ever more generalized. Abstractions, symbols, and specific design elements often served to unite and even define, social and political groups—villages, clans, tribes and kingdoms—even as these same groups began to divide along gender, vocational and class lines. Style emerged as a way of defining the collective, and as an element of culture. Style also functioned as way for even the non-artisan/specialist to create personal objects that could relate to the larger cultural context.

So, from the dawn of class society there has been both a synergy and tension between "art" and "craft." The naturalistic and often humorous art of Paleolithic people seems to have flowed almost effortlessly between the "canvas" of cave walls

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and the surfaces of all-important, highly functional tools. With Mesolithic and later agricultural societies both naturalistic and increasingly abstract signs continued to adorn functional objects but also began to serve other social and aesthetic purposes as religious or magical symbols, and as symbols of power and status. The emergence of mercantile capitalism meant that the expertise of the craftsperson became an economic factor and the objects he/she produced became commodities with an economic value and significance that might bear little relationship to their utility. The ritual and secrecy of the guild system in medieval Europe, or similar institutions elsewhere were the expression of an economic tension—if everyone is potentially a "maker," then the only way to convert expertise and technique into exchange value is to hold it very closely.

Industrial capitalism brought even greater changes to both the methods and meanings of artisanship and an increasingly radical division between "art" and "craft." Ruling classes were no longer content to simply possess the most rare, valuable and labor-intensive products of artisans; they began to elevate "non-functional" aesthetic expression to an exalted, even divine status. Just as technique and production methods in the crafts in many cultures and places were reaching unprecedented levels of refinement and complexity, the craftsperson was increasingly debased as "less than an artist." The advent of mechanized mass production threatened to do away with artisanship all together except perhaps as an exotic luxury for a very few.

The early days of working class struggle against capital also saw a reaction by the artisan class and its champions in the intelligentsia against the marginalization of craft. In the early 19th Century the Luddites—militant textile artisans in England—smashed the new power looms in protest. The Arts and Crafts Movement of the late 19th and early 20th Century united artisans and designers from England to America and Japan in a cultural struggle to restore the dignity and artistry of artisanship with the goal of providing finely made functional objects to the working masses. Many innovations in design and objects of breathtaking beauty and elegance came out of the Arts and Crafts Movement. But ultimately the desperate struggle of the Luddites and the utopian visions of a William Morris were doomed to failure. Industrial production may be under the control of a capitalist class that sacrifices the artisan's artistry on the altar of profit without a second thought; but industrial production does not exist because of those capitalists. Rather industrial production exists as a consequence of humanity's struggle to satisfy its basic, human needs—food, shelter, life, freedom and the leisure time with which to do things that satisfy and fulfill us. In the hands of the many industrial production can be a tremendous force for human liberation, and therefore also for artistic and craft innovation and expression.

In the 1920's the artists, architects, designers and students of the radical Bauhaus School in Germany and the Vkhutemas State Art and Technical School in the early USSR took up the banner of the craftsman on a new plane—that of embracing industrial production as a means of producing beautiful, high quality, functional objects on a mass scale so that they could be used and enjoyed by all working people.

The profound impact that the Bauhaus and Vkhutemas have had on art and design can be seen everywhere in the world today. Walk down the aisles of a "big box store" and with virtually every "modern" product of industrial design, no matter how half-assed or how brilliant, odds are you can trace at least part of its aesthetic and production lineage to the Bauhaus or a related modernist school or movement.

It is no coincidence that the Bauhaus and Vkhutemas were based on the premise that all men and women are "talented" and capable of effective work and expression in any medium given time and practice. It is no coincidence that these schools and movements explicitly fought to erase the artificial schism between "high art" and craft. It is no coincidence that modernist movements like these closely studied the craft traditions, aesthetic methods of many different societies and cultures including those of contemporary hunting and subsistence agricultural societies, and Paleolithic art. And finally it is no coincidence that even through the repressive political regimes of the Stalinist era, arts and crafts training was a central part of virtually every child's education in the USSR with no reference to the capitalist question of whether such training was appropriate for kids who might not become professional artists or craftsmen.

These are not coincidences because industrial production has exploded the lie that art is the product of divine inspiration and craft is for the "simple folk." That is not to say the this lie isn't still given currency by the rich and powerful—we see it borne out it in a thousand ways every day in American society, where public education is increasingly viewed by the ruling class as a necessary evil—job skills and disciplinary training for the poor, the brown and the black. The ruling class may see education as a means to a profitable end, but the rest of us know better. Throughout this history of the marginalization of craft in many cultures, we have all continued to make things; things that matter to us; things we can use but things that also express our shared subjective experience. And as craft becomes less and less a part of increasingly mechanized, computer-controlled production, it becomes clearer to us that the value of a crafted object has never been measurable in dollars or even just in terms of its utility. Humans make things beautifully, interestingly, expressively because that is what it means to be human. Making is satisfying; it is fun; it can be shared. What the painter does is what the potter does; what the car customizer does is what the sculptor does; what the weaver does is what the photographer does.

And now we are in a strange, fascinating and unprecedented time. This collection of insightful, engaging and highly useful articles make that clear in so many ways. We have not solved the problem of putting industrial production in the service of the many, of want, of freedom, of life; craft will not do that for us though art and craft will certainly play a role as they have in every human struggle. But just the same, amidst the oppression, war, hunger and environmental destruction a strange and wonderful bridging of the technological gap is taking place between the centers of mass production and the places "ordinary people" find themselves outside of work—home, school, community center, library, hospital, prison. Craft has always

existed in these places, often in great depth and richness. But something is new. Mass production and new technologies have given us unprecedented access to some of the most advanced methods of making. Alongside the potters wheel we find a relatively inexpensive laptop computer with enough processing power to operate 10 space shuttles simultaneously. For less than a dollar we can obtain super bright LED's; for twenty dollars a microcontroller that can automate a home or damn near anything else you can think of. With a 3D printer costing less than $700.00 our most fanciful pencil drawings can emerge in space as objects we can hold and use. Every image we make, every piece of music we record, has an instant potential audience of billions via the web.

And, as if by magic, the ethos and techniques that are driving the way these objects are understood, used and enjoyed by "regular people" is the timeless one of craft. Far from displacing artistic values or older methods, these new technologies and approaches are giving them new life and new potential. Far from alienating young people from cultural traditions of the past the DIY movement and maker spaces seem to be hotbeds of old-school and new school—scratch that! They are crucibles in which such distinctions are evaporating along with the false division of art and craft. Old and new tools are just tools and all making is potentially artful and expressive. The work of both "newbies" and experts, in maker spaces, in rich and poor neighborhoods, in cities and remote villages, asserts over and over the essential truth of craft—that all people are makers and all people are artful in their making.

COURTNEY WEIDA

1. FOUNDATIONS OF CRAFT IN EDUCATION

As educators, artists, and craftspeople (and by this I mean both craft media like crochet or baskets as well as the *craft* of teaching), we celebrate practice of working with the handmade perhaps as much as the resulting well-crafted work. However, I have often overheard ceramics and craft mourn the loss of students' ability to crochet or model clay – and to even express concern for adult students who have scarcely ever worked with their hands in a direct engagement with tactile art media. As Elizabeth Garber notes (2013) "affectively, there are pleasures in making and completing and in the use of the senses." (p. 56). Considering the senses and emotions as well as cognitive lives of students is a good place for teaching artists and other art educators to reflect upon how we can justify the use of craft materials in the schools. You may wish to list your top three rationales for craft: from motor skills, to cultural traditions, to experiencing design. Learners who encounter warm, soft, and time-honored materials of craft can engage not only with craft histories and hand-made sensibilities, but can also "get in touch with" a sense of their own development and the embodiment of internal transformations. To discuss craft in art education is also to touch on issues of teaching about:

* sensory materiality,
* collective and individual consciousness, and
* a balancing of histories and traditions with the individual maker's constructed meanings.

Another important aspect of teaching craft is its potential it as an approach and a philosophy. Teachers may wish to include the concept of craft in their teaching philosophies or their teaching approaches. For example, in what way is teaching a craft? In what way is life a form of craft? Historian Glen Adamson (2007) describes the term craft as one that applies not only to objects, but also to approaches, attitudes and actions of craftspeople that make those objects. Craft works can be strongly linked with the functions, cultures, and traditions of their makers and users. As a teacher of craft, it can be helpful to begin designing your curriculum by identifying the intersection of a few materials, makers and goals. Examples of how craft might include many materials and media for curricula are included in Figure 1.

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Artists	*Media*	*Techniques*	*Projects*
Faith Wilding, International Fiber Collaborative	Fiber	Knitting, knotting, Crochet	Multiples, clothes, dolls or zombies, gigantic cozy or guerrilla knitting
Janice Mars Wunderlich, Karen Karnes	Clay	Slab, coil, pinch	Multiples, handmade necessary objects
Erica Wilson, Shen Shou	Embroidery/ Needlepoint	Stitching, sewing	Messages, symbols, subversive/unexpected messages

Figure 1. Craft Media and Techniques

We should also consider how the practice of craft relates to the hand and the body, encouraging sensory and fine motor development. Or in more practical terms, how does craft help us learn with the body and the mind? Dating back to Seonaid Robertson (1961), we can see an art education interest in not just the hand (as in handicraft), but the entire body in "expressive rhythm relating mind and material" (p. 27). Craft can be the meeting place of cognition and coordination of the body. John Howell White (2004) also contextualizes 19th and 20th century education in the U.S. as a period of interest in the human hand in its connection with the mind. At this time, the paradigm of craft's therapeutic potential extended to special populations of children, women's clubs, and veterans. Within K-12 schools, crafts were contextualized in programs for Manual Training, Industrial Arts, and Applied Arts. (Campus buildings at Teachers College Columbia University, for example, still bear signs referring to the Manual Arts.) Craft has often straddled many areas of human experience and terminology, from mind to body to heart. Today, "life skills" programs for students with disabilities and special needs are often accompanied by "creative craft" courses, making this area of learning particularly relevant for the teaching artist. All of this history is basically to say that craft has a distinguished role in education of the past, and that we take part in diverse traditions as we take up craft as part of teaching art.

We can also look at how craft relates to who we are as people, socially, historically, and even spiritually. Artistic development expert Judith Burton (2009) has also noted the historical interest of Viktor Lowenfeld in creative practice "as the place where the thinking, feeling, and perceiving of the *whole* individual could be attended to and developed" (p. 329). The writing of Howard Rissati (2007) similarly draws attention to the sustained bodily connection observable in craft, of doing and communicating with craft materials. During the 1970s and 1980s, my older siblings and I took public school classes in industrial drawing and woodworking, engaging with line and form as precise and mechanical representations that translated into smooth wooden objects (lamps, old fashioned children's toys and puzzles, among other odds and ends) intended for

practical use. Even then, these classes were a dying breed of curriculum, (like culinary arts and home economics) which has widely disappeared from the schools in those particular incarnations. How can we bring craft back into the curriculum through toys, hand-made household objects, and new items yet to be discovered?

A renewed interest in craft is observable in the ongoing "Craft in America" series of the National Art Education Association's *School Arts* Magazine. This and related art education resources may be of interest to craft artists who are teaching young people. Friendship bracelets and macramé (which I remember from my own camp experiences as a young person) have transformed into some of the fiber art curriculum in school art classes my own student teachers facilitate today. Craft has reemerged with much diversity within interdisciplinary curriculum; re-envisioning itself as practical, sometimes ironic, often personal, and even political. Teaching artists can approach craft from many different perspectives and with a range of goals. We hope that you will locate and enhance useful perspectives and goals through this book. Some introductory considerations of themes or tones in craft might include:

1. When is craft serious and straightforward? (chairs, tables, buildings, or functional objects)
2. When is craft imaginative or ironic? (pink crocheted cozies for military tanks, fiber panels to cover a NASA rocket, or yarn bombing)
3. How are these craft projects alike and different?
4. Why is it important to think like a craftsperson? What can that disposition, habit of mind, or way of thinking teach us about other disciplines?

In the following sections, Celia Caro presents an elementary school curriculum that cultivates craftsmanship blended with popular culture consumption, through comic book characters. Educators might consider the role of youths' interests, their creative play, and sense of ownership through her examples. Reaching across disciplines, Dolapo Adeniji-Neil and Tara Gibney explore how craft objects and techniques can awaken and inspire students in storytelling activities across cultures. Fiber artists Jennifer Marsh and Pamela Koehler present the large-scale communal craft projects of the International Fiber Collaborative as socially-engaged, interdisciplinary projects that are taking place in a variety of arts settings and across many age groups. Diane Caracciolo considers craft objects in cultural contexts. I write with a call for art educators to consider digital resources and communities of makers as additional spaces of craft learning. Shari Zimmerman provides craft lesson plans for special needs students. Finally, Nanyoung Kim gives us a more detailed history and rationale for craft.

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CELIA CARO

2. CRAFTING POPULAR CULTURE

A Hands on Approach

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *PASSION: What is the intersection of your interests in craft and your students' interests? Can you think of at least three project ideas that combine your passions?*
2. *GOALS: Caro identifies typography as a teaching goal, to improve her students' skills in this area. What are 2-3 areas in artistic development/art learning that you want to build your students' practice and extend their thinking about? Consider especially lost traditions and crafts.*
3. *PROCESS: Caro posits some of her teaching experiences as product and some as process or play, responding to John Dewey's notions of education as experience. How much of your lessons are about exploration versus a finished product and why? Can you design at least one session dedicated to experiencing craft materials and at least one other to revising and polishing a final craft object?*
4. *CRAFT AS REPETITION: The Daniel Webster Elementary students learned about trying out a skill to hone their practice. This process involved making mistakes and locating gradual improvement. How will you encourage students to complete a craft task that is challenging? – plan ahead for problem areas! Pay special attention to tips and sayings that comfort and encourage. (E.g. centering on the wheel, beginning to knit, learning the pattern of basket weaving)*
5. *POLISH/PROFESSIONALISM: Caro suggests to her students that even popular culture items like stickers and skateboards are created as real, professional work. How can you include not only art history in your teaching, but also contemporary examples of makers? Consider craft resources such as:*
   http://www.contemporarycraft.org/The_Store/Splash.html
   http://crafthaus.ning.com/
   http://www.craftforms.com/
   http://www.museumofcontemporarycraft.org/
   http://madmuseum.org/learn/resource-materials

The Daniel Webster Elementary School is the only public Humanities & Arts Magnet School serving grades K-5 in the City School District of New Rochelle.

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Its curriculum includes academic and cultural enrichment, including an extensive fourteen-week Studio Arts Program. I began working as a teaching artist for its Studio Arts drawing program in 2009. During that year, I conducted a requested drawing workshop on Henry Hudson's 400th anniversary of sailing up the Hudson River. However, for my second year in the Studio Arts Program, I decided to create a comics and cartooning workshop because I wanted to relate my teaching to my own artistic practice while also connecting to my students' interests, and there was no denying that my students were obsessed with cartoons.

Cartoon characters have become part of our consumer culture and are used to sell everything from fashion to fast food. In fact, according to the Licensing Industry Survey released by the International Licensing Industry Merchandisers' Association (LIMA), character licenses generated international profits of $ 237.6 billion in 2010 (LIMA, 2011). The majority of those sales were generated from highly sophisticated mass-marketing campaigns aimed primarily at children[1].

While I found the corporate exploitation of my students' affection towards their favorite cartoon characters troubling, I also saw an opportunity to counteract the messages being marketed to them by teaching them how to create their own art and entertainment in place of the mass-marketed media and mass-produced global brands that bombarded their daily lives off and on-line (Davis, 2006)[2].

Inspired by John Dewey's concepts of active citizenship[3] and Olivia Gude's Postmodern Principles[4], my goal was to encourage students to be dynamic participants in their culture rather than just passive consumers. Yet, weaning them off Sonic the Hedgehog and SpongeBob was going to be tough. What could I use to get them past the allure of these slick, corporate icons?

CRAFT PRINCIPLES GO POP

While browsing in an office supply store, I spotted a package of blank mailing labels and the idea of having the students create their own stickers took shape. My research into handmade stickers uncovered links between the Do It Yourself (DIY) ethos of many street artists[5] and the self-sufficiency philosophy of both contemporary artists[6] who use craft techniques and the Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries[7]. If I wanted my students to resist capitalism and consumerism, I needed to demonstrate how much fun taking back the means of production could be. By incorporating DIY street art and contemporary craft principles into my curriculum, my students might learn that they didn't need corporations to produce their material culture. They could do it themselves.

RESISTING THE STATUS QUO

While I was enthusiastic about my new workshop, I knew there was some resistance in the school to the idea of teaching comics and cartooning in the Studio Arts Program. Would including elements of street art and its associations with vandalism

alienate some of the school faculty even further? When I first proposed the idea during a planning meeting at Daniel Webster, some of the classroom teachers were unimpressed.

Voicing their concerns, one teacher said, “I thought you were going to teach them *real* art. Comics and cartoons are junk food for the brain.”

