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**QUESTIONING THE ROLE OF ART  
IN WALDORF AND ENGLISH CANADIAN MAINSTREAM EDUCATION**

by

**Margaret Buie Keppie**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

at

**Dalhousie University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
June, 1997**

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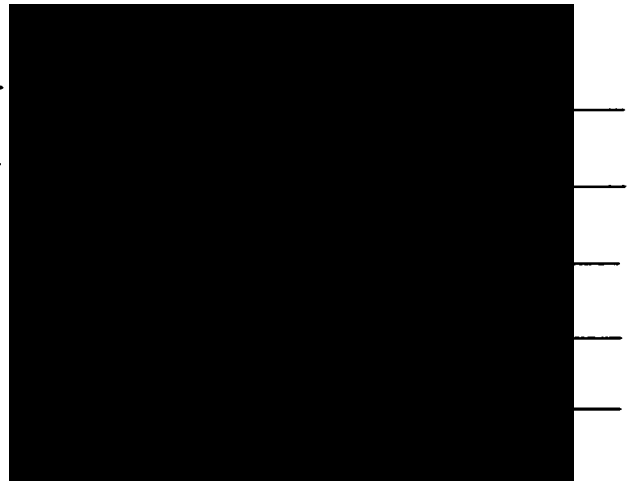
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by Margaret Buie Keppie

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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This work is dedicated to my mother,  
Susanna Peirce Buie,  
who first introduced me to the confusion...

*Never mind about trying to find a beginning.  
Enter the center, the hurricane's eye.*

*Pierce the whirling confusion!  
Fiercely whirling confusion!*

*And then...  
with time...*

*Discover what it is  
to cradle something and put it to rest.*

by Margaret Buie Keppie

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Questioning the role of art in Waldorf and English Canadian mainstream education by Margaret Buie Keppie**

Faced with rising violence, decreasing achievement levels, financial cut-backs, and increasing cultural diversity, today's educators may well assume that art has little significance for education when compared with such pressing issues. Indeed, the educational function of the arts has not been well established in public education in English Canada for more than a century. In this thesis I juxtapose this situation with the contrasting one evident in Waldorf schools, which form part of an alternative educational movement introduced into Canada in 1968. Founded in Germany in 1919 following the educational principles of social philosopher and scientist Rudolf Steiner, Waldorf schools promote social responsibility, cognitive development, community building, and unity in diversity through a curricular and pedagogical approach in which artistic activity is central to the whole educational process.

The juxtaposition of an educational system in which art is widely understood to be of peripheral significance, and an educational movement in which art is central, creates an opportunity for comparative analysis along lines suggested by the work of scientist/artist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe [1749-1832] and philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein [1889-1951], among others. In such analysis, differing cases are placed side by side so as to shed light on each other.

My thesis is that art plays a fundamental role in mediating between knowing and doing. Without such mediation, thinking develops which is skillfully calculating but lacking in compassionate morality, while at the same time, activity too often becomes violent and aggressive, or alternatively, apathetic, when unmediated by a caring attitude. Thus thinking and doing both require mediation through one's emotional and feeling life if they are to come into healthy balance, such that people become more thoughtfully active, and more actively thoughtful, in all their lives. Artistic activity schools such mediation, and therefore can be understood to play a crucial role in education.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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...to the spirit that guides and sustains me!

## CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

The metamorphosis of a feeling to a thought does not always happen (T. Brown, Jr., 1993, p. 159). Here is a story of one time it did. Faced with an inexplicable response to a particular educational environment, and wanting to find out *why* I was affected as I was, I needed to translate my awareness into a language my mind could understand. With the support of various individuals and institutions, I have been able to devote several years of my life to realizing such a translation. Though aware that further improvements are possible, I am confident that this work merits being made public at this time in this way, and I am hopeful<sup>1</sup> that it will attract interest among other educators.

A document of this length requires at the beginning a concise statement of the thesis to be advanced, context and motives behind it, topics addressed, resources and method used, import of key terms, and theoretical significances, assumptions, and limitations associated with the study. This introductory chapter is designed to give this.

Thesis

My thesis is that artistic activity likely contributes to the development of human cognition in surprising and important ways not well understood by many Canadian educators, and that these ways can be glimpsed in the compelling rationale articulated by Rudolf Steiner and embodied in Waldorf educational practice. In short, artistic activity seems to provide for the expansion of intelligent awareness simultaneously in opposite directions along a number of important parameters, such as thinking and doing, freedom and discipline, rationality and intuition, action and passion, and Self and Other. The surprising relationship appears to be that increased awareness of half of the polarity

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<sup>1</sup>In announcing this I follow Macdonald's (1995) suggestion:

...if we believe in education we are counted among the hopeful. And, if we are hopeful, then we will hold to Erich Fromm's definition: 'To hope means to be ready at every moment for that which is not yet born, and yet not to become desperate if there is no birth in our lifetime.' If we are to be ready for what is yet unborn we must know where we are, what the contradictions we face mean in our own terms, and what direction we feel we are fumbling toward. (p. 50)

through artistic activity significantly and immediately enhances awareness of the other half, such that apparent contradictions are dissolved in paradoxical relationships which remain distinct *and not fragmented*, coherent *and not confused*.

The paradoxical expansion of cognitive awareness simultaneously in opposite directions suggests that artistic activity can function educationally to engender transformative rather than cumulative change.<sup>2</sup> The transformative element arises from the sensitive, feeling life of the individual. That is, feelings serve as a focal point through which complementary aspects of a polar relationship are able to jointly influence and transform awareness. This realization leads to an understanding of cognitive development in which feeling plays a pivotal role, unlike traditional models in which feeling is often denied relevance for cognition. It also shows how *intellect* and *morality* can unite in a dynamic and vital relationship frequently sought but seldom discovered.

The thesis reflects a comparative study of two long-established contrasting educational traditions. In one, known as Waldorf or Rudolf Steiner education, art is central to all aspects of education. In the other, here labeled English Canadian mainstream education, art has generally been peripheral to other allegedly more important educational matters. A comparison of the curricular rationales and pedagogical practices of these two contrasting traditions (focusing on the elementary level only in order to limit the scope of the inquiry) is made on the basis of published accounts by teaching practitioners and educational theorists familiar with each approach.

The resulting analysis leads to the conclusion that artistic activity, arising out of an appreciative understanding and awareness of creativity, is of fundamental educational significance. This is so, especially as artistic activity demonstrates how distinction and

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<sup>2</sup>To grasp the sense of this idea, imagine that cumulative change refers to the growth of the caterpillar day by day as it eats and increases in size, whereas transformative change refers to the metamorphosis of the caterpillar into a butterfly. The first is *quantitative*, while the second is *qualitative*. Education designed to foster cumulative change leads to a greater quantity of knowledge, whereas education designed to foster transformative change leads to a qualitatively different kind of knowledge.

communion are simultaneously enhanced when their relationship is understood as united in feeling life based on the rhythmical interplay of sympathy and antipathy.

### Context

The educational work of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), though relatively well-known in his native Europe and with almost 70 years of development already in the United States<sup>3</sup>, has only recently been introduced to Canada through the founding of the first Canadian Rudolf Steiner school in Toronto in 1968.<sup>4</sup> In 1970 a Waldorf school formed in Vancouver, and the 1992 Fall Newsletter of the Waldorf School Association of Ontario, Inc., registers fifteen Canadian Waldorf schools, along with two Waldorf initiatives.<sup>5</sup> There is also in Canada now a full twelve-month Waldorf Teacher Education program, designed to follow a foundational year of study in the ideas of Rudolf Steiner,

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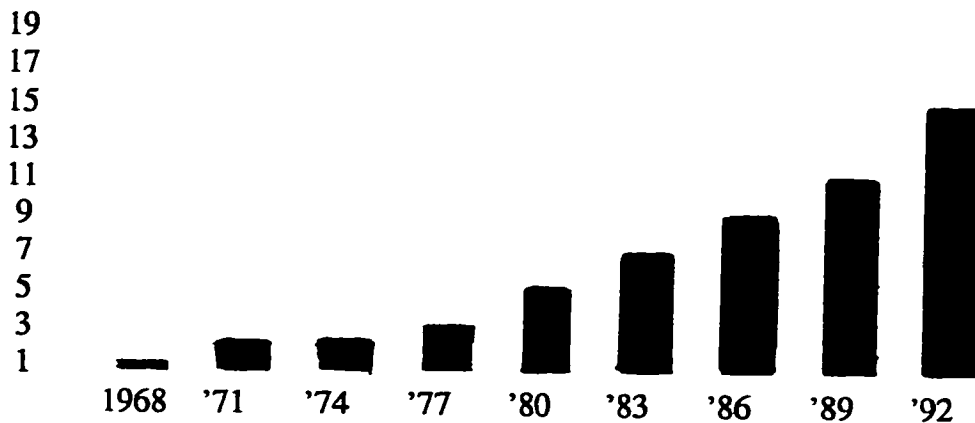
<sup>3</sup>The first Steiner school in North America opened in 1928 in New York City, "founded by a group of teachers, doctors, artists, and parents who had studied in Europe with Rudolf Steiner" (Rudolf Steiner School Brochure, New York, p. 5). It was originally housed in a small brownstone building at 111 East 39th Street and accommodated "twelve students, five teachers, and two floors of classrooms that doubled as living space at night" (ibid.). As enrollment grew, it was relocated to its present site in 1944, and in 1955 a second building was purchased to house the newly inaugurated highschool. In 1972 a small farm in nearby Harlemlville was added to allow living and learning opportunities in a rural setting. Following the success of this first school, a number of other such schools were created, with the result that by 1996 there were more than 175 Waldorf schools in North America, according to the Rudolf Steiner School Brochure already cited.

<sup>4</sup>Longtime Waldorf educator Alan Howard came from England to help found the first Canadian Waldorf school, which opened in Toronto in 1968. It was the 120th Waldorf school in the world at that time; only ten were in North America (Harden, 1990, p. 4). After retiring from teaching, Alan Howard continued to support the growing interest in Waldorf education in Canada through advising, writing, and lecturing until his death in 1996.

<sup>5</sup>The term Waldorf initiative refers to a school still in the formative stages, with some classes begun and advancing on schedule, but without the full complement of classes. Because a new class is added each year, it takes approximately eight years for a complete elementary school to form.

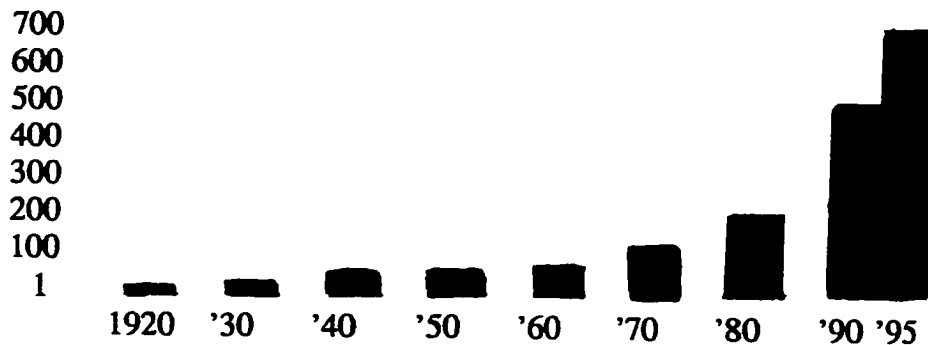
offered by the Rudolf Steiner Centre in conjunction with the Toronto Waldorf School. According to a recent Newsletter for the Anthroposophical Society in Canada, the newly formed West Coast Institute for Studies in Anthroposophy now offers a two-year early childhood training program; as well, resource and training conferences on administrative and development issues for Waldorf schools in the Pacific Northwest are available. In September 1996 the first Waldorf grade school in Nova Scotia was begun, following several Waldorf kindergarten and cooperative home-schooling ventures throughout the province.

#### INCREASING NUMBERS OF WALDORF SCHOOLS IN CANADA



This growing interest in Waldorf education evident in Canada is also present world-wide. For example, with less than 200 Waldorf schools in eighteen or more noncommunist countries in 1980 (Barnes, 1980), there were almost 550 such schools in more than thirty countries a mere decade later (Kotsch, 1993). The 1994 Waldorf Education Exhibition Catalogue prepared for the 44th Session of the International Conference on Education of UNESCO mentions 640 schools, 1087 kindergartens, 300 curative centres and 60 teacher training institutes in more than 50 countries (p. 84). Today there are nearly 700 schools world-wide educating students according to the principles of Rudolf Steiner, "and numbers are still rising" (Burnett, 1996, p. 1).

## INCREASING NUMBERS OF WALDORF SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE



This mushrooming interest in Waldorf education piques my curiosity as an educator: What is so special about Waldorf education? Why the dramatic interest? Is this simply a symptom of disillusionment and dissatisfaction on the part of many parents with mainstream schooling, such that any alternative becomes attractive, or are there particular reasons that account for the interest in Waldorf education itself?

At the same time as interest in Waldorf education has been increasing, support for mainstream public education in Canada has been decreasing. Daily news reports document that budgets have been slashed, support staff decreased, programs curtailed, class sizes increased, and supplies and equipment become increasingly dependent on voluntary parent contributions. Lack of mastery of basic skills and increasing violence on the part of students has created a crisis of confidence in public schooling.

The puzzling thing is that both Waldorf education and English Canadian mainstream education have arisen from essentially the same western eurocentric cultural tradition, yet they have ended up with diametrically opposed views on the role of art and the value of artistic activity in education. How has this difference come about, and how significant is it for understanding the current appeal of Waldorf education compared with the current anxiety associated with mainstream education?



### Motive<sup>6</sup>

When I first taught in a Waldorf-inspired nursery school and kindergarten<sup>7</sup>, I was both puzzled and intrigued by the palpable energy radiating in the room as we prepared for the children's arrival each day, and also during our time together with them throughout the morning. There was clearly something going on in that room which was different from what I had experienced in all my years as both student and teacher in public school.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>My choice to talk about this aspect of my work in this chapter reflects a methodological principle which was brought to my attention by Georg Kuhlewind, renowned anthroposophist whom I heard speak at a public lecture in Toronto on October 19, 1996. The principle he advocated, and which I support, is that a helpful orientation to a subject is often established through a review of its origin, in addition to or even instead of a detailed definition or description of its current status. This coincides with basic qualitative, autobiographical, and feminist research principles which advocate candid exposure of the researcher as a person with particular interests and biases, though I recognize that it conflicts with the traditional academic practice of eradicating the personal as much as possible from research reports. For readers who consider the personal to be distracting and unnecessary, this section can easily be skipped.

<sup>7</sup>Head Teacher Kate Mortimer hired me in August 1992 as Assistant Teacher for the Starbright Morning Nursery School in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. I thoroughly enjoyed the work and assisted in the school for two years until it was forced to close due to Kate's ill health and the lack of a qualified Waldorf teacher to replace her. The school had 22 children enrolled in a three-morning a week program following the curriculum guidelines and pedagogical practices endorsed by the Waldorf Kindergarten Association of North America. Although I was not trained as a Waldorf educator, I was able to contribute my expertise as a parent of two children, a private music educator of children ages 3-7, and a certified and experienced public school educator. That winter I also successfully completed a NS Department of Community Affairs pre-school education course focusing on Waldorf education.

<sup>8</sup>I attended Grade One Public School in Columbia, South Carolina. During Grade Two I moved with my family to Tallahassee, Florida, where I attended local public elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. After receiving my undergraduate university degree at Bryn Mawr

I know I was not alone in feeling it: When we had our Open House in the spring of 1992, to attract enrollment for the following year, several people who had never been in the school before commented on it right away. They would look around without knowing where to focus, clearly both pleased and puzzled, and say something like, "This is a really special place. It feels good in here. There is something special about it. It would be nice to work here. The children must love it." I knew what they meant, without being able to define the quality any better than they could.

Sometimes I would ask the Head Teacher about it, and she said it had to do with "ensouling" the room, but it was hard for me to really grasp the sense of this idea. It was odd: Here was something I clearly relished each day but could not understand intellectually. Increasingly, I tried to pay conscious attention to what was going on which might account for this peculiar sensation.

One thing I noticed was an explicit metaphorical emphasis on the rhythm of breathing connected with everything we did with the children: always a carefully designed "letting go" of something and then an equally careful "taking in" of something new, which was further released in its turn. For example, each morning started with a relatively unstructured playtime, giving the children time to "let go" of parents and home concerns before confronting the new tasks of coordinated group activity. And later in the morning, when we sat down to eat together, the lights were dimmed and a candle ceremoniously lit to mark the letting go of the active songs and plays which fed our

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College in Pennsylvania, I worked for several years in the field of education, first teaching science in a private girls' school in Pennsylvania, and then developing elementary social studies curriculum in Zambia, before returning to university as a mature student to complete the B.Ed. program at Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Upon receiving Nova Scotia Teacher Certification in 1980, I job-shared a music position for eleven years in a rural elementary school in Canning, NS. For ten years during this time I was also active in the Home and School Association of another Nova Scotian rural elementary school attended by my two children; there I served in several leadership positions and spear-headed a substantial community-school effort to improve playground facilities.

richly expressive social life together, making room for a quiet, inwardly focused time in which to simply enjoy the calming satisfaction of physical nourishment.

Never merely mechanistically repetitious, this rhythmical out-breathing and in-breathing was at once both refreshing and calming. Visitors to the school frequently commented on how relaxed the children were, happily absorbed in what they were doing rather than tearing around noisily in the disjointed fashion one might expect with so many young ones together in the same room. (Indeed, the one family which chose not to send a child back to the school for a second year complained that the atmosphere was too calm and gentle for their little boy, although it had been fine for his older sister: They felt boys needed to be part of a more "rough and tumble" atmosphere if they were to be suitably prepared for life in the world beyond school!)

There was little to point to directly as the "cause" of this characteristic atmosphere. It seemed to be a combination of several things, all reflecting a very sophisticated and very subtle understanding of physical, social, and spiritual relationships of one sort or another. That it happened *by design* and was no mere accident became ever more convincing to me, however. Even though I did not fully comprehend the thinking behind the design, I came to a clear realisation that the teaching here was intentionally *artful*<sup>9</sup>: It was both lovingly and carefully crafted to express and to create something beautiful.

True to form, artistic activities were encouraged among the children too, as an important part of their learning each day. More and more I came to the idea that understanding the way art<sup>10</sup> functioned in this educational context would likely provide

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<sup>9</sup>Steiner frequently called attention to the fact that teaching is an art. Also, Marjorie Spock (sister of the formerly widely read authority on child health care, Dr. Benjamin Spock) has explicated this notion at length in her book about Waldorf education, *Teaching as a Lively Art*.

<sup>10</sup>Throughout this text I use the word *art* to signify not just visual art, but also music, dance, drama, poetry, storytelling, and design, orchestration, composition, choreography, narrative, and crafting of all sorts. Indeed, part of the import of this thesis is the exploration of what exactly 'art' is and does, so at this state it is somewhat premature to be more precise. Suffice it to say that the word

a key to understanding the special significance of the educational experience as a whole.<sup>11</sup>

Gradually this personal experience, along with subsequent scholarly investigation, led me to wonder if the special attraction of Waldorf education at this time in so many countries somehow hinges on the deeply informed commitment on the part of Waldorf educators to integrate artistic activity with all aspects of human development, including individual and social development in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, and strongly influencing interpersonal, spiritual, moral and social development. If Steiner is right in suggesting that art has more possibility in our time than either science or religion

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is used in a very broad sense.

<sup>11</sup>Three years after beginning my study, I found this supposition to be strengthened and supported in the work of Swedish educational psychologist Agnes Noble, who in 1996 published an overview of Steiner education called *Educating through Art: The Steiner School Approach*. While she does not enter into the curricular detail which I do, her six year study, sponsored by the Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences, addresses the same general question: "My main purpose here has been to try and figure out why artistic exercises are accorded such central significance within the context of education" (Nobel, 1996, p. 18). The timely appearance of this book has relieved me of the necessity to document much of the general background relevant to this topic, since the first seven chapters of her book offer much that is relevant to my study as well: 1) how aesthetics, psychology, and education potentially interrelate; 2) a broad overview of Steiner's social and educational work; 3) a review of Steiner's own education and upbringing; 4) the important foundation for Waldorf education which sprang from Steiner's awareness of the life and work of Goethe; 5) Steiner's general attempt to bring the spiritual into a fruitful relationship with both art and science; 6) his underlying concern with social issues; and 7) the further development of his approach through the ideas and efforts of others interested in human creativity. Only in her final chapter, chapter 8, does she discuss directly, but in an admittedly introductory way, the relationship between Steiner's theory of knowledge and his approach to teaching and education. Her contribution on this point is considered more fully in my literature review (Chapter 2).

for effecting a wholesome integration in ourselves and in our societies,<sup>12</sup> then it should not be surprising that increasing numbers of people, when faced with the chaotic fragmentation typical of postmodern life, are turning to an educational approach that understands and values the arts.<sup>13</sup>

The valuing of art in Waldorf education is not something only I have noticed. Artistic activity of students in Waldorf schools around the world is almost always remarked for its beauty and its ubiquity. For example, Holland (1993), answering the question "What distinguishes a Waldorf School from other schools?", mentions first the

artistic quality in the children's work on display -- whether the subject is watercolor painting or reading, clay modeling or geometry.... The children's 'main lesson' books, their artwork, their handcraft projects -- all reflect a budding appreciation for the world's beauty and a developing pride in each one's ability to achieve self-expression with artistic assurance. (p. 3)

Similarly, Noble (1996) describes an investigation

commissioned by the Swedish National Board of Education, and carried out in 1977 under the leadership of Professor Ahlstrom from the Institute of Education at Uppsala University,... [which] affords many glimpses into how the Waldorf school attaches great importance to integrating different art forms into the process of knowledge, and incorporating artistic activities in general, from the first to the twelfth grade. (p. 33)

This contrasts with my experience of mainstream education, where artistic activity is often either non-existent or at best peripheral to the main educational focus. For example, Rief's (1992) experiences in education<sup>14</sup> prompt her to write, about North

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<sup>12</sup>More detailed explication of this idea is contained in the discussion which follows.

<sup>13</sup>Recent educational reforms are beginning to intensify the focus on art in mainstream education, making the contrast between art in Waldorf and mainstream traditions less stark than it might have been even ten years ago. The complexities of the situation will become more apparent from the discussion in Chapter five.

<sup>14</sup>From her book, Seeking Diversity, we learn that Linda Rief is a public Middle School language arts teacher in New Hampshire, an educational instructor at the University of New Hampshire, an author of professional articles and text

American education generally, that "Too often, when we refer to the arts, or label something 'creative,' we demean its importance. Why are the arts the last disciplines funded, or the first disciplines cut in a budget crunch?" (p. 149). This mainstream attitude can also be glimpsed in this comment by Halifax District School Board education director Gordon Young, quoted in the "Parenting" insert of the Monday, October 30, 1995 Halifax Chronicle-Herald as saying, in September of that year, "The idea of the arts as frills is not changing" (p. D3).

It is true, according to Colwell (1995), that the current ferment of educational reform includes the area of arts education as well as more predictable areas such as science and technology; yet where artistic activity does succeed in making an impression on teachers, students, administrators, and/or parents, its advocates are likely to stress technical accomplishment, economic benefit, higher IQ scores, and improvement in learning generally more than heightened awareness of beauty (pp. 147-152). For example, when Nova Scotian school boards recently threatened to cut school music programs, parents and music educators "were outraged" and wrote "dozens" of letters "extolling the virtues of a music program", cataloguing these "virtues" in terms of development of self-esteem, learning to cope with stage fright, gaining a sense of accomplishment, and learning perseverance, without once referring to any value associated with experiencing or creating beauty (Chronicle Herald, op.cit.).<sup>15</sup>

In order to satisfy my curiosity about the significance of art in Waldorf education, especially as it might compare with arts education in public schools in English mainstream Canada, I have designed this study as a philosophical inquiry into the

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chapters, a recipient in 1988 of one of two Kennedy Center Fellowships for Teachers of the Arts, a writer who has had her work performed at Kennedy Center and on National Public Radio in the USA, and chairperson of the Early Adolescence/English Language Arts Standards Committee of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in the USA.

<sup>15</sup>Dr. William Hare (personal communication, November 9, 1995) rightly cautions that such comments may simply reflect what parents assume will be strategically effective in keeping or reinstating art programs, rather than accurately portraying the parents' own values.

curricular and pedagogical principles and practices concerning art in both traditions. Through this work I attempt 1) to achieve a deeper, more informed awareness of how art functions in the Waldorf system as compared with mainstream schooling; 2) to explore the interface between artistic activity and cognitive development; and 3) as far as the data allow, to provide a coherent and detailed argument responding to the question of whether or not (and if so, how) artistic activity might enhance cognitive development. I also identify goals for further research arising from my study, together with implications for current attempts to integrate art more effectively into the public curriculum.

### Topics

Following this introductory chapter, I devote Chapter 2 to a literature review of other studies whose purposes come close to mine. In Chapter 3 I detail my method more completely. Chapter 4 offers a relatively in-depth discussion of art as it appears centrally within the context of Waldorf education, with particular reference to Goethe's three spiritual laws of Polarity, Enhancement, and Metamorphosis. Chapter 5 presents a brief historical overview of art as it appears peripherally in mainstream English Canadian education, whether fashioned as a transmissive, transactive, or transformative process, as a basis for comparison with the Waldorf approach. Chapter Six brings my comparison of the two traditions into final definition, through my proposed analysis of how artistic activity can support (or fail to support) cognitive development. Besides clarifying my present understanding, I consider possibilities for further research, and suggest implications my thesis may hold for public educational policy and practice in Canada.

### Resources

Although the link between art and education is relatively little discussed in the academy compared to, say, links between language and thought, ties between technology and schooling, or attempts to reconcile hegemonic standards with the ever increasing need to recognize social and cultural plurality in schools, there is nevertheless a bewildering array of scholarly information on a number of diverse aspects associated with my topic. While it is clearly impossible to review all this information in detail, it is important to note at least the general orientations of some of the more influential approaches taken in the past to realize possible interconnections between art and cognition in schools.

For my purpose it makes sense to group this vast work into several major categories. From the philosophical point of view comes a longstanding interest in art in education, especially in terms of understanding how such mental faculties as creativity, imagination, insight, intuition, and inspiration function and are best schooled. Bamford's (1981) use of three historical sub-divisions is helpful here: He suggests that among those concerned with human consciousness and the possibility of non-sensory based knowing, together with the important implications such knowing may carry for understanding art, are 1) the stream flowing from Plato and Plotinus through medieval mysticism and the so-called heresies to the Renaissance, 2) the subsequent emergence of what has been called the romantic understanding of art and knowledge, and 3) the recent deconstruction of Cartesian consciousness, to which philosophers of science have also contributed.

From the point of view of the study of psychology comes a resurgence of interest during the latter half of this century in issues of mind, spirit, introspection, cognition, and metacognition as distinct from the purely behavioral understanding of human nature made popular earlier this century through the work of B.F. Skinner and J.B. Watson. Following a largely continental European tradition stemming from late nineteenth century work in psychophysics and physiological psychology (Boring, 1961), boosted hugely at the turn of the century by Freud and Jung's investigations of the unconscious, and strengthened by Piaget and Vygotsky's subsequent work in developmental theories of learning, cognitive scientists today explore such issues as the creative process, artistic awareness, perception, alternate forms of knowing, and multiple intelligences (cf. H. Gardner, J. Bruner, deBono, Hofstadter).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Koestler (1967/1975) offers the interesting insight that Behaviorism had at first merely reflected the intention "to exclude consciousness, images and other non-public phenomena as *objects of study* from the field of psychology; but later on this came to imply that the excluded phenomena *did not exist*" (p. 17, italics original). Cognitive scientists, stimulated in part by the advent of computers and the possibility of artificial intelligence, have now simply reopened the field of mental phenomena for study. Eastern and Native spiritual traditions, highly sophisticated psycho-biochemical research, noetic science, consciousness research, and research into neurolinguistic programming serve to intensify this interest.



Closely related to the work of educational psychologists in this field is recent research by neurophysiologists into hemispheric brain functions, and the powerful integrating effects of the corpus colossum, since this research has served as a powerful force to redirect educational attention to the arts (cf. Bruner, 1970; Edwards, 1979). In addition, the medical understanding and use of anaesthetics, especially when contrasted with the philosophical and psychological understanding of aesthetics, suggests links between art, suffering, and awareness which may be crucial to a more intelligent and fruitful understanding of the educational process.

Even more subtly connected with the links between art, cognition, and education is the whole momentum of twentieth century physics which has led scientists and scholars away from the certainties of mechanical principles and the materialistic emphasis of atomistic theories to the realm of uncertainties, force fields, and anti-matter. This recent re-orientation of science lends weight to scholarly inquiries into intangible relationships of all kinds, including artistic forms of knowing (cf. Capra, 1991; Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Tippins, 1992; Leonard & Murphy, 1995).

Finally, from the point of view of teachers and artists themselves come the complementary perspectives of those who care to reflect on their actual engagement within educational and artistic processes. Teachers like Kimon Nicolaidis (1941), Sybil Marshall (1966), Sam Bush (1984), Marjorie Spock (1985), Linda Rief (1992), and Torin Finser (1994) have important thoughts to share arising out of their artful experiences of teaching and learning. Similarly, William Blake's (1969) understanding of cognition, Coleridge's theory of imagination (cf. Gallant, 1989), Arguelle's (1975) explication of transformative vision, Colville's (1995) fascination with the ordinary and commonplace as a gateway to invisible significances, Beatty's (1985) awareness of form without formula, da Vinci's contrasting use of the sfumato technique and rational perspective (cf. Arguelles, 1975, p. 25), Nicolaidis' (1941) stress on understanding the significance of gesture, Marcus's (1995) insistence on the necessary physicality of art, and Goethe's concept of metamorphosis (cf. Steiner, 1883-97/1988) are just some of the many and varied rich themes waiting to be mined in the search for deeper understanding of the significance of art and cognition in education. Many of these artists are, or have been,

teachers themselves, as well as art practitioners, thereby increasing the likelihood that their reflective insights into educational issues are relevant and well informed.

All of these varied approaches, together with explicitly school-based studies and educational documents which reveal concepts, attitudes, values, and practices connected with art in Waldorf and mainstream English Canadian schools, contribute to the broad background informing my analysis. Particular studies whose purposes come close to matching my own are reviewed in more detail in Chapter 2. Overall, it is clear that much work remains to be done to focus attention ever more clearly on the significance of artistic activity within specific educational contexts. This study constitutes but a small move in this direction.

### Method

This study involves philosophical inquiry into the interface between art and cognition, particularly as it appears in two contrasting educational contexts. My objectives are to explicate the central role of art in Waldorf education, and the peripheral role of art in English Canadian mainstream education, through a comparison of curricular and pedagogical rationales and practices.

Philosophical inquiry of the kind demonstrated in this research project aims at plausible analysis, not proof. As Soltis (1988) explains, interpretative studies offer critical reflection leading to analysis and evaluation of given situations. Siegel (1988) agrees that clarification, illumination, and deepened understanding of educational matters through philosophical investigation are significant research goals, since they inform the theoretical base underlying educational practice. Similarly, Entwistle (1988) defends the importance of theoretical work which provides new perspectives on educational problems and opportunities. As Collingwood (1950) stated long ago:

in philosophical inquiry what we are trying to do is not to discover something of which until now we have been ignorant, but to know better something which in some sense we knew already; not to know it better in the sense of coming to know more about it, but to know it better in the sense of coming to know it in a different and better way -- actually instead of potentially, or explicitly instead of implicitly, or in whatever terms the theory of knowledge chooses to express the difference; the difference itself has been a familiar fact ever since Socrates pointed it out. (p. 11)

In a similar vein, Gadamer (1975) draws attention to the importance of *understanding* as a different goal from *explanation*.<sup>17</sup> As Battista (1985) notes, science is moving away from both the vitalistic and mechanistic paradigms which have predominated in the past towards a holistic worldview predicated on principles of monistic ontology,<sup>18</sup> interactive epistemology,<sup>19</sup> analogical methodology,<sup>20</sup> probabilistic causality,<sup>21</sup> structural analysis,<sup>22</sup> and negentropic dynamics. Murphy (1994) confirms

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<sup>17</sup>This distinction will be discussed again in Chapter 3. Here, as an initial gesture, I repeat Lonergan's (1978) illustration of the difference between heuristic (i.e., tending toward understanding) and explanatory concepts: Fire was conceived by Aristotle as an element, by Lavoisier's predecessors as a manifestation of phlogiston, and by later chemists as a type of oxydization. But though the explanations differed, the object to be explained was conceived uniformly as the 'nature of' a familiar phenomenon, and without this uniformity it would be incorrect to say that Aristotle had an incorrect explanation of what he meant and we mean by fire. (p. 737)

<sup>18</sup>Monistic ontology is the view that there is one substance, not two or more. For example, the body/mind relationship is understood as integrated rather than separate, and the familiar dualism of time and space is collapsed.

<sup>19</sup>Interactive epistemology replaces notions of subjective and objective knowledge. It appears in all modern theories of social constructivism.

<sup>20</sup>Analogical methodology contrasts with methods derived from formal logic or psychological orientations. It reflects instead the use of case studies and examples, as in legal argument.

<sup>21</sup>Probabilistic causality refers to the increasing awareness of uncertainty in relation to truth, such that certain truth has been replaced by probable truth as the goal of scientific research.

<sup>22</sup>Structural analysis, also termed deconstruction, concerns the postmodern urge "to see beyond the given and to deal with the possibility of the ensuing uncertainty" (Kincheloe et al., 1992). It questions the validity of 'grand narratives of legitimation' precisely because such narratives "fail to understand their own construction by social and

the move towards holism in science generally, as well as the move in philosophy - following Wittgenstein - towards "a technique in which our own nature as persons is part of the process of coming to know" (p. 132).

In line with these and other writers, I construct a reasoned and focused explication, based on such scholarly achievements as systematic study, rigorous inquiry, and disciplined reflection, exposing my deepened understanding of the interface between art and cognition, especially as it appears in Waldorf education as compared with mainstream English Canadian education. The results of my work stand as an invitation to other educators to weigh my arguments and conclusions against their own experiences, not so much to arrive at some new and general truth, nor to demonstrate or prove some conclusion, as to "deepen what we already know" (Collingwood, 1950, p. 11).

My analysis reflects dimensions of several different strands of philosophical inquiry. From traditional philosophy of education (cf. Portelli, 1993) comes understanding of the praxical relationship of theory with practice. From conceptual analysis (cf. Scriven, 1988) comes commitment to clarity, rigour, and logic. From 'grand theory' (cf. Skinner, 1985) comes valuation of interpretation and contextual significance. From aesthetic theory (cf. Eisner, 1982 and 1991) comes concern for artistic presentation. From grounded theory (cf. Glaser and Strauss, 1967) comes acknowledgement that the investigator is the primary research instrument. From feminist theory (cf. Lather, 1988) comes attention to my social identity. From constructivism (cf. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; also Lincoln, 1990) comes awareness of the interactive nature of synthetic understanding.

This may well appear to be nothing but a jumbled potpourri of tidbits from various philosophical research methods, and so a more coherent way to conceptualize my research orientation is to characterize it as an attempt to engage in what Steiner and others have called "Goethean science" (Steiner, 1883-1897/1988). Zajonc (1985) reminds us of Goethe's own term for this - "gentle empiricism" - and describes it as a process "wherein the investigator, by becoming an active participant...is able to experience and

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historical forces" (ibid., p. 4).

accurately conceive the formative movements" inherent in whatever is being studied (p. vi). Following both Steiner and Emerson, Zajonc (1993) notes that the "structured flow of human thinking" is "intimately connected" with the "genesis of form": "In thinking, nature repeats herself on a higher plane, so that we recognize in the processes of thought, activities not unlike those of assimilation, digestion, self-maintenance and creation" (p. vii).

Bockemuhl (1985) explains this as the application of our "mathematizing" ability to areas other than mathematical content alone, such that we connect the outer world with our inner activity in a way that brings to consciousness new understandings of the interconnections of things which otherwise appear to be disparate (p. xi). A more detailed account of this phenomenological approach is given in Chapter Three, together with an appropriate rationale for assuming the attainment of a respectable degree of validity and reliability through using this method.