This teacher was not only pointing out the use of cartoon characters like Tony the Tiger and Toucan Sam as corporate spokesmen for processed (junk) food companies, but also stating a long-standing bias against comics, which have traditionally fallen within the spectrum of “low art”. Since their inception, comics have been associated with bad taste, semi-literacy and junk culture (McCloud, 1993). Despite the blurring of boundaries between art forms in contemporary practices[8] and the advancements of Visual Culture Studies (VCS) (Ambury, 2003), there still exists an institutional bias against practices that exist outside the realm of traditional fine arts. This conventional bias not only overlooks the comprehensive nature of most contemporary art practices, but also fails to see the great potential of alternative art forms like comics, street art and DIY craft as teaching tools.

The fact that this teacher was voicing the elitist views of the status quo, views that I wanted my students to challenge, only encouraged me to pursue my curriculum. I was reminded of contemporary artist Liza Lou’s experience of being ostracized in art school for using “crafty” materials like beads.

> People would actually say, ‘I’m sorry, but that is not allowed.’ But when I saw how much this material upset people, it was so obvious that it was a good thing. (Bagley, 2008)

Inspired by the Postmodernists and VCS theorists, my first goal for the workshop was to question the metanarrative[9] of mainstream consumer culture with (Blackburn, 2000)my students and help them assert their own voices, utilizing devalued artistic practices like comics, street art and craft. Under the VCS umbrella, these once-marginalized art forms have recently been utilized as a way to study issues of consumerism (Poser, 2008), cultural identity (Congdon & Blandon, 2005), community (Stevens, 2008), and social justice (Gude, Postmodern, 2004).

However, while this contextual approach recognizes these mediums’ wealth of cultural and political associations, it overlooks their rich potential for experiential learning by doing (Adamson, 2007). I also wanted students to develop valuable manual, cognitive and social skills (Dewey, 1934) by practicing the crafts of cartooning and DIY street art.

MAKING IS THINKING

I needed a project that helped my students improve their manual and cognitive skills while also developing the work ethic required for the craft of cartooning. Since so much of comic book art and street art incorporates hand-drawn text, I knew many of my students could benefit from refining their typography skills. This was an

area where several of them had expressed interest, but some felt intimidated by the medium because they were insecure about their handwriting.

If I could give them a user-friendly format to work with, I felt strongly that they would be motivated to master the craft of typography. That's when I discovered Linda Scott's *How To Be The Best Bubble Writer Ever*[10] and hit on the idea of having the students design door signs for their rooms featuring their original typography. This project would help the students develop their manual and cognitive skills through the dual process of designing and hand-drawing letters and then making a functional object to feature them.

The typography project required students to follow the procedure of creating thumbnail sketches of their handwritten fonts, and then penciling, inking and coloring their final word design, before making it into a sign. They needed to learn how to skillfully use pencils, erasers, permanent ink markers, crayons and collage materials in order to successfully complete their projects.

Mastering these methods and materials is a two-fold process that requires a great deal of motor/muscle skill and technical knowledge about the functions and properties of tools and materials (Risatti, 2007). Technical knowledge is essential, but it is only through the steady application of procedural memory and manual skill that raw materials are transformed into functional objects (Sennett, 2008). Procedural memory, remembering how to do something in sequential order, plays a pivotal role in almost all academic subjects, and is especially important in mathematics and the sciences (Levine M., 2004).

In a craft practice, however, procedural memory must be combined with physical action. According to neurologist Frank R. Wilson, these cognitive/manual skills can only be achieved " . . . through practice or action, rather than theory or speculation" (Wilson, 1993). The cartooning students could have memorized all the procedures for drawing three-dimensional or bubble letters, but wouldn't have begun to grasp the meaning of the procedures without testing them out through physical action.

The physicality of craft is one of its core strengths as a learning tool. It makes the theoretical real. Often when faced with a more abstract drawing assignment, students will ask me, "Why do I have to do this stuff?" This question is rarely asked when the making of a functional object is involved, and it is the primary reason I had the students turn their typographic designs into signs. Students understand why they need to make a functional object, and the nature of the medium helps them learn "how" to make it. Students with high bodily-kinesthetic intelligence[11] may be especially suited to the physical aspects of making functional objects. The simultaneous coordination of kinetic and cognitive skill has many correlations to other fields such as medicine, music, sports and dance (Risatti, 2007).

Like medicine, music and dance, craft is a discipline. In order to have any impact, practice and action must occur regularly over an extended period of time. This steady practice is essential to mastering any medium. Psychologist K. Anders Ericsson refers to this as the "10,000 hour rule," meaning that in order to achieve excellence

in any field, at least 10,000 hours of regular practice are required (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993).

Mastering procedures and practicing regularly may also have an impact on the students' work ethics. When practicing a craft, students begin to understand that there are no shortcuts to success. In opposition to our culture of instant gratification, craft teaches students that they need to practice patience and persistence when faced with frustration and failure (Sennett, 2008). Students also learn how to reflect on their mistakes and review their procedures. These procedures, therefore, are the bedrock of students' practice and lay the groundwork for all future learning.

THE CARTOON STUDIO AS LABORATORY

Experimenting with new ideas, procedures and materials is often overlooked as part of the craft process (Sennett, 2008). As the quirky and playful fonts designed by my students demonstrate, there is plenty of room for experimentation in the cartooning studio.

The variety of illustrated letters my students designed was astounding. There were skeleton, monster, food and flaming alphabets. Once my students had mastered the basic bubble and three-dimensional forms, many were inspired to try out all kinds of ideas. One fourth-grade student, Ian, struggled with this project for three weeks. Selecting a final design was a real challenge for him because he couldn't choose from all the original fonts he had created. Since it was October, he had sketched jack-o-lantern fonts, zombie fonts, gravestone fonts, vampire fonts and candy-corn fonts. After much painful deliberation, he finally decided to combine all of them into a meticulously rendered "Keep Out" sign. When I asked Ian why he had persisted with the typography project despite all his frustration, he explained: "Even though it's hard, it's also fun to play around with new ideas and try out stuff. You see what works and what doesn't."

This physical testing out of ideas is one of the greatest values of craft: its ability to bridge the gap between the abstract and the concrete (Stowe, 2007). But unlike the straightforward applied knowledge of the practice stage, in the experimentation stage, new uses can be found for traditional ideas, techniques, tools and materials (Sennett, 2008).

This connection can be made through manipulating concepts and materials for new purposes. Words, paper, pencils, crayons and markers are not just for making book reports or cartoon strips. They can also be transformed into a room sign – a real and useful object that asserts one's identity. Through the careful and patient exploration of procedures, novel and elusive ideas can become tangible items. Seeing one's investigational thoughts materialized is an intellectually and emotionally rewarding experience. Yet, Ian mentioned something else that compelled him to design five different hand-drawn font designs, when only one was required; he said he felt "free" to play with new ideas, and that working with typography was "fun".

THE POWER OF PLAY

Play is a powerful motivational tool. Neuroscientists have recently discovered that play engages several centers of cognition and perception across the whole brain, and is related to heightened attention and emotional rewards (Brown & Vaughan, 2009). I encourage play and performance in the cartooning studio by giving students projects like trading cards and puppets and through urging them to act out their characters' facial expressions, body language and stories. I recently introduced Dadaist and Surrealist drawing games like Exquisite Corpse, inkblots and blown ink in order to foster even more improvisation and experimentation in the studio.

These games also create new bonds among the students. By playing and experimenting with methods and materials, students make discoveries that they share with each other. With this open exchange of ideas, a new community develops in the classroom.

CRAFTING COMMUNITY

Art educator Olivia Gude stresses the importance of challenging young artists to create new spaces in which caring, creative communities can emerge (Gude, Possibility, 2007). In some ways, the cartooning studio at Daniel Webster is an example of this type of community, and its street art influences play a pivotal role.

When I introduced the sticker project to my students, I never imaged that it would become part of the culture at Daniel Webster, even though many street artists do use stickers as a form of communication and social bonding[12]. As soon as they were given the mailing labels, the students were hooked. "Really?" they asked, "We can make our own stickers? People do this? "

They immediately started drawing all kinds of stickers featuring their new typography skills, original characters and even cartoon strips that used stickers for panels. Within a week, the sticker underground had formed. Making and trading stickers quickly became part of the playground culture. I also learned of many after-school trips to Staples, Office Max and CVS in search of blank mailing labels and I had a hard time keeping them on my cart[13].

Historically, craft has often been a social and collaborative practice (Naylor, 1971) that is frequently taught and practiced in communal groups (Bolin, Blandy, & Congdon, 2000). In DIY craft communities, the sharing of information, techniques and ideas is encouraged and rewarded by the collective (Levine & Heimerl, 2007). This is antithetical to our much of our modern, Western culture, which values individuality and competition over community and collaboration (Sennett, 2008), but it is essential for students to learn that they can reshape their schools and communities by questioning the status quo and becoming active participants. In choosing collaborative creative actions the cartooning students have generated a supportive community that offers an alternative to the often isolating and competitive world outside the studio. One of the factors in creating this community is the pride that the students take in their work.

PRIDE IN WORK

Inside the cartooning studio, the majority of the students work hard, not because they have to, but because they want to[14]. I'm proud of the high standards they have set for themselves and the fact that many share their hard-won knowledge and skills with their classmates. During my final project for the workshop, this pride in their work was demonstrated to me in several ways.

Because the students had reacted so enthusiastically to the Street Art medium of sticker art, I took inspiration from the giant figurative cutouts of Swoon and Armsrock[15] for the final project. However, I decided to make the cutouts puppets by attaching brass brads to their joints. This way, the figures could be put in a variety of positions and would be able to interact with each other once installed. This also presented my students with the challenge of designing and constructing life size figures that could move without ripping.

Once again, the students exceeded my expectations by taking ownership of this project and constructing complex and engaging puppets that demonstrated creative problem solving, thoughtful planning, collaborative art making, drawing skills and artistic innovation.

The ad-hoc artistic community that had developed around the sticker project flourished during the puppet project. Students helped each other measure, cut, assemble and color in their creations. They reminded each other to use the skills they had already acquired in drawing facial expressions, gestures and typography. They modeled poses for each other to draw. Some went so far as to invent original techniques like using pop-up card engineering to make skateboards, speech bubbles and broadswords stand out from the walls, while others teamed up to create narratives and supplementary comic strips about their puppets. When a group of students insisted on installing their own puppets for the Spring Arts Festival exhibit, I saw their pride in the fact that they could make original pop culture for themselves and their school community.

Pride in one's work can also transform the way one interacts with the world (Sennett, 2008). I have seen some of my more marginalized students acquire new social roles by exhibiting exceptional skill or innovative thinking in the cartoon studio. One student in particular takes it upon himself to make weekly packs of hand drawn trading cards to give and trade with his classmates[16]. The students look forward to receiving Enrique's "rare" and "valuable" card packs, which are all wrapped in wax paper and labeled by hand. Stuck on the sidelines in many of his classes, Enrique is a rock star in the cartooning workshop, valued for both his skill and generous spirit. By taking pride in his work and himself, Enrique has found a meaningful and creative way to counteract a lot of the prejudice he faces for being different. His classmates are also changing by learning to encourage and support each other as artists and for respecting people like Enrique for what they can bring to the collective. In small but significant ways, they are crafting their lives with skill.

NOTES

[1] As the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported in 2006, food companies spent nearly $2.3 billion to advertise to children, contributing greatly to the childhood obesity epidemic. In April 2011, the FTC released sweeping new guidelines asking food makers and restaurant companies to make products healthier or stop advertising them to children.

> By explicitly tying advertising to childhood obesity, the government is suggesting there is a darker side to cuddly figures like Cap'n Crunch, the Keebler elves, Ronald McDonald and the movie and television characters used to promote food (Neuman, 2011).

[2] Approximately 70% of children aged 8-11 go online from home. Of those, 37% use instant messaging and 35% play games and video.

[3] See Stankiewicz (2001), for a discussion of Dewey's theory.

[4] Particularly resonant was her assertion that "it is important that art classes allow students to have meaningful self-expression in which they become representin',self-creating beings." (Gude, Postmodern, 2004).

[5] See Carlson & Louie (2010), for examples of street artists who make posters and stickers that critique consumerism and corporate power.

[6] In Potts (2007), there is a discussion of contemporary artists, such as Shane Walter, who utilize DIY craft mediums to express their self-sufficiency and reject capitalism and consumerism.

[7] Naylor (1971), argues that the Industrial Revolution, the Arts & Crafts Movement rose up in opposition to the degrading and isolating effects of consumer culture and factory life on workers. It stressed that people should create rather than consume their culture.

[8] "What or who dictates what we call art and what we call craft?" See Blackburn (2000), for further discussion of the topic.

[9] Lyotard (1979) explains that in postmodern philosophy, a metanarrative is a grand unspoken story that totalizes the world, and validates a culture's power structures.

[10] Scott (2011), provides a very easy to understand procedural process for writing both bubble and three-dimensional letters and then demonstrates over 70 variations on these forms.

[11] Gardner (1993), states that the core elements of the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence are control of one's bodily motions and capacity to handle objects skillfully. This intelligence also includes a sense of timing, a clear sense of the goal of a physical action, along with the ability to train responses so they become like reflexes. A high degree of fine-motor control and a gift for using whole body motions is also present.

[12] See Carlson & Louie (2010). Sticker art is often the gateway medium for many street artists. Street artists like Obey, Tower and Tika experiment with both form and content and there are sticker exchanges around the world.

[13] Following in the footsteps of street artists everywhere, my students became quite "resourceful" in acquiring their materials and I knowingly and unknowingly donated many mailing labels to their cause. See Armsrock (2007), Levine & Heimerl (2007); and Bolin, Blandy, & Congdon (2000) for further discussion.

[14] I have a few students who regularly feel the need to rebel against the requirements of certain assignments. Because I want my students to challenge authority, I regard this as a healthy assertion of their independence and will work with them to find more suitable projects.

[15] See Carlson & Louie (2010), and Armsrock (2007).

[16] I also have an Artist Trading Card project, which has become extremely popular with the fourth and fifth grade boys. As in the sticker project, the students have become makers and traders of their own pop culture objects.

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DOLAPO ADENIJI-NEILL, TARA CONCANNON-GIBNEY &
COURTNEY WEIDA

3. CRAFT OBJECTS AND STORYTELLING

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *CRAFTING INTERDISCIPLINARY TEACHING*: List three subject areas from Math, Science, Social Studies, English/Language Arts, or other Arts disciplines that you would like to use to inform your craft explorations with students. These connections aren't always easy, but they can contribute to your students' meaningful learning experiences, and also cement your interdisciplinary role and value in the school or organization where you are working.
   Tip: Speak with their classroom or subject teachers about possible connections, or peruse the hallway bulletin boards for projects you might ask to join, or begin by simply asking students what they are working on outside of your residency!
2. *HIS/HERSTORY AND TRADITIONS:* As the authors point out, stories can be a way of teaching. Reflect on how you first started working in craft. You may wish to start a journal or revisit those journals you had as a younger craftsperson. Is there something in the story that you can share to intrigue, challenge, or inspire your students to work in craft traditions? Use your history to illuminate your students' developmental experiences.
3. *CRAFTING WORDS:* What are your favorite and least favorite sayings in teaching? How about in crafting? Try beginning one teaching session with just a single phrase to inspire students to work or begin a discussion. Notice when less is more and more is more in terms of how we speak during craft experiences. (E.g. Famed potter Hamada reportedly told other potters that the clay was the best teacher, while M. C. Richards wrote prolifically through poems and journals about the experience of making pots!)
4. *CULTURE AND CRAFT:* As you work within your chosen medium/media, think about at least three cultural traditions you can include via individual artists, histories, or children's stories and myth. Challenge yourself to include at least one representation of your students' cultures (e.g. The authors explored Japanese and Latin American cultures), one work of craft/craft artist from a culture removed from your students' daily experiences, and/or if possible, one culture with which you are very familiar. Notice the questions and context that students pursue, and challenge yourself to continue your own research in craft with students.

C.L. Weida (Ed.), Crafting Creativity & Creating Craft, 19–27.
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Proverbs and Sayings for Teaching Artists and Craft:

Craft is part of the creative process. – Gavin Bryars

I think a craft becomes an art form when the space of possible solutions becomes so huge that engineering can't carry you through. – Bill Budge

Most people won't realize that writing is a craft. You have to take your apprenticeship in it like anything else. – Katherine Anne Porter

You should put time into learning your craft. It seems like people want success so quickly, way before they're ready. – Lucinda Williams

Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one." – Malcolm Forbes

The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery." – Mark van Doren

Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep. ~Scott Adams

All art requires courage. – Anne Tucker

Great art picks up where nature ends. – Marc Chagall

I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way - things I had no words for. – Georgia O'Keeffe

Fine art is that in which the hand, the head, and the heart go together. – John Ruskin

*Teaching tip: Ask your own students to discuss these quotes, then write a journal response or artist statement about what they think craft is.