### Key Terms

Many of the key terms in my discussion will only be clarified through the discussion itself, since the import of much of what I have to say depends directly on what one comes to understand through such terms as education, art, intelligence, cognition, creativity, imagination, human development, human nature, and so on. A few introductory remarks are in order, however.

The term "Waldorf education" identifies an educational movement stemming from the anthroposophical ideas for social renewal widely promulgated by Rudolf Steiner in the years during and immediately following the widespread devastation caused in Europe by the first world war. Emil Molt, owner of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, Germany, was impressed with Steiner's ideas and invited him to lecture on social renewal to the employees of his factory. The workers in turn were impressed with the vision Steiner presented, and they asked if it would be possible to found a school for their children so as to begin to put some of Steiner's ideas for social renewal into practice. Steiner agreed, and with Molt's financial backing the school was duly opened in 1919. It soon became the prototype for other schools around the world similarly based on the ideas of Rudolf Steiner. Although each of these schools maintains relative

independence, they are known collectively as Waldorf schools (also Rudolf Steiner Schools), in recognition of the first (summarized from Carlgren, 1976/1993, pp. 11-18).

Anthroposophy names the world view promoted by Steiner and from which the ideas for Waldorf education grew. It involves an intentional development of human thinking abilities so as to understand the lawfulness of the invisible world beyond the physical world given to external sense perception. Meaning "human wisdom", anthroposophy has sometimes been described as learning to "read the world" and to understand real relationships which, however, are not immediately obvious. Steiner's conviction was that such understanding can be intensively developed through the actual experience of thinking, and is thus available to anyone willing to cultivate awareness of thinking through various meditation and concentration exercises. The results of such intensively aware thinking are insights whose truths can be "tested" by the fruits they bring forth into the world.

Although anthroposophists recognize the validity of materialistic thinking in reference to the physical world, they argue that a different thinking is required for the non-physical world. In contrast, materialists reject the anthroposophical principle that thinking can have at times a purely spiritual (i.e., thoughtful) content. Growing awareness in educational circles of metacognition lends credence to the anthroposophical awareness of thinking as a real experience which can itself become the focus of thinking.

Waldorf education is compared and contrasted to "mainstream English Canadian education", a phrase used to identify the education associated with those schools in English Canada which are funded by public tax monies and for which the government takes primary responsibility for staffing, programming, equipping, and maintaining. Because education is a provincial responsibility in Canada, there are of course differences in how it is administered in each province. Where relevant, such differences are signified by adding the appropriate provincial title, as in "mainstream Nova Scotia schools", "mainstream Ontario schools", and so on.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>The reader should beware of potential confusion here, since the term "mainstreaming" is sometimes used in other contexts to signify an inclusive approach in which variously

Concerning the term "intelligence", it is important not to narrow one's understanding too soon. Although typically taken in educational circles to refer to such activities as solving problems, making reasonable decisions, organizing concepts, abstracting principles, and so on (Lawson, 1995, p. 150), such use might arguably be understood as referring more specifically to an "intelligence of the head", distinct from what others might call an "intelligence of the heart" (see, for example, Schwaller, 1982), and what "body-sensitive" philosophers such as Merleau-Ponty (1942/1962) and Varela (1992) acknowledge as "intelligence of the body", not to mention possible combinations of these. Even more radical, Gardner's (1985) theory of multiple intelligences expands the notion of intelligence in many ways simultaneously. A key point in understanding Steiner's notions of how art functions in education is connected with the ability and the willingness one has to take a very broad view of intelligence.

Concerning the term "art", it is important to keep in mind a relationship of fundamental importance: the relationship between art and nature. According to anthroposophist Christopher Marcus (1995), the important thing about art in connection with Steiner's ideas is that art is *not nature*. By this he means that a uniquely human element is involved in art, making it different from all other aspects of the natural world. From this perspective, art has significance in terms of recognizing and developing this uniquely human element in the world; art thus may be said to *mediate* in one way or another the distinction between humanity and the rest of nature (Berger, 1980, p. 196).

From a different perspective, one can see both a cultural and a functional rejection of the *institution of art* (ibid., p. 197). Although Berger (1980) claims that the *cultural* rejection of art is itself dependent on art and so leads back "into the museum and the institution of art", he acknowledges that the *functional* rejection of art, as evidenced in the quasi-natural sculptures of Romaine Lorquet, for example, does do away with the mediational function of art through refusing "the *distinction* of art in our time" (p. 197).

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challenged children are grouped together with children of more normal abilities. This is a completely different usage and bears no relation to the way I use "mainstream education" in this text.

In such a case, something quite different happens in the relation between the artist's work and nature. Berger (1980) characterizes it as a "bringing forward of space" as "a condition of existence born from within", such that form is not imposed from the outside but arises as from a seed, obeying "the same laws of assembly as the fruit or leaves on a tree" (p. 194). In this analysis, artifice -- as distinct from art -- becomes recognizable precisely through the external imposition of form. Explication of these perspectives on how art interrelates with nature constitutes a major aspect of my concluding discussion and is crucial to understanding how art functions in both Waldorf and mainstream education.

Concerning the term "education", it is important to note Steiner's view that "From the nature of the growing and evolving human being, the proper point of view for Education will, as it were, spontaneously result" (Steiner, 1909/1981, p. 8). Thus for Steiner, education is best understood in terms of human nature and natural human development. This allows for relatively easy comparison with other developmental theories (though Steiner's notions of development are considerably more complex than most),<sup>24</sup> while at the same time it renders more complicated any comparisons with theories based solely on standards of training and environmental determinism, including cultural transmission.

From the Waldorf perspective, education involves knowing, trusting, and facilitating the development of what is understood to be available to ripen from within each individual. From the mainstream perspective, the focus on inner developmental forces is more varied. Similarly, although both Waldorf and mainstream educators understand the complementary need to introduce form based on established socio-cultural conventions, they differ in how they approach this. Thus, while "education" refers in

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<sup>24</sup>Steiner (1923/1988) presents his view of human development in considerable detail in this lecture series about *The child's changing consciousness and Waldorf education*. He also writes about it in his 1909 essay on *The education of the child in the light of anthroposophy*. Burnett (1995) gives a useful summary and places Steiner's view briefly within a broader context of western culture.



each case to the formative process by which a human being develops, the dynamics of this process may be understood differently in the two contexts.

Concerning the term "creativity", it is critical to bear in mind Bamford's (1981) careful distinction: "...we must go beyond the idea of a single, unique act of creation and assume as well a 'creative state' of continuous or recurrent creation, metaphysical in nature, outside space and time" (p. 31). The implications of this distinction weigh heavily in my discussion of art and education, since they focus attention on Steiner's links with the Hermetic tradition and get at the heart of much of what Steiner offers the world:

From this point of view creation is continuously or recurrently unfolding, and consciousness may always "know" its states by virtue of the principle whereby "the One is the All".... Consequently, the world is not continuous as our senses present it to us, but there are moments of eternity, gaps or openings in perception, which our senses conceal from us. (ibid.)

Thus all human beings are creative in so far as they participate in the "spiritual exegesis" of all that confronts them in life, through constructing meaning, grasping significance, and being reflexively aware of what otherwise remains unrealized without their creative effort. Cobb (1995) refers to a similar view within the context of the current educational debate about constructivism: He characterizes it as a nondualistic constructivist approach which is partially inspired by theories of distributed intelligence, and which "considers that human activity and the world are mutually constitutive" (p. 26). In other words, creativity is understood to be a major force or power available to human beings, which can be released, harnessed, and schooled according to particular educational goals.

### Significance

Most educational and social theory developed within the modern, Eurocentric context has systematically devalued the affective aspect of human awareness through focusing attention primarily on the intellect or the will, or at best on the interrelationship between these two, as in Freire's (1992) notion of conscientizacao or Schon's (1983) reflective practitioner. Though a theory of the tripartite soul (as vegetative, sensitive, and rational) goes back at least to the time of Plato and nominally underlies most educational theory today through Bloom's taxonomy (based on the triune of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains), nevertheless there has been relatively little focused study or

coherent understanding connected with how feeling interrelates with thought and action.<sup>25</sup>

Steiner's suggestion that art allows feeling and sensitivity to function as a necessary bridge connecting (and thereby enlivening and enhancing) both human thought and human action offers a timely theoretical model for a new understanding of how all three major aspects of human nature may integrate with each other. Such integration implies that Truth and Intellect, Goodness and Moral Action, and Beauty and Aesthetic Feeling should not be understood independently from each other, but recognized as *interdependent*. This recognition coincides with a widespread paradigm shift in many areas of scholarship towards a more ecological and holistic worldview.

The holistic understanding of human nature affirmed by Steiner's theory of art suggests that teaching and healing are potentially powerfully inter-connected: Properly informed teaching facilitates *ease*, just as improperly informed teaching facilitates *dis-ease* among individual students, communities, and the world at large. The deepening of understanding engendered by this thesis offers the potential, therefore, for individuals to develop revitalized energies, increased motivation for learning, enhanced self-esteem, and renewed confidence in the integrity of life through creative and constructive involvement within society. In social terms, there is the promise of a more moral and more friendly community, within which the unique contribution of each individual is welcome.<sup>26</sup>

Steiner claims that art offers educators a way to teach discipline, respect for authority, and the value of freedom through invitation rather than demand, such that these critical values are not negated by the teacher's own actions. Furthermore, he suggests

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<sup>25</sup>Dr. Steven Burns points out that R. deSousa's book on The rationality of emotion is a notable exception here (personal communication, April 11, 1997). John MacMurray (1935) has also written about Reason and emotion, and Louis Arnaud Reid's book on Ways of understanding and education brings this concern into the educational world very clearly.

<sup>26</sup>Steiner composed many short passages which serve as texts for meditation. His "social verse" is frequently quoted at Anthroposo-phical gatherings: "The healthy social life is found, when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community, the virtue of each one is living."

that by attending to our human capacity to feel and be sensitive, we *necessarily* increase awareness of our need both for *good judgement* in our thinking and *good will* in our doing. From such awareness comes the striving necessary to create better selves and better communities.

In light of the "monumental crisis in public education" described by Kotsch (1993) and others in terms of falling test scores, huge disciplinary problems, increasing dropout rates, and functional illiteracy for a high proportion of graduates, surely it behooves educators to examine carefully a theoretical model and established educational practice which apparently offers a dissolution, or at least a reduction of these troubles. Paradoxically, both the explosive, uncontrolled energy which manifests as violence, and the disinterested absence of energetic involvement which manifests as apathy, are signs of an education "gone wrong". Freire (1987) calls the frustrated activity of those who rebel without really understanding the consequences of their actions "an explosion of impotence"; apathy too exposes impotence. To my mind, "good" education must help people to better understand the potential power manifest in human beings, so that we do not succumb through ignorance to either sort of impotence, but instead learn to direct what power may be available to us with intelligence, compassion, and joy.

Steiner's awareness of the value of art in education offers one possibility for moving closer toward the realisation of this goal. I submit that this possibility merits careful, sustained, systematic, analytical reflection, not only for the intrinsic value it may have, but also because it directs attention toward a dimension of education which has been notoriously undervalued in western mainstream education during the past several hundred years. I have designed this study to accomplish something of this reflection through my own work, and I hope the text will encourage further reflection through the heuristic value it may hold for others.

### Assumptions and Limitations

It should be clear from my account of how this thesis came to be written that I was motivated initially by a sympathetic response to Waldorf education. My inquiry has been coloured, no doubt, by a willingness to assume there are good reasons for such sympathy, though I have tried to be reasonably critical in my study and to guard against

too automatic a justification of Steiner's views. While I recognize sympathetic interest as a potential limitation, I make no apology for it, following Popkewitz's (1990) reply, when asked "Can there be a disinterested science among interested social scientists?": "At best, disinterest can mean a disciplined and systematic approach to investigation in which one 'plays' with different interpretations. But this play always occurs within boundaries" (p.59). To offset potential problems associated with this, I intentionally consider disconfirming evidence and alternative interpretations, as well as alert my readers to the need for cautious weighing of my arguments and suggestions.<sup>27</sup>

A more serious limitation to my mind is the fact that I write in general terms about Waldorf and mainstream education while having necessarily limited experience of both. Relying on published documents to adequately portray the relevant curricular rationales and pedagogical practices of both educational contexts means that I am always *at least* one step removed from an actual face-to-face interaction with live, flesh-and-blood students and teachers. This distancing of my analysis from education as it is lived introduces an intellectual gloss to my work which, though necessary and perhaps even inevitable, nevertheless is almost certain to obscure important perceptions, just as it may facilitate other perceptions, such as clarity, focus, and perspective, which are not possible in any other way.

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<sup>27</sup>The need to be skillful and accurate in such weighing is paramount, yet tremendously difficult. Steiner (1905-8/1947) himself cautions that it is not accomplished by critical judgment alone, since this leads inevitably to a one-sided and therefore mistaken understanding. Instead it must be balanced with an awareness of "devotion and selfless veneration" (*ibid.*, p. 9). In other words, it is the balance between critical resistance and sympathetic acceptance which establishes one's response. Without due measure of both sympathy and antipathy there can be no true understanding; knowing *exactly what is due*, however, is a puzzle which one solves by conforming to external rule, and another by appeal to inner conviction. Learning to make such an appeal, and to trust the result, is an extremely delicate task which bears directly on the central topic of this thesis. Bach alludes to something similar in his oft-quoted remark, "There is nothing to it. You only have to hit the right note at the right time, and the instrument plays itself" (cited in Exley, 1991).

Further limitations to my study arise from the nature of Steiner's work itself. For one thing, he was a prolific writer and lecturer, authoring several hundred volumes of work, only some of which have been translated into English from the original German. For the most part I have studied the English translations, which raises the possibility that I have understood better what the translator intended than what Steiner himself had in mind. To guard against this, I have compared different translations of key texts, and - where possible - consulted the original German source. I have also taken note of any explanatory notes by Steiner's translators which draw attention to particular nuances of meaning which may be unexpected and significant.

Significantly, many of Steiner's lectures were transcribed by others without ever being checked for accuracy by the speaker himself due to lack of time, though Steiner did at least take pains to appoint trusted colleagues to the task of recording the talks verbatim and preparing them for publication under the careful supervision of his wife, who was thoroughly conversant with his views and worked closely with him at all times. Still, he was clearly aware that at times the important subtleties of his message were lost due to faulty transcription. Because of this, I have tried to support key points in my analysis of Steiner's ideas through reference to his written texts, rather than his spoken lectures, on the assumption that his written texts are likely to portray his intended meanings more accurately than the transcripts of others, no matter how sympathetic and well-intentioned they might be.

Finally, the method used constitutes a limit on any inquiry, in terms of following rules for establishing credible results. All investigators are inevitably bound by the tools they use. By assuming my own importance as primary research instrument, I limit the quality of my results to my own integrity. As Schwandt (1990) notes,

to examine the exercise of method...is to study a way of knowing; in other words, methodology and epistemology are linked. Ways of knowing are guided by assumptions concerning what we are about when we inquire and by assumptions concerning the nature of the phenomenon into which we inquire. (p. 262)

By choosing this method of philosophical analysis and reflection, I assume a certain value for myself which may only be established, following the conclusions I draw

in my study, by the degree to which my work is recognized as *integral*.<sup>28</sup> This brings me to my last and most fundamental assumption, which is simply that such recognition is not mine alone to make, else I could simply establish a self-gratifying, positive feedback loop in which I work to achieve integrity, while assuming my integrity by virtue of my work!

Such self-affirming circular logic is characteristic of the insane, as Hofstadter (1989) is quick to point out (p. 696), though he also suggests the more promising possibility that "The self comes into being at the moment it has the power to reflect itself" (p. 709). Einstein also draws our attention to this reflexive puzzle, as may be deduced from a jingle he once composed when asked to autograph a picture: "A thought that sometimes makes me hazy - Am I, or are the others, crazy?"

My assumption is that others are always necessary to a certain extent in deciding answers to such questions, since judgements of quality and value necessarily bear social weight. This is in line with Eisner's (1991) canon of *consensual validation* (pp. 112-113), as well as Riviere's (1996) argument, following Banks (1992), that "inquiry cannot represent the position of a single individual, but must be validated by the community which is the subject of the inquiry" (p. 109).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>A similar viewpoint was expressed by Arnold Schonberg in this remark, "The 'beautiful' in music is a by-product of the composer's integrity, a function of his search for the truth" (cited in Exley, 1991, no page number).

<sup>29</sup>I am grateful to Dr. Steven Burns for clarifying that *agreement can signal validity*, rather than just shared opinion, following an argument suggested by Wittgenstein that "agreement in judgements presupposes agreement in form of life," and "agreement in form of life is a condition of questions of truth being meaningful, *but that they are meaningful*"; in light of this, the emotivist view popularized among analytical philosophers earlier this century by C.L. Stevenson (1945) in his book, *Ethics and language*, stands rejected (personal communication, April 18, 1997). While I share Wittgenstein's view, some constructivists continue to separate agreement from validity by insisting that "*correct and right* are not terms of accurate depiction but are expressions of agreement and commendation" (see, for example, Smith, 1990, p. 177, italics original).

Hence my study is ultimately limited precisely to the extent that it serves to exclude or distance others from being intelligently involved in reflecting on the results. But this is a flexible limit, and one well beyond my complete control, for although I both invite and strive to support the intelligent engagement of others, I cannot assume complete responsibility for their interpretation or reflection of my work. Nor do I care to force their involvement through excessively persuasive arguments. Nevertheless, I am keenly aware of the vulnerability inherent in such a position, as was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who remarked somewhat in the same vein, "Give me the best instrument in Europe, but listeners who understand nothing or do not wish to understand and who do not feel with me in what I am playing, and all my pleasure is spoilt" (cited in Exley, 1991, no page number).

## CHAPTER TWO: Literature review and justification for research

Previous work in at least three related areas informs this study. First are the fairly well-established threads of philosophical and anthroposophical inquiry connecting issues of epistemology, art, and human cognition. Second are various insights gleaned from empirical research in the recently emerging fields of cognitive science and neuroscience. Third are the varied hues and tones introduced by those who have published reflections of their own artistic activity, whether as Waldorf or mainstream educators, or as practicing artists in a more conventional sense.

Few researchers have attempted to bring these three areas together in a meaningful way. Even fewer have attempted to understand their interconnections in terms of established curricular and pedagogical practices. In this chapter I review some of the attempts which come closest to my own in this regard. I also indicate how my study may suggest deeper and richer understandings of the interface between artistic activity and cognitive development than may yet have been grasped by many educators in Canada.

### The Role of Art in Waldorf Education

Art plays an important role in Waldorf education in at least two ways. On the one hand there is a curricular and pedagogical focus on such conventionally understood artistic activities as drawing, painting, storytelling, drama, movement, music, modelling, and so on.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, there is the notion that teaching is itself an art, in the sense that it requires skill, care, and judgment in working with chosen materials. In this

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<sup>1</sup>Along with Irwin and Farrell (1995), I suggest that within western Eurocentric culture "art is a concept that most people understand though we may disagree upon a definition" (p. 137). It is important to add, however, that "in virtually all indigenous languages, no word or phrase exists that parallels the English term of 'art'" (ibid.); from their research, Irwin and Farrell (1995) have found that "indigenous peoples believe that everything in life is connected... therefore, art, creativity and concepts like beauty can not be separated out from the rest of life" (p. 135). The words of First Nations elder, Gilbert Joe, to the effect that "to me art is work [and] work is life itself" express this more connected view (ibid., p. 138). It is interesting to realize that Steiner's view of art also comes very close to this: This will become more apparent in later chapters.



section I review work having to do primarily with the first of these ideas; nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind the other as well, since it too underlies and informs the Waldorf approach to education.

*The work of Agnes Noble.*

A recent study by Swedish educational psychologist Agnes Noble (1996) comes closest to my own intentions of exploring the interplay between art and knowledge, particularly as it is exposed in Waldorf education. Her work establishes a useful, general background to much of my own discussion. For example, she uses familiar language to introduce and reassure academic audiences about some of the unusual challenges presented by Rudolf Steiner's method of *spiritual science* which underlies his educational insights.

She also introduces the general development of Steiner's thought, particularly as it originates in an epistemology implicit in Goethe's scientific studies. Having summarized how Waldorf education arose out of Steiner's threefold social vision, Noble (1996) identifies in her final chapter the fundamental aim of Waldorf education as bringing together what is often kept separate in other social contexts -- two aspects of life identified as the intellectually-spiritual and the physically-corporeal (p. 221).

Art has a central role to play in this, as Noble (1996) is careful to point out. She concludes that this role must be more and more fully explicated if educators are to understand and benefit from Steiner's many educational insights:

There has been a lack of studies encompassing both Steiner's theories on art and knowledge, and his views on how this can be incorporated into teaching methodology. A link of this kind between the epistemological and practical points of departure is necessary if we are to understand the approach employed in Waldorf Schools the world over today. (Noble, 1996, p. 222)

A more succinct rationale for my own study can hardly be articulated! Moving in the same direction as Noble, yet going further, I explore the interconnections of Steiner's theories of art and knowledge in terms of three *spiritual laws* which Steiner discovered in Goethe's work. These are the laws of polarity, enhancement, and metamorphosis. Also, while Noble reviews in her final chapter much of the practical

advice Steiner gave to the teachers of the first Waldorf school, especially in terms of art, I have taken the further step of juxtaposing subsequent Waldorf educational practice with that of English Canadian mainstream schools, in order to expose more clearly the underlying principles of each. In this way my own work both complements and furthers the research undertaken by Noble.

*The work of Alison Soutter.*

Alison Soutter (1994), psychologist at the University of Luton, has compared Waldorf educational principles with Vygotskian principles of learning as social process and found the match to be interestingly close. Imagination is seen to develop out of play<sup>2</sup> and supports artistic and scientific creativity, as well as other intellectual modes of thought. Imagination is intentionally stimulated through pedagogical practices such as exposure to unstructured toys, creating beautiful environments in which to learn, and telling stories without showing prepared illustrations.

Soutter (1994), like many others, notes that Steiner's educational ideas are part of a much wider world-view, termed anthroposophy, which stresses the links between human physicality and spirituality. She claims that although Steiner's original insights are intuitive, rather than research-based,<sup>3</sup> subsequent research supports the conclusion

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<sup>2</sup>Steiner was certainly influenced by Friedrich Schiller's views, expressed in his Letters on the Esthetic Education of Man, on play and imagination as fundamental to artistic experience. Since Schiller's work on this subject is generally accorded wide significance, it seems reasonable to suppose that Vygotsky was also familiar with it. It may be that any similarity between Steiner's and Vygotsky's views on play and imagination partially reflects this common root.

<sup>3</sup>Steiner himself argues that intuition, properly understood, constitutes a form of scientific research (i.e., *spiritual science research*) as yet unrecognized by many physical, natural, and social scientists. Gertrude Reif Hughes (1995) offers this explanation:

Steiner stressed that thinking is not to be viewed as merely personal or subjective, even though it usually feels like a private experience. He firmly refutes the widely held, unexamined assumption (not to say dogma) that thinking must be subjective: "Thinking is *beyond* subject and object. It forms

that Waldorf schools provide healthier social climates, where children can learn without fear of bullying, for example.<sup>4</sup> Because of this, she argues that more work needs to be done to discover other strengths and weaknesses of Waldorf education. My study serves to address this need by inquiring into the role of art in education and asking: Are there

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both of these concepts, just as it does all others." Developed in one's own unique way by each individual who undertakes to do so, the thinking capacity can become reliable intuition, allowing one to find the motivation for what one "must" do and to choose it freely. In such choices, individuality and cognition unite to produce freedom, freely undertaken actions that are both fully individual and socially constructive. (p. xx)

<sup>4</sup>She refers in particular to a paper by herself and Ian Rivers which was presented at the Twentieth Annual Conference of the British Educational Research Association held in September 1994 at St. Anne's College, University of Oxford, entitled, "Bullying and School Ethos". Other documentation exists (which she does not mention however), such as the "1993 Preliminary School Statistics from the Waldorf School of Milwaukee Inner City project in America" by Dr. Richard R. Doornek, Curriculum Specialist in Art with the Milwaukee Public School Board, from which this conclusion is drawn: "The data regarding suspensions is significant in that it reflects the fact that children at the Waldorf school are learning to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner when they are in school". In a 1993 letter describing the Milwaukee Waldorf project to a community in Alaska which was considering supporting the Waldorf concept in Anchorage Public Schools, Dr. Doornek adds,

First, I must remind you of the socio-economic situation in which we placed the program. It is one of the poorest economic neighborhoods of the city, and the school is surrounded by social disintegration. It is important to know that because what is happening in the school is somewhat remarkable -- all things considered.... My personal observations support the fact that behaviors are changing -- despite the chaos in the neighborhood and insecurity at home.

Copies of Dr. Doornek's statistical report and letter are available to anyone interested through the Steiner Schools Fellowship in England. The SSF attempts to serve as a collection and distribution point for all research results pertaining to Waldorf education printed in English.

convincing curricular and pedagogical reasons for viewing the centrality of art in Waldorf education as a strength? And if so, what (if anything) does this imply about the peripheral status of art in mainstream schools?

*The work of Alduino Bartolo Mazzone.*

In his analysis of Waldorf schooling as related to the progressive education tradition, Mazzone (1995) catalogues a number of key characteristics of Waldorf education. In terms of curricular emphasis, and how art fits into the overall curricular structure, Mazzone notes a three-fold organisation, such that

A balance of academic, artistic and practical activities is provided in the belief that all the faculties of the soul should be nourished and exercised. The organisational form to support this aim is the three-fold division of the day whereby the morning period emphasises more formal academic learning, the middle period of the day focuses more on artistic subjects, and the afternoons are devoted to practical activities.  
(Mazzone, 1995, p. 6)

Though he is clearly in support of this tri-fold emphasis, and accepts the valuation of artistic and practical as well as academic activity in Waldorf schools,<sup>5</sup> he also recognizes and draws attention in his conclusion to the fact

that much more work could be done in documenting the many efforts that have been made in developing the organisational and methodological aspects of Waldorf schools and in articulating the educational philosophy of Waldorf pedagogy in a language that is more accessible to contemporary educators. (Mazzone, 1995, p. 22)

My study is designed to contribute to the accomplishment of this goal, with particular reference to the role of art as the central and pivotal curricular focus in Waldorf education, mediating both academic and practical learning experiences. This dynamic is brought into even higher relief in my work by my juxtaposing it with the way art has functioned in mainstream schools in English Canada. Mazzone (1995) suggests that such

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<sup>5</sup>Alduino Mazzone was a "founding and pioneer teacher of the Mount Barker Waldorf School" and then Chairman of the Council of the Anthroposophical Society in Australia, lecturer at the Rudolf Steiner College (SA) in Adelaide, Educational Consultant, and lecturer in the School of Education at Flinders University, SA (Mazzone, 1995, p. 22). His academic degrees include a B.Ed., M.Ed.St., and Grad.Dip (Ed. Admin.).

research carries rich significance in the areas of personal and social values, as well as in clarifying societal educational aspirations (ibid.).

*The work of John Burnett.*

In a recent comparison of spirituality in Waldorf and mainstream English education, Burnett (1996) notes that anthroposophical understandings lead Waldorf educators to balance scientific, artistic, and religious (moral) work with their students. However, pedagogical practices for doing this, as for example through such activities as meditations, festival celebrations, verse composition and recitations, as well as other forms of artistic endeavor, are often seen and criticized by non-Waldorf educators as overt, or even dogmatic, religious practices. Especially where Waldorf education is not funded by public monies, Burnett (1996) finds that Waldorf schools "have tended to be viewed either as elitist private schools which have somewhat eccentric spiritual ideas or as poorly-funded free schools very much on the green, alternative fringe" (p. 9).

To clarify the notion of spirituality in Waldorf education, and especially how it reflects epistemological foundations and artistic practices indicated by Steiner, Burnett (1996) argues that "well-documented publications..., active participation in national conferences,...[and] professional dialogue with other educationalists" is urgently needed (p. 9). While such work has been sparse over the past 70 years in Britain (where Burnett lives and works), "there are definite signs of change" (ibid.). As an example of this, he cites the recently established programme on Waldorf Education at the University of Plymouth, soon to be augmented by the establishment of a Waldorf Research Centre "which co-ordinates current projects as well as training Waldorf educators in the techniques of research" (Burnett, 1996, p. 9).

He also reports a major public exhibition in 1994 at the 44th International Conference on Education at Geneva sponsored by UNESCO to facilitate examination and debate of Waldorf educational principles and practices. Increasing and widespread interest in Waldorf education is easily documented<sup>6</sup> and offers important grounds for

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<sup>6</sup>The Steiner Schools Fellowship in England and the Association of Waldorf Schools in North America offer help in this regard (see appendix for addresses).

more research according to Burnett "if proper professional dialogue is to be achieved" (ibid.). In this study, I not only engage in the kind of research Burnett advises concerning Waldorf education, but I also contribute to a growing dialogue between Waldorf and other educational perspectives.<sup>7</sup>

*The work of Gilbert Childs.*

Childs (1991) has written a comprehensive account of Waldorf education, drawing on numerous books and lectures by Steiner in order to introduce both the theory and practice of this unique educational approach. Besides reviewing Steiner's personal background, development of his three-fold social world view, and anthroposophical vision, Childs describes succinctly several key aspects of Waldorf education. These include, for example, discussion of the four temperaments (personality types) which invite teachers to use different kinds of curricular and pedagogical practices to meet the needs of different kinds of learners. Also reviewed by Childs are organizational aspects of Waldorf schooling such as the use of main lessons, and the practice of having the same class teacher stay with a group of children throughout the elementary years. In addition, Childs touches on the creative, artistic approach to the curriculum taken by Waldorf educators, and he indicates how imagination is interwoven into all learning activities.

It is this focus on art and imagination which I have greatly intensified in my own study. In so doing, I attempt a more thorough description and analysis of how artistic activity may inter-relate with cognitive development, both within Waldorf and English Canadian mainstream education. Childs' work serves to introduce the general theory and context of Waldorf curricular and pedagogical practice: His work is both extended and complemented by my more detailed and searching inquiry into the role of art in Waldorf as compared to English Canadian mainstream schooling.

*The work of Frans Carlgren.*

Carlgren (1976/1993) has also written a comprehensive account of Waldorf education, including background on Steiner's life and anthroposophical work, basic

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<sup>7</sup>Additional authors exploring points of contact between Waldorf and other educational traditions include Yonemura (1989), Ginsburg (1982), Cavanaugh (1990), and Ensign (1996).

features of Waldorf schooling, detailed description of the curriculum followed in Waldorf schools, and a concluding discussion on how this world-wide school movement furthers individual and social freedom in the world today. In his discussion of art in the Waldorf school, Carlgren (1976/1993) draws considerable attention to, but does not attempt to explain, the fact that in Waldorf education artistic activities are seen as deeply *formative* rather than superficially *informative*: He notes that they are understood by Waldorf educators to "open out a wide range of soul experiences and also an intimate interplay between physical and psychic activities" (Carlgren, 1976/1993, p. 57). My study is designed to weigh this claim both philosophically and analytically, and to discover a possible explanation for how such an "intimate interplay between physical and psychic activities" might be possible in a school setting.

Carlgren (1976/1993) includes numerous photographs and examples to illuminate daily practices in Waldorf schools, though the principles underlying such practices are only briefly indicated. This suggests a need for a more thorough philosophical analysis of the rationales underlying particular Waldorf curricular and pedagogical practices: Such is the aim I set myself in this present work.

Carlgren (1976/1993) points to the significance of such an analysis in regard to the role of art when he notes, on the concluding page of his text,

The goal of the artistic activity within a Waldorf school is not -- and ...this must be expressly emphasised -- to produce artists, but rather to develop human beings who can be creative in all walks of life. (p. 261)

Through realising their own creativity, both individual and social bodies are able to sustain a high degree of liveliness and vitality: It is this dynamic of healthy renewal and fructification which Steiner sought to stimulate through his educational vision. Carlgren (1976/1993) explains: Waldorf education is designed to induce an experience of inner freedom through removing "as far as possible the physical and spiritual obstacles which can place themselves in the way of the conscious mastery of the ego, or self, in adult years" (p. 261). He argues that it is a task of "helping to unfold the latent inner capabilities of the growing human being" (*ibid.*). In this study I attempt to spell out more exactly what this might mean in schools.

*The work of A.C. Harwood.*

Oxford don A.C. Harwood (1958), close friend of Owen Barfield and C.S. Lewis, both of whom – like Harwood – were deeply concerned about the possible merits of Steiner's anthroposophy (cf. Adey, 1978), has written a deeply informed and deeply informative account of the principles and practices realized in Rudolf Steiner's educational work.<sup>8</sup> In his first chapter, "Premises", Harwood (1958) explains how unusual Steiner's vision was, and why it has been so hard for many to understand:

It is when we make ourselves aware of earlier changes in human consciousness that we also make ourselves sensitive to new forms of thought and perception which may emerge, and indeed are emerging... It is with such emergent modes of thinking and perception that Steiner was concerned. There is therefore a double task awaiting anyone who endeavours to interpret his thought to a new public. He [sic] has not only to mediate new thoughts to his readers but in order to do so he has, in some sense, to initiate them into new ways of thinking. In this process one of the first things which the reader will discover is that he [sic] is being asked to think artistically and imaginatively not only about poetry or painting but also about the Sciences, that the principle of form is regarded as the creative and controlling power in works of nature as well as in works of art, that a new science is being based on qualitative aspects of the material world no less than the present science is based on the quantitative.

In its very nature, therefore, Steiner's educational philosophy stands in the centre of one of the great questions of modern education, the mutual relation of the Sciences and the Arts. (pp. 10-11)

Harwood (1958) examines Steiner's educational philosophy in great detail, especially in terms of *metamorphosis*, though he is careful to point out the danger of abstraction in trying to understand Steiner's thought theoretically, without benefit of artistic awareness:

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<sup>8</sup>Adey (1978) notes that Harwood co-edited the Anthroposophical Quarterly and taught at a Rudolf Steiner school near Oxford (p. 125). Fox (1993) adds that Miss Daphne Olivier, who became A.C. Harwood's first wife, was one of four teachers who heard Steiner lecture about education in England in the early 1920's and decided to found a school along anthroposophical lines. Within a few months A.C. Harwood joined the group and in 1923 helped to found what was to become the Michael Hall School, where he and the others formed a faculty of five for the seven students who enrolled when the school officially opened in January 1925 (p. 29).



Even to mention this single principle of metamorphosis is to fall into the danger which Steiner himself always strove sedulously to avoid – the danger of abstraction. For it must be added...that Steiner's ideas about childhood (and about other things as well) are not theories or hypotheses in the ordinary sense of modern science. They came to him with the force of immediate and overwhelming experience. There is a vast difference between observing a process from outside and realising it through conscious participation.... To enter into the experience of others requires not only understanding but imaginative sympathy as well. Logical thoughts can pass immediately from mind to mind. To communicate experience is a matter of art, which has indeed its own logic but which never speaks from mind to mind without evoking deeper qualities of feeling. (pp.11-12)

It is thus a "feeling awareness" which Harwood tries to evoke in his review of Waldorf education. At the same time, he provides a scholarly account which resounds with Steiner's own view of art and shows how such a view can come to permeate a whole education: "The nature of an art is always in some measure to present the eternal in the guise of the temporal and local; and the art of teaching is to make the enjoyed moment serve the whole of life" (Harwood, 1958, p. 97).

Harwood's account provides important detail about Waldorf education which is far too long to repeat here. Thus it serves as an admirable companion or background study to my own. Where my study differs from Harwood's, is in my attempt to *intensify awareness* of the role of art in Waldorf education not simply through description (artful or otherwise), but through *juxtaposition* of two contrasting educational contexts, such that the contrast itself serves to heighten perception of each. In this way I attempt something novel, which nevertheless relates to Harwood's work.

*The work of Hildegard Gerbert.*

Dr. Gerbert (1989), in her descriptive and explanatory study entitled *Education through art*,<sup>9</sup> explores Rudolf Steiner's declared awareness "of the power inherent in an understanding of art, capable of influencing everyone" (p. 1). She understands that he was "eager" to make this awareness "fruitful", and so he directed many of his

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<sup>9</sup>I refer here to the English translation of a study originally published in Germany in 1965 with the German title, Menschenbildung aus Kunstverständnis, Part I.

pedagogical lectures toward the goal of showing "that the inner life of young people needs impulses fired with enthusiasm, arising from artistic experiences" (ibid.).

While much of her discussion relates to artistic activity as it is experienced in grades nine to twelve in Waldorf schools (where I have preferred to concentrate on the elementary grades), nevertheless she is -- like me -- directly concerned with "an understanding of art as a whole within the pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner" as well as a consideration of "how a knowledge of his Science of Spirit can be helpful in this direction" (Gerbert, 1989, p. 2).

Her analysis offers the provocative insight that the current "passion" for external images in society is directly related to a "killing" of the imagination, while at the same time this "longing" for pictures also portends the development of new soul qualities allowing human beings to "burst the tight confines of the merely physical perceptible" (Gerbert, 1989, p. 5). She explains how Steiner understands this to be facilitated by such practices as concentration and meditation, both of which are strongly supported in artistic activity. On the other hand, pictures created mechanically with advanced technology such as photography, television, video and film, are likely to address the human longing for pictures in a superficial and soul-destroying way (Gerbert, 1989, p. 6).

What Gerbert acknowledges as "the happiness of active perception" is lost in such experiences, and they become merely occasions for what she says is like "an aimless searching, in which one surrenders oneself to the diversity of possibilities..." (ibid.). To counteract this tendency, she argues that considerable pedagogical energy must be directed towards developing a proper "organ for receptivity" among young people: Such receptivity, when experienced, allows "real encounters" to take place "in which the ego develops inner activity and growth" (Gerbert, 1989, p. 6). In order to accomplish this, she says, "the experiencing of art must be raised into consciousness, and an understanding of art must be awakened" (ibid.). In my study I try to discover how the elementary years of Waldorf education are designed to prepare for this, and how English Canadian mainstream schools either dismiss this goal, or perhaps attempt to meet it in other ways.

Gerbert (1993) also clarifies some of the fundamental ideas "of an aesthetics which Dr. Steiner developed out of the knowledge of the human being" (pp. 25-26). For example, lines and contours tend to create mental images, leading to the standardized use

of symbol, hieroglyph, and eventual letters, in which "drawing becomes simplified until it no longer appears as form, but speaks directly to the already acquired understanding of conventional signs" (ibid.). Feelings, on the other hand, typically arise in response to "wider" (i.e., two-dimensional) aspects of experience such as colour, harmony and dissonance, transition and correspondence; the Will more clearly expresses itself artistically in three dimensions, as in sculpture and architecture (Gerbert, 1989, p. 26).

In my study I attempt to relate this particular view of aesthetics, which Steiner articulates and Gerbert elaborates, to specific curricular and pedagogical practices in Waldorf elementary schools, as a possible means to explicate how human development may indeed be linked to artistic experience. In this regard, although I write in terms of *cognitive* development, it is important to bear in mind that I do not intend thereby to restrict my focus to intellectual concepts alone: I use the word "cognition" in a broad and admittedly controversial sense to refer to "active knowing" which may be tacit and physical, and sensitive and emotional, as well as abstract and intellectual.

*The work of Torin Finser.*

Dr. Finser (1994) has written a highly reflective, personal account of his years with a class of Waldorf pupils, from their start together in Grade One through completion of the elementary curriculum in Grade Eight. His avowed intention is to encourage a reexamination of "existing practices of teaching,...personal philosophies of education, and...alternatives for educating children" (Finser, 1994, preface).

Drawing on his own experiences as a Waldorf teacher, supplemented by his own earlier experience as a Waldorf student, Finser does not attempt to catalogue "all the dimensions of the Waldorf curriculum and the stages of child development as seen from the Waldorf point of view, or of Anthroposophy, the spiritual orientation that underlies it": Instead, he uses an intentional "winnowing process" which allows him to selectively include sufficient "events and experiences...to illustrate particular aspects of Waldorf education", while "leaving room for the active imagination and interpretation of the reflective teacher" who cares to read and learn from his work (ibid.).

Given the centrality of art and artistic activity in the Waldorf experience, it is not surprising that many of the "events and experiences" reflected in Finser's book do, in

fact, shed light on the role of art in Waldorf education. For example, he describes vividly how such seemingly small events as greeting each student at the door of the classroom easily takes on a ceremonial quality (Finser, 1994, p. 15). Similarly, he describes the exquisite care with which special birthday verses are selected for particular children, "using such images that represented qualities inherent in the birthday-child's being, while also suggesting possibilities for future growth" (Finser, 1994, pp. 25-7). And there are numerous descriptive passages indicating how artistic intentions were interwoven with academic ones, as the following excerpt illustrates:

We began our sixth-grade study by making circle designs that were partly an artistic exercise (we used colored pencils to shade them) and partly simple practice in using the compasses. We drew concentric circles, expanding each one from a common point, and made many, many drawings of circles divided into six parts -- opportunities to discover that the radius of any given circle fits exactly six times around the circumference of the same circle. By drawing full circles at each of six points around the circumference, the class created a variety of flower forms that could be carefully shaded in a whole palette of colors. We then went on to drawing families of triangles... (p. 122)

In the text itself, Finser does not offer much theoretical insight into the reasons behind such activities. He does make extensive use of end-notes, however, to comment on Steiner's indications in particular instances, and sometimes to mention other sources which may go into the relevant educational theory in more detail. For example, in one endnote he explains how Steiner's view of the evolution of human consciousness points to the need for an artistic awakening at the present time:

Steiner describes that in our age, humanity's task is to take the clarity of thinking that has been developed and now regain the pictorial mode of consciousness, enabling clarity to unite with warmth of soul and feeling: this is an artistic path and holds tremendous potential for every realm of human activity and achievement. (Finser, 1994, p. 246)

In regard both to the many detailed examples of pedagogical practices, and to the occasional glimpse into Steiner's thinking and the influence it has had in shaping Waldorf education, Finser's work is an invaluable aid to my own study.

Essentially, I build on Finser's work by attempting to fill in something of the theoretical background to his text, through abstracting some of the principles underlying

many of the artistic practices he reports. In doing this, I recognize that I involve myself in a one-sidedly academic exercise, instead of following the more complex (and reputedly healthier) anthroposophical approach of combining academic, artistic, and practical intentions in any particular endeavor; in a sense I aspire to un-weave the braided text he has created and expose only one thread, through focusing attention on the theoretical import of what he describes much more vividly.<sup>10</sup>

*The work of Jünemann and Weitmann.*

In 1994 an English edition was finally published of a 1976 extensive account of Drawing and painting in Steiner schools, written by Margrit Jünemann and Fritz Weitmann under the auspices of the Pedagogical Research Centre of the Association of Independent Waldorf Schools. Their book pays tribute to the work of an earlier Waldorf educator, Dr. Erich Schwebesch, who was invited personally by Rudolf Steiner to head up the art and aesthetics program in the first Waldorf school.

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<sup>10</sup>While this is certainly the case in terms of my thesis itself, it is not completely true with regard to my over-all experience during four years of doctoral study. I never questioned the fact that it is necessary for me, in attempting to write about art, to ground my developing understanding in artistic experience as well as theoretical analysis. In consequence, I have actively pursued singing, dancing, poetry composition, watercolour painting, eurythmy, acting, and form drawing through formal study and individual practice over many, many hours during the past four years. It is important for me to acknowledge the welcome understanding and support of this approach, particularly within an academic context where it could not simply be taken for granted, by Professor Anthony Barton, and Drs. Jim Manos and Nick Webb. It is harder for me to see how practical intentions can be (or have been) integrated into my work, though I am aware that insights arising from my study have indeed served to inform my daily life in important ways involving practical consequences as, for example, in family relationships and issues of personal growth. I have also been involved for several years with DANS Nova Scotia's project to support dance in public schools, and I helped to spearhead a committee of school teachers, administrators, and curriculum supervisors to work with artists and art educators in promoting *art infusion* in schools, culminating in a three-day workshop in August 1995 for educators working in and around Halifax.

It also acknowledges that "Rudolf Steiner laid great importance on the role of art in education and life.... [and emphasized that] The practice of art is an essential way to increase our awareness of self and others" (Jünemann and Weitmann, 1994, preface). For example, they draw attention to Steiner's view of art like this:

Steiner even said, there will be as much deceit and criminality in the world as there is lack of art. Much violence in life comes from deep inner boredom. The exciting creative process which is art can instead fill the social environment with a positive spirit. The children in school do not become aware of the value of such insights all at once, but as they grow older they become increasingly aware of the enormous value of what they were given in school. (ibid.)

Identified by Weissert (1994) as a "practical and comprehensive work book", Jünemann and Weitmann's text "gives an overview of the Waldorf School Teaching plan and Art curriculum... [and] thoroughly investigates many aspects of art that Rudolf Steiner spoke of in many lectures, notes and demonstrations (Foreword).

In the course of lecturing and leading "artistic working groups" in the Association of Waldorf Schools' summer schools for teachers from other schools, Jünemann and Weitmann (1994) gradually became acutely aware of the "need for a theoretical foundation" concerning art in the Waldorf context: Their book was the result of an attempt to abstract from Rudolf Steiner's original presentations, as well as from the work of anthroposophical painter Julius Hebing with whom they had both studied repeatedly and extensively, sufficient theory to explain the "methods relating to teaching the fine arts in a Waldorf school from class 1 to class 12" (p. v).

Although limited to a consideration of painting and drawing only, their text is invaluable to me in my own study. My work differs in scope from theirs in that I look at more than just the "pictorial" arts of drawing and painting, seeking to include also the plastic formative arts of sculpture and architectural forms, as well as all the "musically poetical" arts, including music proper as well as everything connected with speech "when employed to express the dramatic and poetic" (Childs, 1991, p. 120). At the same time, my study is more restricted than theirs in that I focus on the elementary years, from grades one to eight, and curtail discussion of the highschool context. I also follow a

different method, and simultaneously aim at a different purpose and audience, by examining the role of art in Waldorf education through comparison and contrast to the role of art in English Canadian mainstream education. In these ways my study allows interesting new perspectives to develop which have perhaps not been realized before.

*The work of others, within and without the Waldorf movement.*

Untold others have written and lectured about education, art, cognition, and human development, both as Steiner understood them, and from contrasting positions.<sup>11</sup> Often two or more themes are woven together, though no one (to my knowledge) has compared the interconnections of all four as they relate to actual pedagogical and curricular practices in Waldorf and English Canadian mainstream schools, as I do here.

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<sup>11</sup>Bruce Uhrmacher (1995) remarks that little scholarly research has been conducted on Waldorf schools, in the world at large or in the US. The topic is unlisted in the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, and a search for studies on Waldorf education through conventional resources provides little material. (p. 382)

Nevertheless, it is a fact that many Waldorf educators have written of their experiences and insights in various books, journals and newsletters, many of which are easily available through the Anthroposophic Press (see appendix for address); at least seventeen doctoral theses have been written on various aspects of Waldorf education (copies of which are available for loan by mail from the USA national library of the Anthroposophical Society -- see appendix for list of titles and library address); numerous lectures, artistic performances, and workshops are given regularly across North America in association with Waldorf teacher training institutes and conferences; study groups and public lectures are often sponsored by Waldorf schools. Such sources, though not always strictly admissible as scholarly research, are relatively easily available and do serve to inform others about the nature and practice of Waldorf education. Uhrmacher (1995) himself notes later on in his article that various anthroposophists such as "Oxford dons A.C. Harwood and Owen Barfield, ... Stewart Easton, Francis Edmunds, John Davy, Rene Querido, Betty Staley, Roberto Trostli, and Eugene Schwartz are becoming national and international Anthroposophical leaders" who strive to carry on and enhance what Steiner was able to start (p. 398). To this list I would add at least Joan Almon, Marjorie Spock, and Christopher Clouder, though many others deserve to be mentioned too, I am sure.

Although for the most part educators who have chosen to write about one or other aspect of Waldorf education have been sympathetic to its general aims (or at least have been willing to reserve judgement until they are more thoroughly familiar with them), this has not always been the case. For example, in his book Education lost: Reflections on contemporary pedagogical practice, published by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, David Solway (1989) -- while acknowledging a growing interest in Waldorf education together with his own limited acquaintanceship with the movement -- describes the Waldorf teachers he has met personally as "amiable lunatics" to whom he would not willingly entrust his own children (pp. 115-6). Regarding Steiner himself, Solway (1989) admits he is "reluctantly impressed with the panoptic if quirky scholarship of the master - there is no doubt the man was a genius in the hundred-handed, Goethean sense", yet he proceeds to draw the conclusion that Steiner is likely none other than a "despotic *imperium*", whose anthroposophical following amounts to a religious sect, "or in the final analysis, *nothing less than a Church occupied with the problematics of salvation*" (p. 117, italics original). With this, he dismisses its relevance for public (if not all) education:

It is therefore a potential instrument of abuse, of that species of control or subtle manipulation of thought and feeling which paradoxically undermines the freedom it purportedly defends. We confront once again, but in another field, the politics of redemption and the theocratic convictions of the elect. (Solway, 1989, p. 117)

Solway's sentiments are repeated in the Church and State. Here, Rob Boston (1996) reports: "Critics Charge That The 'New Age' Waldorf Movement And Other Religious Groups Are Trying To Use Tax-Funded Charter Schools To Advance Religion" (p. 4).

Boston reviews a number of complaints against Waldorf education on the grounds that 1) Waldorf education is religious-based while claiming not to be, suggesting that it engages in deception and indoctrination, or 2) it is religious-based (whether or not Waldorf educators admit it) and so should be excluded from all public financial support. Boston (1996) documents evidence of both sorts of complaints, as well as the typical Waldorf response which admits the presence of spiritual dimensions in Waldorf education, but insists these are universalist rather than credal, dogmatic, or doctrinaire, making it inaccurate to label Waldorf education "religious".



Boston correctly points out that Steiner himself was doubtful whether public monies could be used to support particular schools without the state insisting on its right to maintain authority over them. What Boston does not explain is that Steiner's three-fold social vision,<sup>12</sup> which formed the original impulse for Waldorf education, calls for an explicit and essential separation of powers among the cultural/educational, judicial/legal, and economic/work spheres of society, following a social philosophy developed from the three ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity, expressed so famously during the French revolution over a hundred years before. In the context of this social philosophy, richly deserving of study in its own right but which I can no more than mention here, it makes sense to suggest that authority in education must not be tied to any aspect of the economy. That this view is so foreign to many present-day educators may partially explain the distrust and misunderstanding of Waldorf education that is liable to arise in the minds of those who are relatively unfamiliar with Steiner's work.

From what I can see, there is a need for further research into the social philosophical roots underlying Waldorf education, if this approach is to be better understood in the educational world. My study helps to expose this need but does little to meet it, since it would lead well beyond the parameters set for my present purpose.

A number of new titles listed recently by the Anthroposophic Press bear witness to the burgeoning interest in Waldorf education. Besides several new translations of Steiner's lectures on education, two additional volumes are appearing now in English for the first time. As well, Heidi Britz-Crecelius has written about children's play and imagination from a Waldorf perspective; Gilbert Childs has written more on Steiner's educational concerns as they intersect with social concerns; Fiona Carnie, Martin Large & Mary Tasker have edited a book "for policy makers, teachers, governors, and parents"

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<sup>12</sup>Many of Steiner's lecture cycles include mention of this theme. Of particular note are two on "Social Issues" and one on "Social Future", all of which are listed in current catalogues of the Anthroposophic Press. Also of interest is a detailed article by Herbert Hahn (1958/1993), who knew and studied under Rudolf Steiner personally, entitled "How the Waldorf School arose from the threefold social movement".

on "the case for diversity of school provision" arising from the Oxford University 1995 conference on educational choice and freedom in Europe, and highlighting case studies of Christian, Muslim, and Waldorf schools; Roy Wilkinson has written about the spiritual basis of Steiner education; Stanford Maher has collected articles reflecting Waldorf perspectives in Teacher Enrichment Programs in South Africa; Stanford Maher and Ralph Shepherd have edited a set of articles about Waldorf education in South Africa; and Richard Blunt offers a new, comprehensive analysis of Waldorf education including its aims, principles, and methods to serve as a "wonderful introduction to the entire Waldorf process"; not to mention books about special aspects of the curriculum, including foreign language teaching, history, and mathematics. Though none of these books focuses on "art" *per se*, they all carry insights about how art functions in Waldorf education.

The same cannot be said of many new teacher-authored books about education in English Canadian mainstream schools.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, one of the first and most obvious lessons to be learned in comparing Waldorf and mainstream educational practices is that art is generally a self-contained, specialist subject in mainstream settings,<sup>14</sup> whereas

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<sup>13</sup>One notable exception is Peter Abbs' 1987 book Living powers: The arts in education. The fact that Abbs is highly knowledgeable about Waldorf education easily explains his deep awareness of the arts, however. More typical of public educators is the casual, even sentimental attachment to the arts portrayed by Peter McLaren in his 1989 description of teaching in Toronto: In frequent trips to the park with his students during early summer, for example, he would simply carry along a tape recorder and tapes for the children to listen to as they romped about. He chose music (urban blues) which he liked because of the peaceful effect he felt when hearing it, hoping that the "beauty" of the music would help the children to relax as well (p. 142). Hanley (1994) points out that most Canadian classroom teachers are not willing to actually teach art, and they excuse themselves from this task by claiming they have no talent (p. 210).

<sup>14</sup>Hanley (1994) claims that this pattern is changing as a result of curriculum reforms in several parts of Canada: The recent curricula are somewhat different in that the objectives are less technical and demanding of specialist knowledge by the teacher. The emerging view of arts education emphasizes broader concepts such as pattern, unity, and variety that are more

every Waldorf teacher is expected to demonstrate and invite artistic activity throughout the whole curriculum.

### The Role of Art in English Canadian Mainstream Education

Few scholarly studies exist, as far as I can determine, which detail the curricular and pedagogical practices concerning art in English Canadian mainstream education.<sup>15</sup> There have been, of course, a number of well-known educators who have written about the theoretical significance of art in public education. These include, for example, John Dewey (1934/1958), Herbert Read (1943/1958), Victor Lowenfeld (1947), Richard Arnheim (1969), Jerome Bruner (1970), Howard Gardner (1983, 1985, 1990, 1991), and Elliot Eisner (1972, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1991, 1997). There are also specialist collections of papers about art in Canadian education, including one published in 1984 under the editorship of Ronald MacGregor, and several volumes published by the NS College of Art and Design (see, for example, York and Webb, 1992). Furthermore, a growing number of researchers are exploring what art should be understood to mean in education. This seems to arise largely from a "survival" need to define art as "basic" so that it won't be "slated for extinction" in hard times, though a philosophical rationale underlying the argument that art is basic has not been well developed among educators themselves (Colwell, 1995, p. 151). As Richard Colwell, invited speaker for the Arts and Learning Significant Interest Group meeting at the 1995 annual international conference of the American Educational Research Association, explains:

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accessible to the novice. A greater number of objectives fall into the category of appreciation rather than skills development, although some skills are expected. That is, recent documents make a greater attempt to convince classroom teachers that they can teach the arts. (p. 210)

<sup>15</sup>Countryman (1984) draws attention to the fact that "art" programs are not clearly recognizable in Canadian schools because some are "pure" (meaning just music, for example), while others are "comprehensive" (including music, visual arts, dance, drama, mime, film, architecture). The pure programs are generally skill-oriented, while the comprehensive ones tend to promote aesthetic literacy and art appreciation.

In reviewing the research completed recently in educational administration, I find no concern for the arts. Most articles on the reform movement or in exemplary schools fail to mention the arts. A few of the more politically correct writers include the arts as necessary but do not mention program standards, experiences, or outcomes. I have therefore become convinced that within the foreseeable future many of today's successful arts program will be conducted outside the basic school day. Our present programs aren't quite basic enough. The concept that music or other arts should be taught ALL students for a LONG time raises a host of philosophical and practical questions, questions, that many teachers do not want to face. While teachers expect to do something different with the students, to them the important thing about the reform movement is that the arts are to be required. (Colwell, 1995, p. 153, emphasis original)

Related to this, there have been a number of recent curricular policy evaluations undertaken in various parts of North America, such as the 1975 Canadian Conference of the Arts National Inquiry into Arts and Education in Canada (cf. Shand, 1984); the 1977 report by the American Council for the Arts in Education, entitled Coming to our senses; the 1993 Blueprint for our cultural future put out by the Canadian Conference of the Arts; McIntosh, Hanley, Van Gyn, and Verriour's 1993 report on The state of the art: Arts literacy in Canada, a national study funded by the Canada Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to answer such questions as

What is arts literacy? What are the criteria for identifying an arts-literate person? What level (if any) of expertise should be required? What is the role of education? Should the emphasis be on the development of artistry or of response to the arts? Or both? (Hanley, 1994, p. 209)

Other studies and reports include the Ontario Arts Council Submission to the 1994 Royal Commission on Learning, consisting of a report entitled Not a frill: The centrality of the arts in the education of the future; the 1994 report by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations entitled National standards for education in the arts: What every young American should know and be able to do in the arts. These studies, however, by and large address policy concerns during a time of educational restructuring rather than description and analysis of existing art education practices.<sup>16</sup> Finding detailed

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<sup>16</sup>Hamblen (1995) has characterized the 1990's as the "Age of Agendas" -- a phrase she uses "to describe the very active and, at times, frenetic pace of policy-making that we see

description and analysis of English Canadian mainstream education practice is difficult at best: I have found only a few researchers concerned with this topic.<sup>17</sup>

*The work of Betty Hanley.*

Betty Hanley (1994), of the Department of Arts in Education at the University of Victoria, has analysed the recently reformed curricula of Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Quebec in an attempt to identify curriculum perspectives on art in those parts of Canada. Drawing on Grenier's (1990) description of three typical conceptions of music in Canadian schools, Hanley (1994) examines the provincial curricula to determine whether art is viewed as 1) symbolic system, 2) cultural product, or 3) conceptualized art. She found little consensus among the provinces, and little understanding of how recent theoretical advances about art as a way of knowing might affect pedagogy: "The analysis revealed differing conceptualizations of arts education with

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throughout arts education" (p. 7; see also Hamblen, 1992). Concerning this focus on policy-making, she notes, "Ironically, there is the very real possibility that too much is happening too quickly" (ibid.). She continues:

In general, arts education policy statements and their attendant literature of explanation consist of lengthy descriptions of agenda formulations, arts policy advantages, implementation processes, administrative requirements, and evaluation procedures. (Hamblen, 1992, p. 8)

<sup>17</sup>Betts, Fisher, and Hicks (1995) report a study involving two years of research with the Arts Integration Program of the Tucson Pima Arts Council, Tucson, Arizona. The program itself includes lessons in theatre arts, music, dance, and visual arts developed and used in over 75 elementary schools in southern Arizona. The research was aimed at evaluating the results of the program and assessing possible factors in achieving "a successful, long-range program of arts integration" (op.cit., p. 69). Such programs and research projects could easily serve as models for Canadian educators: Indeed, one conclusion of this study was that

this kind of iterative, collaborative, and developmental study will have to be repeated often....An arts integration program has the power to turn a classroom into a creative environment full of friendly, accessible resources where the art of learning and the art of teaching thrive together. (Betts, et al., 1995, pp. 70, 69)

minimal recognition of fundamental implementation obstacles" (Hanley, 1994, p. 208).

In an earlier study focusing on music, Hanley (1989) notes that "the number of approaches tends to make synthesis elusive" (p. 101). She found that educators vary considerably in valuing music as fun, referential, intellectually challenging, or emotionally expressive (ibid., p. 102). With little or no consensus as to *why* music is important, teachers are generally unable to implement a music program successfully throughout a school or district. Hanley (1989) notes, "With the perspective of hindsight, one conclusion to be drawn from this loosely structured inquiry is that philosophical consensus should have preceded curriculum implementation" (p. 102). Overall, she found that

Music educators have begun to realize that music education has been suffering from a lack or confusion of philosophical direction. Methods, to be sure abound, but the philosophical underpinnings are usually unvoiced and hence largely unrecognized, incoherent, or unsatisfactorily stated. This is not surprising since music educators have a busy enough schedule dealing with the practical aspects of their roles. They are generally not philosophers. On the other hand, philosophers who are interested in the arts focus typically on aesthetics, not methodologies. (Hanley, 1989, p. 103)

Hanley (1994) acknowledges the difficulties (p. 210): My study begins to address them by offering a philosophical and historical perspective on art in Canadian schools which illuminates something of why these difficulties exist and why there is such confusion in the way art is viewed and taught. Such illumination opens the way for future clarification of how and why art might better contribute to public education.

*The work of Timothy Cooper.*

Dr. Timothy Cooper (1989), of the University of New Brunswick, designed, tested, and administered a national survey in the late 1980's in order "to establish a data base of information about public school music teaching in Canada" (p. 47). Based on a 36% response rate from a sample of 1600, Cooper (1989) reports considerable variation in curricular balance amongst schools across Canada (p. 54). For example, although most teachers include listening, creative, movement, and writing activities, along with music history and music theory, there are "evident gaps in some programs":

11% of music teachers do not use listening activities in their classrooms.  
Twenty-nine percent of music teachers do not plan creative activities for

their music classes. A large number of teachers do not plan either movement activities or writing activities for their music classes (51%; 45%). Finally, over one-half of the music teachers who responded to this survey do not teach music history (51%) and a substantial number of teachers (17%) do not teach any music theory. (ibid.)

According to Cooper's (1989) report, many teachers are unsure whether or not there is a curriculum guide for teaching music in their province. Performing through singing and playing musical instruments takes up the majority of time available for music. Most elementary students learn to sing in parts, and classroom instruments (such as recorders, rhythm band instruments, Orff instruments, and ukuleles) are used in just over half of the classrooms. Guitars and electronic instruments are sometimes taught, but non-fretted string instruments are rarely used. Students are most likely to sing to piano accompaniment, though substantial numbers also sing a cappella and with accompaniment tapes. A large majority of schools participate in local and regional music festivals. Over half put on annual musical productions themselves.

Although Cooper was focusing on music programs only, his work is interesting because of the pattern it reveals of tremendous variety across Canada. Not only are teaching methods and curricular emphases different from school to school, but the teachers also have widely differing musical backgrounds and competencies. As well, the average time allotted for elementary music varies from as little as 45 minutes a week per child (in New Brunswick) to as much as 120 minutes a week (in Ontario). Because this was just a first step in establishing a data base, no patterns over time can be ascertained without further assessment surveys. However, in comparison with Waldorf education, the pattern of tremendous diversity is clear and serves to echo the confusion Hanley also reports about the arts in general in Canadian public schools.

*The work of Roland Case.*

Roland Case (1994), of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, is also concerned about difficulties facing educators who attempt curriculum assessment and restructuring in any subject area. His main point is that educational issues are generally far more complex than educators care to admit, and improvements to existing systems require "considerable finesse across the educational community" (Case, 1994, p. 81).

One of the biggest difficulties to which he draws attention is the fact that many of the people involved in curricular or pedagogical reform are able to learn and recite "jargon" without realizing what exactly they are talking about (Case, 1994, p. 82)! This may mean, for example, discussing potential curriculum integration (such as linking art and music experiences with social studies lessons) in terms of "natural fit" or "natural connections", without being able to offer any theoretical detail about how and why this might actually be worth doing (Case, 1994, p. 84).

In this regard, it is interesting to compare the mainstream educational context with the Waldorf one. Here a very deep and profound understanding is always accessible, thanks partly to Steiner's many "indications" and spiritual insights serving to suggest the import of specific curricular and pedagogical practices, but also thanks to the reflective insights generated by other Waldorf educators as they attempt, like Steiner, to strive toward "knowledge of higher worlds".<sup>18</sup>

The situation in mainstream education is greatly complexified by the fact that not just teachers are involved, but also those who write "curricular and institutional policies, instructional resources, professional journals and books, preservice teacher education, and inservice professional development" (Case, 1994, p. 82). In Waldorf schools the freedom of the individual teacher is protected,<sup>19</sup> and "inner work" of private meditation and group

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<sup>18</sup>One of Steiner's classic early works in the area he calls "spiritual science" is his handbook, entitled Knowledge of the higher worlds and its attainment, in which he describes how to develop thinking into an imaginative, inspirational, and intuitive force not limited to ordinary external sensory perception, and yet still in tune with nature's laws. In the Waldorf world, as teachers develop this power of reflection within themselves, they themselves become able to conceive their tasks holistically and to strive towards fulfillment of them in a coherent, integrated way.

<sup>19</sup>There is no formal hierarchical structure in Waldorf education. Each teacher has equal rights with all other teachers; there are no principals, curriculum development specialists, curriculum supervisors, or school inspectors. Instead, all teachers are expected to work and contribute to the life of the school equally, and each school is an independent unit. Although discussion of this is well beyond the scope of my dissertation, the dynamics may be important.



reflection strengthens and revitalizes each individual.<sup>20</sup>

A mainstream classroom teacher may create curricular confusion at times through well-intentioned but possibly inadequately or ill informed methods, such as theme teaching, a strategy frequently employed to address the need for curricular integration (Case, 1994, pp. 84-88). For example, theme teaching can all too easily be over-emphasized with ill effect, through the fact that everything is integrally connected around one theme (say bears) for a few weeks, while in the following weeks everything revolves around something quite different (say weather), leaving students little understanding of how bears and weather might ever fit together!

One of the clear points that emerges from my present study is the fact that Waldorf education -- by understanding an overarching theoretical framework in which artistic activity mediates thinking and doing, thus potentially transforming all initial experiences at school into experiences of Freedom and Love,<sup>21</sup> and thereby lending a deep and profound coherence (i.e., wholeness/health) to the whole educational experience -- avoids many of these potential curricular and pedagogical confusions which concern Case about mainstream educational practice.

The realisation that thinking and willing are reflected in Freedom and Love is fundamental to Waldorf education and will be discussed again later on. Case's (1994) main concern is the relatively simple fact that mainstream Canadian education has no such

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The fact that such dynamics differ greatly from the hierarchies operating in mainstream educational contexts may be a critical factor in accounting for the different educational experiences realized in these schools.

<sup>20</sup>Steiner's conception of the healthy interplay between individual and group is expressed succinctly in the widely recited "social verse, mentioned in the previous chapter.

<sup>21</sup>Explication of this idea in its fullness must wait for a later chapter. For the moment, it will perhaps suffice to mention that Steiner understands Freedom in terms of *wilful thinking*, which forms a polarity with Love as *thoughtful willing*. Both are intimately connected, in Steiner's worldview, with human morality and social responsibility, hence their importance in education.

clear-cut theoretical center from which to move, grow, and develop in a healthy way, with the result that changes are typically made from a fractured vision:

Confronted with failure to achieve significant lasting improvement by attending to one aspect of the education system, typically, we shift attention to some other aspect. Our record of educational reform will not improve, however, simply by finding new, more strategic loci of change....The underappreciated challenge facing educational reform is to improve our collective ability to conceptualize and operationalize change initiatives....We must learn to explicate the meaning and purpose of initiatives with adequate clarity and to translate them into sufficiently refined practical strategies. (Case, 1994, pp. 80-81)

A possibility suggested by my own work is that the clarity with which Steiner was able to formulate and communicate coherent principles pertaining to education, coupled with his unusual ability to "translate them into sufficiently refined practical strategies", holds important lessons for present-day educators seeking to improve educational systems.

I do not mean to suggest that Steiner himself should be idolized, or that formulaic approaches to education should be sought in what Steiner communicated, although this response has sometimes occurred.<sup>22</sup> Rather, I think he intended that others pay attention to *how* he was able to proceed so provocatively in so many different fields, and to follow *his method* for achieving insight so that they too could think and act effectively to create a more moral and socially constructive educational system *out of their own authentic insights*.<sup>23</sup> As Steiner himself pointed out,

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<sup>22</sup>See, for example, Bruce Uhrmacher's (1995) analysis of Steiner's appeal in terms of Max Weber's notion of charismatic leadership and Neil Postman's notion of comprehensive and meaningful stories.

<sup>23</sup>Steiner was aware of the many potential pitfalls and deceptions awaiting those who attempt to know themselves authentically. As a guiding principle, he suggests:

*All knowledge pursued merely for the enrichment of personal learning and the accumulation of personal treasure leads you away from the path; but all knowledge pursued for growth to ripeness within the process of human ennoblement and cosmic development brings you a step forward. This law must be strictly observed, and no student is genuine until he has adopted it as a guide for his whole life.*

No teacher of the spiritual life wishes to establish a mastery over other persons by means of such rules. He would not tamper with anyone's independence. Indeed, none respect and cherish human independence more than the spiritually experienced....Only what we experience within ourselves unlocks for us the beauties of the outer world. (Steiner, 1905-8/1947, pp. 18, 14)

Case (1994) argues that mainstream teachers must become more reflective, more analytical, more willing to "negotiate...the gap between the worlds of the theoretician and the practitioner" (p. 81). With others whom he cites, Case argues that "we undermine reform efforts by our penchants for conceptual vagueness" (ibid.). I seek conceptual clarity about art in education, precisely in order to support better curriculum reform.

*The work of Marjorie Siegel.*

Marjorie Siegel (1995) of Teachers College, Columbia University, argues that North American education is shifting noticeably from transmission-based pedagogies to inquiry-oriented models of teaching and learning. In this shift, scope for a new dimension of education is rapidly emerging: transmediation.

With this term, Siegel (1995) refers to "the act of translating meanings from one sign system to another" (p. 455). She is especially concerned with the translation of meanings from word-based systems to non-verbal systems such as images and pictorial representation, as well as music and dance (Siegel, 1995, p. 456). Her point, following the philosophy of mind articulated by Susanne Langer, is that human beings make and understand meaning not just through language but through all kinds of symbols (ibid.).<sup>24</sup>

In light of this, what Eco (1976) recognizes as the "verbocentric ideology" of our schools has led to what could reasonably be called an impoverished education:

The privileged status accorded language over images, music, and movement is evident in our curriculum guides, instructional methods and materials, evaluation practices, schedules, and the like. However central

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(Steiner, 1905-8/1947, p. 17, italics original)

<sup>24</sup>Eisner (1997) argues along similar lines and suggests that forms of representation constrain thinking in certain ways, such that cognition is enhanced when multiple forms of representation are taught, making the curriculum literally into "a mind-altering device" (p. 350).

language may be to human activities, some evidence suggests that the cultural tendency toward verbocentrism in schools is limiting for students... (Siegel, 1995, p. 456)

Siegel (1995) calls attention to the work of Goodlad (1984) who found that "telling" as a pedagogical method "positions students as passive learners", though this did not happen in art classes, presumably because there

students did not learn solely through talk but drew, painted, sang, acted, and danced, thus experiencing for themselves what it means to create knowledge and meanings through different modes of representation. (Siegel, 1995, p. 457)

Siegel argues that if educators want to promote inquiry-based learning, they must come to terms with semiotics, which involves the study of meaning, how meanings are constructed, and how various signs become meaningful. As Smith-Shank and Diket (1995) explain, "Semiotic theory corresponds to the many ways in which ordinary human beings experience and interpret the world" (p. 49).

Building on Charles Peirce's earlier work in semiotics, as well as Susanne Langer's arguments about the distinctions between discursive thought and presentational immediacy,<sup>25</sup> Siegel (1995) draws attention to the fact that translating meanings from one

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<sup>25</sup>Langer (1974) describes 'presentational immediacy' as the felt dialectic of sensory impact and conceptual interpretation. This dialectic is a transient act at any moment of life, but it involves something more than its own passage; for the interaction of peripheral and central felt processes begets the sense of reality. (p. 344)

She adapted the concept from her teacher, friend, and mentor Alfred N. Whitehead (1929/1969), who describes it like this: Perception which merely, by means of a sensum, rescues from vagueness a contemporary spatial region, in respect to its spatial shape and its spatial perspective from the percipient, will be called "perception in the mode of presentational immediacy"....The unravelling of the complex interplay between the two modes of perception - causal efficacy and presentational immediacy - is one main problem of the theory of perception. The ordinary philosophical discussion of perception is almost wholly concerned with this interplay, and ignores the two pure modes which are essential for its

sign system to another is a truly generative process because it requires the creation of new meanings (pp. 460-1). In support of her argument, Siegel (1995) reviews research suggesting that learning tasks such as

writing about pictures, creating book reviews through collage, and role-playing based on the theme of a story, may foster development of a wide range of cognitive, aesthetic, and psychomotor skills which remain untapped in most traditional classrooms. (p. 461)

Siegel's work has some interesting points of connection with mine. First, she pays close attention to what is actually happening in schools. Second, she recognizes that many artforms allow for a holistic, "integral presentation" which evokes profoundly different learning experiences than does the discursive, linear presentation of many language-based forms.<sup>26</sup> Third, she addresses the generative, creative aspects of thinking which tend to develop as a result of reflection and transmediation. While I find her discussion of art in terms of signs and representation far too limited for my purpose here, nevertheless her careful attention to actual instructional practices, her sensitivity to multiple ways of knowing, and her willingness to explore and explain what creative, generative thinking might actually be are all significant concerns which I too attempt to address in my work.