STARTING WITH STORY: INTERDISCIPLINARY & CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

During the Spring of 2011, I was invited to work with New York City public elementary school children in an art and writing workshop residency. The teachers who welcomed me into their classrooms shared their hopes that students could learn about art, about writing, and about expressions from many cultures through the arts. One of the most powerful ways to do this involved bring actual craft objects and artifacts into the classroom, from baskets to pottery and jewelry. In this way, students could learn about and create objects, histories, and imaginings. As Bloom observes, "If you want to know what a strange artifact from another time or another country really is, you won't ask a chemist, you would appeal to an expert in archaeology, anthropology, or history" (p. 10). In teaching across disciplines and across cultures with artifacts and poems, I felt fortunate to also collaborate with a Social Studies

colleague from Nigeria, and a colleague in Literacy education from Ireland. This resource describes our teaching approaches that introduce students to multicultural narratives, build communication skills around identity, and engage imaginations in culturally and socially relevant ways through the craft of storytelling. We describe ways of using poetry, proverbs, and folktales as storytelling tools of social studies, and discuss exemplars of memoir in the reading and writing workshop for children. These curricular frameworks will be interwoven with my art and craft workshop experiences, through examples of visually descriptive and culturally rich stories as provocations for studio-based and art historical activities.

The basis of using traditions of storytelling within social studies inquiry, the development of individual literacy, and narrative expression in art is also often the meeting point of our cross-disciplinary discussions as friends and collaborators. Our personal experiences working with a common thread of story and craft objects allowed us to think about how our subject areas inform one another as humanities. As an art educator, I was impressed at the creative and personalized ways in which my Literacy colleague modeled memoir as an expressive writing approach to help students understand nuance and similarities of the structure and function of stories. So too, classroom discussions of the peopled histories of words and sayings were detailed, sensory-rich, and full of evocative images and ideas that lingered in my mind long after our meetings. Our three subject areas are linked through the common theme of storytelling in terms of its cultural importance, creative sequence and structure, and sensory-rich language.

A Few Poetry Activities With Craft

*Bring in craft objects such as baskets, bowls, pottery, quilts, hand-made clothing, etc. Ask students to pass around each object and then make lists of what they notice. Include describing words (adjectives) and nouns to list what they see, smell, hear, and hear when they examine each object. Use these lists to create haikus, list-style poetry, or odes to a chosen object.

*Weaving words: Explore collaging words and phrases to create a poetry quilt – use various colors, typography, and images to echo the structure of a quilt.

*Object histories: Locate a practical but precious object from students' homes, a local museum, or even at the school or teaching site. Explore its history and why it is kept, then write a story poem from the perspective of various keepers of the object.

Teaching artists and other art educators can explore the craft of storytelling in terms of its significant place in culture through images and traditions. In nearly every occasion (both sacred and mundane) a story, a proverb, or praise poetry is used to dignify the occasion; to teach by imparting knowledge and eliciting critical thinking in both adults and in children. The late folklorist and museum director

William Bascom (1965) noted proverbs serve as metaphors to teach children to think abstractly. A proverb is a wise saying that is used to express a truth, a double entente; it is meant to be understood in more than one way. It contains images that must be puzzled over before they can be understood. In addition, children are compared to Yoruba beads in song, for both are precious and beautiful. The Yoruba remind us that such stories also provide the fuel for communication: when a discussion fails, stories and songs reignite the power of multiplicity of voice.

We can also explore how memoir can be an accessible genre for younger students who are beginning to write because everyone has a story to tell. Writer and educator Katherine Bomer (2005) has also emphasized social justice as a key aim of memoir and described the genre as “the most democratic of all kinds of writing” (p. 12). What is fascinating about memoir is that although all our stories are unique, when examined closely, they can also reveal intriguing commonalities that binds humans together. For example, *Childtimes*, the cross-generational memoir of an African American grandmother, mother, and daughter meaningfully explores a particular family, culture, time period, and geography while also writing with a thread of elegant simplicity, awakening us to aesthetic possibilities in the ordinary. The narratives depict mundane, everyday occurrences that were significant to each of the authors in some way. In this way, storytelling is parallel to the craft of scrapbooking. We all have personally poignant stories similar to these texts, and thus writing memoir becomes an individualistic and community-minded creative act, engaging even the struggling writer. It is the teacher’s role to develop the students’ consciousness and self-awareness of all the stories that they possess. We have integrated storytelling across disciplines through a range of art and craft projects: self-portraits, sketches of memories, identity collages, and personal visual timelines to examine and discuss the possibilities of stories leading to more in-depth memory and craft projects.

SEQUENCE AND STORY: CONTEXT, THREADS, & SKILS OF NARRATIVE

Storytelling projects can also contain elegant and poetic reference to forms and functions, particularly when storytelling moments are framed within tales. For example, my Social Studies colleague recalls: The most memorable times for me as a child were moonlight evenings when an elder would regale us with tales of kings and queens who wished to find a good spouse for their beautiful daughter by setting up storytelling contests/tasks for the suitors to engage in, and the best man or woman would win. These tales often have moral instruction attached to them. Yoruba folktales and fables usually contain talking animals as main characters, such as in many Ijapa tales like the tortoise and the hare (which shows that the race does not always belong to the swift or the arrogant). These stories instill a sense of community through the settings where they are told: the evening, resting period after the evening meal, a time when all activities have stopped and before bedtime, so the stories would be the last thing heard. It was hoped thereby remembrance would be ensured, lesson would be learned and stories would be passed on to the

next generation. In this way, story creates space for learning about cultural values and traditions. We also used actual craft objects like hand-made dolls and puppets, makeshift "treasures", and other objects from stories as inspirations for illustrations and as dramatic storytelling props.

As an art educator, I truly felt inspired to create curricular space around memoir in literacy activities and sociological musings on sayings and maxims. I mused on the saying that "a picture is worth a thousand words" and wondered about how this phrase can also be inverted to explore literacy and cultural possibilities in works of visual art. My colleagues' use of narrative and memoir inspired me to think of ways in which students could personally relate to a work of art by telling an evocative story. My first and second graders were most prolific in writing poems and creating drawings inspired by Faith Ringgold's Tar Beach story quilt series when I asked them to consider what they might hear, smell, taste, see and feel if they visited Tar Beach. They noticed details like the food on the tables, the man soaring through the night sky, the blanket where children looked up at the stars. Remarkably young children employed detailed description and interpretation: "The moon is shining white / And the trees are brown / I believe I can fly" and "Moon bright, Stars whoosh, And kisses blowing by" (My Magical Book of Many Poems: P.S. 66 Poetry Anthology for First and Second Grades. 2011).

WONDERFUL WORDS: ILLUSTRATING/INTERPRETING SAYINGS AND STORY STRUCTURES

In Africa, the value of the individual performing their stories persists as a chosen artistic and educative framework in every media and genre. Poetry, folktales and proverbs are now used as entertainment learning tools; the performers can be grandiose, showy, and flowery. Praise poetry is adaptive especially to music, or folktales turned into cartoons, with proverbial metaphors sprinkled in spoken words; and these artistic representations are necessary in order to engage new audiences and prevent potential loss of traditional values. So too, craft objects like kente cloth are used to map a village and tell the stories of those who live and work there.

Yoruba sayings and their rich histories inspired me to try out artistic representations of the same idea through drawing, sculpture, and collage. I invited students to read Cooper Eden's *If You're Afraid of the Dark, Remember the Night Rainbow*, a beautifully illustrated gem of a children's book that takes common worst-case scenario phrases and gives them uncommon and encouraging conclusions, in an if/then syllogism format around sewing, baking, embroidery and other crafts. For example: "If you lose a memory, embroider a new one in its place." The students and I read this book aloud, and I asked each of them to share one of their own favorite, or least favorite sayings. Students noticed how these maxims were sometimes from popular culture and movies, from different cultural traditions, and even particular to individual families or communities. I delighted in the elegance of their visual expressions of literary expressions, dramatizing literal and symbolic sayings.

Beautiful arrange,nets of images and objects effectively illustrated visual metaphor from concrete to symbolic within “apple of my eye,” “butter me up,” and “life is like a box of chocolates.” Such artistic explorations can be crucial in understanding complexities in communication and culture, and are often highlighted in needlepoint pillows, samples, and wall hangings in the craft sphere.

Within written work, the genre of memoir also has a tendency to utilize repetitive or idiomatic phrases to reinforce powerful human feeling, particularly that of nostalgia. For example in Lois Lowry’s Looking Back: A Book of Memories she begins many of the vignettes with the simple phrase “I remember,” while Cynthia Rylant’s *When I was Young in the Mountains* begins every vignette with the title phrase, and in Anna Egan Smucker’s *No Star Nights* each sections starts with “Every night when we were little.” In some cases, these re-occurring phrases also give the text a pleasing, rhythmic quality, and a frame for creative writing. Teachers can explore this aspect of memoir writing with their students by examining a range of memoirs, creating a class chart of phrases (or other beautifully visual collections) used by authors, and then examining personalized vernaculars that highlight both shared traditions and unique histories. We may also examine crafts of scrapbooking, memory jars, and other memory art that expresses nostalgia and documents the past through art. We have also found that such refrains are wonderful prompts for creative writing as well as free drawing times with students, framed by unique language and its inspirations.

SENSES AND STORY: EXPERIENCING AND EXPRESSING NARRATIVE

As another method of culturally responsive artistic and literary curriculum for my young students in Queens, I aimed to present more works of art and poetry that were not just from the canon (of often white, often male artists and authors) but also from students’ cultures and countries of origins. I was thrilled to come across *My Black Book of Colors*, written by Venezuelan Menena Cottin. In this richly poetic and glossy black illustrated book, color is experienced within every sense but sight (so that red tastes like strawberries or black feels like soft hair). From this entry point to the senses, I invited first and second graders to read this story and then reflect upon what blue and green might sound, smell, feel, and taste like to someone who is Blind. I was captivated by the possibility that “Math tastes like green” which a second grader explained as the idea that green things grow and multiply (like numbers can). The visual arts often model the value of Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligence framework (2006), of experiencing and then representing the world not only through the cognition, but also through the senses, and exercising different modalities in this way. We used a multisensory approach to hand made books filled with color collections, with colorful paper, felt, and other collaged objects.

So too in literacy instruction, the memoir genre employs the senses to help the reader experience the author’s significant moments. In the classroom, a teacher might choose to examine memoirs that are particularly sensory in nature such as

Lawrence Yep's *The Lost Garden*, which explores the coming of age of a Chinese American boy. The students can read the text seeking to identify when and how the author awakens each sense (sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing) in the text. Having examined a number of texts in this way, the students plan their memoirs by focusing on not only the event and its significance but also how they will use the senses in describing their experience richly.

Experiences of story in Yoruba culture also engage the senses through music and performance. Employing dramatic and musical performances, the storytellers often assume the persona of the characters in the tales, imitating voice, movement and gesture. When a sentence is uttered, it goes into its own universe and takes a shape of its own. "A gesture, once made, can never be made the same way" (Drewal 1992; 1). The craft or performance of the poem each time takes a new meaning, a new inflection and attitude. This sense of individuality is particularly valuable for children to explore within those short poems of beginning writers. In stories where singing is required, the storyteller can also sing or recite poetry in an animated voice accompanied by expressive body language. The audience also may be active participants in the story, singing choruses, responding vocally in the voice of a character or characters, clapping their hands or playing a musical instrument during the storytelling. For example, I invited by students to view Hokusai's Great Wave of Kanagawa (1831) and not only write descriptive poetry of the beautiful waves and experiences of oceans, but also perform a related song and dance we practiced around storms and sailing.

SELFHOOD AND STORY: IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY

My collaborators' personal connections through storytelling within their disciplines continually reminded me of how aesthetic resources tell meaningful stories. In *Amelie*, one of my favorite films that is both visually rich and related to aesthetics and handmade objects, a quirky and practical approach to discussing and engaging with art emerges. The movie's title and protagonist is Amelie, a waitress in France who enjoys many quiet pleasures of life such as skipping stones, dipping her hand in a sack of grain, or cracking the shell of broiled sugar on her crème brulee (sensuously depicted as vignettes in this film). Shy, reclusive Amelie gradually emerges beyond her solitary life and comes to know her co-workers and neighbors, including the elderly Raymond Dufayel, named "Mr. Glass" for his brittle bones. Downstairs neighbor Dufayel impresses Amelie with his studio filled with dozens of reproductions of Renoir's Luncheon on the Boating Party (1831), painted by him over his past 20 years as a shut-in. In each reproduction, Dufayel claims he misses something about the expressions of the people. He tells Amelie that the person who puzzles him the most is "the girl with the glass," a lonely young figure in the center of the painting who fascinates both him and Amelie. Amelie projects much of herself onto the dreamy "girl with the glass," musing if this woman is thinking of someone not in the painting, dreaming of the person she likes.

As Amelie ventures to guess about a mysterious outsider, she also begins to emerge from her shyness in projecting some of her own longings and plans onto this figure. Over time, Amelie also begins building human relationships across cultures and abilities, and she strives to bring the same relational and aesthetic experiences to others in the form of treasured objects, anonymous gifts, and handmade video collages she creates from carefully selected glimpses of life from film and television. It is this kind of relationship with art and visual culture that story affords us. We can enlarge our visions and voices in beautiful and poignant ways, crafting personal objects for our communities.

So too, storytelling through memoir is centrally a statement of self, akin to a visual self-portrait. In writing memoir we come to know ourselves better by examining our experiences and pinpointing which stories have been significant in developing our current social, emotional, cultural, and physical selves. Reading the memoirs of others can help us come to know ourselves better as sometimes we will note a "me too" moment, while in other instances we may recognize differences. In teaching children to read and write memoir, we are encouraging not only self-reflection but also investigation of how other people's stories have affected their creative development as artists and authors.

Similarly, we have found that spoken storytelling can be fluid and express both the individual identity and cultural values. In oral culture with the absence of a fixed text, the storyteller may tell the tales as an artist, weaving the texture, the colors and creating anew an age-old tale. For folk culture honors everyone as a "potential, if not an actual, producer of culture. Folktales are the general property of the community, and each individual has a right to retell a story in consonance with his own vision" (Sekoni 1994; p. 78).

We have enjoyed exploring how storytelling through and about objects and practices of craft can prove powerful arts instruction, cultivating multiple ways of seeing and saying. It encourages students to self-reflect and to celebrate their lives and communities, and to see and feel cultural differences and commonalities represented in the words and images of others. Interdisciplinary craft lessons that reach across cultures lead learners to explore storied lives through oral language, reading, and writing as part of creating imagery, while enhancing social and emotional development. We hope that our stories of storytelling will weave as threads in the fabric of your arts experiences as well.

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RESOURCE WEBSITES

Center for Digital Storytelling: http://www.storycenter.org/
International Storytelling Center: http://www.storytellingcenter.net/
National Storytelling Network: http://www.storynet.org/
New York Storycorps: http://storycorps.org/record-your-story/locations/new-york-ny/
Storytelling Center of New York: http://www.storytelling-nyc.org/
Visual Thinking Strategies: http://www.vtshome.org/

PAMELA KOEHLER, JENNIFER MARSH & COURTNEY WEIDA

4. CRITIQUING CONSUMPTION THROUGH CRAFT & THE INTERNATIONAL FIBER COLLABORATIVE

INTRODUCTION AND RESOURCES

1. *FRAMING CRAFT THEMES:* The International Fiber Collaborative poses several provocative themes for craft teaching. Explore the website to select some that you might use or become inspired by in your curricula:
   Community, Health, Peace, Ending Poverty, Energy, Music, Science/Technology, Visionary Images, Conservation, Equality, Imagination, Freedom, Recycling, Empathy, Education
   http://www.thedreamrocket.com/
2. *EXHIBITION/DOCUMENTATION OF CRAFT:* Marsh documents the work of global contributors online through Flickr, YouTube, and other digital sites. Check out some of these links from the main site and consider how you will document and exhibit your students' craft works through these or DeviantArt, etsy, Behance, and others.
3. *CRAFT TECHNIQUE SPOTLIGHT:* Knotting is highlighted as a special craft technique that is symbolic and connective. Reflect upon the unique qualities of a particular craft technique you'd like to teach. What words and phrases make it unique and appealing? How would you describe its allure to a beginner?

This craft collaborative, founded by artist and art professor Jennifer Marsh, encourages craftspeople and students to design fiber patches or panels that form monumental cozies installed over gas stations, rockets, and other large objects. By covering a rocket ship with messages and images of the artists, both the makers and the viewers can construct meanings around ecological, political, and aesthetic issues. I first met Jennifer Marsh after her creation of the International Fiber Collaborative and its initial Gas Station Project. Within this inaugural project, she sought to open up opportunities for "professional artists, hobbyists, or students" to express their concern about our human dependency on oil. (www.internationalfibercollaborative.com/html/gasstation).

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This project demonstrates how craft can be blended with activism (craftivism). Art teachers and teaching artists may wish to explore additional outlets of craft projects with social issues. Some additional examples for teaching artists include:

1. Potters for Peace:
   http://www.pottersforpeace.com/
2. Empty Bowls:
   http://www.emptybowls.net/
3. Craft Activism:
   http://www.craftactivism.com/
4. Craftivism Blog:
   http://craftivism.com/
5. Craft Activism Blog From the Journal of Modern Craft:
   http://journalofmoderncraft.com/tag/craft-activism

Craft resources are increasingly available online. The IFC project reached participants through websites, magazines, and other announcements of organizations such as College Art Association and Fiber Arts Magazine. The variety of themes and political ideas engaged by the project is matched by myriad materials used by makers, including crochet, knitting, stitching, patching, and collage. This materiality invites us to consider how various media can approach related ideas. Further, we can explore multiple or mixed media through craft with our students. The individual pieces of the IFC were connected manually on the gas station site, and also synthesized digitally on websites by Marsh herself. In this way, the founding artist takes on a role of curator and custodian of the artworks of many individuals. The framework of the viewer as she/he engages with the IFC's Gas Station Project is structurally two-fold. Visitors to the actual site of the installation can view the wrapped gas station structure and gas pumps during the brief period of its exhibition. On the website, viewers can continuously view photos or even video of the project itself, which engages an appreciation of the process of installation involved with large-scale artworks. Teaching artists might consider how they will exhibit students' craft works, taking exhibition as an additional form of craft. For example, how is a hand-made fiber shelter different than a sterile white gallery? Students can explore an aesthetic of craft that extends beyond the objects themselves to context.

Contextually, the themes of various IFC panels were incredibly diverse in concept and appearance, providing inspiration for future works. Carol Lowell, a New York artist, directly addressed the rise in gas prices with a sort of knitted chart as her panel. Aimee Lee is another New York artist who addressed the theme of environmentalism and oil by recycling plastic shopping bags (which are created from petroleum) as a knitting material. A UK artist named Rebecca Wombel similarly used recycled VHS tapes in her crocheted black and white geometric panel. Maine artist Ann C. Kittredge Houlton created two panels that juxtapose petroleum-based yarns with natural yarns that read: "I AM OIL" and "NOT OIL." A sculpture professor, Rob Millard-Mendez, created a "No Petrol Panel" from cotton fabric and cotton thread

that reads "no petrol products in this square." Missouri artist Lauren Jacobs quilted and painted a panel that evokes (and perhaps predicted) news footage from the recent BP spill, of an oil-slicked eagle trying to fly against an ominous grey background.

Other crafters go beyond revisions of craft traditions in their practices, to physically deconstructing traditional discarded craft items, another technique craft artists can employ in teaching young people. The International Fiber Collaborative gathers many fiber panels that are knitted, woven, crocheted, or even recycled from older quilts and other textiles to be re-made into new works. For example, Mindy Thompson and Jennifer Marsh's piece, "Hot Plate Mama," repurposes colorfully knitted potholders in a sort of sunburst pattern of round and square shapes. Other pieces reference both material and symbol, such as "Burlap Membrane" by Costa Rican collaborators Aura Madrigal, Irene Chaves, Gaby Chavarria, Alina and Carlos Chavvaria, and Alex and Antony Gonzalez. California artist Karen Rosenberg created a wool and silk composition of shapes of various sizes and colors evocatively titled "Earth, Sea, Sky." Each piece can be viewed as a singular composition and particular interpretation of related themes.

THE TREE PROJECT: IDEA(L)S OF INTERDEPENDENCE

Addressing community and ecology more directly than the Gas Station Project, the second project of the IFC examined interdependence as a theme in terms of roots, branches, and leaves. Participants were asked to create and submit leaves from fiber materials and/or techniques, culminating in a covering for a giant tree on view in museums and parks. Metaphorically, this project took on a similar approach to the Gas Station, joining multiples by various individuals into a larger, unified work. However, the Tree Project actually simulated a living tree, highlighting a natural object instead of a distinctly commercial, man-made form. Marsh also integrated the installation portion of this project as part of her teaching practice in a Public Art course. While there was a great deal of artistic freedom allowed in the creation of leaves, Marsh (2009) specified that each submission should "relate to interdependence in a social, economical, political, ecological, or geographical way" (www.internationalfibercollaborative.com/html/treeproject.html).

The leaves featured in this community work seemed to take on a certain gem-like quality, that shows a lot of interdisciplinary connections with science. California artist Linda Laird directly repurposed remainders from the Gas Station Project, using remnants of her cabin quilt to create a leaf pattern. Missouri artist Jane Linders explored the metaphor of photosynthesis through cloth, negatives, and cyanotypes (involving water and sun, like actual leaves). Suzan Engler, from Texas, created "leaf fossils" by fusing grocery bags, recycled buttons, and fragmented leftovers of yarn and cotton. Many of the leaves, perhaps to a greater extent than the IFC's first project, were aesthetically-focused rather than overtly political. The shape, color, and texture of the leaves themselves were frequently emphasized. Florida artist Susan Wallace explored the shape of local leaves, emphasizing in her website description

the complexities of red bay trees in her area, which are being killed by a fungus. Swedish artist Ann-Marie Sjoberg worked from wool and yarn, generating a leaf for each season of the year. Teaching artists can explore more projects around trees and fiber here: http://www.internationalfibercollaborative.com/html/gallery.html
On the other hand, some leaves were less centered on environmental issues and more linked to personally relevant topics such as New York artist Lisa Post's commemorative leaves for her mother and grandmother. These kinds of projects model family connections possible in teaching residencies. Venezuelan artist Maria Parada created leaves in honor of her grandchildren from collaged cloth and paper. Concepts of family also emerged in the stories of the makers, many of whom created their work in collaboration with their children, exemplifying another kind of interdependence. Meanwhile other artists addressed cultural and geographical communities. Hana Hong, from Seoul, worked with Korean paper and the Korean flag motif. New York artist Melissa Kraft assembled a leaf from ribbons, threads, papers, and ink, inscribing the materials with words of peace in several different languages. As Johanna Drucker (2010) has observed, craft can reconfigure consumption of its various materials: "possibilities for reinventing traditions of art making and of shifting the relation of critical opposition to mass media into a different key can be enunciated, one in which the pleasures of consumption are an acknowledged part of aesthetic production rather than a repressed one" (p. 595). In the IFC, there is a wonderfully complex interplay of materiality: of celebrating materials consciously, even while critiquing commercial and consumer aspects of contemporary culture. As educators, we may ask students to consider such questions of personal aesthetics and politics of the materials and objects that fill our lives.

KNOTTING AS METAPHOR FOR CRAFT COMMUNITIES

In addition to interdisciplinary pedagogical possibilities, Marsh's past two projects and current Dream Rocket Project also reveal and celebrate reclaimed and reconfigured craft techniques of the past. Anthea Black and Nicole Burisch (2010) have examined craft within feminist theory and DIY cultures, arguing that "the accessibility of global communication networks have [generated] . . . increased sharing of craft knowledge and skills, and created an overall democratization of crafting practices " (p. 609). Many artists of the IFC wrote to Marsh about the processes of their work, and these descriptions are included online alongside images of each individual piece. In reading the artistic descriptions to students and audiences, I am often struck by the element of surprise and amazement of viewers as to which materials and processes were employed and what messages were intended. This sharing and commentary is greatly increased by digital social networks.

In consideration of materials and processes, knotting is an example of a craft technique that may be seen as both old and new, comforting and subversive. As a process, knotting uniquely affects and engages us; for unlike sewing, knitting, and crochet - knots are completed by the hand and are a democratic (and perhaps even

quintessential) unit of creation that nearly everyone can do. In The Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Rope Work, Raoul Graumont and John J. Hensel (1945) have noted that historically, people "have found fascinating interest in the development of knot work . . . [and] it can be truthfully stated that the formation of useful knots with rope or cordage of some kind was one of man's earliest and most essential tools" (p. vii). Certainly, individuals must employ knotting each day in a variety of personal and mundane tasks.

Knotting in proliferation can also contribute intricate and patterned artistic products. Knotting can be both connective and isolative: we can knot two materials together, or tie up one strand in a knot so that parts are enclosed, invisible, and more compact. Similarly, the IFC projects both connect and obscure individual messages, depending on the digital narrative perceived. Germano Celant (1985) also wrote of the knot as "linked to the notion of complexity and involvement, of condensing and twisting" (n.p.). Celant specifically applies the term knot to a group of artists working together. Susan Kuchler (2001) similarly characterized knotting as both highly scientific and mathematical (as in knot theory), and yet evocative of that which is highly personal. In this way, the communal and interdisciplinary connections of the IFC explored by the individual could be seen as a sort of conceptual knot, or even a network of knots.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS: CRAFT ACTIVISM

As projects like the IFC revitalize and reinvent craft processes, they also join makers within new communities. Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard (2002) have noted that "artist-organizers . . . collaborate with others to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts and communications media, while building cultural capacity and contributing to social change" (p. 8). They specify that community may be delineated by geography, common interest, and identity. In this way, Marsh's projects through the IFC create particularly valuable examples of individual and communal social change through socially-conscious and politically symbolic craft techniques of fiber. It is my belief that educators should seek such projects within classroom teaching, for they bridge many academic subjects and uniquely human experiences across geographies and identities. Black and Burisch (2010) have also asserted that "key features of craftivism include: participatory projects that value democratic processes, the use of various cross-disciplinary media, and an ongoing commitment to politicized practices, issues, and actions " (p. 614). The current IFC Rocket Project particularly emphasizes interdisciplinary connections of science and art through space exploration, and also evokes the social and cultural history of astronauts and NASA in the news, literature, and personal identifications.

The IFC meaningfully balances this focus on social issues with individual interpretations. As Ellen Gates Starr (2010) has observed of collaborative work in art history, "only now are we learning, partly from dismal experience of life barren of beauty and variety . . . that no man can execute artistically what another man

plans, unless the workman's freedom is a part of the plan" (p. 156). In Marsh's IFC projects, both the planning and the execution are thoroughly collaborative, from soliciting project ideas from previous participants, to communal installation and shared digital documentation. I have also wondered how Jennifer Marsh and the IFC change the face of public art such as the monumental works of the Christos', even as they occupy a similar framework. While the late Jeanne-Claude was denied full artistic credit for the work early on the Christos' career, we may also argue that the workers and volunteers were largely uncredited as well. Through the collaborative and the engaged social networks of blogs, nings, and personal sites, any participating artist in the IFC can be known to a viewer. In fact, the Collaborative itself is often more recognizable than Marsh's individual name.

As M. Anna Fariello and Paula Owen (2004) has observed, "without a credible and unambiguous theoretical basis, the craft establishment is doomed to drift between commercialism and romanticism, while young artists remain unaware of their craft antecedents" (p. 32). The IFC creates much-needed artistic and social spaces for many individuals to experience craft, community, and social change as personal and collaborative endeavors between artists and their communities. Elisa Auther (2010) has observed that "indie culture's elevation of the handmade and . . . the values of the environmental movement and activism surrounding globalization, both of which position craft or the homemade object as an anti-consumerist, ecologically sustainable, even ethical practice" (p. 173). DIY culture and craft community projects such as the IFC can revisit craft history and also revitalize contemporary craft cultures as socially and artistically relevant.

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JENNIFER MARSH & COURTNEY WEIDA

5. REMIXED/UNSTITCHED DIGITAL COMMUNITIES OF CONTEMPORARY CRAFT[1]

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How will you use digital sites of craft to plan projects, document them, or aid your students' processes of making?
2. What resources and message boards are common choices among your students? Which might be referenced or included in your teaching and how? (Consider etsy, wikispaces, instructibles, deviantArt, and others)
3. Are there any sites you would discourage students from using? What alternates exist among instructibles, TeacherTube, TEDTalks, etc.?

"There is no doubt that the future belongs to the virtual spaces of craft."(Sandra Alfoldy, 2007 in NeoCraft: modernity and the crafts)

Craftspeople who teach may well ask how online networking sites for crafts define can complement and enhance physical communities of contemporary crafts. Communities of people working with studio craft media might seem unlikely digital natives, however, Internet forums for craftspeople are expanding. (A few examples include etsy.com, craftzine.com, and craftster.com.) In many ways, web forums such as message boards and tutorials offer alternative social and teaching spaces. Web dialogues, exchanges, and collaborations also provide participants with opportunities to reclaim and/ or revise artistic identities and conceptions of past and present craft communities. Craft (as I have seen it defined online) encompasses a range of traditionally-created works from embroideries, to quilting, to knitting, to hand-made cards, to crochet, to ceramics, and jewelry. While craft contextually extends to a variety of artistic projects and products, this essay will primarily address (1) my own experiences of digital community as a ceramicist and (2) social networking in digital craft sites my students have discussed.

CRAFT CONNECTIONS

My status as a potter and ceramic sculptor affords me an extended liminality not only within ceramics, but also in art and craft; for ceramics typically engages the real and imagined borderlines (borderlands) of the two areas. Although I have studied and

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taught at six universities, I also have been a student at Haystack Mountain School of Craft and become engaged in learning about craft traditions and digital spaces of contemporary craft. My own role as a ceramic artist gives me the flexibility and indeterminacy of being a craftsperson (and/or an artist), while my dual roles as ceramicist and professor also engages some tensions and hierarchies of traditional forms of education (such as those ceramics techniques passed down through families and workshops) with more standardized and formalized ones of the universities (such as formalized studio and methods courses). For this reason and others, my writing on the area of craft speaks from within and without various communities. As a ceramic artist, I have come to believe that the earthy, physical processes in the ceramic studio can be oddly parallel to those undertaken in the virtual, digital realms of my computer. I might sculpt, burnish, and glaze ceramics during the same hour, engaging with different works of art at different stages of completion. Meanwhile, at my computer, I find myself using my word processor to plan out my ideas; dabbling in Photoshop to format images, and keeping several "tabs" open in my web browser to look at ceramic art history, pottery quotes, and/or other possibilities to inspire making processes. My studio-based and computer-based projects are often undertaken simultaneously, with many various parts evolving with different paces, places, and phases. This layered evolution coincides with what Sherry Turtle (Director of MIT's Initiative on Technology and Self) called an enlargement of the "thinking space" through the "dynamic, layered display" of the computer (1996, p. 29). For many craftspeople, the social networking of the computer is fluidly linked with more physical artistic processes. Technologist and philosopher, David Weinberger, (2002) also commented on the relationship between the physical and the virtual in relationship to corporeality, "the bodiless Web reminds us of the bodily truths we have always lived." (p. 142). While the Web does not connect us with tactile spaces of a ceramics studio, knitting circle, woodshop, or other physical craft places directly, it does reflect and reference materials and spaces of craft continually. Although the studio itself is often a quiet and tactile place with unspoken poetry, the web communicates itself with a wide array of words and images. In other words, it expresses visually and discursively. However, the language with which we express ourselves online may be casual, personal, lengthy or short, and the space is perhaps more democratically communal and communally expressive than a traditional studio craft workshop. For example: in lieu of the biographical sentences I included above, I might represent myself in a short blurb online: (potter, craftswoman, professor), or simply include an image and academic profile.

While there may be a different poetic for expressions of identity online and in the studio, some connections can be made to the tactile experiences of using a computer and engaging with crafts. Malcolm McCullough (1998), a researcher of craft and digital technology, noted how the repetitive movements typing and clicking with the computer can be comparable to craft. I have often found myself similarly soothed by the repeated motions of weaving reeds or wires into baskets as those of following threads of thought online to form questions and ideas. In this way, the relationships

between weaving a basket and meaningfully making one's way through craft sites and communities become more apparent.

CRAFTING SPACES

When weaving through the digital cultures of ceramics and other crafts with which I both observe and take part, I am always intrigued by the (re)conceptualizations of space and community that existed among groups. Space remains a key aspect of web communities as defined by their titles. I went from Craft Ark to Craft Church to New Orleans Craft Mafia. The look, feel, and function of a Craft Church in your web browser can be very different than that of a Craft Mafia–and this naming allows the digital forums important distinctions in the same way that university studios may differ from casual workshops. Words, fonts, backgrounds, colors, and images can give each communal space a very different feel. While some of these communities do not continually or solely exist socially in physical space (rather the connection is found online), groups may still perceive their socialization as taking place in a space and defend their rights to define and delineate their space. The Church of Craft website elucidates some of its many (and changing) roles as place, concept, and object:

The Church of Craft could be seen as a giant piece of art. Performance art of the very best kind, where the people involved don't always know that they are making art. The kind of art that is endless and endlessly meaningful, that generates discussion and prompts action. Art that is deeply personal and yet rooted in the world. And if you see the Church that way I wouldn't argue with you, and neither would many of its members or, indeed, its ministers. But the Church is also real—the kind of real that doesn't need quotes or capital letters. The Church of Craft is, without irony or disclaimer, a church. (www.churchofcraft.org, 2006)

It may be noted that this mission statement has since changed. Indeed, the mission of groups such as these are more frequently subject to change than real-time organizations such as schools and arts centers. This perhaps suggests the fluidity and freedom of an online space in comparison to a physical one. Other groups alter their name or mission to reflect the specific identities of the members, such as listings of crafts by men, or explorations of the connections of feminism and women's work in the craft.