### Summary and Conclusion

While virtually all Waldorf educators recognize the importance of art in education, and several have written at length and with great insight about their understandings and experiences of art within the Waldorf context, it seems that none has explicitly articulated an in-depth analysis of what Steiner worked so hard to promote in education: the use of artistic activity to help children to understand and consciously experience in their own lives the power inherent in such spiritual laws as polarity, enhancement, and metamorphosis. Nor has this question been critically examined and answered: Is an artistically-based education such as is practiced in Waldorf schools suitable or desirable for all children through public education?

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proper explanation. The interplay between the two modes will be termed "symbolic reference." (p. 143)

<sup>26</sup>As she is quick to point out, metaphor is an important exception to this general statement.

Approaching from the side of mainstream education, one can see a huge confusion about the importance of art, what it is, and how it functions in relation to learning. Where art is understood and incorporated into schoolwork at all, it tends to be by art specialists; classroom teachers seem to know and care little about it. Few studies exist which illuminate and examine art education practices. Although many theorists have written persuasively about its educational significance, curriculum planners are only just beginning to take art seriously in Canada and to accept it as fundamental in all learning.

In this study, I attempt to bring these two perspectives together, juxtaposing the Waldorf experience and the mainstream experience in an attempt to understand both better. Having reviewed in this chapter some of the already available research pertaining to this problem, in the next I characterize more completely the goals and method of my own research project.

### CHAPTER THREE: Research Method

This research project involves speculative philosophical investigation into the nature of art and artistic activity as these relate to cognition and cognitive development, especially in terms of how these relationships are visible in the curricular and pedagogical practices of Waldorf education as compared with mainstream English Canadian education. Such a project is consonant with Soltis' (1988) claim that philosophical research entails interpretive studies in which philosophers "unearth, examine, critique or attempt to justify our public ideological commitments, be they conscious or unconscious" (p. 11).

#### Rationale

The purpose of interpretative studies in education, as Soltis (1988) points out, is to analyze, reflect, evaluate, and seek a "clearer understanding of educational matters":

When engaged in this sort of philosophizing, a philosopher of education is more intent on providing illumination, understanding, and perspective for educators *to think with* than on providing programmes and policies for educators *to act on*. (ibid., p. 10, italics original)

There is nevertheless an implication for educational practice embodied in such an approach, as Freire (1992) makes clear through the notion of *conscientizacao* (p. 54).

Freire claims that "authentic action" (i.e., action authored by actors themselves and not by external scriptwriters), is only possible when it forms part of "a totality of reflection and action" (ibid.). Such praxis demonstrates an educating, liberating, transforming force capable of improving human lives and situations if, and only if, people are engaged as Subjects rather than Objects; in praxis, reflection leads to action, and the consequences of action become the object of further reflection (Freire, 1992, pp. 53-54).

Although this research demonstrates only half of the process characterized by Freire, namely critical reflection, implications for future practice are nevertheless carried in it due to this praxical dynamic. Implications stemming from my own engagement with the matter will inevitably be enriched by the further reflections of those educators who undertake to read and consider this study. According to Freire (1992), it is the individual's ability *to reason* which makes such a praxis possible (p. 53). Without trust

inevitably replaced by "slogans, communiques, monologues, and instructions" (ibid.).

Although this text appears superficially as a monologue, my inquiry actually asserts the value of dialogue in two ways: First, the text resulting from the study demonstrates the reasoning power of the author in dialogue with other authors; second, the text is presented in such a way as to be intentionally devoid of propaganda toward its readers in favour of a respectful invitation to further dialogue (cf. Freire, 1992, p. 54). Only in this way can Freire's "authentic praxis" be realized, and an effective basis for possible improvements to the system be established (ibid., p. 52).

This study is thus conceived as part of a wider educational dialogue concerning art and cognition. By contributing to such dialogue in a scholarly fashion, that is, through drawing attention to a particular concern in a carefully reasoned<sup>1</sup> way, I provide

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<sup>1</sup>Siegel (1988b/1989) discusses the role of reasons and rationality in education (in terms of critical thinking) in a way that starts from, and leads to, a slightly but nevertheless significantly different viewpoint than mine (p. 17). While he acknowledges the need for a critical thinker to have a certain disposition, certain habits of mind, and a certain character, as I do also, he characterizes these three requirements differently than I do. In the first instance, Siegel's (1988b/1989) "necessary disposition" involves a person having both the tendency and the will "to demand reasons and evidence for judgments and actions under consideration" (p. 10, italics added), while for me this is an impossible requirement since (in my experience) reason is unresponsive to demand; Clouder (1995) indicates something similar when he notes, "We have seen in our twentieth century experience that it is only lying gestures that can develop under compulsion, as many inhabitants of totalitarian States can testify" (p. 4). (Since I do, however, understand and easily accept Siegel's further requirement that a person be willing "to question even -- perhaps especially -- her own most fundamental beliefs and attitudes" [1988b, p. 11], I am willing to pay attention to him on this point.) In the second instance, Siegel's phrase "habits of mind" is problematic for me because I deem the reasonable mind to be the very one which is not governed by habit. In the third instance, Siegel's character requirement, that a person have the "desire to conform belief, judgment and action to the results of the fair-minded evaluation of reasons", appears to beg the question, since "fair-mindedness" presupposes reasonableness as far as I can see.



material for reflection by other philosophically minded Subject-educators, who, like me, are willing to undertake such reflection as the only authentic basis for effective action to improve educational practice. Siegel (1988a) agrees that "one must remove oneself from the vicissitudes of practice in order to make a theoretical contribution, which one hopes will eventually aid practice" (p. 19). Such theoretical contributions offer clarification, illumination, and deepening our understanding of something (ibid., p. 20). Entwistle (1988) suggests this happens as a result of "new perspectives such that one confronts educational problems and opportunities from a different point of view" (p. 29). Both of these characterizations identify what I attempt in this study.

### Validity and Reliability

On the view taken in this thesis, philosophical inquiry is to be conceived as aiming at plausible analysis rather than certain proof<sup>2</sup>. In other words, philosophical inquiry does not fit the scientific research model in which an interpretive position, external to the knower, serves as a necessary starting point, in terms of which facts are "observed", and the consistency and coherence of these facts then tested and measured in order to prove (or disprove) certain hypotheses. Skinner (1985) indicates that this scientific model results in rationally grounded, scientifically respectable beliefs, that is, beliefs which are accepted as valid and reliable in a technical sense:

A belief is rationally grounded, and hence scientifically respectable, if and only if it has been submitted to a 'crucial experiment' designed to falsify it, and has succeeded in passing that test. If a statement – or a body of statements in a theory – fails the test of falsifiability, or proves incapable of submitting to it, we have a clear indication that nonsense is being talked. (p. 5)

The perplexing problem here, at least for inquirers determined to trust reason as

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<sup>2</sup>I recognize that the nature of scientific "proof" is far from established. Popper (1968) argues, for example, that nothing in science can be proven: The most that is possible is to establish by rigorous testing whether something is demonstrably false or not, and then to proceed rationally by following the "most rigorously tested conjecture" which persists as "not false" (cf. Tarnas, 1991, pp. 360-361).

something other than a totally calculative function of the human intellect<sup>3</sup>, is the assumption of an interpretive framework, external to the knower, within which all subsequent observations and measurements are carried out. Tarnas (1991), following Popper (1968) and Kuhn (1970), calls attention to the problem like this:

Man observes the universe as a stranger, making imaginative guesses about its structure and workings. He cannot approach the world without such bold conjectures in the background, for every observed fact presupposes an interpretive focus. (Tarnas, 1991, p. 360)

In philosophical research such as I attempt here<sup>4</sup>, systematic study and disciplined reflection are carried out in such a way that the interpretative focus is never relegated to the status of mere presupposition, since it is never objectified, but itself remains a key

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<sup>3</sup>The various ways in which Reason and Intellect are understood by philosophers throughout the centuries is a huge topic in itself, well beyond the scope of this thesis to describe. Lovejoy (1961), for example, devotes several hundred pages to explicating just such differences. In broad, inevitably overly-simplified terms, the point is that at least two clearly contrasting, and often contested, ways of knowing have been identified by philosophers: one, calculating and rational; the other, meditative (to use Heidegger's term) and intuitive. For some, only one allows for real knowledge (there are proponents for each side) while the other offers belief or illusion; for others, both lead to knowledge, albeit knowledge of different kinds. Kincheloe et al. (1992) discuss at length the implications of this contrast for schooling.

<sup>4</sup>Philosophical inquiry in education actually appears in several forms, including *traditional* philosophy (after the manner of Dewey) which tends to be oriented to solving practical problems, and *conceptual analysis* described by Scheffler as concerned with intellectual rather than practical difficulties (Portelli, 1993). Skinner (1985) adds *abstract and normative theorizing* designed to provide "reasoned defences of particular ideals or practices" (p. 4), as well as myriad *hermeneutical, interpretative, constructivist, and inductive approaches* which - to varying degrees and following such thinkers as Gadamer, Feyerabend, Derrida, Kuhn, Wittgenstein, and Rorty - call into question the very authority of the researcher. There is also *artistic or aesthetic theorizing*, in which the choice of communication style is an integral part of the vision (Eisner, 1982). My research is arguably both artistic and hermeneutical, though I prefer to characterize it using Steiner's own term, *Goethean*.

factor in the investigation. In other words, the *interpretative focus* is acknowledged as none other than the researcher herself, as Langenbach, Vaughn, and Aagaard (1994) clearly remark with reference to an interpretative and inductive approach: "...the primary instrument of data collection and analysis...is the investigator" (p. 94).

Eisner (1991) identifies three main criteria for determining the quality of such research, namely structural corroboration, consensual validation, and referential adequacy (p. 110ff.). These criteria are met through such varied research practices as:

- 1) focusing on characteristic rather than exceptional features of the situation under investigation,
- 2) bolstering the validity of the resulting generalizations through examining and relating multiple types of data,
- 3) considering "reasonable alternative interpretations" as a necessary part of the research,
- 4) submitting one's work to the agreement of "competent others",
- 5) tempering such submission with a critical awareness that "different purposes, different perspectives, different sensitivities, different research foci, different views, and different orientations among researchers can spawn legitimately different interpretations",
- 6) recognizing that "work is referentially adequate when readers are able to see what they would have missed" otherwise, indicating that "referential adequacy is tested not in abstractions removed from qualities, but in the perception and interpretation of the qualities themselves", and
- 7) seeking to bring about a "more complex and sensitive human perception and understanding" of whatever matter is under investigation (Keppie, 1992, pp. 6/38-6/41).

A simpler formulation for adequacy of research can be gleaned from Freire's earlier mentioned notion of dialogue. If the fundamental basis of dialogue is trust in the ability of all human beings to reason, then the viability of philosophical inquiry aimed at demonstrating and contributing to dialogue can be gauged by the degree to which it is judged *reasonable* or not. In this view, criteria such as those identified by Eisner are understood as spelling out what is most likely to be deemed reasonable.

Scriven (1988) is another who attempts to spell out acceptable standards of reasonableness in order that results may be clearly communicable, a key aspect in any

dialogue. He advises three principal means, all of which I attempt in my work, for achieving optimal conceptual clarification as an aid to effective communication:

- 1) using the "method of examples and contrasts" rather than the "method of explicit definition", such that paradigmatic examples are used to illustrate meaning rather than seeking to encapsulate meaning in an "operational or arbitrary" definition;<sup>5</sup>
- 2) arguing from analogy, as in jurisprudence, rather than attempting quantifiable proof;<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Shiner (1978) argues that such a procedure is indeed reasonable, though some would deny it, as this passage shows: Let us consider how the procedure of setting cases alongside cases does meet the constraints which our agreement with Sibley on certain points has put us under. Firstly, to claim that perceptual proof in criticism is a species of case by case reasoning does not require one to give up the thought that the application of aesthetic terms is not condition-governed. It is for certain purposes important to insist that those who have denied that the critic in any sense *reasons*, and for that matter also one who like Sibley thinks that the procedure of the critic can only be called "proof" in an inverted-commas/snigger-quotes sense, are misrepresenting the procedure of the critic as it compares to other procedures. Sibley, for instance, writes that "an activity the successful outcome of which is seeing or hearing cannot be called *reasoning*" (1965, 144; his italics). This remark is true only when one refuses to call the procedure of setting cases alongside cases a procedure of reasoning. Indeed a successful case-by-case procedure does result in our seeing or hearing the work as we did not see or hear it before. Indeed also this does not come about by the operation of a procedure of strictly deductive or strictly inductive reasoning. But it none the less for that does come about by a procedure of reasoning. (pp. 318-319)

<sup>6</sup>Dr. Steven Burns (1989) cites G.E. Moore's lecture notes reporting the view of *20th century philosopher extraordinaire* Ludwig Wittgenstein: Apparently Wittgenstein held that by drawing attention to things placed side by side, a form of reasoning is introduced similar to that which is used in a court of law, where cases are compared to other similar cases, and judgments are made on the basis of seeing (or failing to see) in one what is more obvious and relatively uncontested in the other (p. 32).

and

3) augmenting the inevitably "loose" and inexact nature of analogical argument with careful and precise logical analysis, seeking "loop-holes and counter-examples" and avoiding "faulty insights" and "fallacious generalizations", however "brilliant and seductive" they might be (pp. 144-146).

Peshkin (1993) argues that all research which is not explicitly "theory driven, hypothesis testing, or generalization producing" can still be legitimately assessed in terms of its "generative promise" (p. 23), measured in terms of outcomes which lead to greater *understanding* of issues rather than valid and reliable *truth* about what is presumed to be real (p. 28). Gadamer (1975) contrasts the search for greater understanding not with the search for truth *per se*, but rather with the search for *explanation*. It is a subtle distinction, but nevertheless a significant one, since it leaves open the possibility that what is *reasonable* may also be *true*, even though standard measures of validity and reliability cannot be applied, since such measures can only address adequacy of explanation, rather than serving to positively determine truth itself.

The matter of ascertaining truth is riddled with complexities and confusions. My own present understanding is that to imagine Truth as something which may or may not be grasped *per se* is to wrongly conceive it in any case. In other words, by accepting the possibility that Truth is unknowable, at least to some extent, the problem shifts from being one of knowing Truth, to being one of knowing the Unknown. This move clearly exposes the contradiction inherent in the formulation of the problem,<sup>7</sup> and pushes us to reformulate it in a non-contradictory way. Since "knowing the Unknown" is clearly impossible, some other relationship to the Unknown -- besides one of knowing -- must

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<sup>7</sup>As Bergson (1961) explains, Contradiction or non-contradiction can pertain only to our manner of formulating the real....We ought to formulate things in such a manner as to avoid contradiction: that is always possible, and it is in this sense that the principle of contradiction has a universal validity. But one has never the right to oppose to an immediate perception of the real, the argument that it is self-contradictory, for the contradiction can come only from a defective way of formulating it. (p. 189)

be established. By implication, this new relationship will also constitute a relationship to Truth as well, though not one of grasping it.

Through my graduate study, and particularly through reading some of the works of Simone Weil, I have come to realize that such a relationship may well consist of a *correct orientation* toward, rather than a *complete grasp* of. Following Weil's (1968) insights, I suggest that a "correct orientation" to The Void (her term), The Unknown, or to Truth itself is directly determined by certain attitudes, including openness, humility, reverence, loving attention, and the ability to listen well enough so as to comprehend intelligently the message conveyed in pregnant silence.

Bruner (1962/1970) articulates a similar theme when he contrasts our idea of fate with our sense of potency and asserts their inverse relationship with each other (p. 159). Where fate is "that which is beyond one's control; ...an outer limit,....the residuum that is left after one has run through the census of what is humanly possible", our sense of potency is "what we think is possible for us" (ibid.). This is not a fixed relationship, but rather one that shifts as a result of our own involvement. Thus:

Each discovery of a way of proceeding, of a way of discovering, forestalling, or effecting, is, then, an incursion into fate that in effect rolls back what we take fate to be. (Bruner, 1962/1970, p. 160)

Bruner sees this process as generating "a reflective concern with the nature of knowledge and with the forms of intelligence that make knowledge possible" (ibid., p. 162).<sup>5</sup>

In so far as possible, I intend something such as Weil's *orientation* and Bruner's *reflective concern* to characterize my work and to be recognized as characterizing my

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<sup>5</sup>Pajares (1996) points out that "Bandura (1986) considered self-reflection the most uniquely human capability, for through this form of self-referent thought people evaluate and alter their own thinking and behavior" (p. 544). With this he draws attention to Bandura's (1977) concept of *self-efficacy*, a concept which has wide applicability in many diverse fields and is becoming increasingly important in education, especially in the area of motivation (Pajares, 1996, p. 545). As Pajares (1996) explains, "This is an issue of which types of questions individuals primarily ask themselves as they encounter new information and novel phenomena." (p. 546). It appears that Bandura's work supports much of what I discuss here in terms of Weil and Bruner.

work. Thus, in addition to being reasonable and easily communicable, my research purports to give evidence of a particular orientation on my part characterized by the attitudes I have listed. I intend that it also have the character of critical self-awareness, which Lonergan (1978) describes as exerting a "steady pressure" to avoid nonsense and pretence:

...it would be excessively naive for the self-knowing subject to suppose that his scientific knowledge and his common sense are purely and simply the product of experience, intelligent inquiry, and critical reflection. The subject knows the polymorphism of his own consciousness; he knows how it generates a dramatic, an egoistic, a group, and a general bias in common sense; he knows how it intrudes into science confused notions on reality, on objectivity, and on knowledge. While, then science and common sense are to be accepted, the acceptance is not to be uncritical. There are precise manners in which common sense can be expected to go wrong; there are definite issues on which science is prone to issue extra-scientific opinions; and the reorientation demanded and effected by the self-knowledge of the subject is a steadily exerted pressure against the common nonsense that tries to pass for common sense and against the uncritical philosophy that pretends to be a scientific conclusion. (p. 399)

The postulate that validity results from correct *orientation* to the Unknown, rather than from specific content or methods for investigating specific problems, seems to enjoy some support from Bohm, as his analysis of truth indicates:

Remember the word "truth" in Latin, *verus*, means "that which is," and the word "true" in English, means "straight": honest and faithful and straight. We could say that consciousness can be honest and faithful and straight but it is not... it is not *that which is*.... We have to be careful because we've implicitly postulated that thought has already gotten down to that which is..., in that way you immediately find yourself *imagining* the deeper thing which is, and thought coming out of that. Now that is self-deception. (Bohm, in Weber, 1985b, p. 64)

Accordingly, where standard measures of validity and reliability are inappropriate for testing the quality of philosophical research, an assessment of "truth" value can still be made in terms of how "honest and faithful and straight" is the researcher in carrying out

the research.<sup>9</sup> To facilitate such an assessment here, I give details of my background and motives, approaches to data collection and analysis, and limitations and assumptions governing my work.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Dr. Steven Burns notes, however, that "you cannot say what 'straight' is unless you know what the goal is that is being approached 'straightly'": that is, there is a sense in which one can't say what is true, meaning straight, without already knowing what is true, meaning the goal toward which one aims (personal communication, 16 April 1997). While this may be, such a goal could still be "ungraspable", even though it established the necessary direction of one's aim. To question how one could recognize such a goal without grasping it is to simply repeat the initial problem. The helpful suggestion which Weil makes, as far as I can see, is that one cannot "know" in certifiable terms the "correct orientation" toward truth any more than one can know truth itself; one can only "know" whether or not one feels in tune, or senses a connection. In other words, it is not possible to assert truth, but only to adopt certain telling attitudes which align us with it; such alignment creates a sensation which may be understood as truth (just as when we touch something and so feel connected without necessarily having a grasp of it).

Whitehead (1933/1967) makes a similar point:  
 if we ask what is meant by 'truth', we can only answer that there is a truth-relation when two composite facts participate in the same pattern. Then knowledge about one of the facts involves knowledge about the other, so far as the truth-relation extends. (p. 242)

Since for Whitehead (1933/1967), "Beauty is the internal conformation of the various items of experience with each other [and] thus concerns the inter-relations of the various components of Reality...", he acknowledges Beauty as "a wider, and more fundamental, notion than Truth" (p. 265). So the matter of patterning, alignment, and orientation is more a matter of Beauty than Truth, though "the general importance of Truth for the promotion of Beauty is overwhelming. After all has been said, yet the truth-relation remains the simple, direct mode of realizing Harmony" (ibid., p. 266). In other words, "Truth matters because of Beauty [and] the realization of Truth becomes in itself an element promoting Beauty of feeling.... Thus Truth,...becomes self-justifying. It is accompanied by a sense of rightness in the deepest Harmony" (Whitehead, 1933/1967, p. 267).

<sup>10</sup>Besides the limitations and assumptions which I recognize, there are inevitably others of which I remain unaware and cannot acknowledge. As Whitehead (1925) explains,



### Definition, Explanation, and Understanding

Conceiving this work as evidence and invitation for dialogue, and trusting to human reason as the basis for such dialogue, are likely to be understood by some, if not many, in a more restricted way than I intend, due to the relatively common (in my experience) notion that dialogue and reason concern only a certain kind of cognition. This is extremely difficult to explain, since many of the words needed (including such pivotal words as truth, cognition, reason, spirit, soul, and sensitivity, to mention only a few) tend to be significant to different people in different ways.

To attempt to use such words significantly, therefore, in *naming* or *identifying* particular meanings is fraught with inherent ambiguity.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps this is what Professor Anthony Barton meant when he cautioned me, during my first year of doctoral study as I wondered if this were something I should even be attempting, that "The secret is to understand the inadequacy of explanation" (personal communication). Lonergan (1978) clarifies the difficulty by pointing out that definitions and explanations aim at universality, whereas understanding is inevitably tied to particulars:

The fact would seem to be that the structure of common-sense meanings is much the same as the structure of common sense itself. There is a communal collaboration that yields a habitual core of understanding and, as well, a range of concepts and linguistic terms in ordinary use. But just as the common core of understanding has to be adjusted by complementary insights into the present, concrete situation before judgment occurs, so also common concepts and terms receive their ultimate complement of meaning from those complementary insights. (p. 307)

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The trouble is not with what the author does say, but with what he does not say. Also it is not with what he knows he has assumed, but with what he has unconsciously assumed. We do not doubt the author's honesty. It is his perspicacity which we are criticising. (p. 29)

<sup>11</sup>DeBono (1990) argues that "naming is the simplest form of description" (p. 184). Furthermore, "description is perception expressed through available vocabulary and according to rules of grammar" (ibid.). And finally, "the main problem with description is our urge to treat it as truth rather than just as perception" (deBono, 1990, p. 186).

To find a way to take into account the inherent ambiguity of words rather than simply trying to overcome it through ever more careful definition, I turn to chaos theory.<sup>12</sup> Here the notion of *reflectaphor*, patterned after *metaphor*, is helpful. According to Briggs (1992), reflectaphors are juxtapositions of self-similar forms which reflect each other yet contain, like metaphors, a tension composed of similarities *and* differences between the terms....Reflectaphoric tension is so dynamic that it jars the brain into wonder, awe, perplexity, and a sense of unexpected truth or beauty" (p. 174).

My suggestion is that the reflectaphoric tension of the same words, used in slightly if significantly different ways by different people, can potentially "jar the brain" into the "perplexity of unexpected truth" which is qualitatively and perhaps even quantitatively different from the kind of reasonableness that strives for definition and explanation. To explore this suggestion at length would take more time and space than I have available at present, so I reluctantly leave it simply as a suggestion. However, I contend that its import for philosophy is both wide and deep, as I am convinced that it parallels in an interesting way Alfred North Whitehead's (1929/1969) definition of philosophy as "the self-correction by consciousness of its own initial excess of subjectivity" (p. 18).<sup>13</sup>

My sense is that such self-correction only happens as the result of a conscious and

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<sup>12</sup>I am mindful of Hunter's (1996) caution that "careful examination of chaos theory's tenets derived from the natural sciences reveals that a leap of faith is required for those who transpose its precepts to educational endeavor" (p. 10).

<sup>13</sup>DeBono (1990) explains how systems theory may illuminate this: *Active systems* are self-organizing, whereas *passive information systems* are not (p. 271). Understanding the difference between these two kinds of systems opens the door to understanding the logic of perception in novel ways which invite "big changes in human affairs" (ibid.). As Briggs (1992) explains, self-organization is part of chaos theory, and functions through positive and negative feedback:

One of the most important discoveries of chaology has been that positive feedback can cause complex, even chaotic behavior concealed inside orderly systems to unfold, and that negative feedback can grow inside an otherwise chaotic system, suddenly organizing it and making it stable. (p. 119)

wilful attempt *to be reasonable* and *to trust that others are capable of being reasonable*, even in ambiguous situations when this may not appear to be the case. Such trust is extremely hard to maintain at times, as I know only too well from personal experience. Nor must it be assumed that "being reasonable" simply means "thinking as I think", since the whole point here is that it provides a strategy for coping with *difference*.

Being reasonable is not, in my view, a matter of adopting, defending, and fortifying what is already Known and Familiar<sup>14</sup>: It is a matter of *orienting correctly* within an ambiguous situation such that one becomes receptively aware and potentially understanding of that which would otherwise remain Unknown and Unfamiliar. It is a process, as Schumacher (1977) explains somewhat poetically, of "gaining *adaequatio*, of developing the instrument capable of seeing and thus understanding the truth that does not merely inform the mind but liberates the soul" (p. 47).

Weber (1985a) notes that Kantian epistemology has restricted our thinking on this, by insisting that we have no intellectual capacity for directly approaching anything other than that which is immediately given to our external senses. Recent theoretical work in physics calls this view into question, suggesting that such a capacity may exist in the universe, though "not in us strictly speaking" (Weber, 1985a, p. 40). Weber continues:

The challenge for the individual locus of consciousness is to provide the condition that allows the universal force to flow through it without hindrance. The result is not knowledge, in the Kantian sense, but direct nondualistic awareness, a state for which Kant made no provision and for which he had no vocabulary. Its precondition is emptiness, as Bohm repeatedly insists, which entails a suspension of the Kantian categories and of 3-dimensional space-time. Such emptiness brings about the cessation of consciousness *as the knower* and transforms us into an instrument receptively allowing the noumenal intelligence to operate through us, irradiating our daily lives and those of others. The specific mechanism at work is difficult to understand. Perhaps we become akin to electrical

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<sup>14</sup>Through reference to numerous examples in the history of math and science, Hofstadter (1989) affirms the logical supposition that proof can never be established using *investigative content*: "We are faced with the recurrent question of circularity. If we use all the same equipment in a proof *about* our system as we have inserted *into* it, what will we have accomplished?" (p. 229).

"transformers" capable of stepping down the staggering cosmic energy in ways that permit us to *focus* it on the microcosmic level where we live and act. (ibid., pp. 40-41)

Battista (1985), in a review of emerging theories of consciousness, suggests that the recently conceived holographic model accounts for an individual's functioning both *receptively* and *transformatively* in relation to the Unknown, through intentionally quieting the brain's ordinary activity, for example, through meditation (p. 148).

Although I do not know whether or not this model is correct, I find it interesting and relevant because it suggests how the Logos may in fact be manifested in dialogue so as to create a sympathetic understanding between people which can, in turn, lead to such authentic transformation of both private and public situations as, for example, Freire describes. In other words, if the human ability to "be reasonable" somehow corresponds to the ability to correctly orient oneself to the Unknown, not so much through dialectical argument based on inferential logic as through a willingness to be openly receptive to what is unfamiliar and therefore perhaps even seemingly nonsensical at first, then transformative possibilities may arise in our individual and collective lives which are neither random nor arbitrary but which harmonize with a deeper order of things than we are yet able to recognize fully. This work is designed to demonstrate such openness.

Dewey (1934/1958) in fact describes something very like this in a passage concerning the nature of thought, where he suggests that authentic transformative possibilities are *imaginative* rather than *imaginary*, and that they arise in any mind which is willing to overcome the "inertia of habit" in order to "seek and welcome what is new in perception but is enduring in nature's possibilities":

Trains of what by courtesy are called ideas become mechanical. They are easy to follow, too easy. Observation as well as overt action is subject to inertia and moves in the line of least resistance. A public is formed that is inured to certain ways of seeing and thinking. It likes to be reminded of what is familiar. Unexpected turns then arouse irritation instead of adding poignancy to experience. Words are particularly subject to this tendency towards automatism. If their almost mechanical sequence is not too prosaic, a writer gets the reputation of being clear merely because the meanings he expresses are so familiar as not to demand thought by the reader. The academic and eclectic in any art is the outcome. The peculiar quality of the imaginative is best understood when placed in opposition to

the narrowing effect of habituation. Time is the test that discriminates the imaginative from the imaginary. The latter passes because it is arbitrary. The imaginative endures because, while at first strange with respect to us, it is enduringly familiar with respect to the nature of things. (pp. 269-270)

Whitehead (1929/1969) alludes to a similar idea when he says, "In some measure or other, progress is always a transcendence of what is obvious" (p. 12). Similarly, Barfield (1967) remarks,

Whereas expansion of meaning can be seen to be the product of the mental *activity* of individual speakers, contraction of meaning can also be - it generally is -- the product of their passivity. It is more often the product of something like force of habit, or rather the inertia of habit. (p. 46, italics original)

Barfield's reference to "mental activity" is notable, for it refocuses attention on the nature of such activity, rather than on its result, and the nature that allows for transformation is necessarily *receptive*, at least in my account, as has already been pointed out. Thus arises the paradoxical notion of an *activity* which by its nature is not assertive, but receptive. I say "paradoxical" because in so much of western eurocentric hegemonic culture, receptivity is understood as synonymous with passivity. The receptacle is merely a container, a repository passively waiting to be filled by an active Other: Scarcely any imaginative effort is required to see here a formula which has been mis-applied in a number of situations where human beings have been, for one reason or another, objectified as *passive objects*.<sup>15</sup> Yet the objectification of people is the one condition

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<sup>15</sup>Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman is just one situation which can be distorted in this way, as reportedly was commonplace in Victorian times when the woman was understood to passively "suffer" the man's assertive, if not aggressive, sexual activity. (The ancient Greek notion enshrined in the writings of Plato and Aristotle that only males are sexually potent likely contributed to this view.) Significantly, such patterns are capable of extension far beyond the generic situation, with the result that men may be stereotypically considered as assertive and active, while women are thought to be generally helpless and passive -- a stereotype many feminists vigorously challenge. Yet too often the strategy chosen by feminists to reclaim a sense of activity has been to simply champion assertiveness, rather than to discover how receptivity itself might be considered an "activity" requiring initiative, conviction, and commitment.

which Freire insists cancels out the transformative possibilities inherent in praxis!

In an interesting discussion of aesthetic perception, Dufrenne (1973) argues for something which might perhaps be called, in light of my comments in the preceding paragraph, "active receptivity": In what Dufrenne calls "depth of feeling", "aesthetic feeling", and "aesthetic experience", there is a "laying open of the self" which manifests as a person "being available and receptive" to something outside herself (p. 405). It is worth considering his remarks at length:

we cannot open up a world and open ourselves to that world except in one and the same movement. There is a reciprocity between intentionality and being-oneself.... Being oneself no longer designates the pure relationship to the self which constitutes an "I think" but the substance of the self possessing depth. An intentionality is no longer an aim or mere intention *toward* but a participation *with*.... to lay myself open is not merely to be conscious of something, but to associate myself with it. Feeling is an act of communion to which I bring the entirety of my being.... We are dealing ...with the acquisition of an intimacy.... We make ourselves present to [another's] world so that it may touch us and flow into us. Feeling has depth, therefore, by this type of generosity, this confidence which it inspires...and which does not proceed without fervor. (For the man of depth is the one who is capable of giving credit to others and discovering a hidden dimension in their actions -- a nobility in what seems to be small, a personality in what seems to be anonymous, and a freedom in what seems to be determined.) There is even love...in the aesthetic attitude. Is not love that expectation of a conversion by the attention we pay to the other, to what he is and expresses?

But this is possible only because feeling permits us to read such expressions. The supreme proof of feeling's depth is that it is intelligent in a way that intelligence as such can never be. Precisely because it is a laying open, a mode of attention, feeling operates without forcing itself. The object is transparent to feeling, but hardly with the transparency of clear ideas, which are transparent, in the words of Leibniz, "if they furnish me with the possibility of recognizing the object which they

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A second such distortion is discernible in all transmissive theories of education in which the student is objectified as, for example, a "blank slate" on which knowledge is inscribed, or a "jug" into which knowledge is poured. The power of such distortions is greatly increased when coupled with widely held religious beliefs such as the Christian one, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

represent." Aesthetic transparency is, rather, the transparency of a sign which is its own meaning, a smile which is tenderness, a motet which is piety. The intelligence of aesthetic expression is alive in proportion to the fullness of our presence and, consequently, to the richness of our feeling. A child knows tenderness in the outstretched arms of its mother, but its response lies in abandoning itself to the embrace. A man knows tenderness in a Mozart andante...because his depths have been offered substantial nourishment, as when a hungry fire is offered wood.... Thus the depth of aesthetic feeling is to be measured in terms of what it discovers. (Dufrenne, 1973, pp. 405-407)

Dufrenne (1973) warns that such feeling cannot exist in a vacuum, but is "encompassed, at both its poles, by reflection" (p. 416). This reflection "first prepares and then ratifies" feeling, so it does not "lose itself" or "convert its communion into a blind ecstasy":

Feeling can have a noetic function and value only as a reflective act, in part a victory over former reflection and in part open to a new reflection. Otherwise, feeling would revert to the pure and simple nonreflective level of presence, that is to what is not knowledge and barely even consciousness. (ibid.)

Dufrenne (1973) concludes that "aesthetic experience culminates in feeling without being able to eliminate reflection. It is located in the alternation of these two activities" (p. 424). If feeling, circumscribed by reflection, is that which allows us to be reasonably oriented to the Unknown through being open and receptive, then feeling plays a crucial, not a subsidiary role in reasoning and in understanding. It is this point which I find so often denied, and to which I want to draw attention in my work.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) have found that many women share, at least for some period in their lives, a "subjectivist" stance in which they distrust theory, intellect, language, expertise, objectivity, and generally hold to a multitude of antirationalist attitudes (pp. 74-5). They are suspicious of categories and labels, and they "often prefer to express themselves nonverbally or artistically so as to bypass the categorizing and labeling that the use of language implies" (ibid., p. 74). For many, this becomes a time of turning inward to find new direction and "is accompanied by an increased experience of strength, optimism, and self-value" (Belenky, et al., 1986, p. 83). Trusting inner feelings is an important part of this process. It is quite conceivable that much of my own motivation to honour feeling comes from such a need to experience this subjective stage, as something Belenky et al. (1986) call a "precursor to

### Data Collection

Three types of data provide the material for this inquiry. First are works authored by Steiner himself, involving discussions of art, cognition, and education. Second are

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reflective and critical thought" and "a knowledge base from which [to]...investigate the world" (pp. 85-6).

On the other hand, Crimshaw (1986) argues that gender differences associated with a long social history of dividing experience into public and private spheres make it more likely that men fit comfortably into a world of "impersonal instrumental rationality and self-interest," while women fit more comfortably into a world that is "personal, particularistic, based on emotion and on care and nurturance for others" (p. 197). From this perspective, my focusing on the fact that feeling appears to be devalued in the academic tradition may indeed reflect an objective reality, but one which provokes my attention not because it is "wrong" *in principle*, but because it is uncomfortable for me.