There is sometimes a gendered aspect of engaging with webspace that persists from earlier times. Sherry Turkle (1995) has written that in the recent past, some folks "identified being a woman with all that a computer is not, and computers with all that a woman is not." She goes on to argue that "the emerging culture of simulation becomes increasingly associated with negotiational and nonhierarchical ways of thinking" (p. 56). Meanwhile, Mary Hawkesworth (2010), has written of globalization and gender, noting the importance of making gender visible (p. 3). In digital craft communities, the choice to assert one's female identity is often prominent in declarations of space such as the "craft grrl community" or "knitter

girl community." From my perspective, this sometimes reflects a certain revision of women's historical membership in arts and crafts communities as well as an honoring of tradition, for it asserts women's presence in the crafts in relationship and continuum with the past, but does so in a technology rich forum not always historically available to women. Helen Sterk and Annelies Knoppers (2010) have investigated the spaces between "hardware and software, those two reductive senses of how humans live out gender, in a space that honors both individual humans and communal living" (p. xiv). Their sense of space shows the complex and fluid relationship between physical identity, digital community, and gender. While individual artists and craftspeople may certainly benefit individually from crafting their identities through crafts learning environments online, there are a variety of unique social situations created around web communities of craft pertaining to the process of making itself that also redefine social hierarchies. From web theorists Michael Hauben and Ronda Hauben's (1997) perspective the Net offers both a "bottom up" redesign of social frameworks as well as inviting more "intellectual activity" than is typically encouraged offline. Certainly some digital forums may serve as counter-culture for art studio spaces, providing alternative types of time and space for personal reflection and inquiry than might be encouraged in a studio. I have observed some hierarchy of craft that exists between crafting sites that cater to those who create crafts as hobbies and sites that identify as relating to "professional" craft. Sites like the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design are more academically-focused and approach the sociological, art historical, and other research-related aspects of craft practice. Such university-affiliated sites can also seem comparatively ambiguous about their membership and goals, addressing both academic researchers and craftspeople working outside of university settings.

CONTEXTUALIZING CRAFTS

Some craft communities view themselves as antithetical to historical notions of craft and aim to redefine themselves artistically and socially. One site, Craftster.com, boasts that it is intended for visitors who "love to make things but who are not inspired by cross-stitched home sweet home plaques and wooden boxes with ducks in bonnets painted on." Other articles, found on Almostgirl.coffeespoons.org, addressed "Renegade Crafters," as web-savvy craftspeople who employ unexpected or unconventional craft techniques such as embroidering a skateboard, creating an illuminated ("light-up") tank top, and/or weaving an iPod cozy. There is also an important linguistic concern in the terms we use to describe craft, from "studio craft," to "fine craft," to "craftsmanship in art," to "artisan crafting," and on to other overlapping derivatives. These definitions imply and engage hierarchical relationships and varying levels of status, digital crafts communities perhaps uniquely re-define, re-create, and even create new and alternative categories.

Craft objects have utilitarian meaning, as a potholder or quilt does, but the functionality is updated along with changing day-to-day needs. Additionally, these

craft items often have personally relevant, subversive, ironic, and/or political messages within their forms or shapes. For example, we find knitted dolls and Japanese amigurumi that are monsters instead of more neutral cuddly figures or embroideries that proclaim "I have my period." These objects are not uniform alongside items of the same function and traditional stitch, but individually express the personality and opinions of the maker. Additionally, they often merge traditional objects with popular and consumer culture, suggesting a critical awareness of consumption. Given that the crafts do not occupy the space they once did in family homes and workplaces, the web also offers a revised and altered space for learning and display of this traditional work. Critic Charles Bernstein(2000) asserted,

> I want to contrast the solitary conditions of viewing a work on a computer screen, my posture fixed, my eyes ten inches form the image, with the physicality of looking at a painting or sculpture in a large room, moving around it, checking it out from multiple views, taking in its tactile surface, its engagement with my thoughts. (p. 183)

There often is, on the other hand, a contextual enlargement of the craft object itself when a scarf or piece of pottery can be viewed alongside the biography of the maker, a tale of its creation, and the commentary of the artist's peers. A computer can be a limiting screen or lens of vision, and some networking sites allows us to disclose our identities in limited, imaginative, or even false ways. (One might "try on" different titles and affiliations in these spaces that would not be believable in physical space.) But more importantly, craft communities are often spaces to engage us with the person who makes a craft item and a variety of supplementary information not typically included when purchasing or viewing a hand-made utilitarian item. This might include narratives about the use of a scarf or piece of furniture, images of the maker and their homes, and additional commentary that links the object and its design with the identity of the craftsperson. As Turkle (1984) has written, computers can "play an important role in human development . . . allow[ing] us to see ourselves from the outside, and to objectify aspects of ourselves we had only perceived from within" (p. 155). In this way, both the artist and the viewer can engage in ongoing dialogue with the work, with contextual information online, and with one another, from different spaces and times that would be difficult to accomplish within a particular physical space and time.

McCullough (1998) has argued «networks make artifacts more transmissible, and provide more settings for comparisons and discussions of practice, than do their grassroots traditional craft counterparts." (p. 270). Echoing this notion, some of the folks I have met who work within online knitting groups mentioned that they feel as if they know crafting podcast personalities (those who produce internet radio shows about crafts such as NeoCraft) better than television celebrities. This is accomplished via crafting podcasters' shared techniques, images, and other information published through the Web. This information engages viewers with an array of different contexts of the objects and emphasizes the maker perhaps as much as the art object.

In contrast, is rare for a gallery show or exhibit to invite and host such extensive information and discussion of artistic process as the web enables. I would venture to note that craft galleries are the only real/physical world spaces that might compare with digital sites in this regard. Craft researcher Bruce Metcalf (2007) noted "craft retains one crucial opposition stance [in that] the hand-made object is widely understood as the antithesis of mass-produced anonymity" (p. 21). I have found that there is indeed a notable outreach, or community-based element to many online craft communities. For example, craftzine.com features outreach projects for community service. Ceramic artists in particular may be familiar with the Craft Emergency Relief Fund, which has come to the aid of artists whose pottery studios have been destroyed by fire or natural disaster. Similarly, Craft Alliance Community features a website and states its program goal as bringing arts to "everyone, regardless of economic circumstance." Internet theorist Judy Breck (2006) muses on the connection of virtuality and such visionary thinking, theorizing the word virtual as "something . . . that is imaginary or hypothetical" (p. 11). Similarly, Sandra Alfoldy (2007) asserted, "the idea of utopia remains central to our understanding of the crafts" (p. 157). There is an openness to these online sites that is imaginative, visionary, and full of possibility because these sites are always comfortably unfinished and evolving. Our hopes for students can also include opening up dialogues in a fluid way, through such exercises as this remixed and reconceptualized research.

CRAFTING COMMUNICATION; COMMUNICATING CRAFT

While ceramics communities and other craft communities are on the one hand simply social groups where artistic sharing, technical conversations, and critiques occur; the social interaction may be uniquely asynchronous and visitors may even "lurk" or visit a site without making one's presence known as in the physical world. One might even question my role as researcher within these contexts, as "user," "viewer," and "maker." These varying levels of participation provides an interesting individuality within the craft community. McCollough (1998) observed that "operating a computer may then seem less like sitting alone with a machine and more like entering a world of action in which you are the narrator" (p. 136). In this way, one's journey as an online observer is not self-conscious in the same way physical journeys through art or craft environments may be, in the sense of observable presence. A protagonist in the realm of online crafting may experience greater autonomy, creating their own pathways and processes where the amount of feedback and input from others is self-selected (as opposed to some studios and galleries of the physical world in which critique can be difficult to avoid.) On the other hand, the anonymity that is easily obtained may not always be desirable. As a craftsperson who exhibits artwork in web galleries, seeks professional development online, and teaches online art classes; reconstructing my persona and representing my work in each space can be at times more tiring and repetitive than appearing physically and speaking verbally. Balancing community and individuality seems

to be a skill that those learning crafts techniques online are apt to pursue. From my perspective, this may suggest that a new skill set of identity construction and re-construction is engaged within digital forums. The unified theory of the Web argued that such "web conversations . . . aren't just multi-threaded; they're hyper-threaded." (p. 67). This interweaving of conversational time and space allows us to ask basic questions or go on craft tangents without breaking the etiquette and flow of real-time conversations. In this way, the web can offer both a unique space and a new approach to craft education. Broader definitions of teaching and learning may embrace the fluid nature of craftspeoples' work in interactions in which a diverse group of crafters of can share all sorts of information through questions, answers, and comments difficult to maintain through real-world community gatherings. Additionally, As Malcolm McCullough (1998) has written "in the unusual event that a master takes time out to articulate a craft, the result seldom takes a well-established literary form" (p. xvi). Certainly, the image-heavy and conversational tone of shared patterns, themes, projects, and other creative expressions is unorthodox in format and yet may be approached with interest and usage extending possibilities of traditionally-published text with specific expectations such as those relating to language, length, and content.

While craft communities are transformed and re-created by web communities, craft forms themselves may reflect both computer technologies and the craft communities they enable. Sarah Kettley, a jewelry artist, has been interested in how jewelry wearing is experienced as a researcher and a maker. Her work engages the concept of a wearable computer, using LEDs and radio transmissions to alter the appearance of the jewelry. A sort of trace of meetings with other jewelry wearers is revealed in the light display, bringing about a visual representation of social interactions. Kettley's recent work explores knitted garments equipped with sensors to be worn while playing the cello, which can manipulate and enhance the resulting sound in interesting ways.

CRAFT CONCLUSIONS

Within various sites of craft explored here, a merging of the cultures of traditional craft makers and those of new technology users are taking place. Personal may become public, and much can be adapted and exchanged within various threads of connection. For example, the World Wide Knit in Public Day is advertised online through groups such as New York's Craftaholics, but culminates in a very physical, and arguably political act of public crafting. While the Web may often be a space that reflects and represents (re-presents) personal and communal visions of craft practice, it is also its own locale for creative forms of publication in craft as well as an enlarged view of the craft process and contexts in contemporary society. Given that the crafts do not occupy the roles and locations that they once did, the web also offers a distinctive and contemporary space for learning and display of this traditional work. For teaching artists and their students, it becomes important to

think about the fluidity in which craft's identity, along with the identity of the maker is both reclaimed and revised in exciting and problematic ways within digital spaces. Metaphorically, learning dialogues taking place between tradition and innovation are parallel to the interplay of craft and digital technology.

NOTE

[1] An earlier version of this research was published and presented as part of the National Art Education Association's http://digitalcommunitiesofcontemporarycraft.blogspot.com/2010/05/re-mixed-and-unstitched-subversively.html

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DIANE CARACCIOLO

6. CRAFTING INNER SPACE

Guided Visualizations for the Creative Classroom

INTRODUCTION

For contemporary educators, the creative imagination is perhaps one of our most urgently needed and underdeveloped tools. Embedded as we are in a highly visual age, it is ironic that working consciously with the inner canvas of the mind's eye remains a remarkably untapped source of inspiration. Crafting mental images demands strong powers of concentration and patient contemplation. Artists and scientists alike understand the role of imaginative consciousness in embodying their visions. Teachers as well can tap into this consciousness by exploring its playful and profound depths through the storytelling technique of guided visualization.

Guided visualizations are one means to coax forth our creative images, which can then be embodied through the crafting of spoken and written words as well as objects. Visualizations are most effective when they arise from the teacher's own awakened imagination rather than from a memorized or read aloud script. For this reason, teachers should take every opportunity to exercise and strengthen their own imaginations. The exercises in this chapter offer one avenue. They are adopted for classroom learning from the professional acting technique of Michael Chekhov (1991), who wrote,

> For artists with mature imaginations, images are living beings, as real to their minds' eyes as things around us are visible to our physical eyes. Through the appearance of these living beings, artists "see" an inner life. They experience with them their happiness and sorrows; they laugh and cry with them and they share the fire of their feelings. (p. 4)

STRENGTHENING EXERCISE

Strengthening concentration and memory help ignite the imagination. Even the most traditional teacher would have difficulty arguing that these capacities are

C.L. Weida (Ed.), Crafting Creativity & Creating Craft, 45–52.
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insignificant aspects of successful learning. They can be directly addressed through simple guided visualizations that serve as short warm ups to the more extended imagination work. The prompts delineated in the exercise boxes that follow are meant as examples. Teachers should feel free to create original wording, detail, and content to meet their needs. Try to speak slowly, clearly, and calmly, and to permit enough time in between prompts for students to complete the mental picturing being elicited. A natural flow of words and timing will come with practice. The questions are not meant to be answered out loud, but are presented to guide and focus the student's attention.

Concentration Exercises with a Physical Object

Concentrate on a simple natural object such as an apple or a stone or a hand crafted object such as a mug, a scarf, or a glass ornament. The objects must be physically present for this exercise.

Prompts: (The word "object" below can be replaced with the name of the actual object being used for this exercise.)

Look carefully at the object. Try to memorize its details—its surface texture, color, size, and shape. Pick it up. How does it feel in your hand? Does it feel light or heavy? Smooth or rough? Is it cool to the touch? Focus with all your might on this object. Let no other thoughts interfere with your concentration. Now, when you are satisfied that you have taken in as much detail as possible about your object, put it down, and close your eyes. *See* it in your mind's eye. Try to call forth a picture of your object as clearly as though your eyes were open. Try to *grasp* your object with an invisible hand and *feel* its details imprinting themselves on the canvas of your mind. In your own time you can open your eyes and look again at the object and handle it with your physical hands. What details did you leave out when you were looking at the object with your mind's eye? What sensations did you forget when you were holding your object with your invisible hands? Close your eyes again and try to see and feel the object. You can go back and forth between your physical senses and your imaginary senses until you are satisfied that you have imprinted the object's details as much as possible on your mind.

Challenges: After the initial visualization, prompt students to allow the object to "speak" to them---to tell its story about how it was created and where it has been. Students can record their object's story through explorations with materials and/or creative writing.

Concentration Exercise with a Remembered Place

Concentrate on a remembered place that is not physically present.

Prompts: Close your eyes and see your bedroom in your mind's eye. What does it look like? Did you make your bed this morning? What kind of cover do you have on your bed? What color are the sheets? How many pillows do you have on your bed? Is there a window in there? What's outside of the window when you look through it? Now try to find one object in your bedroom to concentrate on. Have you found it? It can be an object that you are very fond of or just something ordinary. Can you lift it in your hand and look at it closely? How large is the object? What color is it? How does it feel in your hand? Is it old or new? Is it a machine made or crafted by hand? How can you tell?

Variations: Places can be anything common to most students—a room in a house, an outdoor space, a shared space in the school, for instance. An interesting variation asks students to concentrate on a place from their past—such as an earlier home or a favorite place they no longer visit. Other, simpler variations include remembered objects without the setting. The point is to call forth the image without access to its actual physical presence. The strengthening aspect is to coax the image forth from the memory alone.

Challenges: Additional sensory prompts, such as smell, taste, and sound can be added to sight and touch. An extended guided visualization from memory work would lead into the area of emotional memory. In this case, you would continue to visualization of the physical place or object to include feelings associated with the place or object. A simple prompt, such as "How do you feel standing in this room? Is this a place of comfort or discomfort for you?" is one way to begin this additional process.

CREATIVE IMAGINATION EXERCISES

Concentration on physically present and remembered objects relies on already created phenomena. When we move into the realm of the creative imagination, we begin to fashion unique mental pictures that are responsive to our own lived experiences, but also capable of taking on new and inventive forms. Exercises in this category are only limited by the ingenuity of the teacher performing the guided visualizations. The following prompts should not limit, but instead stimulate awareness of the manifold and rich possibilities of this domain. The first exercise develops flexibility in our crafting of mental images. According to Chekhov (1991), our images should "follow their own logic freely, inspiring, suggesting, and enriching us at the same time" (p.12).

Reversals and Transformation of Images

Concentrate on transforming and reversing an image.

Prompts

Reversing an image: Imagine pouring tea from a teapot. First see the teapot in your mind's eye. What color is it? What is it made of? Is it delicate or sturdy? Chipped or brand new? Now see it tip gently over and allow the tea to flow out into a tea cup. What color is the tea? Is it steaming hot or lukewarm? Once the cup is filled, reverse the movement and watch the tea as it flows backward into the pot.

Transforming an image: Imagine a small hut transforming into a beautiful castle and back again. First see the hut in your mind's eye. What is it made of? Stone perhaps, or wood? How tall is it? What shape is the doorway? Does it have any windows? Now imagine that the hut is slowly being transformed into a beautiful castle. How do the walls grow and change? Follow the roof as it rises upward into the sky and grows into a magnificent structure. See how the door becomes a splendid entranceway to the castle. What shape is the final building? See all the details of windows and doorways and elaborate decoration in your mind's eye. And now imagine that the castle is slowing transforming back into the original small hut. See the walls shrink back and the roof move downward. What else changes along the way?

IMAGINARY JOURNIES

Leading students on "imaginary journeys" offers one vehicle for inspiring the creative imagination. The journey motif is effective for guided visualizations because it offers a simple storytelling structure within which your listeners can freely create settings, characters, and challenges to overcome. Imaginary journeys can be a playful motivation for story creation, improvisations, and materials explorations. The following prompt models a basic format that can be endlessly elaborated upon. It begins by establishing a relaxing and receptive listening mode. As the journey continues, listeners are encouraged to create pictures of their own invention. As you revisit the initial structure, encourage your students to feel free to discard images that appear stereotypical or lifted from popular culture. There is no need to hold onto their first images. The creative process involves flexibility and revision. Gently guide your students to be inventive rather than imitative.

Prompt: Imagine you are walking down a pleasant, sunlit path through the woods. The weather is just right. You can feel the sun's warmth on your face, shoulders, and back as you move further down the path. Perhaps a gentle breeze touches your cheek. Listen for the sounds below your feet and in the branches above you as you move on. What do you hear? Try to imagine the varied sounds and scents carried by the breezes around you. Are you near the ocean, or in the mountains? In a pine woods? What do the scents tell you about your environment? How does the path feel under your feet? Is it soft, pebbly? Damp or dry? Bend down and touch the surface with your hand. How does it feel? As you move further you will see a clearing in the canopy of trees before you. Looking through the opening you see in the near distance a house. Try to see in your mind's eye all of the details of this house. How large is it? How many floors does it have? Is it modern or old-fashioned? What do the grounds surrounding the house look like? Are they well-kept or overgrown? Try to see all of the details of the house and its grounds. Now walk further down the clearing and approach the house until you are standing right before the front door. Push open the door and go inside. What do you see? Take note in your mind's eye of the furnishings and decorations, colors and objects. There is one door across the way, which, in a moment, will open for you. As this door opens a person is going to walk across the room and exit through another door. Focus all of your attention on this person as she or he moves across the floor. Now the door opens. What do you see? How old is this person? What is she or he wearing? How does this character move across the floor? Does this person see you, say anything to you? Take some time and focus on this action, trying to see in as much detail as possible. (This prompt is adapted from Caracciolo, D. & Wallowitz, L. (2009). Reawakening a sense of play through theater. *Encounter*, 22, (3), 21-25.)

Elaborations: The above sequence can be revisited and elaborated upon. For instance, once the student has invented a single character, additional characters as well as settings can be created using the same process of guided visualization. A small village and cast of characters can be crafted from this exercise. Students can discuss various challenges and conflicts that can arise in their invented village and work out resolutions singly or in groups. The journey can take them through manifold landscapes, real and imagined and address a multitude of conflicts and challenges. You can follow up a series of guided visualizations that build one upon the other over a period of several days with an exercise in the embodiment of images. For instance, perhaps one of the characters in the village has a treasured object. Describe its appearance. Where did it come from? How was it acquired? Where is it kept? Is it on display or hidden away in a secret place? After guiding your students with a series of evocative questions about the object, you can ask them to sketch it and then embody it through materials explorations.

EVERYDAY CLASSROOM USES

It is not difficult to see how guided visualizations can lead to different creative avenues in the classroom. They can be as simple as opening lesson "hooks" to engage learners in a new topic. In an elementary science lesson, for instance, a simple guided visualization can be used to introduce the four seasons or the growth of a sunflower from seed through blossom and back again to seed. Any phenomenon that undergoes a process of unfolding through time is ideal for guided visualization. For this reason, social studies is a rich source of guided visualizations that can be structured as short narratives, such as pivotal moments in history, descriptions of locations, and events in the life of a person living in a particular era. Zazkis & Liljedahl (2009) point to the use of mathematical storytelling to captivate learners otherwise disenchanted by the bare bones of mathematical content. In their book, *Teaching Mathematics as Storytelling,* the authors emphasize the use of vivid imagery to add color and life to a range of classroom practices such as introducing a concept, explaining a rule, and solving a problem.

In language arts, they can be used as pre-reading exercises to introduce the setting, character, and/or conflict in a text about to be read. Such imaginative pre-reading work is particularly helpful when a text is difficult because it provides an experience that begins to render the unfamiliar more familiar. For instance, take your students on an imaginary journey to encounter the three witches from *Macbeth* or the enchanted forest in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Before they ever open the book, they will feel as though they have been there. Isn't this one reason many teachers turn to film in literature classrooms—to provide a more direct, visceral experience of a text when students have difficulty creating these images through reading alone. Evocative guided visualizations will show students how to awaken their own inner cinematographer and help them generate images while reading. One of the discoveries Wilhelm (1997) made in his study of struggling readers was that "reading is seeing." (p.113).

Rather than addressing visual learners with PowerPoint presentations and video clips alone, you can help students craft their own mental images of the processes, settings, and stories they will encounter in a lesson. You will not only be supporting their content understandings, you will also be strengthening their capacity for concentration, attentiveness, mental picturing, and creativity. Guided visualizations in the classroom are also great stress relievers, allowing everyone, including the teacher, to breathe more deeply before transitioning to the next effort.

PROJECT-BASED WORK

In addition to serving as opening hooks and transitions, guided visualizations can inspire more fully realized projects that extend over several weeks. Students can work in collaborative groups to embody their invented characters and settings through improvisation, script writing, storytelling, music, movement, and materials explorations. A combination of these activities can speak to the needs of different

learners if the teacher creates a variety of roles that address diverse learning styles and interests. Some students become performers, visual designers, script writers, directors, or record keepers, for instance. Students and their teachers can conclude storytelling units with a culminating festival where students perform and exhibit their creations, embracing the wider community in a celebration of the fundamentally human capacity for imagination.

RESOURCES

What follows is a list of texts that offer resourceful teachers springboards for using story to inspire their own guided visualizations and other creative activities.

Booth, D. (2005). *Story drama: Creating stories through role playing, improvising, and reading aloud.* Portland, ME: Pembroke Publishers.

Storyteller David Booth offers a wealth of activities to engage the imagination through role-playing and story. Filled with specific examples from children's literature.

Chekhov, M. 1991. *On the technique of acting*. Revised and edited by M. Gordon. New York: Harper Perennial.

Acclaimed actor and director Michael Chekhov's classic text for actors. The first chapter is called "Imagination and Concentration" and contains specific exercises for developing the creative imagination.

Collins, R., & Cooper, P. J. (1997). *The power of story: Teaching through storytelling*. IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

An engaging and practical description of the educational potential of storytelling. The second half is filled with specific classroom exercises, including guided visualization, which the authors term "guided fantasy."

Fennessey, S. M. (2000). *History in the spotlight: Creative drama and theatre practices for the social studies classroom*. NH: Heinemann.

Wonderfully readable and detailed examples of how to incorporate creative dramatics and literacy into the study of history. The second chapter includes imaginative ways to incorporate objects (artifacts). Excellent resources included.

Heard, G. (1989). *For the good of the earth and sun: Teaching poetry*. NH: Heinemann.

Heard, G. (1999). *Awakening the heart: Exploring poetry in elementary and middle school*. NH: Heinemann.

In these books, poet Georgia Heard offers sensitive, practical and detailed ways for teachers at all levels to engage with the world of poetry.

Heinig, R. B. (1992). *Improvisation with favorite tales: Integrating drama into the reading/writing classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Organized by popular fairy tales, Henig provides a range of imaginative exercises and related activities.

Matthews, P. (1994). *Sing me the creation: A creative writing sourcebook.* UK: Hawthorne Press.

Matthews, P. (2007). *Words in place: Reconnecting with nature through creative writing.* UK: Hawthorne Press.

Written by a poet and creative writing teacher, these expressively written books with their wealth of ideas and exercises contain treasures for those seeking to unlock the doors of the imagination.

Mellon, N. (1998). *Storytelling and the art of imagination*. Cambridge, MA: Yellow Moon Press.

Storyteller Nancy Mellon provides a wealth of exercises to encourage the imaginative exploration of ancient archetypes and symbols for healing and self-development.

Perrow, S. (2008). *Healing stories for challenging behavior*. Gloucestershire, UK: Hawthorne Press.

Written by a "story doctor" this book provides guidance in the understanding of stories as healing arts forms. Many examples and instructions.

Polsky, M.E. (1980, 1998). *Let's improvise: Becoming creative, expressive & spontaneous through drama*. NY: Applause

This book is filled with imaginative exercises. The first chapter has extended examples of guided visualizations combined with creative movement exercises—the "fantasy trip."

Zazkis, R. & Liljedahl, P. (2009). *Teaching mathematics as storytelling.* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

A book filled with mathematical stories and a series of techniques for using storytelling in the mathematics classroom.

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SHARI ZIMMERMAN

7. LESSON PLAN ON TOOLS FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

INTRODUCTION

We use tools in our every day life at home and every occupation uses tools as well. We use a comb for our hair and a toothbrush for our teeth. A carpenter uses a hammer; an artist uses a pencil. Providing an understanding of how to use the proper tool for a job is important in understanding and establishing skills for ADL (activities of daily life) is paramount for these students to learn and reinforce. The TDL (tools of daily life) that are used are equally as important in their curriculum. It is also important to develop an understanding and establish skills for vocational occupations. This lesson will provide an opportunity to become familiar with a variety of occupations and tools (TDL) for ADL and vocations while creating ceramic artwork. It will also introduce an appreciation of artwork by Jim Dine. Dine used a variety of tools of different vocations in his artwork.

Objectives

Students will discuss, learn and understand:
What are tools of activities of daily life?
What are vocational tools?
How vocational tools are used.
Who uses these tools?
They will build fine motor skills by understanding the techniques and procedures for creating a "tool" tile from clay.
They will view artwork created with tools.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

Art Skills

Students will learn and discuss:

– How to roll out a clay slab.
– How a tool is pressed into the clay to
– Recognize examples of tools

C.L. Weida (Ed.), Crafting Creativity & Creating Craft, 53–56.
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– How to safely use tool
– Procedures, materials, techniques, and tools for painting a clay tile.

Life Skills

Students will learn and discuss:

– How tools for activities of daily life are used
– How to cut a shape from the clay slab
– How vocational tools are used
– Recognize examples of tools
– Safety using tools
– Reinforce cutting skills
– Improve fine motor skills

Enduring Questions

What?
What is a tool?
What are specific tools? (i.e. Toothbrush, Comb, Hammer, screwdriver, rolling pin etc.)
What is a clay slab?
What do you use a tool for working with clay/art?
What is the difference using a tool for ADL and a tool for creating artwork?
How?
How can I create a slab of clay?
How do you use a tool?
How can I tell the difference between two tools?
Why?
Why do we use tools?
Why is it important to use certain tools for a specific job?
Why is it important to use tools safely?
When?
When is it important to use tools safely?
When do you use tools for art?
When does a (occupation, i.e. carpenter) use (name of tool, i.e. hammer) or (draw?) (brush teeth?)

Materials and Tools
Examples of art tools, vocational tools and ADL tools
Clay/Clay tools
Paint/Brushes/Water containers
Toothbrush/Comb/Spoon etc

Lesson Procedure
- Show and examine examples of tools
- Visit carpentry, custodian, kitchen etc to understand who uses tools,

when they are used and how they are used.

- Discuss who, what, when, how tools are used; students will be allowed to handle and examine a variety of tools.
- Sketchbook: Students will trace a variety of tools and color them.
- Demonstrate techniques and procedure for using clay tools
- Students will learn the procedure for rolling a clay slab
- Students will cut a clay slab.
- Students will use tools to create a clay slab tile with an impressed tool.
- Students will paint the fired tile.
- Students will create tools of daily life on tiles with at least 3 different vocations/ADL's.

Modifications/Accommodations
Adaptive tools and equipment will be made available or modified as necessary.
Student worksheets will be typed in a large font for those students with visual needs.
The questions and students' answers will be repeated.
Extra time will be allowed for the students to process the questions and answers.
All students will be encouraged to participate, take their time and do their best.
There will be break time built in for those students who need time away from the lesson.
The teacher and teacher assistant will assist any student who may need further explanation and/or extra support

Vocabulary

Art
Slab Impression Color Mixing
Clay Painting

Life skills
Tools Occupation/Job Safety Activities of Daily Life

Assessment
Artwork will be displayed in in school gallery.
Clay tiles will be used to create a permanent display around classroom door.
Students will understand the materials, procedures and techniques.
Students will participate in a class critique to foster communication skills.
Students will respond critically to examples of art to foster communication skills.

Students will respond critically to artwork created in class foster communication skills.
Class or individual review of materials, techniques and procedures.
Students will answer questions based on the day's activity for understanding.
Discussion: What did you like the best, worst, what do you want to do next time? What tool did you use in class today?

Extension
Fine motor skill exercises,
View artwork of Jim Dine. Dine's artwork depicts and incorporates tools used in many occupations. This will help reinforce students' personal experiences with tools of daily life (ADL), vocational tools and occupations.

RESOURCES

http://www.nassaumuseum.com/exhibits_jimdine_pinocchio.php[ECE3]
http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=81620
Images of personal care, kitchen, carpentry, custodial etc. tools

SHARI ZIMMERMAN

8. LESSON PLAN FOR HANDMADE ART CARDS

INTRODUCTION

This lesson will invite students to create greeting cards for an actual business: *Sweet Art Cards.* It was developed for the high school REACH art curriculum in New York. This lesson is modified for special needs, to integrate the REACH Lifeskills curriculum with visual art experiences to enhance mainstream opportunities. The lesson will include connections to core curriculum topics such as math, social studies, ELA and science. Connections to the Lifeskills curriculum will include lessons to enhance students' motor, social and technology abilities. The curriculum recognizes the New York State Alternate Learning Standards for the Arts, ELA, Science, Math, and Social Studies.

The custom of exchanging greeting cards can be traced as far back as the ancient Egyptian culture. The Chinese included written greetings along with gifts to celebrate the New Year. In Europe, as early as the 1400's Valentine cards were exchanged. In the mid 1850's the greeting card industry was established with holiday and birthday cards. Greeting cards are now a well-established industry even in light of the advancement of technology. People still look for decorative (often hand-made) cards to send to one another to observe special occasions.

Objective

Students will discuss, learn and understand:
Who makes greeting cards?
Where are greeting cards sold?
How do artists create greeting cards?
What is used to make cards?
Who will buy the Sweet Art Cards?

Students will create
Sweet Art Cards that will be sold within the school population

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Enduring Understandings

Art Skills
Students will discuss, learn, understand:

- How artists create greeting cards
- How and where cards are sold
- How to create a greeting card
- Procedures, materials and tools
- for making cards
- Safety rules using art materials and tools

Life Skills
Students will discuss, learn, understand:

- necessary fine motor skills
- eye/hand coordination
- assembly of items
- how to use tools of daily life
- safety rules and procedures

Enduring Questions

What?
What can we make with paper?
What will the paint be used for?
What will the glue be used for?
What do we have at home and use everyday that we can use to make greeting cards?
Who can we send a greeting card to? For what occasion?

How?
How do we assemble the greeting cards with our artwork?
How do we package the greeting cards?
How do we send greeting cards?

Why?
Why do we send greeting cards?
What occasions do we send greeting cards?

When?
When do we send greeting cards?

Materials and Tools

- Paint
- Brushes
- Watercolors
- Watercolor paper
- Colored paper
- Blank Cards/Envelopes
- Glue

Lesson Procedure

- Use visuals to discuss how greeting cards are made
- Show and examine different examples of different types of greeting cards
- Discuss where and how we use greeting cards
- Demonstrate techniques and procedure for creating and assembling greeting cards

Modifications/Accommodations

Adaptive tools and equipment will be made available or modified as necessary.
Student worksheets will be typed in a large font for those students with visual needs.
The questions and students' answers will be repeated.
Extra time will be allowed for the students to process the questions and answers.
All students will be encouraged to participate, take their time and do their best.
There will be break time built in for those students who need time away from the lesson.
The teacher and teacher assistant will assist any student who may need further explanation and/or extra support.

Assessment

Sweet Art Cards will be sold to the school population.
Artwork will be displayed in classroom and showcases.
Students will understand the materials, procedures and techniques.
Students will participate in a class critique.
Students will respond critically to examples of art.
Students will respond critically to artwork created in class.
Class or individual review of materials, techniques and procedures
Students will answer questions based on today's activity for understanding.
Group discussion: what did you like the best, worst, what do you want to do next time?

Vocabulary

Art tools: water, watercolor, watercolor paper, glue, assembly
Life skills: greeting cards, assembly, fine motor skills

Extensions
Developing communication skills
Organizing items
Color coordination

RESOURCES

Visuals and/or actual greeting cards
Art tools and supplies
http://www.greetingcard.org[ECE4]

NANYOUNG KIM

9. CONCEPTUAL, BIOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ANALYSES OF CRAFT

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

This chapter explores the status of crafts through conceptual, biological, and historical analyses in order to understand current practices and to envision future development. Among art fields, crafts have been considerably downgraded compared with fine arts or design. This occurred in professional craft fields as well as in K-12 (Kindergarten to 12th grade) art classrooms, especially in the latter part of the twentieth century. Why did this happen? Couldn't there be any other way? The obvious reason for their downfall is that machines now produce most things that were formerly made by craftspeople with their hands. If that is the only reason, why do crafts not disappear completely? Is there any hope to revive craft practices?