Yet another possibly relevant point is suggested by Koestler's (1964/1975) discussion of creativity: In extensive research concerning the thinking processes of creative scientists and artists alike, it appears that "breakthroughs" from the unconscious reveal themselves through emotionally coloured pictures (i.e., visual images) far more often than through words or formulas (pp. 169-173). Indeed, words and logic are understood by many creative thinkers to "interfere" with their thinking, at least at a certain stage (*ibid.*, p. 172). Although Koestler (1964/1975) follows common practice in labelling such "pictorial and other non-verbal representations" as regressive "vehicles of thought", since they are "both phylogenetically and ontogenetically older forms of ideation, than verbal thinking", he admits they must be understood as "a regression which prepares the forward leap, a *reculer pour mieux sauter*" (p. 173), much as the diver who would achieve greater height above the board must first jump down with sufficient energy to produce the necessary rebound effect. From this perspective, an appeal for greater attention to *feeling* can indeed indicate a valuing of more careful *reasoning*, just as Hare (1985) argues that *thinking harder* about the consequences of our actions is what is needed in order to become sufficiently *aware of feeling* to attend to it and thereby allow it to affect our morality: "We do need to feel differently, but this does not mean thinking less but thinking of things we are at present neglecting" (p. 13). Such examples illustrate the anthroposophical principle that inner soul processes relate to each other through polar opposition, a principle which is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, and which may help to explain my need to honour feeling as a necessary part of reasoning.



works by other educators, illuminating Steiner's work, both in terms of Waldorf education and in comparison with mainstream English Canadian education. Third are publications by still others, in such diverse fields as philosophy, psychology, science, and art, which allow assessment of Steiner's insights within a wider body of scholarship.

A number of writers provide details of Steiner's extensive schooling in philosophy and science, the formation of his three-fold social vision, his involvement in theosophical circles, his subsequent break with theosophy and development of anthroposophy, and his growing interest in art and education (cf. Carlgren, 1976/1993; Noble, 1996; Steiner, 1923-5/1991; Childs, 1991). Following numerous public lectures on the topic, Steiner published in 1907 a small book entitled The education of the child in the light of anthroposophy. During the next decade, he was increasingly involved in the arts. The bulk of his writing and lecturing about education followed. From the founding of the first Waldorf school in 1919 until 1924, Steiner delivered over two hundred lectures on education (often as part of one and two week lecture courses) and wrote a number of articles and essays about Waldorf education. The lecture courses include:<sup>17</sup>

1919 (May-June: Stuttgart)	Education for the people
1919 (August: Dornach)	Education as a social problem (6)
1919 (Aug-Sept: Stuttgart)	Study of man (14)
1919 (Aug-Sept: Stuttgart)	Practical advice to teachers (14)
1919 (Aug-Sept: Stuttgart)	Discussions with teachers (15)
1919 (Aug-Feb'20: Stuttgart/Basel)	The spirit of the Waldorf school (6)
1919 (Dec-Jan'20: Stuttgart)	The genius of language (6)
1919-1924 (Stuttgart)	R. Steiner in the Waldorf School (24)
1920 (March: Stuttgart)	Warmth course (14)
1920 (April-May: Basel)	The renewal of education (14)
1920 (September: Stuttgart)	Balance in teaching (4)
1922 (August: Oxford)	Spiritual ground of education (9)
1922 (October: Stuttgart)	The younger generation (13)
1923 (April: Dornach)	Child's changing consciousness (8)

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<sup>17</sup>The Anthroposophic Press has recently undertaken to publish "the complete series of Steiner lectures and writings on education in a uniform series" entitled Foundations of Waldorf education in order to "constitute an authoritative foundation for work in educational renewal, for Waldorf teachers, parents, and educators generally" (Rudolf Steiner in the Waldorf school, p. 229).

1923 (May-June: Dornach/Oslo)	The arts and their mission (8)
1923 (August: Ilkley)	Education + mod. spiritual life (14)
1923 (August: Penmaenmawr)	The evolution of consciousness (13)
1923 (October: Stuttgart)	Deeper insights into education (3)
1924 (April: Stuttgart)	The essentials of education (5)
1924 (April: Berne)	The roots of education (5)
1924 (June-July: Dornach)	Curative education (12)
1924 (July: Arnheim)	Human values in education (10)
1924 (August: Torquay)	The kingdom of childhood (7)

I have read and reread most of these lectures at least twice over the past four years. While they are immensely informative, they must also be studied intelligently, as Steiner cautions and as I have discussed briefly in Chapter 1, for although they were transcribed in shorthand by competent recorders chosen by himself, and subsequently typed and published under the care of his wife, who was highly conversant with his views, the transcriptions were never reviewed by Steiner himself. So there may be different implications carried, for example, in the way the material is punctuated, divided into paragraphs, and emphasized, than Steiner intended.

Besides the lecture courses specifically on education, I have also read and studied a number of other lecture courses given by Steiner concerning anthroposophy in general and his views of human mental and spiritual capacities. These include:

1906/7 (Oct-Apr: Berlin)	Supersensible knowledge (13)
1906/16 (Dec-Jan: Munich+Bern)	The universal human (4)
1911 (March: Prague)	An occult physiology (8)
1911/2 (Dec-Jan: Hanover)	World of senses + of spirit (6)
1914 (Jan: Berlin)	Human and cosmic thought (4)
1914 (July: Norrkoping)	Christ and the human soul (4)
1914/5 (Dec-Jan: Dornach)	Art ...[and] mystery wisdom (8)
1915 (Aug-Sept: Dornach)	Community Life (10)
1916 (Jun-July: Berlin)	Toward imagination (7)
1916 (Nov: Dornach)	The karma of vocation (10)
1920 (May: Dornach)	The redemption of thinking (3)
1920 (Mar-Nov: Stuttgart)	Polarities in evol. of mankind (11)
1920 (Sept-Oct: Dornach)	The boundaries of natural science (8)
1920 (Oct: Dornach)	The new spirituality... (7)
1920 (Dec: Dornach)	Bridge...spirituality+physicality (3)
1921 (Mar: Stuttgart)	Anthroposophy and science (8)
1921 (April-June: Dornach)	Materialism and anthroposophy (17)
1921 (July: ?)	Man, a being of sense+perception (3)

1922 (Jan-Mar: Dornach et al.)	Old + new methods of initiation (14)
1923 (June-July: Dornach)	Learning to see... (4)
1924 (Jan: Dornach)	Rosicrucianism + mod. initiation (6)
1924 (Jan-Feb: Dornach)	Anthroposophy and the inner life (9)
1924 (August: Torquay)	True and false paths... (11)

Additional single lectures by Steiner which I have read are:

1904 (Dec: Berlin)	The inner development of man
1906 (July: London)	The spiritual-scientific basis of Goethe's work
1906 (Nov: Hamburg)	Women and society
1909 (Oct: Berlin)	The nature and origin of the arts
1913 (Feb: Berlin)	Self-education
1913 (March: Berlin)	Errors in spiritual investigation
1924 (June: Koberwitz)	Youth's search in nature

I have also studied a number of lecture courses concerning art and art forms, including:

1906/23 (Cologne et al.)	The inner nature of music (7)
1907 (Sept: ?)	Occult signs and symbols (4)
1914/21 (May:Dornach, et al.)	Colour (12)
1921 (Oct: Dornach)	The art of lecturing (6)
1923 (Oct-Nov: Dornach)	Man..symphony of..creative word (12)
1924 (Sept: Dornach)	Speech and drama (19)

To supplement these several hundred lectures, I have read many of Steiner's books, in order to overcome as much as possible any biases introduced into his work through the act of transcription by others. Admittedly, there is still the possibility that reading his words in English translation, rather than the original German, inevitably colours Steiner's thoughts in ways he never intended, as I have mentioned already. To guard against this, I have paid special attention to translators' notes about particular difficulties they have encountered, and I have also compared various translations of key passages with the original, whenever possible. Steiner's books which I have studied include his autobiography, the four texts which he himself recognized as fundamental to his thought (starred), and several others, including:

1883-97/1988	Goethean science,
1886/1988	The science of knowing,
1892/1981	Truth and knowledge,
1893/1992/1995	* Philosophy of spiritual activity/Philosophy of freedom/Intuitive

	thinking as a spiritual path
1897/1992	Goethe's world view,
1899/1989	Individualism in philosophy
1904/1947	* Knowledge of higher worlds,
1910/1994	* Theosophy,
/1972	* Occult science,
1914/1973	Riddles of philosophy,
1916/1990	The riddle of man, and
1923-25/1991	Rudolf Steiner: An autobiography.

Shorter texts by Steiner which I have studied include the numerous letters and essays published in two volumes entitled The life, nature and cultivation of anthroposophy, and Anthroposophical leading thoughts. I have also read, studied, and watched on stage one of his four full-length mystery dramas, The soul's awakening.

As comprehensive as this extensive reading list might seem, it is important to remember that Steiner gave over 6000 lectures and wrote many, many other articles and essays, some of which have still never been translated into English. Because of this huge amount of material, it is practically impossible for any one person to be thoroughly familiar with all of Steiner's work. I certainly could not claim to be so. Nevertheless, I have made a sincere attempt to become well acquainted with all of his main educational work, much of his artistic work, and most of his general philosophical and anthroposophical work which provides the context for his educational and artistic insights. Omitted from my study are specific works in such other fields as anthroposophical medicine, agriculture, special education, economics, religion, community development, political and social development.

To supplement and enrich my own interpretive reading of Steiner, I have also studied the works of a number of other anthroposophical writers, scientists, artists, and educators. These works are for the most part discernible in my reference list through the fact that they have generally been published by publishing houses which are sympathetic to anthroposophical ideas. Such presses include,

Lanthe Press, East Grinstead, England;  
 Hawthorne Press, Stroud, England;  
 Anthroposophic Press, Hudson/Spring Valley, New York;  
 Inner Traditions International, New York, New York;  
 Anthroposophical Publications, Temple Lodge, London, England;

Rudolf Steiner Press, Bristol/London, England;  
 Mercury Press, Spring Valley, New York;  
 St. George Publications, Spring Valley, New York;  
 Steinerbooks, Blauvelt, New York;  
 Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, England;  
 Steiner Book Centre, Vancouver, Canada;  
 Floris Books, Edinburgh, Scotland;  
 Rudolf Steiner College Press, Fair Oaks, California.

The Steiner Schools Fellowship also publishes a popular journal about Waldorf (Rudolf Steiner) Education, called Child and Man (recently renamed Steiner Education). I have read all the issues of the last five years, plus many earlier ones, each regularly containing seven to ten articles published by Waldorf teachers or associates, along with book reviews of anthroposophical works, and advertisements for current anthroposophical programs and resources. A second publication of the Steiner Schools Fellowship is Paideia, a journal published specifically for Waldorf teachers which I receive regularly. In North America there is Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education published twice a year for distribution to members of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, to which I belong.

Other sources for my anthroposophical research include materials (background articles and class notes) obtained during a course I took in Waldorf education in the winter of 1991-92 in Halifax, NS, under the auspices of the Department of Community Services Early Childhood Education Training program, and taught by experienced Waldorf teacher Helen Kimball. As well, I have studied for four summers at the Rudolf Steiner Institute in Maine, working on both theoretical and artistic courses with leading anthroposophists from various parts of Great Britain, Europe, and North America. At the Institute I have also had opportunity to meet and talk informally with other students there, including Waldorf teachers from all over the United States and Canada, as well as many people interested in other aspects of anthroposophy besides education.

Further, I have visited, sat in on classes at all levels, talked both formally and informally with a number of teachers, and gathered house publications and descriptive brochures at Waldorf schools in Alberta, Ontario, and Nova Scotia in Canada; New York City and Spring Valley, New York, in the USA; Cuernavaca in Mexico; and Forest Row and Bristol in England; as well as the anthroposophical training center Emerson College

and the Steiner Schools Fellowship in England, and the Rudolf Steiner College and Waldorf teacher training center in Toronto. I have also attended the four-day international Waldorf kindergarten conference in Spring Valley, New York. (A list of the dates of these visits is included as Appendix C).

Following two years of participation in an anthroposophical study group in Halifax, NS, in the fall of 1994 I became a member of the Anthroposophical Society myself and now participate regularly in monthly meetings of the Nova Scotia branch as well as several workshops, guest lectures, festival celebrations, and focus group activities each year. Memberships in the national (USA) Waldorf Kindergarten association and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America mean that I also receive regular publications from these organizations which are useful for my work. While many of these contacts and activities are not formally integrated into my research, except for my use of published materials, they nevertheless serve to focus my attention and ground my efforts in ways that help to keep me "honest" by keeping me in sympathetic touch with Waldorf educators and other anthroposophists for whom my research may carry important implications, as well as helping to ensure that my representation of Waldorf education is not unnecessarily misleading for those who are unfamiliar with it.

Only slightly removed from the work and concerns of those actively engaged in anthroposophical endeavors are the academic researches of those who have studied Rudolf Steiner's educational thought in formal university programs. While none of the masters and doctoral theses I have come across direct attention precisely to the interface between art and cognition, which is my concern here, they nevertheless do offer background and related information which is pertinent. Similarly, there is a small, but growing number of relatively well-established academics who are sympathetically interested and highly knowledgeable about Waldorf education and anthroposophy in general, and who are able to offer scholarly interpretations and analyses of Steiner's work in various fields (cf. Zajonc, Hughes, Sloan, Finser, McDermott).

On the other hand, there is (perhaps inevitably) at the same time some evidence of academics seeking to acknowledge Steiner's contribution to education, yet representing it -- presumably unwittingly through insufficient study -- in ways that seem to contradict

Steiner's own work. Childs (1991) alludes to this, for example, when he points out that "All too often Rudolf Steiner has been regarded as a mystic, but people who so regard him merely betray their ignorance of his basic approach to Spirit as well as Nature, which was that of the scientist" (p. 1).<sup>18</sup> It may also arise due to impressions gained in a Waldorf school setting which actually are inappropriate, since they reflect understandings learned in significantly different contexts, as, for example, the common misapprehension by visitors to Waldorf schools of assuming that having all the children in a class work through the ramifications of a particular colour combination shows a lack of appreciation for creativity and personal expression (James, 1989, p. 16). It is to avoid as much as possible such premature judgments of Steiner's views that I have tried to keep open, and to put myself in positions where I will learn about Waldorf education and anthroposophy through contacts with others currently involved and interested in these same issues.

Finally, as regards the wider circle of academic scholarship which provides a broad philosophical, psychological, educational, and aesthetic context within which to characterize and interpret Steiner's work, I point to my reference list. The selection of sources, while directed by my current research focus, also reflects reading interests coloured by an undergraduate degree in cultural anthropology with honours in ethnomusicology, earned in 1969 from Bryn Mawr College; an education degree earned in 1980 from Acadia University; a master of arts degree in elementary education earned in 1992 from Mount Saint Vincent University; several decades of varied educational work at the professional level in Canada, the USA, and Zambia, including, of course, two years working in a Waldorf-inspired kindergarten, and, importantly, the manifold stresses

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<sup>18</sup>Steiner (1920/1987) lectured about mysticism, especially in its relationship with materialism, in a lecture course published under the title, Polarities in the evolution of mankind. That he considered mysticism to be one-sided and potentially misleading is clear from this statement:

Someone looking for the spirit by following the path of mere one-sided inner mysticism, failing to realize that when he comes to see through the tissue of this mysticism it is materiality he finds, is on the way to becoming infantile. (Steiner, 1920/1987, p. 91).

and joys ever present in my particular personal, family, and community involvements, including more than thirty years teaching, performing, and composing Scottish Country dances and dance music. More recently, my doctoral program has allowed me to focus on art education through graduate courses at the NS College of Art and Design, aesthetics and philosophy of art through graduate courses in Dalhousie's Philosophy Department, and history and philosophy of education through courses in the doctoral program in Educational Foundations at Dalhousie University. Throughout this study I have drawn heavily on all the usual scholarly resources of the academic world, including library texts, academic journals, computer communications, and professional conferences.

### Data Analysis

Goethean science, as understood by Steiner (1883-97/1988) and explicated by Lehrs (1958, especially chapter VII '*Except we become...*'), requires adults to consciously reorganize and remobilize their thinking to operate in a way which they have previously experienced only unconsciously, as, for example, in childhood. This is not an easy task, either to understand or to accomplish.<sup>19</sup>

I have attempted to do it, without fully understanding it, on the assumption that such understanding can arise only from such an attempt. In Steinerian terms I acknowledge this as a willful attempt to direct my thinking in a certain way, as well as simultaneously a thoughtful attempt to engage my will (activity) in a certain way: The one gives evidence of human *Freedom*, while the other gives evidence of human *Love*.

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<sup>19</sup>Kincheloe et al. (1992) draw attention to the example of Albert Einstein: "He frequently referred to his use of childlike curiosity and his ability to see the world through the eyes of a child, as a key to understanding his way of thinking" (p. 152). Their thesis is that Einstein's thinking was unusual in being both *post-formal* and *bi-modal*, that is, integrated in a particularly healthy way, in dramatic contrast with modern thinking so prevalent in today's schools. In their analysis, modern thinking exemplifies a *cognitive illness*, in which creativity, higher-order thinking, and imagination are all limited to an unhealthy degree (Kincheloe et al., 1992, p. 13). It follows that "thinking like a child" must somehow involve unblocking the potential for creativity, higher-order thinking, and imagination which we all possess.



In this way, analysis becomes not only intellectual, but also moral.

If achieved, such analysis results in something qualitatively different from formal analysis based on inferential logic alone.<sup>20</sup> What I shall call, for want of a better term, "moral analysis" does *include* the common definition of analysis as the intellectual activity of separating, differentiating, and objectifying things in order to become critically conscious of them. In Goethean science, however, the Intellect is not limited to consciousness of other things only, but it becomes reflexive, that is, it turns back on itself in order to become conscious of its own activity, as well as the myriad things external to it.<sup>21</sup> In doing this, the Intellect experiences the unique position of standing within its own thought processes: Thoughtful consciousness of this experience amounts to an actual perception of the individualizing activity of one's Intellect. This prompts the recognition that thinking and analysis are indeed potentially moral acts of free human beings.

This capacity to be knowingly aware -- out of one's conscious initiative -- of both Self and Non-Self as interconnected is the essence of Goethean science, just as the capacity to be unknowingly aware out of one's unconscious initiative of both Self and Non-Self is the essence of childlike cognition. Montessori (1967) offers a particularly clear description of this childlike cognition in reference to language acquisition:

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<sup>20</sup>Lonergan (1978) explains inference as moving "from knowledge of premises to knowledge of a conclusion in the same mind" (p. 718). Where premises are questioned, however, other forms of reasoning must come into play, as Socrates knew, and as Gardner (1985) discusses in light of the fact that "empirical work on reasoning over the past thirty years has severely challenged the notion that human beings -- even sophisticated ones -- proceed in a rational manner, let alone that they invoke some logical calculus in their reasoning" (p. 361). In Chesterton's (1961, p. 83) words:

All that we call common sense and rationality and practicality and positivism only means that for certain dead levels of our life we forget that we have forgotten. All that we call spirit and art and ecstasy only means that for one awful instant we remember that we forget.

<sup>21</sup>Kincheloe et al. (1992) suggest something similar in their claim that "Reason is not negated in postmodern ways of knowing. Rather, it is redefined..." (p. 217).

The child does not 'remember' sounds, but he incarnates them, and can then produce them to perfection. He speaks his language according to its complex rules, with all their exceptions, not because he has studied it, nor by the ordinary use of memory. Perhaps his memory never retains it consciously, and yet this language comes to form part of his psychic life and of himself. Undoubtedly, we are dealing with a phenomenon different from the purely mnemonic activity; we are dealing with one of the strangest aspects of the infant mind. There is in the child a special kind of sensitivity which leads him to absorb everything about him, and it is this work of observing and absorbing that alone enables him to adapt himself to life. He does it in virtue of an unconscious power that only exists in childhood. (p. 62)

The reference to language is opportune, since it serves to suggest, in a most particular and apt way, the whole concern with how understanding might be related to analysis.

Langer (1957) identifies the use of language to "communicate, by producing a serried array of audible or visible words, in a pattern commonly known, and readily understood to reflect our multifarious concepts and percepts and their interconnections" as *discourse*, and the pattern of discourse as *discursive form* (p. 289). She argues that this form has so "impressed itself on our tacit thinking", that it "has made, far more than most people know, the very frame of our sensory experience" (*ibid.*, pp. 289-290). Furthermore, in the "strictest sense" all experience that "is not discursively communicable" is therefore also not "logically thinkable" and, "according to practically all serious philosophical theories today, it is unknowable" (Langer, 1957, p. 290).

Langer (1957) takes exception to this strictly limited view, which ties knowledge and understanding to logical analysis, and which regards "the whole life of feeling as formless, chaotic, capable only of symptomatic expression" (p. 191).

Goethe's own experience showed him that "every process in nature, rightly observed, wakens in us a new organ of cognition" (Goethe, quoted in Lehrs, 1958, p. 85). What constitutes such "right observation" is "a form of contemplating nature which he called a "re-creating (creating in the wake) of an ever-creative nature" (*Nachschaffen einer immer schaffenden Natur*) (*ibid.*). Goethe understood this process to be a kind of "reading" of nature, but, as Olson (1996) points out in great detail, the meaning of

"reading" has changed dramatically over time.<sup>22</sup> During the Middle Ages, for instance, words "were seen as having a natural connection to things", whereas in Modern times, words are "mere conventions" representing ideas (Olson, 1996, p. 167). This shift is indicative of a modern mode of reading, in which careful and sustained attention is paid to the text itself in order to determine meaning, instead of "reading between the lines" by virtue of "the gift of personal illumination, revelation or epiphany" (ibid., p. 168).

Both scripture, the book of God's word, and nature, the book of God's work, can, in the modern scientific thinking so famously advanced by Francis Bacon and heavily influenced by the Protestant reformation, "be read by careful examination of the surface properties of the 'texts' in question" (Olson, 1996, p. 169). Here there is no need or reliance on "deep meanings, hidden secrets, mystical interpretations, or a gift of the spirit": Modern reading — at least as seen in the eyes of seventeenth century readers — is "algorithmic", that is, as "more or less mechanical and as available to everyone if they follow[ed] correct procedures" (ibid., pp. 168-169). "Correct procedures", of course, meant complete and total reliance on so-called "objective" sensation "according to the textual properties themselves" (Olson, 1996, p. 171). In consequence, "it allowed, for the first time, notions like figurative language, interpretation and commentary to take on a pejorative sense" (ibid., p. 169).

In postmodern times reading is no longer viewed as algorithmic, nor is sensation any longer considered truly objective: There is now widespread agreement that "all reading requires something like inference to the best explanation" (Olson, 1996, p. 168). Kant's distinction between the knower and the known is no longer as it was: The knower

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<sup>22</sup>De Bono (1991) is another who calls attention to the need for much more skillful *perception* to offset the one-sidedness of abstract thinking based on axiom, logic, and argument (pp. 4-6). The danger, as he points out, is that perception, due to the inherent circularity of self-organizing systems, can serve to simply reinforce what we are *already prepared to perceive*. Emotions and context may also affect perception. What is needed then is a *disciplined* perception in which attention is intentionally guided according to certain rules. De Bono (1991) has developed this idea quite extensively and used it to create an educational program for teaching the skill of *perceptual thinking*.

is today more reflexive, and the known is more subjective, such that vis-a-vis people of the seventeenth century, "we in the twentieth century recognize the dogmatism of their religious views and the unattainability of their scientific goals" (ibid., p. 172).

Olson (1996) argues that writing has allowed thoughts to become sufficiently objectified that we now distinguish ourselves from them, and thereby become conscious of them. For example, assumptions are recognized *as assumptions*, inferences *as inferences*, and conclusions *as conclusions* (ibid., p. 280). In this way, writing has provoked a change of consciousness, such that we no longer think about things themselves, but only about "representations of those things" (Olson, 1996, p. 282).

Although Olson ends his work there, satisfied to have explained how we have arrived at the point of "thinking about thought" (ibid.), Steiner takes this as his starting point in developing Goethean science (also called anthroposophical science, or spiritual science). In thinking about thought, Steiner says we arrive at the possibility of consciously awakening modes of thought which we enjoyed unconsciously as children.

Goethe's approach, based on imaginative understanding, seems initially to be like the inferential understanding of the Intellect. For example, Zajonc (1993) cites Goethe:

'In reality, any attempt to express the inner nature of a thing is fruitless. What we perceive are effects, and a complete record of these effects ought to encompass this inner nature. We labor in vain to describe a person's character, but when we draw together his actions, his deeds, a picture of his character will emerge.' (p. 202)<sup>23</sup>

The crucial difference, however, is soon pointed out: "...in common with all scientists, Goethe searched for patterns, the hidden lawfulness within the welter of color phenomena, but for him they were to be exalted perceptual experiences, not abstract substitutes for nature's glory" (ibid., p. 203).

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<sup>23</sup>Zajonc's (1993) paraphrase of this is worth repeating: Attempt to define a human being in terms of psychological theories, and you inevitably fail to reveal his or her essential being, but as a novelist, describe how she walks, places her hand at her side, moves her head and mouth...and immediately the inner nature of a person is revealed. Goethe knew this method well. (pp. 202-203)

Hodgson's (1993) remarks about scientific model-building are instructive here:

In his famous book, The structure of scientific revolutions, Kuhn (1962/1970) argued that models are used, consciously or not, to predict virtually all of our everyday interactions with our environment, including scientific research. If this view is accepted, then models should represent as close an approximation as possible to reality, if they are to properly guide us. However, it should be emphasized that models are a two-edged sword. On the one hand, they are a powerful means of organizing data in a form that enhances understanding and prediction. But on the other hand, by operating to exclude perception of data which does not fit the model, they have a soporific effect, that may lead to unjustified confidence in the application of the model.

As I understand it, Goethean science requires the researcher to wait, and wait yet again, so as to resist the temptation to intellectually contrive a logical connection between observations, and thus construct a scientific model as described above.<sup>24</sup> Instead, such a researcher allows a connection to form itself deep within one's awareness:<sup>25</sup> From numerous reports of scientists, mathematicians, and artists who have experienced this process, it seems as if this connection typically appears through an image, or at most a suggestive word or phrase, rather than a completely logical proposition. Also, typically such connections are made in the twilight periods between full wakefulness and deep sleep, but only after a prolonged period of concentrated attention on the problem at hand.

Zajonc (1993) notes that "Goethe fully emphasized the significance of *Bildung* or 'self-transformation' in his scientific methodology" (p. 204). By this he means we can only ever see what we are prepared to see (or hear what we are prepared to hear, feel

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<sup>24</sup>Wittgenstein (1953) apparently meant something like this with his advice, "Don't think; look!" (PI 66).

<sup>25</sup>Again, Kincheloe et al. (1992) suggest that Einstein's experience is instructive in understanding this: In reflecting on his own thought processes, Einstein reckoned "the most important feature in productive thought" to be a kind of "free, combinatory play" with concepts which "did not seem to emerge in any verbal formulation" but appeared as "'certain signs and more or less clear images'" (p. 146). This play rested on a decidedly *emotional foundation*, which was -- interestingly enough -- "the need to achieve unity or 'to arrive finally at logically connected concepts'" (ibid.).

what we are prepared to feel, and so on). Sensation, which comes so naturally and unconsciously to a young child fully prepared to be receptive to all, is more typically filtered in adult consciousness through habitual perceptions built up through thoughtless, automatic, mechanical repetition based on previous awarenesses rather than current ones.

As we attempt to consciously rid ourselves of habitual responses and patterned thinking, and prepare ourselves to be open to the here and now, we risk being overwhelmed by its sheer abundance and intensity.<sup>26</sup> As Zajonc (1993) makes clear, "Goethe's method requires a reciprocal enhancement of both natural phenomena and the observing mind" (pp. 211-212). Beginning in *wonder*, moving through *interest* to *active inquiry*, "as we enhance our cognitive capacities we simultaneously enhance the world we see until, ultimately, we behold the ideal within the real..." (ibid., p. 212). Zajonc

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<sup>26</sup>Here I begin to glimpse a possible dynamic reality behind my supervisor's comment of, "Oh Maggie, it goes on and on!", when I handed him yet another stack of pages to read. Perhaps having achieved a certain level of Imaginative knowledge, one risks being overwhelmed, and overwhelming others, unless one comes to realize the complementary value of letting go, forgetting, and rhythmically emptying one's consciousness, thus moving towards the next level of cognition, which Steiner calls Inspiration. Significantly, he suggests that we are most helped in making this step by strengthening our capacity for love through achieving self-discipline (Steiner, 1921/1991, p. 67ff.). In this process, Steiner explains how we may become *active in what is normally considered passive*:

with the power of love the exercises in forgetting can be practiced with greater force, and the results will be more sure, than without it. By practicing self-discipline, which gives us a greater capacity for love, we are able to experience an enhanced faculty of forgetting, just as surely a part of our volition as the enhanced faculty of remembering. We gain the ability to put something definite, something of positive soul content, in the place of what is normally the end of an experience. Normally when we forget something, this marks the end of some sequence of experiences. Thus in place of what would normally be nothing, we are able to put something positive. In the enhanced power of forgetting, we develop actively what otherwise runs its course passively. (ibid., p. 71)

(1993) has a deep understanding of this; his description is worth quoting at length:

Goethe's sense of scientific understanding is grounded in insight, not model building, and so is true to the heart of both science and art. Every scientific discovery from Galileo to Einstein can trace its origin to the eureka experience in which a phenomenon becomes transparent to the ideal, and an idea is seen. From this exhilarating moment, the scientist works to translate his or her insight into words and symbols. In the process, the eureka experience is often lost while its technical power is retained. Goethe was more interested in the former, seeking constantly for means that would permit everyone to have their own epiphany..., to see ideas. (p. 212)

In attempting to follow this method, I suggest that my "analysis", such as it is, rests less on abstract theory derived from logical inference<sup>27</sup> and more on the presentation of ideas arising from Imaginative (and perhaps also Inspired and Intuitive) understanding, using these terms in the way Steiner does.<sup>28</sup> In such understanding discursive reasoning is not abandoned, but is linked to the ordering of that which is already known. Genuinely new knowledge, as Sloan (1983) -- drawing on the insights of David Bohm expressed in his book Wholeness and the implicate order -- points out, can only come about "by means of a breakthrough into a dimension of intelligibility previously inaccessible" (p. 129).

The particular appeal of Goethean science is that it offers "a renewed appreciation of technical, instrumental reason as the indispensable servant, but not master, of the creative potentialities of the human being" (Sloan, 1983, p. 130). Even more

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<sup>27</sup>In discussing the *cognitive revolution*, Kincheloe et al. (1992) note: "There must be modes of thought which transcend the formal operational ability to construct abstract conclusions....After Einstein, we know too much to define formal operations as the zenith of human cognitive activity" (p. 13).

<sup>28</sup>Steiner's life work was to explicate these terms as he used them. His small book, The stages of higher knowledge, presents a brief overview of his notions of Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition (Steiner, 1967). Whicher (1989) offers this compact statement: "For the reader unfamiliar with these terms, one might translate them as meaning a higher spiritual form of thinking, feeling and willing" (p. 11). Alternatively, they can be understood as enhanced sensations, with Imagination characterized as *enhanced seeing*, Inspiration characterized as *enhanced listening*, and Intuition characterized as *enhanced touching*.

significantly, it points the way to re-integrating scientific insight, artistic insight, and moral insight as mutually supportive aspects of knowing.

Analysis from a reductionist viewpoint does not allow for this (Sloan, 1983, pp. 12-16), but analysis in Goethean science does. Reductionist science analyzes into finer and finer parts in order to approach reality in terms of separation. Goethean science accepts analysis in these terms, but only as part of what human beings are capable of thinking. Because a sense of separation is accomplished in the very moment of self-consciousness on the part of the human Intellect, it is intellectually permissible to acknowledge separation as "real" and to pursue a science of separation. However, by becoming consciously reflexive, a Self-conscious Intellect can re-conceive integration as "possible" and thus attempt a science based on wholeness.<sup>29</sup>

By engaging in the critical task of analysis, a Goethean scientist affirms the experience of individual consciousness. By engaging in the Imaginative task of synthesis, that same scientist affirms the experience of virtue.<sup>30</sup> Analysis without Imagination leads to reductionism and lack of morality; synthesis without critical judgment leads to sentimentality and lack of awareness. It is my goal in this research to balance these two

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<sup>29</sup>Kinchloe, Steinberg, & Tippins (1992) point out that recent developments in chaos theory are quickly making this view more widely understood and accepted:

Attempts to understand chaotic systems through a reductionist lens are doomed to fail. Scientists are recognizing the futility of analyzing these systems by breaking them into parts isolated from the whole: such systems are constantly folding into each other by iterations and feedback loops. Thus, with the discovery of chaos theory, and the recognition that systems interact holistically, comes a revolution in perspective that holds much promise for the future -- a promise which cognitively reveals itself in the ability to see facts as parts of larger processes. (pp. 174-5)

<sup>30</sup>According to Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary (1962) virtue means not only *general moral goodness and right action and thinking*, but even more significantly, *effective power or force; efficacy; potency; especially, the ability to heal or strengthen* (p. 2042).



principles. Written language itself, as pointed out by Olson, offers me the opportunity to be critically analytical. The initiative I show in directing my attention in a disciplined and actively receptive fashion offers me the opportunity to be Imaginatively creative.

Steiner (1920/1981) understands the balance between analysis and synthesis as a rhythm, similar to waking up and falling asleep (pp. 130ff.). Both are essential. In analysis, we "wake up" to individual consciousness; in synthesis, we "fall asleep" to individual awareness, in order to participate in a larger understanding. In Steiner's words, "...if we pay due respect to man's inherent urge for rhythmical activity, we shall always be on the right path" (ibid., p. 131). My goal in this research is to balance critical analysis with a willing receptivity to the possibility for ideas to come together imaginatively in new ways.<sup>31</sup>

### Summary and Conclusion

Goethean science calls us to "advance from the form of the experienceable as it presents itself to us in what is given to the senses, to a form of it that satisfies our reason" (Steiner, 1983-87/1988b, p. 107). In doing this, we do not attempt to replicate external reality through creating an intellectual model (i.e., representation), whose "truth" is measured in terms of how accurately it explains what is observed; instead, we acknowledge that "truth is not the coinciding of a mental picture with its object, but rather the expression of a relationship between two perceived facts" (ibid., p. 109).

This research project involves reasoning in this way about art and cognition in two contrasting educational contexts. It requires that I balance analysis, in which I intellectually distinguish various features of each context, with synthesis, in which I bring both into relationship in order to understand each more clearly and more fully. Such research offers a response to Dewey's (1931/1967) "plea for the casting off of that

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<sup>31</sup>Kincheloe et al. (1992) report that Einstein considered a *higher-order intelligence* to be one with "the ability to see connections..." (p. 9). They add that "This sophisticated intelligence has something to do with the ability to see what no one else has seen before" (ibid.). It is this which must distinguish such thinking from *induction*, which only allows connection in terms of *generalization* from past experience and which must be *commonly acknowledged* to be valid (Black, 1970).

intellectual timidity which hampers the wings of imagination, a plea for speculative audacity, for more faith in ideas" (pp. 10-11). Just as Dewey (1934/1958) holds that imagination is a necessary "gateway" to consciousness, since it alone enables us to bridge the gap between present experience and the "funded result" of past interactions which "constitutes the meanings with which we grasp and understand what is now occurring" (p. 272), so Steiner (1883-97/1988b) argues that "a process of the world appears completely penetrated by us only when the process is our own activity" (p. 121).

## CHAPTER FOUR: Art at the Center

Rudolf Steiner's (1909/1981) opening remarks in his early essay on "The education of the child in the light of anthroposophy" sound curiously recent: He mentions the "problems of the hour" and "demands of the age" as having to do with social issues, the place of women in society, various educational questions, health issues, and human rights (p. 5). Any reader today could identify myriad problems of exactly the same sort still troubling us almost a century later. Already in his day Steiner recognized that "by the most varied means, men are endeavouring to grapple with these problems"; Steiner's concern is that the situation continues unchanged because we appear to be working "with means which are utterly inadequate" (ibid.).