In this chapter, I will first start with a conceptual analysis of the usage of "craft," categorize three fields of crafts, investigate the evolutionary ground of crafts, and finally survey historical influences on professional craft fields. As a professor of future elementary teachers and design instructor for non-art major college students, I now realize that I have been teaching what crafts have to offer, so I will share it with other art educators.

COMPONENTS OF CRAFT

Even though answering, "What is craft?" might not be as difficult as defining "What is art?", there are several distinctive aspects of craft that can be considered in order to understand it more clearly. Each aspect may have slightly different histories and applications. In doing so, we can position where craft stood before and where it stands now in the larger picture of society and the art world.

First of all, craft is related to the skill of making something, as the word, "craftsmanship" immediately conjures up in our mind. Indeed the first use of this term was exactly this, but with a negative connotation.[1] We still talk about "crafty" schemes in the sense of plans that are "skillfully, but also cunningly worked out." This skill dimension of craft is what craft shares with many other human activities that require practice to be mastered, such as swimming or tap dancing. Skill in a craft will be manifested in the quality of things made: how well components fit together;

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how details are treated; how well form, material, or way of fashioning serve their function, etc.

Studies of aesthetic responses rarely address what people usually feel when they encounter an exquisitely crafted artwork. It is because these studies focus on Western canonical artworks,[2] or artworks in a museum in which craft is not usually well represented.[3] A response to how skillfully a thing is made may not be a full-fledged aesthetic response, because skill can be applied to anything whether it is artistic or non-artistic. However when skill is applied to crafts in which the final “look” or “feel” is important as well as how it “works,” this matter is not as neutral as it seems.

“Wow, how did they make it?” “It must have taken a long time to make it!” This is what my non-art college students say when they meet an exquisitely fashioned craftwork. People not trained in art tend to focus on this aspect first rather than a formal or some other aspect, but this amazement is such a natural response that we should not disregard it as non-aesthetic or inappropriate: it can be a stepping-stone to investigate and appreciate crafts further.

The skill manifested in the quality of a craft object stirs in us admiration for its maker, imagination about the culture that produced it, and understanding of potential human capability that we only dimly share. We approach human culture through crafts; physics and chemistry of materials, techniques and procedures developed through human ingenuity, and social functions and meanings of the craft item thus produced and used.

This materiality is probably the most important aspect of crafts before the modern machine age. The Western guild system helped to keep high quality of goods by requiring of the artisan a long period of apprenticeship and a rigorous selection process before allowing a mastership in any field. In modern times, skills and methods are written down in books so that anybody can have access to it, but the standard of skill is not as high as in medieval times, since there is no official institution to control it.

The second component of crafts is that they involve human hands. This component of crafts would have become especially salient in the 19th century when machines rapidly substituted human hands in making goods. It is probably the most distinctive characteristic of craft, as in the interchangeable use of the two terms, “handicraft” and “craft.” Even though the 19thcentury art critics deplored the quality of machine-made goods and socialists and communists bewailed the working conditions of factory workers, the availability of goods for lower class people and the subsequent improvement of the quality of life cannot be denied.

Most of the time we expect craftspeople to use simple tools, such as a potter’s wheel or a loom. How about power tools? Even power tools would be accepted as legitimate, as contemporary woodcraft usually employs them. As we can imagine, there will come a time when the scope and kind of non-human agents in making is so extensive that it will cause us wonder whether or not we can call the products crafts. Some accept the manipulation of a computer as a tool for a craft.[4]

I suggest that the next component is the material or the relationship between material and the human hand. Traditional materials are stone, clay, various metals, precious stones, wood, and fibers, or indeed anything you can think of, especially in contemporary studio crafts. Each material has its own physical characteristics, which in turn lend themselves to different treatments and different usages. From the beginning of human history human relationship with those materials has been very close. We characterize a civilization by its major material used in making tools, such as the Stone Age, Bronze Age, or Iron Age, as a mastery of dealing with each material has far-reaching consequences in a society, besides the uses of the items made of the material.

This relationship between material and the human hand seems to have a certain mystery that we do not quite understand. There is a delight in handling material, a sense of cognitive and physical challenge in molding it to our purpose, unmistakable satisfaction when this endeavor is successful, and assertive self-reliance, self-affirmation, or even empowerment when we finally master it. It is as if in the material itself we find a non-human partner with whom we constantly converse about the material world we live in. This interaction may have a calming effect on our psyche, as people often confess that this is how they feel when they are immersed in a craft project.

Because it takes a long time and great effort to master one medium, and the method of handling the material is mostly in handed-down tradition, craftspeople know their position in the history of their trade and therefore are usually humble. This image of the artisan is diametrically opposed to the image of the artist formed in modern times from the Renaissance through Romanticism, which is creative, rebellious, and individualistic. I wonder whether this humble image of the artisan made crafts so unfavorable to modern art education, because modern art education looks upon the adult fine art world as a model. On the other hand, this humble attitude might be the reason why craftspeople easily form communities to share their knowledge and experience.

The craftsperson learns by experience how different materials behave according to different treatments. In many cases, it is tacit knowledge preserved in procedural memory, which cannot easily be put down in words.[5] Our muscles know it and remember it. For this reason, there is very little writing on crafts in the medieval times when crafts were most flourishing: you learn by watching your master working on the craft and by constantly practicing it. It is ironic that writing on craft began when craft itself was disappearing.

The next component can be the utility or functionality of things made by craftspeople. We use them as containers, garments, construction materials, furniture, weapons, and tools. Therefore, this factor is closely related to the material aspect of crafts. Each material is suited to a specific function owing to its inherent physical characteristics. A container could be made either with fired clay, carved wood, or woven reeds, but we use them for holding different things.

Emmanuel Kant in the 18th century is known for his definition of the characteristic of aesthetic experience as "disinterested pleasure" (p. 6). It is our emotional engagement with an object without wanting anything in return. For example, a farmer who wants to buy a tract of land will view the land differently from a traveler who admires its landscape. The farmer has an "interest" in the utility of the land, whereas the traveler's delight is "disinterested." This concept is directly opposite to the utility of crafts, and therefore logically excludes crafts from art.

However, a medieval knight could have enjoyed a knife with an exquisitely carved handle without using it to cut anything, or he may have used it while still admiring its form and decoration. Even humble farmers could be sensitive to the landscape of their land. For hundred of years Tuscan farmers in Italy have planted cypress trees on the hills of their land for aesthetic reasons. The Tuscan countryside is famous for its undulating fields and low hills delineated by the artistic positioning of the cypress and other trees.

It is unfortunate that the utility of crafts itself keeps them from achieving a higher position in society and in the art world, because "disinterested pleasure" does not conflict with utility as our imaginary knight shows. On the other hand, this aspect is an excellent gateway for children to like art, because it is very approachable to them.

The above-mentioned four components of crafts – skill, hand, material, and utility – may be necessary conditions for an artifact to be categorized as a craft item but not sufficient, because when we say, "crafts," we mean implicitly "art crafts." What will make a craft an "art craft"? We discussed "disinterested pleasure" as a defining characteristic of an aesthetic experience. Here we are in danger of being embroiled in a centuries-old debate on the definition of art in aesthetics, because fine arts moved a long way to engender different theories beyond the concept of "disinterestedness." However, historically, at least up to the 19th century, craft was rather straightforwardly related to "ornamentation," "decoration," or "beauty."

"Ornamentation" or "decoration" now has a negative connotation, as the phrase, "This is a mere decoration, not a real thing," would make perfect sense to all of us. It tends to imply superficiality instead of substance and authenticity, sweetness or comfort instead of seriousness and truthfulness, even femininity instead of masculinity. "Beauty" also had disappeared for at least fifty years until it was revived in the 1970s in aesthetic discourse. During the period of Modernism in the twentieth century fine arts became everything but beautiful, while crafts have kept this ideal more or less consistently, unless craft artists consciously align themselves with the fine arts.

The beauty of crafts can be achieved by applying so-called design principles. They are taught in art schools nowadays in foundation design courses before upper level studio courses. Even though establishing such courses as basic for further studies in art is an inheritance of Bauhaus, the first such principles were suggested by Wesley Dow much earlier than Bauhaus. Dow published "Composition," in 1900, in which he suggested five principles of composition: Opposition, transition,

subordination, repetition, and symmetry.[6] Dow was deeply influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement and he drew his examples from the artworks of the world, most of which were crafts and architecture.

There is a set of design principles commonly set forth in design books, such as unity, variety, contrast, balance, and center of focus. Even though these principles, when used together, can produce designs from decent to excellent, they are not physical laws.[7] In a life long pursuit of finding conditions of beauty, Christopher Alexander, an architectural theorist, came up with "fifteen fundamental properties" that give an object "more life." He did it by observing hundreds of art works from all over the world throughout history.[8] Again most of them are craft objects and buildings. This means that design principles are more related to crafts than to fine arts.

The components of craft discussed above – skill, made by hand, material, utility, and beauty – are useful in that they allow us to differentiate crafts from fine arts or design. In the Middle Ages all the later components of fine arts, such as painting, sculpture, and architecture, were considered crafts regulated by each different guild. After fine arts were separated from crafts, all of these criteria were broken down one by one in fine arts areas: utility was eliminated when the concept of "beaux-arts" was born in the 18th century, skill was no longer important from the latter part of the 19th century when academic painting was denounced, the human hand and its relationship with material was gone by the middle of the 20th century with "ready-made," "found objects," "conceptual art," and "happenings." When was beauty no longer the pursuit of fine arts? Noticeably from the movement of Realism in the 19th century, but began earlier from Romanticism, which gave birth of the concept of "sublime" as another powerful ideal for fine arts, besides "beauty" (p. 10).

In design only utility and beauty remain operative, whereas skill, material, human hand are no longer important and are replaced by the machine production. An interesting phenomenon is that in design fields, the term, "design," connotes two different meanings. One is "design" as "beautiful form" similar to the beauty of craft items discussed so far, and we tend to apply it to graphic design fields of typeface, logo, and layout design. "Design" in this sense in modern design fields also includes expressive qualities of abstract design elements, the legacy of Modern Abstract art and the teaching of Bauhaus. For example, to convey a drug company's image of exactness, scientific authority, and professionalism, a graphic designer would use cool colors instead of warm colors, straight lines instead of curved lines.

The other is "design" used as "planning," "devising," or "inventing." This meaning is has a connotation of "creativity," "problem-solving," and is most suitable in product design and architecture. With globalization and the post-industrial nature of contemporary society, "design" with this meaning is all the rage coupled with "creative problem-solving" as a vital force of global economy. This is interestingly related not to "beauty," but to "utility" or even "problem-fining in utility." One example is a new design concept applied to a pair of pepper and salt shakers.

Somebody came up with the idea that the pair did not have to be identical, and now we see the explosion of designs of two small ceramic pieces that are different but somehow thematically related. One such shaker pair is composed of a black dog in the urinating position and a red fire hydrant!

THREE FIELDS OF CRAFT

We can discern three different realms of craft practice: studio crafts, general crafts, and classroom crafts. Even though these three areas overlap somewhat, each area has its own characteristics with its own constituents, ways of practicing, overall style and look, and professed or assumed goals and purposes.

By studio crafts I mean different craft fields that were incorporated in the art schools of universities and colleges. These fields are direct descendants of medieval crafts with s similar aspiration of excellence and seriousness. They include ceramics, jewelry, textile, wood, and glass, the latter two being less common than the former three areas. Book-making was added as a new member in relatively recent times, but is still in an infant stage compared with other craft areas. These are professional fields with their own institutions, methods of communication, ways of propagating knowledge and skill, and standards of practice.

In a craft department of an art school, students are supposed to acquire knowledge and skill in dealing with materials, equipment, and processes, but tend to be encouraged to experiment with new materials and concepts as soon as they achieve a certain level of proficiency. Even though they produce functional pieces, functionality is not the defining characteristic of crafts in art schools: they tend to aspire to be "fine arts." In this sense, studio crafts have all the components cited above, except utility. In addition, some might explicitly pursue the "fine arts" approach adopting issues found in the contemporary art world, therefore focusing on "message" rather than "beauty." A recent phenomenon of "craft activism" is an interesting movement in which, as in fine arts, craftpeople explore the issues of the contemporary world.

However, studio crafts people have to adjust their artistic scope and taste in order to cater to the general public taste to sell their works after their formal training in school. In this way their products merge into general crafts but maintain high standards in their execution and design, if not in taste. There is also a small population of craftspeople who learned their trade in a more traditional way, not through a formal higher education. They are generally not interested in what fine artists do, and focus more on functionality and professional skill. Even though their livelihood may be precarious, they sometimes succeed in forming a community, which in turn provides an artistic ambiance for the general public.

I would like to adopt the term, general crafts, to designate the craft fields many "arts and crafts" stores deal with. The constituency of this realm is the general public (and children) who do not usually have an academic training, but have

interest in practicing a certain craft as a hobby. The kinds of crafts in general crafts are more numerous than studio crafts: they include knitting, painting on wood, beads making, candle making, silk flower arrangement, quilting, sewing, and embroidery (a textile design department may teach knitting, sewing, and embroidery), many of which were once normal domestic practices for everyday life, especially for women.

The list of crafts in this area tends to change over time as new areas are invented and old practices go out of fashion. For example, basket weaving seems to be rarely practiced these days, as we do not see its materials any more in these shops, perhaps because of its long duration of products not compatible to the current pace of the contemporary world or the ready availability of cheap products from third world countries. However, through the Internet, one can buy materials and equipment for less practiced crafts.

Scrapbooking is a recent addition to the list. Even though its history does not go back more than twenty years, it is currently the most flourishing craft field for the general public. Its booming success probably is owed to the commercial potential of its materials such as scrapbooks, stickers, papers, stamps, and containers. Another reason for this development might be that it taps the almost instinctual self-interest of people.

An interesting phenomenon parallel to the scrapbooking has developed. It is the return of the 19th century idea of "ornament." In my memory, for several decades we had lived in a sterile environment devoid of ornamentation because the modernistic taste of clean interior design and architecture were so dominant throughout the latter part of the 20th century. All of a sudden, all kinds of Victorian ornamental designs came back with a vengeance! They are "sweet" with flowers, butterflies, angels, and cute girl faces, "colorful" with all the colors of the spectrum, but often showing elegant color schemes, and "eclectic" in the combination of motifs from different sources.

General crafts also have several characteristics that are clearly differentiated from studio crafts: the material is limited; the skill-level for mastering a medium is not usually demanding; equipment is simple; design does not receive much attention; method is prescribed with templates, prescribed designs, and step-by-step procedural instructions. It is important for the manufacturers of these materials that the general public can produce a tangible craft item relatively quickly and successfully. Therefore this field is driven by the commercial sector of society.

We will have the least interest in the general crafts because we have such little control over the ups and downs of the field driven by commercial interests. However, for the quality of life and a psychologically healthy society, general crafts are extremely important: the experience and satisfaction from making something with our own hands is deeper and more self-assuring than receiving programmed entertainments through vision alone, a factor that is far too dominant in our culture. Also the robustness of craft programs in our schools both at the

college level and in K-12 art classrooms eventually influences the general craft fields in a positive way.

Another place where crafts are practiced is the art classroom of K- 12 level. These classroom crafts also have their distinctive characteristics. These constraints are derived from the unique place crafts hold in the US public education system. Crafts are part of the art curriculum, which means that they must compete with other art content for their existence: there is simply not enough time to practice a specific craft in any depth. Due to the scant budget for art in the public school system, art teachers cannot use costly materials: usually crafts materials are more expensive because they are three-dimensional. Another factor is that crafts have not been considered important through the history of art education.

From the beginning of the 20th century up to 1940s, crafts were indeed flourishing subjects in the art curriculum. The educational benefit of crafts was detected by Swedish Sloyd and its philosophy seeped into the Manual Training program in the United States.[9] Another favoring aspect was the top-down influence of crafts departments of American art schools influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement: many of their graduates must have taught in K-12 art classrooms. Then Lowenfeld's theory of creative self-expression took over. He was influenced by Freudian psychology and Modern art. He especially considered the "repetitive imitation" of children's drawing a hallmark of emotional repression.

The next two great movements after Lowenfeld's creative self-expression theory were Discipline-base Art Education (DBAE) and Postmodern Visual culture. DBAE brought back art appreciation and Postmodern Visual culture paid attention to contemporary media culture and the issues of contemporary fine arts. In both paradigms there was no place for crafts. Only multicultural art education promoted crafts, because art items of non-Western indigenous cultures were mostly craft products. However, its focus on crafts is inadvertent, and from the point of cultural perspective rather than artistic perspective.

Because there was not much concern for crafts in the professional art education field, they were left to their own devices. However, crafts survived in classrooms, Sunday schools, summer camps, and afterschool art programs. Many crafts projects in art classes are done with paper, scissors, glue, some color media, or cheap materials such as plastic beads or pipe cleaners purchased from craft material companies specifically geared toward school children.

Classroom crafts are for the most part degenerated forms of general crafts in terms of material, time, and skill level. Unless the art teacher consciously tries to make the craft project more interesting, creative, or educational, the classroom craft products tend to be aesthetically poor, "crafted" badly, and similar to each other. The most interesting thing is that whether a given craft project is well thought out or not, children can hardly contain their excitement when they know they will be working on a craft project. They seem to enjoy the handling of materials itself more than anything else. It is curious to note that a two-dimensional art medium such as drawing or painting does not elicit the same level of enthusiasm.

EVOLUTIONARY ORIGIN OF CRAFTS

The fact that the mere manipulation of materials gives such a deep pleasure is not a trivial matter. This is what I mentioned above when I talked about the relationship between material and the human hand having a certain mystery. We see this tendency in children; we see it again in the students who "discover" their interest in a specific medium in college and major in it, and quite obviously in the almost inexplicable devotion of craftspeople to their chosen professional field. It seems that this propensity is deeply ingrained in human nature.

Isn't this something that helped our human ancestors to survive in prehistoric times? The traits that survived for eons of time because of their evolutionary benefits are usually coupled with pleasure. The pleasures derived from food or sex would be the most extreme cases, as they are directly related to the survival and continuation of the human species. Our love for nature would be a less obvious case. Likewise, the pleasure for handling objects reveals that it could very possibly be evolutionarily chosen trait. Otherwise, why do toddlers often exasperate their parents by constantly playing with objects like pots and pans, which is seemingly boring?

This delight of handling in three-dimensional objects must have come from our human ancestors' long history of making tools. In this regard, British archeologist, Steven Mithen, provides an interesting insight. In his book, The Prehistory of the Mind, he argued that through eons of evolutionary history, humans developed different kinds of intelligences separately according to the problem areas human ancestors had encountered for millions of years. Mithen suggests four intelligences, technical intelligence, natural history intelligence, social intelligence, and language intelligence. They were developed through making tools, hunting and gathering foods, interacting with other people, and using language, respectively.

For Mithen, the crossing of the most significant threshold for human species to become uniquely modern human, Homo sapiens (sapiens), happened when these different intelligences were merged together to function in a fundamentally different and more effective way. He argues that this flexible cognition formed the bedrock of human culture manifested in religion, art, and science.

It is obvious that handling objects is in the realm of technical intelligence. Mithen thinks that technical intelligence began 1.4 million years ago when Homo erectus made hand-axes. The hand axe is a pear-shaped, bifacially and bilaterally symmetrical all-purpose stone tool made of flint stone by striking other stones and being slowly fashioned into the shape. Since manufacturing a hand axe requires complicated mental functions, he assumes a specialized intelligence, not just general intelligence through which many animals learn to survive with trial and error.

Indeed tool making goes even farther back in time. Before Homo erectus, Homo Australopithecus and Homo habilis used cracked stones as tools without significant advancement for 1 million years. After the hand-axe, the next significant advancement came only 250,000 years ago, which means Homo erectus used the

tool for another million years! The explosion of tool technology came with Modern Homo sapiens whose traces were found from 200,000 to 100,000 years ago.

When did "art crafts" appear? Mithen thinks that an art object that shows mixed cognitive functions came after modern Homo sapiens crossed that important cognitive threshold. Making beads with ostrich shells started relatively recently, 40,000 to 50,000 years ago, obviously for decorative purpose, and decoration with object is a new application of the product of technical intelligence to the social intelligence realm, as one decorates oneself assuming other people would see and admire it.

It is noteworthy that craft/art items with decorative purpose were made before any representational images. Representational art appeared 30,000 to 40,000 years ago (the famous cave paintings of France and Spain date back from 30,000 to 10,000), therefore at least 10,000 years later. One astonishing find is an ochre stone discovered in a cave in South Africa. It shows a deliberately incised crisscross linear pattern. The discovery pushed the date of the first craft/art object into 77,000 years ago and it is now known as the world's oldest 'art' object.[10]

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CRAFTS

Crafts as mechanical arts

Indeed from the explosion of the tool technology in prehistory to the onset of the Industrial Revolution of the 18th century, crafts were the basis of human material culture. In Western Europe as well as in Eastern Asian culture, the social status of craftpeople was usually regarded as lowly because it involved physical labor. When a craft item is made exceeding its mere function with decoration and beauty, it is valued much more highly than its maker because it can be used as a status symbol for powerful individuals and institutions. The visible factor of sumptuous formal qualities enchanting to the eye and the invisible factor of the owner's ability to pay for its production work together to form the symbolic value. A beautifully copied bible was a treasure of a monastery or a court, but those who produced it were anonymous monks, not unlike other laborers.

In this general tendency, there were cultural variances depending on many different factors, especially on how the creative ability of the artist was viewed and how special the artwork was conceived in a given society. For example, the social status of the artist in Egypt was higher than that in Greece, because in Egypt a sculpted image was considered to be sacred, as the dwelling place of a deceased soul. Because the Quran was written in the Arabic language, calligraphers of the Arabic language were highly esteemed.

From ancient Greece to the Middle Ages, all types of production involving skill and rules were considered as mechanical arts, as the Latin word, "ars," was the direct ancestor of the modern word, "art." Therefore shipbuilding was as much an "art" as painting or pottery making. In the middle ages, "liberal" arts were separated

from other arts, because these arts were more theoretical and intellectual, therefore deemed worthy of "free" citizens.

Separation of fine arts from crafts

Through the Renaissance, painting, sculpture, and architecture became separated from all other mechanical arts and categorized into "liberal" arts.[11] As Renaissance artists discovered ancient classical function of art and tried to recover it, they had to learn perspective, geometry, anatomy, and classical literature, which could not be provided by traditional craft workshops.

The special status gained by fine arts in the Renaissance became solidified through the art academies: it was begun in Italy in the 16th century by Giorgio Vasari, emulated by France in the 17th century by Louis XIV, followed by England in the 18th century, and spread all over Europe by the 19th century.[12] During this time, another reorganization of the arts took place. Now painting, sculpture, and architecture were separated from not only mechanical arts but also from liberal arts, as it became evident that they were quite different from other liberal arts such as logic, mathematics, or rhetoric. Finally in the 18th century they were dubbed "Beaux-arts," that is, beautiful arts or arts that pursue beauty, from which the English word, "fine arts," was derived.[13] As art academies became ever more powerful institutions endowing great social prestige on their members, crafts were destined to suffer lower social esteem as "not-so-fine arts" left behind the fine arts.

Industrialization and the disappearance of crafts

The first major blow to crafts however was the mechanization of production resulting from the Industrial Revolution. The degree of mechanization varied from craft to craft. Textiles was the first craft to be mechanized and indeed was most suitable to mechanization owing to its characteristics,[14] but sooner or later the majority of goods previously made by craftsmen fell into the "hands" of machines.

The response of individual nations to the Industrial Revolution was also varied. Among European countries, Italy was the nation least influenced by mechanization. From the middle ages, the Italian peninsula was composed of small kingdoms and city states, each of which had a strong identity and fought for dominance among each other. Also different regions of Italy tended to specialize in different crafts with long traditions sometimes going back to Middle Ages or the Renaissance, as the example of glass-making in Murano near Venice from the Renaissance, which is still prospering. Another factor is that Italy was not united until 1861. Having had no central government to promote industrialization, Italy bypassed the onslaught of the mechanization of crafts. Crafts are still practiced in Italy in family-owned small factories and are known in all the world for their high craftsmanship and design quality.

The most severely influenced country was England. With the invention of the steam engine and other subsequent inventions, England led European nations in the scope and degree of mechanization. Crafts and cottage industry rapidly fell and people flocked to industrial cities in order to work in the factories. Without being protected socially, factory workers suffered squalid living conditions, low wages, long hours of work, and dehumanizing repetitive work. Factory scenes of the 19th century became a breeding ground for socialism and communism.

Revival of crafts

It is no wonder that England was the birthplace of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which strongly reacted against the mechanizing contemporary practices and promoted the return to the work ethics and superior design and craft quality of the medieval workshops. It began around 1860s and its two most famous proponents were William Morris and John Ruskin. The medieval workshop was envisioned as an ideal working place as idealized in Ruskin's study on Gothic art,[15] and even as a model for a new and better society. From the 1880s, the movement spread to other countries rapidly.

Separation of design from crafts

It was also in the 19th century that design was separated from craft. Even though machines replaced human hands in "making," they could not substitute the human mind and eyes in "designing." In the traditional crafts design was executed by craftspeople themselves using traditionally handed down motifs and forms. The benefit of this was that design was improve in form and composition through generations of craftspeople who had an intuitive sense of form due to their life-long experience of dealing with materials and forms. This is why we find centuries-old ceramic vessels or other craft items of many ancient cultures made by humble artisans to be incredibly beautiful.

In the absence of craftpeople who could design for manufacturers? France was the first to recognize this need for designers and started training them in the fine arts academies for Royal ceramic factories and textile factories as early as the 17th century. Germany came next and trained designers in technical schools in the early 19th century. As for England, the concern for design quality of manufactured goods took hold of the English government in the1830s, resulting in a select committee in the House of Commons to investigate the possibility of founding a school of design. The progress was very slow because the elites of the Royal Academy of Art did not want lower class people to learn how to draw figures, and therefore impinge on their prestige: figure drawing should be prohibited in their curriculum.[16]

The real wakeup call came after the 1851's World Exhibition in the Crystal Palace. Even though financially successful, English goods were far behind the other European countries in aesthetic qualities, especially France. With Henry Cole's initiative, an art

school for training designers was established as the South Kensington School of Art, which later became the Royal College of Art. Its curriculum followed the German approach, more mechanical and using flat linear designs than France. The school also was functioned as a normal school whose graduates would teach in the public school system. In the 1870s, with same urgency, the state of Massachusetts invited South Kensington graduate, Walter Smith, and established a drawing program, known as the industrial drawing movement, which was to become the first public art class in the United States.[16]

Therefore around the 1860s there were two camps of practitioners who responded to the mechanization of crafts differently, or even oppositely. One was the South Kensington group and the other the Arts and Crafts movement. In brief, we can say that the latter was reactionary, pessimistic of the current situation, sympathetic to working class people, and the former was more positive toward modernization and tended to cater to industrialists. These two trends merged in the 1890s when Walter Crane, a proponent of the Arts and Crafts movement became the director of South Kensington School of Art.

The influence of the Arts and Crafts movement was enormous on many levels. Preserving and actively rediscovering various craft techniques was invaluable for later generations. In the United States the movement gained great momentum at the beginning of the 20th century through the publication of magazines, how-to books, and mail order catalogs. The most important aspect for our purpose is that the movement directly influenced the establishment of crafts departments at college and university level in the United States, beginning with the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred, New York in 1901.

Rejection of ornamentation

Meanwhile in Europe the second blow to crafts came from Modernism early in the 20th century. Interestingly, even though the blow was not aimed at crafts per se, but at ornamentation, crafts declined together with ornamentation because they were so closely combined with each other historically. Then what was the problem with ornamentation?

Decoration or ornamentation was the major job of the 19th century designers and craftspeople. Both South Kensington and the Arts and Crafts movement used botanical motifs abundantly. Along with animal motifs, botanical motifs were indeed common both in traditional Western and Eastern crafts. The enormous popularity of botanical design in the 19th century England, however, was especially owed to the development of botany and natural science at that time: the curriculum of South Kensington included botanical drawing and plant anatomy.

The difference between 19th century floral design and traditional classical floral design was that the latter gave motifs the illusion of three-dimensional forms and space, whereas the former was flattened and stylized to fill a two-dimensional surface. In this regard, Owen Jones, an architect and designer in the Royal Academy

of Art, was instrumental. He was influenced by his study of Islamic patterns in Alhambra, and later published "The Grammar of Ornaments."[17] In this book, he compiled patterns from all over the world, and most of the patterns were indeed flat.

When a designer works with the organic lines of plants to fill a flat surface, the style of the design tends to be curvy and sinuous as if the lines grow and propagate like tendrils. In France an even more sinuous style became popular with "Art Nouveau (New Art)" and this decorative style spread to other European countries with different names, such as "Jugendstil (young style)" and the "Vienna Secession" style between 1890-1910. It was "new" and "young" against academic tradition. With his provocatively entitled lecture and text, Ornament and Crime, Adolf Loos, an Austrian architect, strongly objected to using excessive ornamentation and showed distaste toward Art Nouveau style of furnishing.[18] His opinion was highly influenced by Social Darwinism in which the hierarchy of world civilizations was explained by the different stages of evolutionary development of human race: excessive ornaments are for primitive people, not for advanced Western civilization.

Stripping off ornamentation and favoring geometrical and abstract shapes swept over the European art world during the first part of the 20th century. An even more devastating effect came from the Bauhaus. At first Bauhaus followed the spirit of the Arts and Crafts movement in terms of the holistic view of art, work ethic, quality of crafts, and workshop training system, but in the later stages after it moved to the industrial town of Dessau, it favored clean-lined products for industry and functionality, and therefore became a forerunner of modern design, especially in architecture, furniture, and interior design. This tendency became even more prevalent as Bauhaus teachers immigrated to the US and became professors of art and architecture.

CONCLUSION

The status of crafts in a society, in an art world, or in an art education system was influenced by many factors. The tacit nature of craft knowledge and the manual labor involved made crafts generally less esteemed than other explicit and conceptual knowledge in a society. Due to their functionality and need of skill, the economic effect in the 19th century was most devastating, and in a sense its effect is continuing through the 20th and 21st century. The second blow to the crafts came from inside the art world. Modernism denied ornamentation, and crafts declined together with ornamentation.

Meanwhile against the backdrop of the merciless mechanization of crafts, the Arts and Crafts movement attracted the interest and enthusiasm of the general public with its idealistic vision of crafts and directly influenced the establishment of crafts departments as the pursuit of professionalism. To the second challenge of the avoidance ornamentation, we have already passed the severity of Modernist period, and due to postmodernism, now already old, the art world recovered the sense of the

vernacular, the eclectic, and the playful. Is this a new background in which crafts may flourish?

There seems to be a sign of a new revival. Many Internet communities are forming, and finally art educators have begun to realize that crafts have been neglected for so long a time. Through Internet craftspeople can tap a niche market with their unique artistic expression. Talented craftpeople may not have to compromise their taste to survive.

As mentioned before, classroom crafts have many limitations, especially in the US public school system. Nonetheless, I have witnessed some art teachers introduce crafts projects with ingenious materials and methods. Knowing how much children like craft projects, they try to obtain extra funds by obtaining a grant and doing auctions and bazaars as a school event, which in turn elicits enthusiasm of parents and community.

In my teaching of non-art college students, I have used craft-oriented studio projects without my realizing it. There seem to have been several reasons that drove me in this direction. First of all they are more "democratic." Probably for biological reasons, hand skill and sense of design are more pervasive than drawing skill in the general population. As mentioned above, human dealing with tools has several million years of prehistory, whereas image-making only arrived at the later stage of modern Homo sapiens.

Even if a student has had a dismal experience in art before, which is the general rule in this kind of class, it is relatively easy for an art teacher to tap these latent skills. Also if the students are to practice any art at all in the future, it is more likely in craft and design area than in self-expression or image-making. We should remember that the self-expression function of art is modern and Western.

Secondly, related to the first reason, skill and design are more "teachable" than drawing or self-expression. I find American students lack manual dexterity because of their upbringing and education. They are clumsy in using a ruler, a compass, or a protractor. Whether I teach a craft project or not, I emphasize craftsmanship in a sense of "doing a job well" as a basic attitude to life, and provide steps and criteria to achieve it and give demonstrations.

Thirdly, as my course is called "Color and Design," it is a design course, and design principles are easy to teach with craft projects. After all, as mentioned earlier, Dow and Alexander drew their design principles predominantly from crafts and architecture. The students can easily see how unity, variety, and contrast can be applied to design with different art elements, as art elements here are usually abstract. With skill and design together, students eventually produce craft-art works that look highly professional and indeed beautiful.[19]

The next reason for using craft-design approach in my course is that I can introduce world cultures through craft artworks. Again American students lack knowledge of world history, because it is rarely taught even as an elective in high school. They are alarmingly unprepared for the globalization that education policy makers emphasize these days. What is a better way to introduce a culture than with its artworks?

It seems the most positive aspect of crafts still worth exploring is the psychological benefits of the relationship between material and the human hand. This sense of tactiligy may be most valuable for children, as children of this generation severely lack this most important experiences of being fully human. I will add the importance of design in craft projects. We can urge children to pay attention to different color combinations, interesting textures, good forms, and overall harmony. In this way, student learning in crafts will expand into design sensitivity that they can use in everyday life in their future.

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