Steiner (1909/1981) argues that the big questions of social life, just as the personal questions of individual life, can only be addressed intelligently when we have a much deeper understanding of the processes of life itself (p. 6). It is only then that "the various ideas of reform current in the present age can become fruitful and practical" (ibid., p. 7).

Steiner devoted his life to deepening his understanding of such processes. The work of Schiller and Goethe encouraged him to formulate the basic ideas of his anthroposophical worldview. From this came insights into education and many other aspects of modern life. In this chapter I briefly review these influences, indicate their import for Steiner's developing ideas, and show how they have been translated into curricular and pedagogical practices of Waldorf education, with art playing a crucial role at the center.

### Steiner's Diagnosis, and Recognition of Spiritual Laws

To reach a deep understanding of life processes, it is necessary to first "respect existing things", since it is existing things which already contain "the embryo of the future" (Steiner, 1909/1981, p. 8). "At the same time," Steiner adds, it is also necessary to recognize "that in all things 'becoming' there must be growth and evolution" (ibid.).

The result is that an intelligent person "invents no programmes; he reads them out of what is there" (Steiner, 1909/1981, p. 8). To read the world in this way challenges people. There are no fool-proof tests for measuring such reading comprehension. There is only the eventual "proof of the pudding"; the consequences which follow from actions arising from what has been "read" and understood: the fruit, the harvest, the yield.

Developing the capacity for this "reading" comprehension, arising out of the ability to "perceive in the present the seeds of transformation and of growth", is what Steiner (1909/1981) intends as the goal of anthroposophy (pp. 6-7). It is a goal which others have recognized too, without naming and developing it as systematically as Steiner did. Myles Horton<sup>1</sup> (1990), for example, says:

I look at a person with two eyes. One eye tells me what he is; the other tells me what he can become.... My job as a gardener or as an educator is to know that the potential is there and that it will unfold. People have a potential for growth; it's inside, it's in the seed. (back and front covers)

And Paulo Freire (1987), famed for his transformative pedagogical work among Brazilian peasants, refers to this same kind of "reading" when he tells a young Brazilian:

Lula, you are for me one of the best readers of Brazil today, but not readers of the *word*, readers of the *world*. That is, you are reading the history we are making every day. You are understanding it, grasping it to the extent that you are making it also. (p. 182)

Steiner himself became aware of the possibility of this sort of comprehension when reading Schiller's Letters On the Aesthetic Education of Man. Here Steiner (1923-25/1991) came across Schiller's indication that "consciousness oscillates between different states": By his own report, Steiner was "strongly stimulated" by this idea (p. 68).

In Schiller's analysis there are three states of consciousness "by means of which man develops a relation to the world" (ibid.). In one, people "surrender" themselves to effects arising from their sensations, so that their lives are determined by their senses and their instincts, and they are "under the compulsion of nature" (Steiner, 1923-25/1991, p. 68). Contrasting with this is the experience of "spiritual necessity", in which people willingly subject themselves "to the logical laws of reason" (ibid.). Intermediate between

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<sup>1</sup>Horton was, like Steiner, intensely interested in social betterment and the possibilities for education to be a part of this. In 1932 he founded the widely known Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, where over the years his educational philosophy and methods influenced such people as Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., Eleanor Roosevelt, and scores of others. Bill Moyers (1990) characterizes Horton's 'special kind of teaching' as "helping people to discover within themselves the courage and ability to confront reality and to change it" (p. ix).

these two is the "aesthetic disposition", in which one "does not surrender one-sidedly either to the compulsion of nature or to the necessity of reason":

In this aesthetic disposition the soul gains experience through the senses, but it brings something spiritual to physical perception and to deeds stimulated by the physical world. One then perceives with his senses as if they had become permeated with spirit.... Reason has entered into intimate union with the physical.... In the development of this state he sees the awakening of man's true nature. (Steiner, 1923-25/1991, pp.68-69)

As Steiner admits, "I was drawn to Schiller's way of thought" (ibid., p. 69). Here at last was recognition that "man's consciousness must first be in a certain condition before it can gain a relation to the world that is in accord with his true nature" (Steiner, 1923-5/1991, p. 69). For Steiner, such a condition was clearly discernible, and he was already well aware of it:

...I recognized that such a state of consciousness is attained to a certain degree when man not only entertains thought portraying external things and events, but thoughts he *experiences as such*. To live consciously within thoughts I recognize as a completely different experience from ordinary consciousness, different also from the consciousness of scientific research. (Steiner, 1923-25/1991, p.70)

Steiner found that Goethe too had experienced this shift in awareness from what is superficially present to what is awakened thoughtfully *in and through* such presence, and he too had described it as "reading". For example, Goethe wrote in a letter to a friend:

'I can't tell you how the Book of Nature is becoming readable to me. My long practice in spelling has helped me; it now suddenly works, and my quiet joy is inexpressible.... It is a growing aware of the Form with which again and again nature plays, and in playing, brings forth manifold life.' (cited in Lehrs, 1958, p. 95)

Goethe recognized, of course, that such "reading" requires an active, cognitive (i.e., spiritual<sup>2</sup>) participation on the part of the "reader" involved. But he also

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<sup>2</sup>The frequent use of the word *spiritual* in connection with Steiner's work can cause confusion among English readers. In large part this is due to the difficulty of translating the German word *Geist* and its related form *geistig* adequately into English. The German word *Geist* encompasses any or all of what in English could be distinguished as *spirit, wit, mind, intellect, genius, spectre, ghost* (Wichmann, 1935, p. 119).

recognized that such participation is intimately related to something real; it is not merely subjective illusion or delusion. In this, Goethe unwittingly anticipates the constructivist view of learning so prominent in education today.<sup>3</sup>

Even more significant, to my mind, is that Goethe saw that an accomplished reader could go beyond the given "text" to conceive new things, as yet unrealized, which nevertheless maintained a "true" relationship with reality, and were not subject to mere arbitrariness or whimsy.<sup>4</sup> For example, in a letter to Herder he writes:

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Often the key meaning for Steiner has to do with the characteristic of awareness or intelligence as being *non-physical*. In this, he often distinguishes between physical existence in *space* and 'non-physical existence', or development, over *time*. At any one point in time we can only 'know' what manifests itself in space at that moment; yet awareness of development in time allows us to also 'know' what is no longer present as well as what has not yet come to be in a physical sense. The point of his learning from Goethe is that just as there are physical laws which apply to things present in space, there are also 'spiritual' laws which apply to the way things develop.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, the work of E. von Glasersfeld, P. Cobb, D. Bakhurst, H. Bauersfeld, and others.

<sup>4</sup>To my mind, this dynamic parallels what Noam Chomsky glimpsed in his remarkable breakthrough in linguistic theory: Chomsky's (1957, 1965, 1972, 1980, 1986) notion of transformational grammar is *rule-based but generative*, such that we are able to *invent* completely intelligible sentences which we have never heard before. As Crain (1992) reports, Prior to Chomsky, most people probably believed in what Brown has called the "storage bin" theory of language learning. Children imitate others and acquire a large number of sentences that they store in their heads. They then reach in for the appropriate sentence when the occasion arises. Chomsky has shown that this view is incorrect. We do not simply learn a set number of sentences, for we routinely create new ones. (p. 300)

My suggestion is that Goethe somehow understood nature through generating an internal "grammar or syntax" of the natural world, just as children do routinely in the world of language. This allowed him to be creative, innovative, and original *within* a lawful system, and to recognize the lawfulness of his own creations and creative spirit. By contrast, much of

I am quite close to the secret of plant creation, and...it is the simplest thing imaginable. The ur-plant [archetypal plant] will be the strangest creature in the world, for which nature herself should envy me. With this model and the key to it one will be able to invent plants *ad infinitum*; they would be consistent; that is to say, though non-existing, they would be capable of existing, being no shades or semblances of the painter or poet, but possessing truth and necessity. The same law will be capable of extension to all living things. (Lehrs, 1958, p. 96)

Being able to achieve an accurate "reading" of something means coming to clearly understand it. Goethe finds that this is not a hit-or-miss process: It involves a schooling of what he calls his "sensorial fancy", in which he follows a definite method (Lehrs, 1958, p. 99). For the sake of clarity, it may help to consider an example of this method, in which Lehrs offers a description of how Goethe came to understand the two differing growth principles observable in many plants (i.e., spiral and axial).

To help towards a clear understanding of both tendencies, Goethe describes an exercise which is characteristic of his way of schooling himself...He first looks out for a phenomenon in which the 'secret' of the spiral tendency is made 'open'. This he finds in such a plant as the convolvulus; in this kind of plant the vertical tendency is lacking, and the spiral principle comes obviously into outer view. Accordingly, the

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ordinary science continues along the line of the "storage bin" theory Crain mentions. In other words, it is apparently still widely believed that we accumulate bits of knowledge based on what we experience, and store this knowledge against the time when appropriate circumstances arise to which it can be applied. Crain (1992) mentions Montessori's 1949 published insight into the importance of grammar and syntax acquisition by young children but concludes that most psychologists were "handicapped by their own ignorance of grammatical rules and structures" and so could make nothing much of the idea until Chomsky was able to give detailed descriptions "of the kinds of operations to look for in children's speech, [at which point] the whole new field of developmental psycholinguistics emerged" (p. 299). My thinking is that Steiner tried to describe, in parallel fashion, some of the "operations" to look for in the development of consciousness at both macrocosmic and microcosmic levels; for those of us "handicapped by our own ignorance of nature's developmental rules and structures", it is hard work to follow him. It may be that Steiner's "science of the spirit" will in fact emerge with stronger force as people become more familiar it, and with what exactly they need to look for in order to understand it.

convolvulus requires an external support, around which it can wind itself. Goethe now suggests that after looking at a convolvulus as it grows upwards around its support, one should first make this clearly present to one's inner eye, and then again picture the plant's growth without the vertical support, allowing instead the upward-growing plant inwardly to produce a vertical support for itself. By way of inward re-creation (which the reader should not fail to carry out himself) Goethe attained a clear experience of how, in all those plants which in growing upwards produce their leaves spiral-wise around the stem, the vertical and spiral tendencies work together. (Lehrs, 1958, pp. 99-100)

In attempting to "read" nature as he did, Goethe was especially aware of the need to *wait* in active anticipation of understanding, letting awareness arise within him without the pressure or force of presupposed logic or hypothetical reasoning. His method was to "never think out an idea prematurely", but rather to "develop the art of waiting -- of waiting, however, in a way intensely active, whereby one looks again and yet again, until what one looks at begins to speak" (Lehrs, 1958, p. 95).<sup>5</sup> Such careful observation, coupled with an actively receptive consciousness,<sup>6</sup> grounded Steiner's thinking as well.

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<sup>5</sup>This method has become widely known as the phenomenological method, especially in the form espoused by Husserl, student of Brentano, with whom Steiner also studied. Arising from a European tradition vastly different from British and North American Empiricism, phenomenology has only recently begun to be practiced and respected in the English-speaking world. Max van Manen, education professor at the University of Alberta, is a prominent educator in Canada who subscribes to this method.

<sup>6</sup>Disciplining oneself to achieve such a combination is an immensely challenging spiritual task, if Steiner and other great scientists, philosophers, spiritual leaders, and artists throughout history are to be believed. Steiner argues that such deep, receptive awareness was formerly cultivated only in the esoteric mystery schools (where pupils were carefully selected for initiation training by previous initiates), because of the dangerous potential it has to be abused by unscrupulous individuals: It is in relation to such mysteries that Foucault's aphorism *Knowledge is power* gains especial significance, compared with Bacon's use of the same phrase. Steiner broke with tradition in claiming that times have changed sufficiently to allow such formerly esoteric knowledge to now become exoterically available to anyone seeking spiritual growth. To this end he founded the Anthroposophical



The important thing here is that Steiner was strongly impressed by the fact of intentional activity on Goethe's part, especially as he (Steiner) continued to wrestle with the growing challenge of making Goethe's scientific work available to the public.<sup>7</sup> Steiner was deeply interested in Goethe's *method*, which required such vivid inner picturing linked to a close and disciplined observation of nature.<sup>8</sup>

For Steiner (1923-25/1991), such inwardly produced images "represented -- when further developed -- a true reflection of the world-processes in the human spirit" (p. 156). It was clear to him that such ideas as Goethe imagined "were not abstract; they were pictures that lived in his soul like thoughts" (ibid.). Steiner recognized this vivid, pictorial thinking as extremely powerful, much more so than ordinary, abstract thought: Dubbing it "Goethean thinking", he foresaw the time it must replace the kind of thinking then dominating scientific thought(Steiner, 1923-25/1991a, p. 156).<sup>9</sup>

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Movement as an attempt to bring human wisdom into the open, as it were, especially through understanding the deep need for careful attentiveness combined with receptive awareness in order to penetrate into the hidden realities of things.

<sup>7</sup>As a result of his detailed work on Goethe for the new Kurschner edition of German National Literature, Steiner was invited to contribute to a second project relating to Goethe's work. This involved collaborating in the Weimar edition of all Goethe's works, including many private letters, diaries, notebooks, and other previously unpublished texts which had been entrusted to the Goethe-Archives in Weimar. Steiner moved to Weimar in 1890 and worked there on this task until 1897, as he explains in considerable detail in his autobiography.

<sup>8</sup>The other key characteristic of Goethe's method, that is, the discipline of "placing phenomena side by side so that they throw light on each other" (Steiner, 1920/1988, p. 38), which matches Wittgenstein's notion of analogical reasoning, was discussed already in the previous chapter.

<sup>9</sup>The power of inner imaging has been widely recognized in sports for several decades (McNeill, 1985, p. 32). It is also increasingly used to promote physical health, and efforts are being made to extend its practical applications into areas of education, empowerment of women, and world peace (ibid.). Still, it is not clear whether or not this power to effect change was precisely what Steiner meant in calling Goethean

Steiner was able to develop these ideas through his growing capacity to think about the thinking process itself, especially as he experienced and understood it. Although "thinking about thinking", or *metacognition*, is much more familiar to educators today due to growing research in self-regulatory mental processes (cf. Baird and White, 1982; Brown, 1980; Reid and Stone, 1991), this was not so a century ago when Steiner was first conceiving this idea. Through developing his ability to "read the world", Steiner gradually clarified the process for himself and began to teach it to others.

Steiner recognized four basic levels of increasing subtlety in comprehending the world: The first is simply cognition based on external sensation, complemented by intellectual reflection, a process with which we are generally very familiar; the second Steiner terms Imagination, or enhanced seeing, by which he means grasping the sense of something in terms of a visual image rather than discursive thought; the third is called Inspiration, or enhanced listening, and requires an inner stillness and openness to what would "speak" to us; and the fourth is Intuition, or enhanced touching, which allows us to feel inwardly moved by new understandings as we realize ourselves *as Selves* in connection with other Selves and with the world.<sup>10</sup>

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thinking *powerful*. It is quite possible that he meant to refer instead to something like what Kinchloe, Steinberg, and Tippins (1992) had in mind in these comments about Einstein:

Einstein's intuition-based oriented visual thinking granted him the ability to scrape away the extraneous and proceed directly to the heart of a problem. Visual thinking like Einstein's bestows the capacity to see visual designs as images of the very patterns which compose the forces that direct the world and our existence in it. Such patterns are certainly to be found in physics, but they also underlie the functioning of our brains, our bodies, our societies, and our inventions. Einstein's application of visual thought in physics may inspire our physicists, but it should also provide insight into ways of viewing problems confronted by social scientists, artists, and even teachers. (p. 169)

<sup>10</sup>It is extremely interesting to me that metacognitivists, presumably with little or no knowledge of Steiner's earlier work, also conceptualize three recognizable powers of cognition beyond that based on ordinary sensory awareness: 1)

Steiner (1914/1973) argues that our cognition, our knowing, arises from this increasingly subtle process of comprehending ourselves and our world; we proceed by *reading* the "occult script" which is everywhere manifest; such reading is related to *gnosis*, and leads to a *diagnosis* of our time and place in the world (p. 51). This is a creative process, in which a person is responsible for active and intelligent involvement.

The import of such diagnosis can only be seen in terms of what develops from it. In Steiner's case, there has been impressive development of the fruits of anthroposophy, with the dramatic rise in interest in Waldorf education as just one example.<sup>11</sup>

Steiner's diagnosis of the world revealed his understanding of certain non-physical laws which he discovered embedded in Goethe's scientific writings.<sup>12</sup> To wit:

In considering the phenomena manifested in organic nature, Goethe observed three "motivating principles" active in them, pointing out that without these principles, no organic evolution can occur. Rudolf Steiner referred to these as "the three Goethean laws": Metamorphosis, Polarity and Enhancement. (Allen and Allen, 1995, p. 16)

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the power of imaging (connected with inner seeing); 2) the power of inner speech (connected with inner hearing); and 3) the power of executive control (connected with a strong awareness of Self). It would be interesting to compare these in more detail with Steiner's levels of higher cognition.

<sup>11</sup>Anthroposophy has shown itself to be very generative, spawning new movements in health, agriculture, art, education, curative education, community living, religion, scientific research, and economics. Information is available from the General Anthroposophical Society or the Anthroposophical Society in Canada (see appendix for addresses).

<sup>12</sup>How Steiner was introduced during his student days to Goethe's many scientific and artistic achievements is spelled out in considerable detail in his autobiography. In brief, Steiner's sympathy for Goethe's ideas was encouraged by his teacher and good friend, Karl Julius Schroer, former director of Protestant schools in Vienna and then professor of German literature at the Technological Institute where Steiner was training to be a teacher of mathematics, natural history and chemistry. Schroer specifically encouraged Steiner to consider Goethe's ideas as an alternative to Herbart's philosophy which was so widely promoted in educational circles in Europe (and indeed North America) at that time.

These laws or principles inform the anthroposophical worldview which Steiner elaborated.<sup>13</sup> Since Waldorf education grew out of this worldview, a fruitful way to approach Waldorf education, and the role which art plays within it, is in terms of these three principles.

#### The Principle of Metamorphosis...

The principle of Metamorphosis involves the "constant change of form" which is clearly "one of the main characteristics of organic nature" (Allen & Allen, 1995, p. 16). It names a constant *unfolding*, or on-going development, often cyclical in nature, as is evident, for example, in the transitions of plants "from seed to leaf, blossom, fruit, and finally returning to seed once again" (ibid., p. 17). Lehrs (1958) explains that the world of plant forms was well suited for Goethe to come to understand metamorphosis, because here more than elsewhere the varying forms actually appear in unmistakable guise:

As a living organism, the plant is involved in an endless process of becoming. It shares this characteristic, of course, with the higher creatures of nature, and yet between it and them there is an essential difference. Whereas in animal and man a considerable part of the life-processes conceal themselves within the organism, in order to provide a basis for inner soul processes, the plant brings its inner life into direct and total outer manifestation. Hence the plant, better than anything, could become Goethe's first teacher. (pp. 85-86)

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<sup>13</sup>Justification, discussion, and philosophical explication of the evidence for these laws forms much of Steiner's contribution to the world through his many books and lectures, not to mention much of the work of anthroposophists who have followed after him. It would be interesting and important, but well beyond the scope of my present task, to consolidate (some of) this work into a coherent and scholarly overview of the anthroposophical awareness of these laws in direct comparison with other philosophical or theological traditions such as, for example, the Apollonian, Socratic, Platonic, Aristotelian, Neo-platonic, Christian, Muslim, Romantic, Scholastic, Realist, Idealist, Modern, and Post-modern traditions. Jackson and Astley (1995), of the Centre for Critical Studies in Education at Roehampton Institute, Surrey University, point in a similar direction, though more prejudicially, when they suggest it is "high time" that "many of the shortcomings of carefully preserved Waldorf theory" are "overcome" through a re-examination of its principles (p. 29).

A short anecdote reveals how Steiner himself managed to convey the idea of metamorphosis to others who found it hard to understand. Following a tour of the Goetheanum<sup>14</sup> by a group of English visitors, Steiner joined them as they were talking:

It was clear that one of them could not properly get to grips with the explanation of the idea of metamorphosis. At that point Rudolf Steiner, who had stuffed a felt hat in his jacket pocket when he had come into the room shortly before, stepped in and pulled the old hat out of his pocket. He crumpled it up and pushed it about, giving a lively demonstration of how its form could be transformed. He even turned it round, so that you could see from the inside what had happened on the outside, until the Englishman, who had really wanted to understand, was satisfied and assured him that now he knew a great deal about what metamorphosis was. Only then did Rudolf Steiner use the capitals and architraves to point out some examples of the developing metamorphoses of form. (Muller, 1978, p. 360)

In such illustration, Steiner followed Goethe's own practice. In other words, Goethe too had endeavored to communicate ideas through vivid, pictorial demonstration, rather than abstract, theoretical definition (Steiner, 1923-25/1991, pp. 155-6).

One problem for Steiner was that, while Goethe clearly *exemplified* such vivid, imaginative thinking, he nowhere described or explained its significance in conceptual terms. Once Steiner came to an understanding of its significance, however, he felt obliged to share this understanding with others, in spite of the fact that he "often felt...untrue to Goethe's thinking" in doing so (ibid., p. 157). In pondering and

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<sup>14</sup>This is the name given to the unusual and impressive building which Steiner designed to serve as a center for Anthroposophical work. Located in Dornach, Switzerland, on land that was gifted to the Anthroposophical Society, the first Goetheanum - built of wood - was destroyed by arsonists. A concrete version was subsequently designed by Steiner, but it remained uncompleted until after his death. Therefore it is reasonable to assume this anecdote refers to the original wooden building, which by all reports was outstandingly beautiful and was explicitly designed to incorporate, express, and invite an experience of metamorphosis.

struggling with how best to understand Goethe's thinking, and how best to convey that understanding, Steiner (1923-25/1991) felt deeply his own spiritual experience of cognition:

through the Goethe task I experienced the difference between a soul-condition in which the spiritual world reveals itself as if by grace, and one where, step, by step, the soul develops kinship with the spirit so that, when it experiences itself as spirit, it knows itself within the spiritual reality of the world. (p. 157)

Steiner gradually came to recognize these shifts in thinking and awareness as actual examples of metamorphoses, just as were the shifting plant forms which Goethe described. From his many personal challenges involved in tutoring individual students,<sup>15</sup> and from numerous philosophical discussions about education and educational reform, Steiner became ever more interested in deepening his own awareness of such shifts, and in determining possible pedagogical and curricular strategies for supporting them, so as to realize as fully as possible the human potential for mental and spiritual growth.

Burnett (1995) summarizes Steiner's approach to developmental phases and locates it within a context of other theoretical approaches. In brief, Steiner follows the Greek

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<sup>15</sup>From the age of fourteen Steiner (1923-25/1991) tutored a number of pupils in order to earn his living: At various times he was called upon to tutor all the subjects in the Gymnasium curriculum, including Latin and Greek, which he mastered himself (p. 455). One particular challenge, from which he "came to realize that education and teaching must become an art, based upon true knowledge of man", involved a ten year old boy with a hydrocephalic condition, whom no one thought was educable, but whose three brothers all required tutoring (op.cit., p. 97). Steiner sensed that he could help the boy, and asked that he be given charge of an education program for him. Steiner's work with this boy was so successful that within two years he had caught up to his age-mates, and he was able to complete not only Gymnasium, but medical school as well, after which he became a practicing physician! In reflecting on the experience many years later, Steiner (1923-25/1991) wrote, "I am grateful that destiny brought me such a vital task. I gained insight into man's nature, in a living, practical way that would hardly have been possible otherwise" (p. 98).

idea of ten seven-year phases, but overlays it with the principle of *triunity*, or three-foldness (Burnett, 1995, p. 32). Burnett (1995) summarizes it like this:

...a life span...is subdivided into *three twenty-one year cycles*.... Steiner's first twenty-one year cycle sees the young human being developing *physically and mentally*; the second series of three seven-year cycles concerns the development and refinement of the *psychological organisation*; the third period, leading to the sixty-third year, has a more reflective and meditative character and calls primarily on the *spiritual development* of the individual. Between sixty-three and seventy, argues Steiner, the human being has a further seven years in which to consolidate and reflect on a lifetime's development. Progression beyond the allotted 'three-score years and ten' is as a fully mature individual who can share the fruits of life experience – provided one has been able to fully work through all the developmental phases offered through biological and psychological maturation. (p. 32, italics original)

Each developmental phase contains in turn a *progressive threefoldness*. That is, within each twenty-one year cycle there are three seven year phases. For example, the first twenty-one years of life reveal what Burnett (1995), following Lievegoed (1979), calls an *Infant Phase*, "...in which *primary physical development* takes place..."; a *Childhood Phase*, "...where learning takes place primarily in a *feeling mode*..."; and a *Phase of Adolescence and Youth*, "...where adult thinking is gradually refined, enabling *individual spirituality* to develop..." (p. 32). As Burnett rightly points out, "This idea is a key to understanding the Waldorf approach to moral education" (ibid.).

And again, within each seven year phase is perceptible a three-fold developmental process. Thus in a very young child, during the earliest years of life, there is dominant a *fundamental motor development* involving learning to orient in space, to crawl, stand, and walk. In the next sub-phase the dominant focus shifts to *primary speech development* as the child engages in 'imitative babble' and learns to copy the sounds and rhythms of speech, delighting especially in nonsense verses, nursery rhymes, ritualistic sayings, and simple repetitive stories. In the third and final sub-phase there is "elementary cognitive development related to speech [in the sense that] only when the child has internalised speech rhythms and sounds through imitation does it become gradually conscious that language carries meaning via syntax and subconscious grammar" Burnett, 1995, p. 33).

During the entire phase learning is predominantly instinctively imitative, but within the phase can be discerned a progression "from *primary metabolic functions* in babyhood to the *beginnings of independent thinking*" (ibid., italics original).

The pattern is the same in later phases. Always there is a movement "from body-based processes, through 'soul' experiences towards independent thinking" (Burnett, 1995, p. 33). Thus the middle childhood period is overall a time when the imagination and feeling life comes strongly to the fore, while there is also a more subtle development from very physically active play earlier, through an intensification of artistic interest, to the budding intellectuality of the pre-puberty child. The cycle repeats in adolescence, when the growing child moves from the obvious physical changes of puberty, to a strong need for emotional balance and maturation, to the 'gradual acquisition of adult intellectuality' (Burnett, 1995, p. 33).

#### ...and its Embodiment in Waldorf Educational Practice

The principle of Metamorphosis informs Waldorf educational practice in several ways. First, it calls forth a developmental perspective requiring a specifically artistic approach during the years of elementary schooling, in response to the child's needs at that time. Second, it allows a conceptual framework for linking particular ideas and experiences in a meaningful sequence, which can be *experienced* tangibly through artistic creation. And third, it allows an enlightened view of education in which the consequences of what is done today are understood to appear later in altogether different guise, as when a butterfly emerges from the cocoon spun by the caterpillar.

The developmental underpinning of Waldorf education is easily glimpsed in the principle that children be offered 'the right thing at the right time'. During the school years, two clearly visible physical changes are understood as markers of major shifts in development: At about age six to seven, the first teeth are replaced by the permanent teeth; and at about age twelve to fourteen, children reach puberty. These shifts are conceived anthroposophically as major metamorphic events, having to do with the successive emergence of the child from a series of enclosing 'sheaths'.

Only the first sheath, the physical womb of the mother, is clearly tangible. The child emerges from it during the process of physical birth. Two further "sheaths"



remain, according to anthroposophical understanding, and are shed successively at the times marked by the physical changes noted above. The child emerges from the etheric sheath at the time of the change of teeth, and from the astral sheath at the time of puberty.<sup>16</sup> These developments happen at approximately seven year intervals. Each one necessitates a change in pedagogical intent.

The physical body, emerging from the physical womb, is especially vulnerable to outside influence during the first seven years, while the formative (etheric), sentient (astral), and moral "bodies" of the child are only indirectly accessible to the parent or teacher during this time. During the next phase of growth, the physical body continues to be responsive, while now also formative *patterns* operating within the child's developmental history can be directly influenced through an understanding, wise adult, although much of the child's emotional and moral/intellectual awareness will continue to operate only subconsciously (cf. Steiner, 1924/1964, p. 68). Following puberty, the physical body and formative processes of growth continue to be vulnerable to pedagogical influence, though less profoundly, while the adolescent's sensitivity in terms of emotion, desire, passion, and impulse becomes ever more conscious and open to reflection and guidance. Finally, at about age twenty-one, the adult emerges as a fully integrated moral being, assuming that pedagogical influences have supported rather than undermined the natural metamorphic process.<sup>17</sup> Awareness of these developmental stages basically determines the Waldorf curriculum (Burnett, 1995, p. 35).

The optimum pedagogical approach to be used varies according to which developmental stage a child is in. In the first phase (largely preschool), great care is given to establishing an optimum physical environment for the growing child, with

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<sup>16</sup>Steiner (1909/1981) recognizes that the terms seem odd to many; he advises that readers "need not take offence" and should simply try to accept the terms as convenient designations for what is described (p. 9).

<sup>17</sup>For the interested reader, Steiner (1909/1981) gives a fuller account of the anthroposophical view of child development in his essay, *The education of the child in the light of anthroposophy*.

pedagogical goals realized through directly modeling appropriate behaviors, while indirectly fostering awareness through stories, songs, recitations, rituals, routines, and many opportunities for physical experiences (with little or no verbal explanations) of various new objects, textures, shapes, colours, sounds, tools, foods, and so on. In the second phase, attention to the environment and to appropriate modeling continues, but increasing emphasis is placed on all manner of imaginative, artistic experiences, in which the child participates deliberately and regularly in the *process of forming* many diverse visual, aural, and tactile creations which complement the content of the lessons to be learned. In the third phase, the child's growing independence is recognized as lessons are contrived to encourage critical thinking and to heighten awareness and valuation of Self: Physical and artistic awarenesses are still part of this process, but they are increasingly reviewed by a critical consciousness.

In keeping with this perspective, Steiner (1924/1964) argues that "between the change of teeth and puberty you must educate out of the very essence of imagination" (p. 36). This demands an artistic approach involving *creating beauty*, whereas teaching in early childhood stresses *doing good* through imitation, and during adolescence it requires a focus on *examining truth* through critical awareness. Described another way, early education focuses on the *will*, elementary education focuses on *feeling*, and secondary schooling focuses on *thinking*, in order that all may come ripe in the fullness of time.

Burnett (1995) draws attention to another aspect of the rhythm of development, as seen from an anthroposophical perspective, when he points out the key turning point in this first twenty-one year cycle:

...viewed as a threefold unity, the first twenty-one years of human life include a midpoint where self-consciousness becomes intensified together with a marked increase in the capacity for independent judgement and its articulation in written or verbal form. This is normally between the tenth and twelfth year and coincides with the transition between Primary and Secondary schooling in most schools. Any teaching delivered before this time must, if it is to speak meaningfully to the child, be of an inspirational, imaginative or imitation-model character. Teaching after this period must needs call on an individual response involving the emerging critical-intellect. Before the tenth to eleventh year, the child's nature is naturally and instinctively subjective. Excessive introduction of critical-

intellectual thinking before this age is largely ineffective and alien to the child's nature as well as a violation of his inner life. Education of the child after this stage calls increasingly on developing objectivity and clarity of thought. Educators of Middle School children and adolescents readily testify to this being a slow and gradual process. (pp. 35-36)

Steiner (1919/1995) himself, in a lecture to public school teachers, times this shift a little differently: he describes an initial shift at about nine years when the personal sense of Self (i.e., the "I" or *Ego*) deepens into what he calls a *spiritual* awareness, where before it was more *soulful* (p. 146). The consequences of that deepening are

that prior to this you should, for example, speak to children about scientific things, about things that occur in nature, by clothing them in tales, in fables, in parables.... all natural objects are to be treated as having, in a sense, human characteristics. In short,...you do not separate people from their natural surroundings. At that moment around the age of nine when the I awakens, human beings separate themselves from the natural environment and become mature enough to objectively compare the relationships of natural occurrences. Thus, we should not begin to objectively describe nature before this moment in the child's life. (ibid.)

Then at about eleven or twelve, a further shift occurs as the Self individuates even more and "the child's developing capacity to judge begins to shine" (Steiner, 1919/1995, p. 147). The significance of this for Steiner (1919/1995) is clear:

There can be no real pedagogical art without the observation of these basic underlying rhythms of human life.<sup>18</sup> This art of education requires that

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<sup>18</sup>While certain rhythms are considered by Steiner to be basic in human development, there are also more subtle rhythms to be considered. For example, Brien Masters (1994) attempts to elucidate Steiner's understanding of "the much discussed and yet continually puzzling 'moods' of the 9th, 7th, 5th, 3rd, and 8ve [musical intervals] in relation to human evolution, together with the corresponding quality of consciousness at each stage" (p. 21). As he explains, The last three of these "moods" -- 5th, 3rd, and 8ve -- he [Steiner] also connects with child development in a way that complements but is not synonymous with his descriptions, primarily in The Study of Man, but throughout his educational work, of the three stages of child consciousness that manifest between the ages of 0-7, 7-14 and 14-21. Though, in the 1923 lectures, he was speaking to musicians, and though indeed there are actual

we fit it exactly to what develops in a human being. We should derive what we call the curriculum and educational goals from that. (p. 147)

A summary of phases of the first twenty-one year cycle, and their relationship to curriculum and pedagogy in the Waldorf school, is presented in table form by Burnett (1995) and is included here as an aid to the reader. It clarifies how art has a central place in Waldorf education in terms of a child's developmental progress through time.

Table: The three 7-year phases in Waldorf education  
(Burnett, 1995, p. 37)

Infant Phase	Birth to Seven years	Walking Speaking Thinking	Development and refinement of basic body processes and organs	Learning thru instinctive imitation. Conscious provision of a 'good' model by the teacher	BODY
Childhood Phase	Seven to Fourteen years	Learning thru Activity Learning thru Art Imaginative thinking	Development of basic skills through repetition and rhythm	'Learning how to learn' through a class teacher's example and guidance and image	SOUL
Phase of Adolescence and Youth	Fourteen to Twenty-one years	Learning to be logical and consequential Learning thru Idealism and Realism Learning abstract thinking	Development of practical skills, ethics and the independent intellectual life	'Learning for life' through the expertise of specialists and practical experience	SPIRIT

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references to music, his use of the word "mood" and his linking of it with specific musical intervals reaches beyond the usual meaning of the word, and also extends further than the developmental stages of child consciousness, and therefore finds its reflection in the corresponding manner in which the subject matter and methodology in lessons of all kinds needs to be imbued and enshrouded. (ibid.)

As an example of the kind of artistic, imaginative teaching especially suitable for elementary students, Steiner (1924/1964) describes the introduction of writing like this:

We should avoid a direct approach to the conventional letters of the alphabet which are used in the writing and printing of civilised man. Rather should we lead the children, in a vivid and imaginative way, through the various stages which man himself has passed through in the history of civilisation.

In former times there was picture writing; that is to say, people painted something on the page which reminded them of the object. We do not need to study the history of civilisation, but we can show the child the meaning and spirit of what man wanted to express in picture writing. Then he will feel at home in his lessons.

For example: Let us take the work "Mund" – English "mouth". Get the child to draw a mouth, or rather paint it. Let him put on dabs of red colour and then tell him to pronounce the word; you can say to him: don't pronounce the whole word but begin only with M; and now we can form the M out of the upper lip. If you follow this process you can get your M out of the mouth which we first painted.

This is how writing really originated, only today it is difficult to recognise from the words themselves that the letters were once pictures, because the words have all been subject to change... (pp. 36-37)

The point is not that all Waldorf teachers should introduce writing in exactly this way. The point is that teachers be *imaginative* in their presentation, striving to involve the whole child in an active, feeling awareness. As Steiner (1924/1964) explains:

...you see a teacher...teaching writing. The teacher lets the children make all kinds of forms, let us say with string. They then go on to painting the forms and gradually letters arise. A second teacher likes to do it differently .... you find that this teacher is letting the children 'dance' the forms round the room, in order that they may experience the forms of the letters in their own bodies. Then she carries over these forms also into the letters themselves. You would never find uniformity of teaching.... The same things are taught but in completely different ways, for a free creative fancy holds sway in the class. There are no prescribed rules for teaching ...but only one unifying spirit that pervades the whole. (p. 42)

Another example can be found in introducing early elementary children to environmental studies of all sorts, when Waldorf educators again rely on an imaginative, feeling awareness to guide their presentation. As Steiner points out, the child

is not yet able to distinguish between the lifeless and the living. For as yet the child has no reason to think that the stone has no soul, whereas the

dog has a soul. The first difference he notices is that the dog moves. But he does not ascribe the movement to the fact that he has a soul. One can indeed treat all things that feel and live as if they were people, thinking, feeling and speaking to one another, as if they were persons with sympathy and antipathy for each other. Therefore everything that one brings to a child at this age must be given in the form of fairy tales, legends and stories in which everything is endowed with feeling.... For this task the teacher...must be of an artistic disposition. For what works from teacher to child is not only what one thinks out or what one can convey in ideas, but, if I may express myself so, it is the imponderable quality in life. A very great deal passes over from teacher to child unconsciously. The teacher must be aware of this.... Through Anthroposophy we ourselves learn once more to believe in the legends, fairy tales and myths, for they express a higher truth in imaginative pictures.... Then when we speak to the child, our very words, permeated as they will be by our own belief in the tales, will flow over to him and carry truth with them.... the child, especially in the age between the change of teeth and puberty, has a most sensitive feeling for whether the teacher is governed by his fantasy or his intellect. The intellect has a destructive and crippling effect on the child, but fantasy gives it life and impulse. (ibid., pp. 44-47)

Steiner's use of the word *fantasy* is important. He recognizes the common view that it is "a thing usually taken as synonymous with the unreal, the non-existent, with which men fool themselves" (Steiner, 1923/1986, p. 107). Yet he argues differently: Fantasy is, for Steiner, a power which first works *plastically* in the small child as "an inner formative force of growth" and *musically* as a "power to...harmonize" in a very physical sense. This force gradually withdraws from such intense expression in the physical being of the child; in fact, from an anthroposophical view of human development, the change of teeth signals the last moment in a highly significant *slowing down* of the tremendously impressive physical growth of the very young child.

Although the school-age child continues to grow physically, of course, the *full* amount of "plastic-musical power of growth and formation" which was evident in the amazing physical development of the young child is no longer needed to sustain the physical growth of the older child. As Steiner (1923/1986) explains,

Something remains over. The soul is able to withdraw a certain energy for other purposes, and this is the power of fantasy: the natural power of growth metamorphosed into a soul force. If you wish to understand

fantasy, study the living force in plant forms, and in the marvelous inner configurations of the organism as created by the ego; study everything creative in the wide universe, everything molding and fashioning and growing in the subconscious regions of the cosmos; then you will have a conception of what remains over when man has advanced to a point in the elaborating of his own organism when he no longer needs the full quota of his power of growth and formative force. Part of it now rises up into the soul to become the power of fantasy. The final left-over (I cannot call it sediment, because sediment lies below while this rises upward) – the ultimate leftover is power of intellect. Intellect is the finely sifted-out power of fantasy, the last upward-rising remainder. (p. 108)

It is because the Waldorf educator recognizes this development in the child, and especially this shift of some of the powerful growth forces at work in the body to the activity of the soul, that such curricular and pedagogical emphasis is placed on art and imagination in the Waldorf elementary school.

Further evidence of this exists in the fact that Steiner (1924/1964) decried the use of textbooks (as they were in his day) precisely because they presented information in a way suitable for adults, but not at all for the imaginative, feeling life of children (p. 50). Thus Waldorf students make their own *main lesson books*, illustrating the concepts they study and so bringing their feeling and bodily awarenesses into relation with their intellectual ideas. In this way more of the whole child is brought into movement, a healthy practice conducive to personal integration (Steiner, 1924/1964, pp. 40-41).

Art is of pedagogical value precisely because it allows simultaneous involvement of physical, emotional, and intellectual abilities. Whether in math, language study, science, history, geography, or any other subject in the elementary school, it is always the physical and feeling life which must be nourished along with the intellectual, if the child is to become well-balanced and "whole". While learning must be strongly physical in the early years and strongly intellectual in the secondary years, it must be strongly imaginative in between so that it becomes fully integrated, and each phase is allowed to fulfill its developmental promise. Artistic activity keeps awareness broad and varied: Feeling is allowed to mediate between doing and thinking, bringing all into relationship. In this way schooling is made to match the developmental needs of the elementary child. As Williamson (1979) explains,

Our task in Waldorf education is to nurture the whole child -- hands, heart and head -- so that he can one day stand in the world as a free human being who acts entirely out of his own initiative. All the subjects of the curriculum combine to bring strength, warmth and clarity to his deeds and feelings, as well as to his thoughts. (p. 37)

It is not just a matter of introducing "hands-on" activities to balance a formal, academic approach. It is consciously cultivating the feeling life, striving to create something beautiful, harmonious, emotionally charged, and personally expressive. By inviting children to consider when their creations feel "finished" (complete, balanced, whole/holy/wholesome), the teacher affirms their feeling life, while simultaneously preparing the ground for more abstract, critical thinking to come (as in later deciding if *ideas* are "balanced" and carry "equal weight", *arguments* are complete or "full of holes", *conclusions* are related to premises in a wholesome or disjointed fashion, and so on). In this way the teacher touches on something deeply connected to the formative processes of life itself, as Richards (1963) notes through comparing the "problem of the embryo" with "composing a poem": "How do they know what to become next in the course of becoming what in the end they have to be? That is the problem of the embryo" (p. 164).

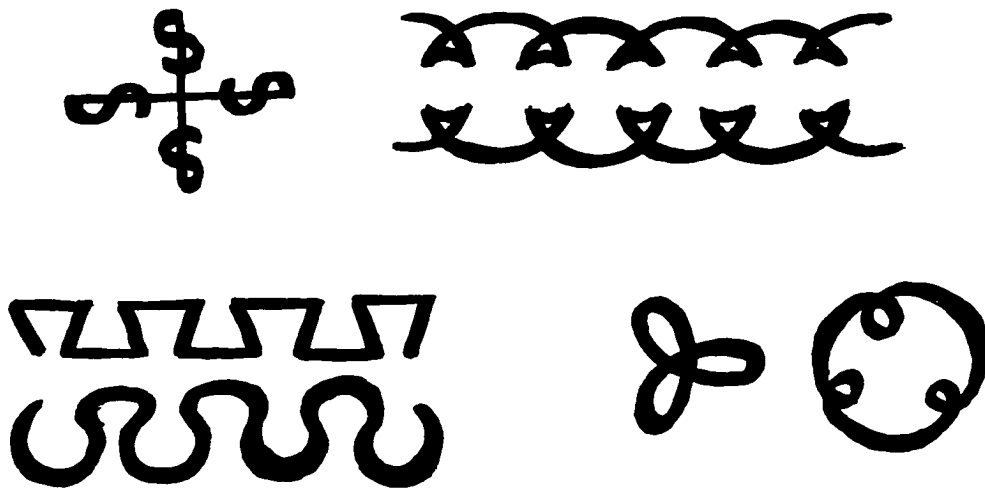
The feeling life is important in the elementary school for the teacher as well. As Steiner (1924/1964) advises prospective teachers, "Your ability to deal with all that happens in the classroom, the good as well as the bad, will depend on your own mood of soul.... it is mainly a question of whether the teacher has sufficient confidence in himself or not" (pp. 74-5). Thus it is through a feeling relation with the children that a teacher is able to exercise the necessary authority and discipline within the class.

Furthermore, it is through a *pictorial method* of teaching that a teacher can implant ideas to which the children can return again and again with renewed understanding (Steiner, 1924/1964, pp. 71-79). Thus as their awareness grows, they experience a deepening sense of what they *already* know, rather than a need to unlearn or to transcend outdated lessons which do not apply to changing conditions. For example, fear, relief, anxiety, and reverence are just some of the feelings woven into a sample story Steiner tells prospective teachers about a little blue violet, frightened of the big blue sky which seems at first as if it might crush her, but whose intense blue at last



becomes a comfort. Such feelings will likely arise many times in a child's growing-up years, and such a story gives the child a pictorial understanding to which he or she can return as often as necessary in order to make sense of the same feelings linked to these many diverse situations.

Finally, particular artforms are taught specifically in such a way as to create opportunities to experience metamorphosis of shape, colour, pattern, and so on. For example, form drawing exercises require transformations of left and right, up and down, inner and outer, as these few brief examples, taken from Gebert's (1987) article on *Form Drawing*, show.



As she explains,

Form drawing is versatile and allows full scope to imaginative teachers, yet the choice of designs is never arbitrary, or merely decorative. The concept of movement as the basis for form precludes mere ornamentation, although it may with advantage give rise to imagery in presenting forms to young children.... Rudolf Steiner recommended that Class 1 be introduced to the basic forms of straight and curved lines on the very first day of school. Variations on that theme can occupy many lessons. In general, angular forms are related to thinking, they have an awakening tendency, and increase alertness and concentration. Curved forms, on the other hand, call on the unconscious forces of the will, they have a relaxing effect. The class may be quieter than usual while drawing curves. Designs combining straight and curved lines are more balance, tending to neither extreme, and are related to the ebb and flow of feeling. (Gebert, 1987, pp. 10-11)

Eurythmy<sup>19</sup> exercises allow movement through space to flow from side to side, from straight paths to curved, from forward to backward, from encircling to

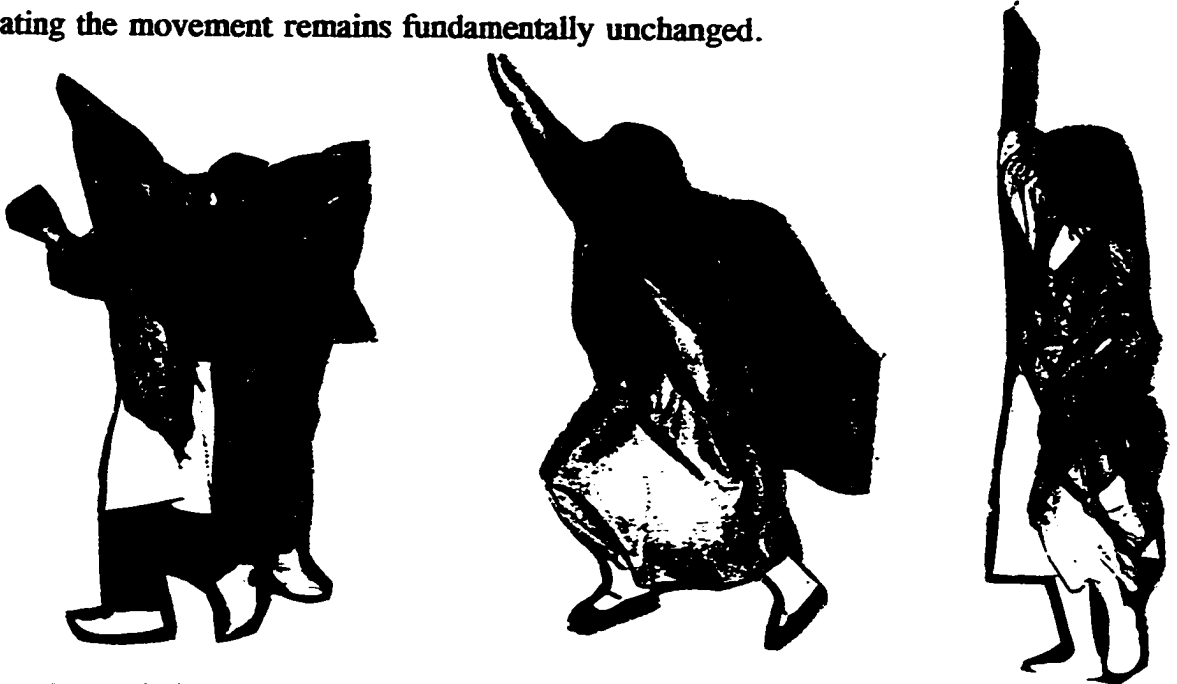
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<sup>19</sup>It is unfortunate that Steiner's Eurythmy was being developed on the continent at the same time as Jacques Dalcroze was popularizing his system of Eurythmics. Though the names are similar, the two are completely independent of each other and were developed with different purposes in mind. In *A lecture on eurythmy* Steiner (1923/1967) explains that eurythmy is "a new art of movement in space, different from anything which had arisen up to that time" (p. 7). Developed out of principles given initially in response to the particular needs of one young girl in 1912, eurythmy is the art of making visible the patterns and relationships of speech and music. It arose out of Steiner's profound consciousness of the expressive import of human gesture and bearing, awakened some years earlier while attending the lectures of Franz Brentano at the University of Vienna during Steiner's student days. In *The Oxford companion to the mind* Brentano is cited as "one of the most original figures in the history of philosophy and psychology ....impressive, courageous, even reckless" (Gregory, 1987, p. 117). A Catholic priest who studied but then "did away" with Aristotelian philosophy, Brentano set about "reforming philosophy in a fundamental manner"; his teachings "were responsible for the emergence of both Gestalt psychology and Husserlian phenomenology" (ibid.). Steiner (1923/1967) referred to Brentano as a "dear friend" and was deeply influenced by him in many ways, not least of all by his uncanny ability to reveal his philosophical ideas directly and profoundly through his gesture and bearing:

Brentano's philosophy, in itself, was far more beautiful than his own description of it. All that he could say in words was revealed through the way in which he moved his arms and hands while speaking, through the way in which he held out the piece of paper containing the notes of his lecture. It was a very remarkable type of movement, and its most striking characteristic was, that by means of this piece of paper, and, indeed, by his whole attitude, he gave the impression of imparting something of great significance, while at the same time preserving an appearance of unconcern. So that in the course of one of his lectures one could see his entire philosophy expressed in these gestures, which were of the most manifold variety. (p. 14)

This awareness of gesture and bearing is intensified in the artform of eurythmy. As Watson (1979) explains, "...the worlds of music and poetry are introduced...as not only man's creation, but also that out of which man is created" (p. 28).

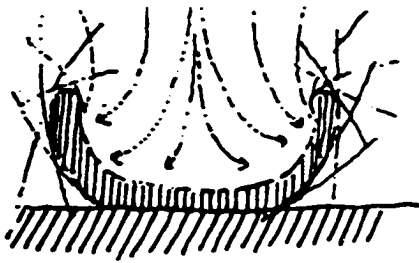
radiating, from spiraling in to spiraling out. Similarly, the pace and tempo can shift from fast to slow, or from a rhythm of "short-short-long—" to one of "long—short-short". In the flow is felt the power of metamorphosis, for what was at one moment clearly visible becomes at the next completely changed in form, while the individual or class creating the movement remains fundamentally unchanged.



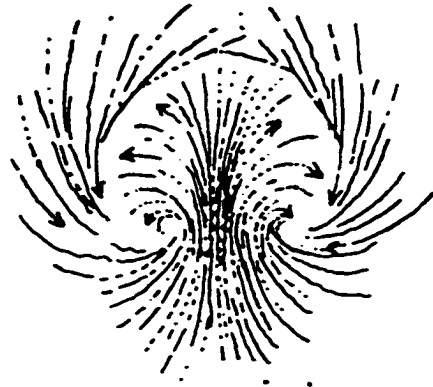
In music it is the same. Rounds are sung in order to experience how one musical shape can become so interwoven as to transform the same melody into its own harmony. Three, four, and five part fugues are played on recorder so as to experience the metamorphosis of high into low, as the bass picks up the same motif played by the soprano or alto. Unison passages metamorphose into full harmonies as patterns are elaborated, repeated, and transposed: One voice becomes many.

Grade One students learn to knit, transforming a single thread into a complex two-dimensional pattern in ways which challenge Euclidean ideas of dimension, much like the monster curves created by sophisticated mathematicians (cf. Briggs, 1992, p. 64). And older children learn cross-stitch, where the crossing pattern on one side of the cloth is changed into a pattern of parallel straight lines on the other, and coloured x's become recognized as patterns and pictures. Crochet and more sophisticated forms of embroidery offer similar experiences. It is not only the outer material that is metamorphosed in artistic activity, it is the inner life of the child as well:

There exists a close though as yet not widely recognized relationship between finger-movement, speech and thinking. Steiner, who discovered this relationship, pointed out its developmental and corrective implications to the Waldorf teachers. Their experience, as well as my own, has fully borne out Steiner's statement that nimble fingers make for clear-cut speech and lively thinking.... Much can be done in the primary grades with handwork.... Knitting, which makes special demands on the fingers, is therefore an indispensable first grade activity. It should be done with large needles and thick, brightly colored strands of wool or string. (Spock, 1985, pp. 34-35)



*Bowl*



*Concave and Convex  
in flowing movement*

Woodcarving and sculpting exercises allow for varied experience with "relief-metamorphosis", where bowls and spoons are shaped with both concave and convex surfaces, and figures emerge from or disappear into undifferentiated masses (cf. Hitsch, 1986, p. 26). Or figures and shapes come into view as light is selectively metamorphosed into dark, revealing shadows which metamorphose a blank paper into a meaningful expression.



Picture created by Rudolf Steiner (1924/1995, p. 133) during a lecture to teachers.

Such varied exercises serve the pedagogical purpose of giving children meaningful experience of processes which reflect their own life processes. The explicit focus is on creating beauty and grace, on living into the experience in a feeling way. But the impact of the experience goes much deeper. Subconsciously the children learn to clarify their emotional responses, to honour them, become familiar with and accept them. Artistic experiences of balance, symmetry, one-sided emphasis, and so on using physical materials help to prepare children for a future, more spiritual stage in their conscious and cognitive development when ideas and intellectual judgements must be weighed against each other, balanced, and brought into harmonious relationship. Thus what is experienced artistically at one level becomes metamorphosed into more intellectual awareness at another. In this way Waldorf educators recognize the Law of Metamorphosis as fundamental to all life processes, and they shape their work and their intentions accordingly.

#### The Principle of Polarity...

The principle of polarity is to be distinguished from simple opposition. Where a principle of opposition necessitates *two* terms, namely a thing or idea and its opposite, the principle of polarity necessitates *three*, that is, the two opposing things or ideas together with a third which mediates between the other two. Polarity implies *threefoldness*. It is this threefold principle<sup>20</sup> which is so deeply imbedded in Steiner's

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<sup>20</sup>Allen and Allen (1995) trace this three-fold idea in Steiner's thinking back to the image of the three kings in Goethe's fairy-tale, The fairy tale of the green snake and the beautiful lily, which was given to him as a twenty-first birthday present by his revered 'teacher and fatherly friend', Karl Julius Schroer (p. 35). As the deep significance of the tale became more and more clear to Steiner over the years, the notion of threefoldness became ever more important in his thinking. Some years later, Steiner

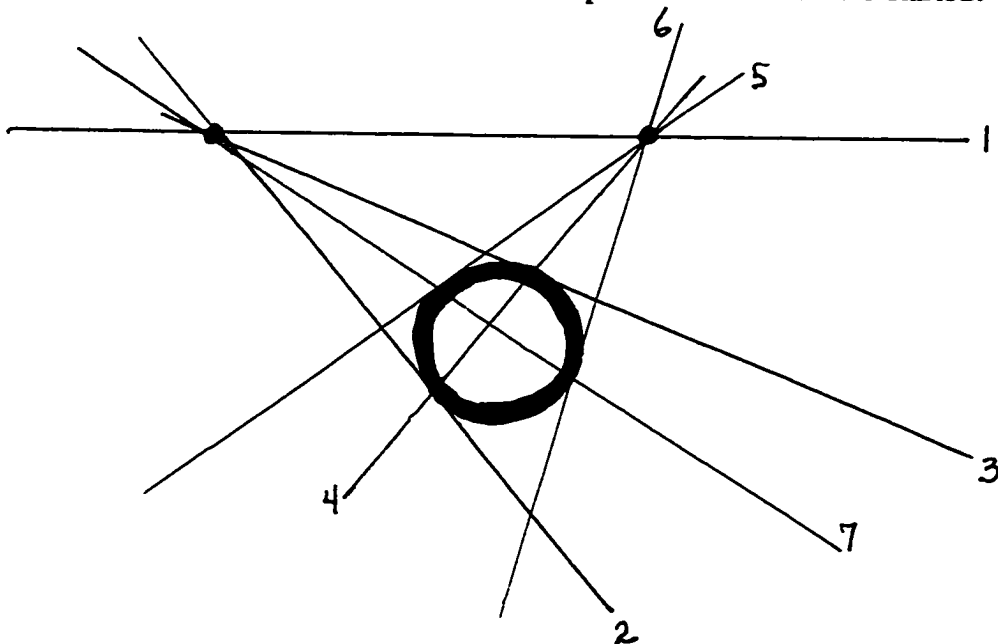
indicated that in his Fairy Tale Goethe represented what Schiller had already set forth in philosophical terms in his Letters on the aesthetic education of man, that is, the uniting of Necessity and Freedom. What Schiller expressed in the form of ideas in these letters, Goethe presented in the form of a Fairy Tale, using living pictures or images in the same way as initiation teaching of ancient times. (Allen and Allen, 1995, p. 35)

anthroposophical worldview and in Waldorf educational practice, which reflects and expresses that view. The concept of human growth as three-fold development (metamorphosis) at various levels, discussed in the last section, is but one example of this, as when Willing and Thinking are conceived as polar complements, mediated by Feeling; or the subconscious awareness of the infant is conceived as the polar complement to the conscious awareness of the adult, and both are mediated by the rhythmical, relational processes of growing up in a social environment.

Whicher (1989) traces the distinction between notions of *duality* and *true polarity* as it has developed in mathematical theory (p. 26), which may be a helpful place to grasp the basic import of the principle. The significant development concerns the need to understand *polar reciprocation* in order to arrive at "a much deeper understanding of *polarity* than the idea of opposites": Thus an understanding of polarity can be "a conceptual and at the same time a morphological one" (Whicher, 1989, p. 27).

Projective geometry exposes the principle of polar reciprocation in the construction of simple shapes, such as circles. Whicher (1989) explains it like this:

Take a circle (or an ellipse or any other conic) and draw a line in its plane; we will first choose to draw the line outside the curve. Choose any point on the line and draw the two lines this point sends forth, to touch the curve from the outside (tangents). The two points of contact of the tangents on the curve will give rise to a new line, which in turn will create a second point on the line with which we started. If now we draw the tangents to the curve from this second point, we shall always find, surprisingly, that the line common to the points of contact of the second pair of tangents will also contain the point with which we started!

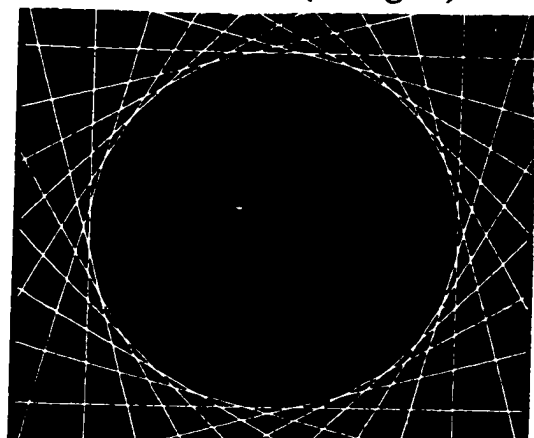
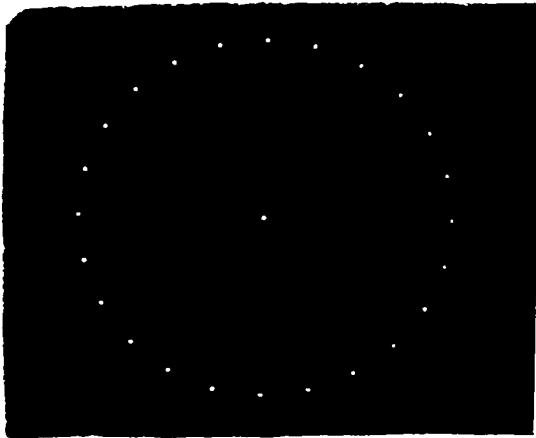


We began with a *line outside* the curve and now find that there is a corresponding *point within* it. The point is called the Pole of the Polar Line, with respect to this particular conic. If the polar is outside, the pole will lie within, if the polar is within, the pole will be found outside the curve (see figure).

For each point on the line outside the curve, there will be a polar line passing through the pole within. The movement of one point or line in the picture will result in the ordered movement of all the others, for they are, as it were, organically related, according to the harmonic law through which they have been brought into being....

Now bring the picture into movement..., by moving *either* the polar line or its pole in towards the centre of the curve or out to the periphery. It will then be found that moving the polar line out will result in the pole moving in towards the centre of the curve. It is the curve itself, which calls forth this reciprocating movement. This is the basis of what is called *Polar Reciprocation*....

We are here led to a more complete picture of what a circle is (or any other of the conics – circle-curves, as we prefer to call them). Euclid defined a circle as a curve formed by all the *points* which are equidistant from a fixed *point*. We now see that there is a polar form to Euclid's circle, namely, an envelope of lines which *also* form a circle (see figure).



(excerpted from Whicher, 1989, p. 27; Figures reproduced are numbers 30 and 33)

Whicher (1989) argues that most schools and universities teach only Euclidean concepts, with the result that many people remain unaware how one-sided their views are. The principle of polarity, and the notion of polar reciprocity, introduces a richer view with the possibility of understanding how things not immediately present can be understood to exist, through mediation and transformation in terms of lawful relationships. This realization itself can be a transformative experience, as she describes:

The steps taken by the mathematicians of the early nineteenth century were as epoch-making as the transition made by Desargues, Pascal and Descartes from the earth-geometry of the Greeks. They reflect the evolution of human thinking.... Moving from perspective transformation to polar reciprocation (from collineations to correlations) is a tremendous morphological experience. It could be compared with walking along the poplar avenue, which involves movement and change of scene, but no great change of forms, and then, in some way, to slip through that infinitely distant point and find oneself on the other side – like Alice, disappearing down the rabbit-hole....

Perhaps this is not so very far-fetched;... the change which comes about through a polar-reciprocal process is deep and radical, involving complicated qualities of turning inside-out, transposing perhaps from right to left and going through the infinite. Unexpected things happen and to carry out such exercises requires presence of mind and freedom from preconceived ideas. The plant and the insect both reveal this radical type of transformation, when, after continuing to produce only leaves or appearing again and again as a caterpillar, they reach a quiescent stage, like the flower-bud, and then, miraculously, an entirely different form appears. Polar reciprocation teaches us to expect such miracles and get to know the type of law prevailing here. (p. 29)

The principle of polarity is closely connected with the principle of metamorphosis. For example, Harwood (1958) explains how the child is understood anthroposophically to grow in different directions simultaneously, with the result that a child's cognition is as fundamentally different from that of an adult as is its physical appearance:

In general we have to recognise in small children a state of body and mind entirely different from the adult's. In the child a preponderance of growth forces and an impersonal participatory consciousness; in the adult the suppression of growth forces and a personal subjective consciousness which sees the world as object. (p. 18)

Physical growth proceeds, in a manner of speaking, from the head downwards: The head matures first, then other parts of the body. At the same time, consciousness grows from the outer reaches of the body up to the head; that is, awareness is first diffused throughout the entire body, and only later comes to clarity as self-consciousness (Harwood, 1958, pp. 13-18).

This is but one example of the principle of Polarity: the principle that things opposite can be intimately and lawfully related. Like Metamorphosis, it is a principle which Steiner intentionally incorporates into the practices of Waldorf education.



Schad (1995) draws attention to the "liberating effect of the threefold principle as an organ of knowledge" (p. 4). From a threefold perspective, "the life of knowledge is no longer reductionist, directed towards one single fundamental axiom out of which the entire world could be woven which all mechanically-minded monists have dreamt of as a final formulation" (ibid.). Instead, paradoxes are understood to express "polaric opposites in world processes". These are not to be *overcome* (following Hegel) or *dissolved* (following Wittgenstein), but simply *attended to as real*, "in order to grasp all the better the mediating principle which unites the necessary extremes and thereby enables them to exist side by side" (Schad, 1995, p. 4). The result is what Schad describes as "a differentiated belonging together" (ibid.).

Because the *middle process* in the threefold anthroposophical vision has the "special function and task" of mediating between the other two, it can become somewhat overvalued as being "a decisive factor", instead of assuming its rightful place within the whole (Schad, 1995, p. 4). Thus, the mistake can sometimes be made of "retreating into the middle" instead of "uniting the whole" (ibid.). To help to avoid this, in understanding the threefold principle at work in human life, Steiner advised following closely the example of the human physical form: The nerve and sense system forms a natural polarity with the limb and metabolic system; both are brought into a healthy and wholesome relationship through the breathing and blood-circulation system (Schad, 1995, p. 5).

In a similar way, in the soul life of human beings thinking and willing form a polarity which is mediated by feeling (ibid.). The point is that "the middle processes do not bring about a neutralising and making uniform, but a recognition of the differences as enabling an amplification from opposite sides to occur" (Schad, 1995, p. 7). Steiner makes the same point: "The world does not progress by always merely holding on to the middle; the middle is present in an appropriate way when the two separate sides are there." (Lecture 14 January 1913, cited in Schad, 1995, p.7).

The result is not a static balance, as might be imagined in the ancient Greek idea of virtue as a mean, but a unity brought into relationship through rhythm and circulation; *life* has a temporal dimension not obvious in bare physicality.

The balance can weigh only by coming to a standstill. A living middle does not abolish the opposites but activates them fully one after the other, thus giving them a temporal augmentation which does not have as its aim the static moment of total completion. (Schad, 1995, p. 7)

This awareness of rhythm and timing is what is expressed in Waldorf educational practice. If the middle is overvalued, it disrupts the whole.<sup>21</sup>

and its Embodiment in Waldorf Educational Practice

As Rawson (1996) notes, "The essence of teaching is timing -- doing the right things at the right time....our success in teaching depends to a great extent on being able to judge the quality of the moment" (p. 27).<sup>22</sup> This becomes obvious each time a

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<sup>21</sup>It is interesting to consider that in some world views Evil is deemed to exist in a singular sense, as contrasted with Good. Already by the time of Aristotle, however, there was a view of Evil as dual, with the Good as the mean between opposites, both of which were evil. In anthroposophy, this amounts to an overvaluation of the middle realm (as the Good): This overvaluation itself precipitates a third Evil. Thus what is needed for a moral world (from the point of view of anthroposophy) is the proper, unified relation among all things, any one of which can seem evil when out of time, out of tune, or out of circulation with the rest:

The moral life shows that we are human only when in freedom we carry through what the wisdom of the middle organs has given us as a model: not to live for ourselves alone.... In his middle region he is man only if here he is more than his ego.... Thereby the ego experiences not only its own being healed, but -- without losing itself -- it leaves its isolation and moves fully into the real organism of all. (Schad, 1995, p. 9)

<sup>22</sup>Max van Manen (1991), although unconnected as far as I know with Waldorf education, follows a phenomenological approach with the result that he too stresses the timing, or tact, so essential to good teaching. In this regard it is worth noting that modern phenomenology has arisen largely in response to Brentano's teachings (through his student Edmund Husserl), as mentioned earlier, and Brentano himself was largely motivated by "metaphysical concerns" connected with what has been described as a "basically obsessive anxiety about time and eternity" (after he rejected orthodox theology in favour of actual experience as a way of knowing in relation to questions of destiny) (Gregory, 1987, p. 117). French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes in the same

teacher considers when to introduce a new idea, how long to wait for an answer, whether an explanation (story, song, game, discussion) has gone on long enough, when a change of pace, atmosphere, or activity is due, and so on. For individual children, timing is important since their developmental stage affects decisions about what should come next.

The polarity at work here is the polarity of time: what has past, and what is yet to come. The present mediates. The polarity in terms of human life is one of being and becoming, and Rawson (1996) is quick to remind us, "A grasp of being and becoming is an essential pedagogical faculty and not merely a philosophical nicety" (p. 28).

Because time is "bound up in our experience with the idea of change and development" (Rawson, 1996, p. 29), it is connected with the principle of metamorphosis, discussed already. Yet, conceived in terms of rhythm, time becomes more clearly linked to polarity. Individual and class rhythms are immensely important for the Waldorf educator. For example, the cycle of sleeping and waking establishes an obvious polarity in daily life, with an intermediate state of dreaming. Rudolf Steiner wrote and lectured frequently about such experiences as analogues for a number of important educational matters:

In our ordinary life we speak of being awake, of the waking condition of consciousness. But we only have this waking condition of consciousness in the activity of our knowing-thinking. If therefore you want to say absolutely correctly how far a human being is awake you will be obliged to say: A human being is really only awake as long and in so far as he thinks of or knows something.

...what we experience while we sleep, from falling asleep until we wake, is not in our consciousness. Now it is just the same with all that passes through our will as an unconscious element.... There is always something asleep in us, namely: the inner being of will.<sup>23</sup>

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tradition, authoring analyses of the experienced body (1942) and perception (1945) which "have contributed to the transforming of the classical standpoints in psychology" (Gregory, 1987, p. 616).

<sup>23</sup>To avoid possible confusion on this point, I should point out that elsewhere Steiner makes clear he is referring to our awareness of what actually happens internally when we metabolize our energy intake and involve muscles, bones, tendons, and so on in movement. It is because we are

Feeling stands between thinking and willing.... You know the feelings in your soul just as you know your dreams, only that you remember your dreams and have a direct experience of your feelings. But the inner mood and condition of soul which you have with regard to your feelings is just the same as you have with regard to your dreams. Whilst you are awake you are not only a *waking* man in that you *think and know*, and a *sleeping* man in that you *will*: you are also a '*dreamer*' in that you *feel*. Thus we are really immersed in three conditions of consciousness during our waking life: the waking condition in its real sense in thinking and knowing, the dreaming condition in feeling, and the sleeping condition in willing. (Steiner, 1919/1990, *Study of Man*, pp. 87-88)

Steiner understood the subtle interrelationships of waking, dreaming, and sleeping to be enormously significant for learning and education, partly because they give clear evidence of how natural rhythmical processes underlie much of human experience, and partly because they serve as vivid reminders that much of what is important in life is nevertheless not directly accessible to human waking consciousness.

Understanding such differing states (or processes) of consciousness is absolutely fundamental in Waldorf education. In other words, though standard educational approaches take for granted their primary concern as being that which occurs to and within a child's consciousness, from the Waldorf perspective sleeping and dreaming are just as important as waking consciousness: Together they establish a rhythm necessary for the unfolding of rich, productive lives within a fully human social and moral context. Waldorf curriculum and pedagogy are explicitly designed to take this into account.

The well established practice of teaching the main lesson<sup>24</sup> in a three day rhythm illustrate this in a vivid way. New material is presented on the first day, with the teacher taking care to convey information descriptively, as well as artistically through appealing

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generally so *little* aware of our metabolic processes that he says we are *asleep* in this part of our life experience.

<sup>24</sup>The term "main lesson" refers to a period of one and a half to two hours each morning for three or four weeks, during which time the teacher presents the current academic subject while the children respond with questions, discussion, and artistic involvement. During this time the students create their own main lesson books, in which they record in words, pictures, charts, and diagrams what they learn.

to both the visual and aural senses. During this part of the lesson, the children's mode of cognition is basically receptive, though not passive: They hear and see (and perhaps feel and touch, depending on the specific content and supporting materials provided by the teacher) what the teacher presents to them.

After the children have been able to sleep at night, when they absorb the new material through different soul-spiritual forces than operate during waking consciousness, they return to school for the second day of the main lesson rhythm. On this second day, no new material is presented. Instead, the teacher asks questions to stimulate the memories of the children and draw from them a repetition of all that was presented as new the day before. This typically involves the retelling of something in sequence, for example, a story or legend, a description of some cultural event or geographical terrain, a summary of certain grammatical features, a procedure for solving a particular type of math problem. Different children are called upon to contribute to the retelling of the sequence, so that gradually a composite picture of the new information is remembered by the class as a whole. The teacher elicits further detail as needed by asking such questions as, "Who can add something to what Jane has said? Was that the very first thing that happened? What happened next? Where did this go? What is missing here?", and so on. No attempt is made to *interpret* the material: The focus is purely on remembering and recreating it out of the children's own inner resources. (Steiner suggests that such exercise helps the children to activate and strengthen soul-spiritual forces which later blossom into fully critical thinking, as well as prepare them for more demanding forms of cognition which he names Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition.)

Again the children go home, where they sleep and unconsciously continue their relationship to all they have seen and heard in school. On the third day when they return to school, they work individually to prepare their main lesson books, incorporating the new material that has been learned, taking care to present it artistically. In this way the natural rhythm of waking and sleeping is brought into relationship with pedagogical intentions. Steiner (1919/1990) explains that "It is this that a rightly guided education must accomplish: it must enable the human being to carry over his experiences on the physical plane into what the Soul-Spirit or Spirit-Soul is engaged upon during sleep" (p. 22).

Through such carry over we gradually learn to integrate the various parts of our psyche, so that a harmony is established within our conscious and unconscious awareness. For Steiner, it is only by virtue of such harmony that human beings are able to act freely and therefore morally in the world.

There is a clear parallel between the rhythms of sleeping and waking with other human rhythms as well, such as life and death, remembering and forgetting, feeling free and feeling constrained, being open and being closed, being expanded and contracted, experiencing levity and gravity, and so on. Understanding such natural rhythms; appreciating their significance for physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social and moral health; and coordinating educational efforts so as to maximally support rather than unduly disturb them, give rise to special curricular and pedagogical challenges.

In his practical advice to teachers, and in his suggestions for curriculum and pedagogy, Steiner sought always to work in harmony with such rhythms. His aim was to encourage teachers to seek a living harmony, through trusting their own disciplined awareness<sup>25</sup> rather than simply adhering to preset rules and regulations in cookbook fashion, with little or no spiritual involvement or initiative on their part. This feature of Steiner's work makes it particularly hard to simply broadcast his reports, lest they be taken as prescriptions to be followed mechanically.

The rhythm of expansion and contraction, of drawing inwards and opening outwards, is pervasive in all living things and happens at many levels. In the classroom the teacher works in harmony with it by intentionally directing the children's attention in an alternation between thoughtful, reflective work which serves to direct the child

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<sup>25</sup>Waldorf teachers regularly undertake both private and collegial study in order to continue deepening their awareness. For example, the faculty of a Waldorf school typically meets together one day each week after school to study and discuss problems and possibilities connected with their teaching, their inner life and growth, the inner life and growth of their students - especially any that seem to be having undue difficulties, the outer life and growth of the school in general, and so on. Often a text by Steiner will provide the basis for group study and meditation, as will artistic activities such as painting, movement, or singing.

inwardly, and active, physical work which serves to direct the child out into the world through muscular involvement. Too much of either can be exhausting and debilitating, for attention must continually be enlivened and awakened through experiencing contrast.

Also characterized as a rhythm of antipathy (turning inwards away from those around us) and sympathy (turning outwards so as to merge our individuality within something bigger than us), the necessary balance of forces can be seen in the alternation of individual inner work (such as is fostered through silent reading, independent drawing and painting and modeling, geometrical exercises, and so on, all of which call up our inner resources for thinking) with cooperative group work (such as is fostered through class plays, interactive games, choral and instrumental ensembles, and group projects of all sorts, which require a heightened awareness of Self in relation to others).<sup>26</sup>

There is a daily rhythm as well, in the way the curriculum is structured, so that there is generally more focus on developing thinking in the morning (roughly comparable to what non-Waldorf teachers might call a more academic focus), followed by more evenly balanced activities in the middle of the school day (roughly recognizable by non-Waldorf teachers as a more artistic focus), and more stress on physical activity at the end of the school day (roughly comparable in non-Waldorf education to a more athletic focus), which prepares directly for the outward movement away from school as the children leave to go back into the "outside" world.

Intersecting rhythms complexify this pattern. For example, there is an annual cycle, such that more time is spent inside during colder and darker months, and more time spent outside during warmer and brighter months. There is even a very short cycle between laughing (in which we let ourselves go momentarily) and being serious (in which we center ourselves within), which an astute teacher uses to advantage.

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<sup>26</sup>Application of this principle in this way is not at all unique to Waldorf Schools, especially in recent years when cooperative group work has become much more valued in mainstream education than was formerly the case. What is unusual about Waldorf schools, however, is the degree to which this rhythmic alternation of inner and outer focus is understood to operate as a principle of life.

Still other examples of rhythmic oscillation, perhaps less immediately obvious, are mentioned by experienced Waldorf teacher Torin Finser (1994). He recounts, for example, his own alternating focus between the demands of his students, which served to draw him ever more intently into the world of his class, and the demands of his many obligations outside of the school, which repeatedly conspired to draw his attention away from his classroom work (p. 64ff.). He also calls attention to his profound gratefulness when, after a particularly intense period of psychological, emotional, and spiritual giving of himself to so many others in the school, which had drained him, he was offered the chance to experience briefly a period of "uninterrupted *solitude*" in the mountains of Switzerland where he was able to turn inward and thereby "found himself again" (p. 89).

Such experiences happen for the students as well, as Finser (1994) documents through this incident which happened when teaching his students about ancient Egypt:

At this point, as we reviewed the lesson the next day, the class discussed what it would be like to observe a vow of silence. Some thought it would be challenging, but Lee, one of my most energetic and talkative boys, exclaimed, "Oh, that would be easy. Just don't talk! No problem." As so often happened in my classroom, in part because of the social insights made possible by having been together for several years, Lee's classmates took him up on his boast. "Oh yes? Why don't you try it!" The next morning Lee arrived with a roll of masking tape and asked me to seal his mouth. He took his seat that day with an air of satisfaction and managed to spend the entire day without even attempting to say one single word. Afterwards I asked him to share his experiences. He gave us a most remarkable account. He had heard things he would never have thought possible; he had learned more in that one day's classes than in many previous weeks. He now appreciated some of this classmates whom he had scarcely noticed before. Ancient Egypt really came through for me that day. (pp. 108-109)

Through such experiences we come to understand how our awareness periodically goes out to meet others, and also turns inward to precipitate a new awareness of self. It is this rhythm, this soul-breathing, which helps to sustain our spiritual growth and development, just as our physical breathing helps to sustain our physical growth and development.

A striking feature of the Waldorf curriculum, mentioned already in terms of the three day pedagogical rhythm, is the presentation of a particular subject through a main-



lesson period of approximately two hours each morning for three or four weeks.<sup>27</sup> Finser (1994) explains something of how the Waldorf teacher seeks to balance the sequence of these main lesson subjects through establishing a rhythm:

Because the students were so engaged in their own hard work during the geometry block, I was able to practice child observation and adjust my teaching according to what I observed in them. Geometry emphasized *their* activity, whereas history and other subjects mostly emphasized mine. I feel that the block schedule should alternate between these two emphases in order to achieve a balance. One might also see this as an alternation between contraction and expansion: the students pull into themselves when doing geometric drawings, and their consciousness expands out beyond themselves when they are living into history. (p. 123)

Jünemann and Weitmann (1976/1994) offer further insight into some of the more subtle ways in which such rhythms can play into Waldorf education. For example, the trained<sup>28</sup> Waldorf teacher knows that "every event in a story has its special dynamic,

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<sup>27</sup>Uhrmacher (1995) gives a brief description of this design in his recent overview of Waldorf education (see p. 393). Spock (1985) describes the practice more fully, adding: It may no longer be necessary to defend this practice, which at the time of its introduction at the Waldorf School in 1919 seemed radical to many. In the light of our present deeper understanding of human psychology one may perhaps rather question how any such indefensible arrangement as the traditional succession of forty minute periods ever found its way into favor. (p. 20)

<sup>28</sup>Teacher training courses in Waldorf education are available to English speaking students in England (Emerson College in Sussex), Canada (Rudolf Steiner Centre in Toronto), and the USA (Rudolf Steiner College in CA, Waldorf Institute of Southern California, Rudolf Steiner Institute in NY, Rudolf Steiner Institute of the Great Lakes Area in MI, Waldorf Institute of Sunbridge College in NY, Waldorf Teacher Training Program at Antioch-New England Graduate School in NH, and the Honolulu Waldorf School Adult Education Course in HI). Training courses typically involve two years of full-time study, though several variations including summer and part-time study are also possible. Due to an extreme shortage of trained teachers at the present time due to the exploding interest in Waldorf schools, teachers are frequently recruited who have some knowledge and sympathy toward the Waldorf approach but who lack thorough training.

either tension or resolution" (p. 29). In telling stories then, such a teacher may consciously choose words to reflect these dynamics through the imagery of color. Thus, a warm, sunny mood will be reflected in the imagery of shining gold, for example, while the sombre, menacing approach of some danger or upheaval may be reflected in a dark blue oppressiveness hovering into the overcast sky as the light becomes completely overshadowed and disappears. Alternatively, the deep, calm stillness of early morning, reflected in a clear blue lake, may be suddenly pierced by flashes of light as the sun's rays cut across the distant horizon. Similarly, the vibrancy and poignancy of life may be reflected in a striking red coat, or fiery red hair, or a blood-red rose.

While not spelled out in detail, such use of color imagery enhances the effect of tension and resolution in the story, by contrasting soul qualities through contrasting colors (ibid.). For example, a contrast may be built up between an enveloping force which presses inward, sometimes with such intensity that it becomes imprisoning or suffocating, and a radiating force which rays outward to illuminate the surrounding shadows, and resolve some mystery by cutting through the encircling fog, but which may also at times simply dissipate in every direction so that all sense of character and definition is lost. Or a contrast may develop between a comforting, cradling energy which prepares and sustains a special place in which to support new growth, and a fragile new creature who comes to dwell there and benefits from the protection, growing strong and robust.

This imaginative characterization of color is carried into actual painting activities in Waldorf schools. "Color stories" are told as a stimulus for watercolour painting in which, for example, a "cheeky red" fellow may appear in the midst of a patch of humble blue, and quickly overpower it with its strength, while the blue retreats to the farthest edges of the paper. The pedagogical significance of such activity is explained like this:

This kind of exercise is just what is needed to bring movement into the children's soul life. If the colour is to become the motif, then the children have to enter right into the colours as they paint, feeling and forming them from out of their own feeling life. This activity changes from colour to colour, and their experience of them gets more discriminating. As well as being outwardly active the children become inwardly alive and mobile as the colours make their feelings visible. (Jünemann and Weitmann, 1994, p. 27)

The polarity of tension and release parallels the polarity of point, as *intensive*, and periphery, as *extensive*. Fulstow (1995), in presenting an anthroposophical background for facilitating work with abused children, illustrates the point-periphery relationship in terms of numerous qualities which themselves also express a polar relationship, as shown in this table (p. 27):

Table of Polarities

<i>Point</i>	<i>Periphery</i>
<i>contraction</i>	<i>expansion</i>
<i>cold</i>	<i>warm</i>
<i>formed</i>	<i>formless</i>
<i>small-headed</i>	<i>large-headed</i>
<i>antipathy</i>	<i>sympathy</i>
<i>thinking</i>	<i>willing</i>
<i>nerve-sense</i>	<i>metabolism</i>
<i>epileptic</i>	<i>hysterical</i>
<i>autistic</i>	<i>too much contact</i>
<i>asthma</i>	<i>too much out-breathing</i>

Fulstow (1995) explains the significance of this anthroposophical view:

Indeed, childhood can be seen as the gradual development of this point-periphery relationship; and the Waldorf curriculum as guide along that journey, as it changes at different ages, and as different faculties unfold; some more to the periphery, some more to the point. Creating balance here is really the realm of normal education. (p. 27)

Waldorf educators work to mediate such polarities constantly. Overall, art itself mediates between science and morality, just as feeling mediates between thinking and doing: It is able to do this precisely because it involves rhythm. This is true at many levels and in many ways, not least of which is the rhythm introduced through the curriculum in terms of two contrasting streams of art: those recognized as plastically formative, such as painting, drawing, sculpting and architecture, in which formations appear in space; and those recognized as musically poetical, such as music proper and "everything connected with speech when employed to express the dramatic and poetic" (Childs, 1991, p. 120).

These latter arts generate works which appear in time, which arise out of and reflect social intercourse, and which depend on the sense of hearing rather than seeing.

Because nothing of the external, spatial world can be copied directly for expression in time, the musical poetical arts tend to reflect more of our inner awareness and to call forth a dreaming consciousness rather than a wakeful one. As Childs (1991) explains,

The outer world is material, objective, determinate, explicit; the inner world is immaterial, subjective, indeterminate, implicit. Rudolf Steiner pointed out that Man experiences increasing and decreasing tensions, expectations and dissappointments, inner conditions of soul which express themselves in the most manifold pictures in dreaming. These experiences correspond to those of musical melodies with their *crescendi* and *diminuendi*, and to the tenuous and indefinable qualities recognizable in all true poetry....Such melodies give experiences of a world in which the human being is not fully conscious, and they impinge upon our daily waking life like reminiscences. In order to mitigate materialistic influences and get beyond them, Steiner said that it was just this unconscious element which prevails in dreams and above all in the melodies of music which must be taken up into the art of education. (p. 121)

Here again is the focus on bringing things into balance so as to educate the whole human being, and awaken that which is uniquely human in each individual.

Steiner was careful to explicate all this for teachers, not for them to repeat to their students, but so as they would fully understand the *background* to their daily pedagogical and curricular practice (Steiner, 1919/1990, pp. 22-23). Thus artistic activities from both the plastically formative and musically poetic streams are included at all levels of the Waldorf curriculum.

For example, all students learn to play recorder and to sing in harmony during their elementary years; during the higher grades more varied instrumental ensembles, orchestral studies and opera are introduced. Fairy tales, fables, bible stories, myths, poetry, ballads, tales and legends, folklore, drama, storytelling, and creative writing are included intentionally at all levels so as to allow the children to experience and enjoy the artistic benefits of such musical/poetic study.

The plastically formative arts are similarly included at all levels of the curriculum, using different media (block crayon, watercolor, colored pencil, pastel, charcoal, ink, acrylic, oil, beeswax, clay, wood, and stone) with emphases ranging from explorations in color, form and line drawing, geometric and architectural studies, light and shade, to space and perspective (both color and line), mood, complementarity and contrast, human,

plant, and animal form, modeling, carving, and bas relief. In all of this, the teacher must understand how such activities encourage the child to move at times toward an experience of the inner spiritual world, as well as the outer physical world:

*We must be conscious of what we are doing, right down to the foundations. When we teach this subject or that, we must be fully aware that we are working either in the one direction to bring the Spirit-Soul more into the earthly Body, or in the other direction to bring the bodily nature into the Spirit-Soul. (Steiner, 1919/1990, p. 23, italics original)*

From such comments it is easy to grasp that Steiner promoted a truly child-centred curriculum rather than a subject-centred one. Childs (1991) reminds us that in Waldorf education "all handing down of the content of human knowledge should entail its manipulation in order to develop human abilities....this supports the bringing into harmony of the child's spirit and soul with its body" (p. 98). By nurturing the soul life in these ways, Waldorf education enlivens the spirit of the child and deepens the child's awareness of itself. These results bring our focus directly to the third spiritual law identified by Goethe: the law of Enhancement, which is the topic of the next section.

#### The Principle of Enhancement...

*Enhancement* is a translation for the German word *Steigerung*, meaning rise, increase, or gradation (Wichmann, 1935, p. 289). It implies a progressive ascent; in other words, it refers to change in a consistent direction. It also carries the idea of *renunciation*. That is, in order for something to be enhanced, something else must be diminished; for every apparent gain, there is a corresponding apparent loss. By spelling out these implications, it becomes clear that the spiritual law of enhancement is intimately linked with the laws previously discussed, namely metamorphosis and polarity. There is an aspect of metamorphosis in enhancement, since there is change. And there is an aspect of polarity in enhancement, because of the reciprocity of gain and loss. But the import of *directionality* in change, and the import of *sacrifice*, direct attention to some new aspects not yet considered.

Steiner (1920/1988) points to the crucial significance of *direction* in change in his lectures on warmth, given to the teachers of the first Waldorf school. He notes that in mathematical calculation, we can reverse processes without introducing error. The

problem comes if we carry this thinking over to the real world. There it is not so simple to reverse processes; things just don't happen that way in most cases.

You see, when I initiate a certain process of transformation, I say that work is performed, heat produced, and from this heat work can again be secured by a reversal of the process. I will show you later the extent to which this applies to the inorganic in regard to heat phenomena. But an organic process cannot be reversed so simply. There are also great inorganic processes that are not reversible, such as the planetary processes. We cannot imagine a reversal of the process that goes on in the plant from the formation of the roots, through the flower and fruit formation. The process takes its course from the seed to the setting of the fruit. It cannot be reversed like an inorganic process....

We must become aware of the extent to which our concepts and calculations are only conceptual in their content. In spite of the fact that our calculations are reversible, in reality these processes are not reversible. (Steiner, 1920/1988, pp. 15-16)

In human development this directionality becomes apparent in the natural spiritual progress, according to anthroposophy, towards moral awareness, both for humanity as a whole and for each individual (Burnett, 1995, p. 31).<sup>29</sup> As Burnett (1995) notes,

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<sup>29</sup>In current mainstream educational theory there is clearly evident a polarity in how moral progress is conceived. On one hand are Kohlberg's descriptions of progress towards conceiving and following *general principles* (cf. Crain, 1992, pp. 134-153). On the other hand are Noddings' descriptions of responding in a caring and nurturing way to *individuals who are in particular need* (cf. Noddings, 1984). Steiner's work suggests a possible mediation, as can perhaps be glimpsed in these remarks by Schad (1995):

Rudolf Steiner repeatedly called attention to the fact that the conscious ego is not the true ego, but a reflection of it in the consciousness bound to the brain, but is itself never fettered to the body. He spoke of the lower and the higher human ego.

The ego has not only the point-like character of a definite centre, but is itself polaric. The higher ego never enters fully into incarnation, but remains spiritually active in connection with the world.... The real ego takes light hold of the body from the periphery and works into the activity of the limbs, which in human beings can enter with intelligent purpose into the necessities of the world. (p. 7)

"This idea can become a source of inspiration for a teacher and can provide a valuable perspective for curriculum delivery and pedagogy" (ibid.).

Besides the directionality of change, the principle of Enhancement is characterized by a certain drama: At certain moments, the organism appears to withdraw its power of *becoming* and to concentrate it into an almost pure *being*. It appears almost as if it were somehow *dying*. Thus Lehrs (1958) argues it can aptly be called a "dying into being" (p. 92). For example, in the plant,

this principle shows itself most conspicuously where the green leaf is heightened into the flower. While progressing from leaf to flower the plant undergoes a decisive ebb in its vitality. Compared with the leaf, the flower is a dying organ.... Life in its mere vegetative form is here seen withdrawing in order that a higher manifestation of the spirit may take place.... The greater the creative power required at a certain stage, the more nearly complete must be the withdrawal from outer appearance. That is why the most extreme withdrawal of the plant into the state of being takes place in the seed, when the plant prepares itself for its transition from one generation to another. (Lehrs, 1958, pp. 92-93)

Steiner finds that human beings have similar transformative possibilities, providing only that they are willing to participate in bringing them about. For example, through such willful striving, according to anthroposophy it is possible to transform intelligence from our familiar sensory-based cognition to Imaginative, Inspired, and eventually Intuitive cognition. Contributing to each transformation is a necessary quiescence, concentration, discipline, focusing of inner will and strength in order to achieve something new.

It is through such achievement that we learn who we really are as human beings. According to Steiner (1919/1984) this is particularly significant in education, where we must somehow find "the will to solve the greatest riddle" - that of humanity itself - "in every single individual" (p. 78).

While acknowledging the obvious fact that everyone "appears as a member of a natural totality (race, folk, nation, family, male or female gender) and is active within a totality (state, church, and so on)", and further acknowledging that "the characteristics and functions of a member of a totality are determined by that totality", Steiner (1894/1992) nevertheless argues that each and every human being has the capacity to make himself or herself "free of the generic" by "using as a foundation" "the

characteristics bestowed upon him by nature" and by "transforming them" "to correspond to his own being" (p. 153). In other words, there is in every person "something completely individual that cannot be explained through something else" (ibid.). Steiner argues that it is only this pristine individuality which accounts for and allows for freedom, and which can therefore be deemed to have ethical import in our lives:

Only to the extent that a human being has freed himself from everything generic, in the way described, can he be said to be a free spirit within the human community. No human being is all genus, none is all individuality. But every person gradually liberates a greater or lesser part of his nature from the generic characteristics of animal life and from the domination of the decrees of human authorities.

In regard to that part of his nature for which the human being is unable to win this freedom he constitutes a member within the organism of nature and spirit. In this respect he lives as he sees others live or as they demand. Only that part of his activity which springs from his intuitions has ethical value in the true sense.  
(Steiner, 1894/1992, pp. 155-156)

The interesting and highly unusual conclusion which Steiner draws from this idea is that all human beings are united, not by virtue of their generic characteristics, but precisely and paradoxically by virtue of their capacity for individuality! In other words, the essential quality we all share is our capacity to be uniquely our Self, what Steiner (1886/1988) calls our *Freiheit* (literally, "freedom", best translated into English, following Steiner's suggestion, as "spiritual activity" - p. 103). One way to grasp this notion of "spiritual unity within apparent difference" is through the word "I":

The little word "I" -- as used, for example, in the English language -- is a name essentially different from all other names. To anyone who ponders rightly on the nature of this name, there is opened up at once a way of approach to a perception of man's real nature. All other names can be applied, by all men equally, to the thing they designate. Everyone can call a table "table", and everyone can call a chair "chair"; but it is not so with the name "I." No one can use this name to designate another. Each human being can only call himself "I"; the name "I" can never reach my ear as a designation of myself. In designating himself as "I," man has to name himself within himself. A being who can say "I" to himself is a world in himself. (Steiner, 1909/1981, p. 14)

Understanding humanity in terms of human spirituality requires, according to Steiner, an understanding exactly opposite to what is required for understanding inorganic



nature. He alludes to the contrast as characterized by Dilthey and others in terms of *Naturwissenschaft* and *Geisteswissenschaft*; however, Steiner also refers to the study of human spiritual activity through his own term: *Freiheitswissenschaften* (Steiner, 1886/1988, p. 103). Leviton (1994) focuses our attention on the fact that

*Freiheit* is a key word in Steiner's thought....*Freiheit* means spiritual freedom of the inner human being, an inner state of 'freedom,' and the science or means (*Wissenschaft*) for attaining it. It evokes a world view of acting, thinking, and feeling out of one's own spiritual individuality.... Steiner asked: Do reason, purposes, and decisions exercise in human willing the same kind of irresistible compulsion as desires do in animals - - because if they do, human thinking itself isn't free, nor our actions, nor our life... Are we free to act based on the ethical results of our independent thinking, or are we compulsively, subconsciously driven? (p. 142)

The crucial difference which Steiner sees between the study of human spirituality and the study of natural science concerns the relationship of the particular to the general: "With the latter the particular is determined by the general; with the idea of humanity the generality is determined by the particular" (Steiner, 1886/1988, p. 104). This difference he describes as "the inner antithesis of nature and the human spirit" (ibid.). This is a key point. For Steiner (1886/1988), nature is understandable in so far as the particular, the given, the observable, is explained through reference to some general law: In other words, human beings understand particular events and dynamics in nature as *caused* by laws (relationships) of natural necessity (p. 104). Human spirituality itself, however, understands itself through a directly opposite relationship: "...the human spirit demands a science that progresses from the given, as *that which causes*, to the *caused*. What characterizes the humanities is that the *particular* is what gives the laws" (ibid.). The consequence of this is that in natural science all particular realities are only of transitional interest, as a means to infer the more important general principles, whereas in human science all general principles are only of transitional interest, as a means to elucidate the more important particular realities (Steiner, 1886/1988, p. 104).

For Steiner, human particularity, human individuality, is of prime importance in all social life and therefore also in all education. As Leviton (1994) points out, Steiner argues that "the exercise of free spiritual cognition -- "the possibility for the individual

to act from his own inner self" — is in fact the core reason for human incarnation and the goal of the consciousness soul" (p. 142). Unfortunately, as Steiner recognizes, for most of us, most of the time, "we are not free in our thinking", although Steiner steadfastly maintains that "yes, it is possible": What is required is "concentrated effort and a great deal of inner schooling" (Leviton, 1994, p. 142). The prime focus of education should be, in Steiner's view, helping children to develop this free inner spiritual activity.

The ultimate significance of this for Steiner is that it is only *Freiheit*, as characterized here, which actually "generates goodness" in our lives (Leviton, 1994, p. 142). Leviton summarizes Steiner's views by saying, "Cosmic thought, which is the fruit of spiritual cognition, turns directly into moral sensibility, moral impulses, because the divine-spiritual lives in each human individuality" (ibid.). Following Max Stirner, Steiner dubs this view "ethical individualism" (Leviton, 1994, p. 143).

Steiner (1894/1992) explains further that the phrase *ethical individualism* refers to the idea that what is ultimately individual in each of us, namely, "the sum of effective ideas within us", represents the "moral content" of our lives in exactly the measure in which our intuitive ideas "flow into our actions" (pp. 104-105). If we simply follow moral precept, no less than if we act unreflectively out of instinct, we are not free in Steiner's sense: Freedom requires that we act out of "neither the compulsion of natural instincts, nor that of moral commandments", but simply out of our own desire to "carry out what lies within", that is, out of our Love (Steiner, 1894/1992, p. 106).

There is an important distinction here between what is actually *individual* in Steiner's sense, and what is *common* in the ordinary sense. For example, criminal behavior may appear superficially as the "carrying out of what lies within" without qualifying in any way as moral. Steiner (1894/1992) anticipates this concern, explaining that

the blind urge that leads to crime does not originate in intuition and does not belong to what is individual in the human being but to what is most common in him, to what is the same in all, and out of which a person works his way through the individual aspect of his nature. (p. 107)

A further possible objection which Steiner anticipates goes like this: "How is it possible for human beings to get on with one another if everyone strives only to assert his own individuality?" (Steiner, 1894/1992, p. 108). Steiner's answer is that this

concern arises from the mistaken notion that a community can only be united if it is compelled to act morally by a well-established moral order (ibid.). Steiner counters this by proposing that unity is possible among those who trust their Intuition and understand that the "world of ideas which comes to expression in themselves is none other than the one which expresses itself in their fellow human beings" (Steiner, 1894/1992, p. 108).

Of course, this view may appear both unrealistic and idealistic. Steiner (1894/1992) agrees that it is idealistic, but not that it is unreal: He insists it is "a real factor", and, as such, it "works its way to the surface of our nature" (p. 109). The very fact that our morality depends on our free spiritual activity means that "the sum total of our nature is not determined without our own involvement": Just as human cognition unites percept and concept, so does human morality unite the awareness of free spiritual activity with the expression of that free spirit in human life (Steiner, 1894/1992, p. 110).

The possibility for individual expression of free spiritual activity means that each and every human being has within him or herself the potential for Enhancement:

The possibility of transforming himself lies within the perceptible object "Man", just as there lies within the seed the possibility of becoming a whole plant. In the plant the transformation takes place because of inherent objective laws; the human being remains in an unfinished state unless he takes hold of the transforming power within him, and transforms himself through his own strength. Nature makes of Man merely a natural being; society makes him a law-abiding one; only *he* can make himself into a free being. Nature releases Man from her fetters at a definite stage of his development; society takes this development a stage further; he alone can apply the final polish.

Thus the standpoint of ethical individualism by no means maintains that the free spirit is the only form of human existence. (Steiner, 1894/1992, p. 110-111)

It is worth noting that Steiner's view of ethical individualism and the function of the Individual within the Community reflects the ancient Greek concept of number, in which number is understood as *distributive*, rather than the more familiar Arabic notion of number understood as *additive*. Lehrs (1958) helps to clarify this difference through an extended example using the number five (pp.369-372). In brief, he suggests that when we count a pile of apples, and find there are five, we make use of our additive understanding of number: The number is essentially abstract from the things being

counted. In fact, it really doesn't matter if they are apples, or pears, or baseballs, or some mixture of things bearing no resemblance at all to each other except the fact that they are all "countable"! As Lehrs (1958) points out, "the process of counting is a process of pure abstraction. The more differentiated are the things which we want to combine into a group through the process of counting, the further this abstraction has to go" (p. 369). Such a process, he notes, is "of exactly the kind which the nominalists of the Middle Ages attributed to every conception formed by the human mind" (ibid.). Furthermore, once this additive concept was securely established in human consciousness, helped along by the power associated with it in terms of recognizing the value of zero, other modes of comprehension were quickly overshadowed and virtually lost, with two important results, which are only now beginning to be questioned:

From the moment when human consciousness was unable to attribute to itself any other than a purely nominalistic mode of comprehension it was inevitable that all explanations of natural phenomena would have two results: (1) the exclusion from observation of everything that could not be conceived in terms of numbers, and (2) an endeavour to find for every numerical relationship capable of empirical proof an explanation which could be interpreted as the result of taking qualitatively identical units and counting them. For this method of forming conceptions is the only one which nominalism can accept with a good conscience. The fact that in so doing it is led *ad absurdum* has only quite lately occurred to it. For if by the logical following of this path - as in modern theoretical physics - the whole universe is dissolved into units which can no longer be distinguished from each other, then it will become impossible to count these parts, for it cannot be established whether any given one of these hypothetical elemental particles has been counted or not. (Lehrs, 1958, p. 370)

In contrast to the additive concept, the distributive understanding of number remains strongly and necessarily linked to the qualities of things themselves, rather than being abstracted from them. In other words, turning once again to Lehrs' example using the number five, we can observe this number as characteristic of the five-fold pericarp revealed when an apple is cut crosswise: "although the act of counting, by which we establish the number five, is the same [as before]..., the quality of the number five is totally different. For in the case of the five pericarps this number is a quality immanent in the apple, which it shares with the whole species of Rosaceae" (ibid.).

It is this ancient Greek understanding of number to which Steiner adheres. Lehrs (1958) summarizes its significance like this: "Unity appeared as an all-embracing quantity, revealed through the Universe. The world's manifoldness was felt to be not a juxtaposition of single things, externally connected, but the content of this unity, and therefore derived from it. This was expressed by the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers in the formula *the One and the All*" (p. 371). Thus Steiner conceives of unity in the cosmos, in the individual, in the community, as fundamental to the manifold expressions we experience every day.

In this way Enhancement is understood to express not just change and variation, but also endurance and stability. For example, we learn more of who we are as we learn how different we are, and we learn how different we are as we learn more of who we are: The connections to ourselves and to each other remain intact since we are never simply adding or subtracting unrelated quantities, but always "re-membering" the fundamental quality of relationship as Unity. Steiner affirms the truth of this view in terms of experience, not abstract proof, and cautions that we ourselves, by virtue of our capacity for spiritual freedom, have the power to realize this experience or not.

Understanding Enhancement from this perspective affirms that we can strengthen and nurture healthy communities through educating individuals. We can enhance the spiritual unity of humankind through determining our individual spiritual freedom.<sup>30</sup> We

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<sup>30</sup>It is incumbent upon us to realize that such a focus on individualism as Steiner supports is *itself* a metamorphosis of a different human consciousness, one more rooted in the group (what Steiner calls *folk consciousness*), or indeed even undifferentiated within the whole of nature itself, both of which clearly appear in other times and other places. In his lecture cycles on *The evolution of consciousness* and *The child's changing consciousness*, Steiner describes how different patterns of human awareness metamorphose over time. For those prejudiced by the so-called Darwinian view of evolution, in which 'progress' is measured in one direction only, that is from earlier and therefore less-evolved to later and therefore more-evolved, Steiner's cosmic account may be erroneously understood as biased in favour of western European civilization as it has developed since the Renaissance. Similarly, his account of the ripening of the child's initially unconscious awareness into the fully mature

can develop integrated and healthy personal lives through increasing awareness of distinct capacities for thinking, feeling, and willing. We can come to know and love the world through knowing and loving any one aspect of the world. In this way we reach beyond the particular, not to the general and common, but to the universal and all-embracing.

As mentioned already, the universal, all-embracing quality of humanity is, in Steiner's worldview, the capacity we all have to experience free spiritual activity within our own conscious awareness<sup>31</sup>. Educators who share Steiner's view accept, as their

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conscious awareness of the adult can be misunderstood as suggesting a progress from something which is less important to something which is more important. From my reading of Steiner, I do not think he intended others to interpret his work in these ways. His concern is always to search out and recognize what form of consciousness is most appropriate to a particular time and place, in terms of what has gone before and what will come after, not in terms of what is better or worse in any absolute sense, nor in terms of what is more or less evolved along some linear, uni-directional path (all of his images suggest either a rhythmical oscillation, or a circling or spiraling over time, and there is no reason to assume that he would abandon this way of thinking at this point). For his time and place, namely western civilization of the twentieth century, Steiner reckoned that the forces pushing and pulling us towards greater and greater individualisation could only be adequately countered "by the reintegration, as a process of conscious social development, of the individual back into the whole family of humanity" (Wolpert, 1987, p. 30). The question of Steiner's central commitment to the Christ-event as a pivotal point in all evolution, whether cosmic or individual, is both important and complex in relation to all of this. Though intimately connected in some ways with my topic, it is nevertheless far beyond the scope of my present research to characterize and explicate Steiner's thinking about Christ. For the interested reader, a useful starting point might be Steiner's small book, Christianity as mystical fact, or the 1914 series of four lectures given at Norrköping and later published under the title *Christ and the human soul*.

<sup>31</sup>Although such a key idea is naturally developed in many of Steiner's writings, his lecture course published under the title The Universal Human offers a brief, focused explication of this aspect of Steiner's thought. It is important to note that Steiner is quickly dismissed by some for appealing to any sort of universal human traits at a time when awareness of gender, race, class, ethnic, and other such difference is more

fundamental pedagogical and curricular task, the challenge of how best to guide and direct children so as to help them develop this capacity in themselves as fully as possible. In the next section, I indicate something of how this is actually done in Waldorf schools. The Waldorf educator prepares the child for active inner striving by supporting artistic activities in all aspects of the curriculum.

...and its Embodiment in Waldorf Educational Practice

Steiner (1923/1989) recommends that art be used to build a bridge from *play* to *life* (p. 193). The plastic arts, that is painting and drawing, are introduced "at a very tender age of childhood", in order that writing may grow out of this artistic activity, just as reading subsequently grows out of writing (op.cit., p. 192). Similarly, using familiar dialect forms of language before insisting on conventionally 'correct' forms allows the child's conscious language competence to grow out of established but unconscious language use (Steiner, 1920/1981, p. 122). Singing and chanting are enjoyed first, before instrumental music allows a clearer focus on musical form per se: In such ways are the children led gradually to not only experience art, but also to understand it as a necessary counter-balance to all that is ruled by abstract law in the physical world (Steiner, 1923/1989, pp. 192-193).

The two paramount pedagogical dangers in all this are 1) working in the wrong direction, that is not allowing new capacities to grow out of what is already at work in the child, and 2) going to extremes such that the education becomes one-sided and unbalanced (Steiner, 1920/1981, pp. 123-126). For example, in language studies, the

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and more forced upon us. The fact that Steiner's formulation of 'the universal human' draws attention to such values as freedom and individual consciousness further brands him as a 'man of his times' for many postmodern writers. To discredit him on this account, however, requires that we ignore the central tenet of his message, which is precisely that through such apparently limited particulars as a 'man of his times', awareness of something else is indeed possible. Gertrude Reif Hughes (1991) goes to some length to show how Steiner's idea of ethical individualism can be discussed intelligently within the context of recent feminist thought without erecting artificial barriers to understanding.

structural or formative element must always be balanced by the musical element, so that attention is brought both to the semantic sense of the language, as well as to such matters as pitch, dynamics, tempo, rhythm, flow, and articulation.

At the same time, teachers must continually work against the all too easy automatic association of ideas in the child's mind: It is essential always to keep the child's own life of ideation active and alive (ibid.). This is easily demonstrated in the study of addition, for example, through the order in which the sum is related to the addends (Steiner, 1920/1981, p. 126). If the child is asked to add fixed amounts to find an answer, as in the problem  $3 + 7 + 2 = ?$ , there is no room for creativity in the child's ideational life. On the other hand, if the problem is posed differently, with a sum given and the child asked to determine the possible addends, as in this example,  $12 = \_ + \_ + \_$ , the child may creatively determine several possible answers, all of which are "correct". Through such simple means does the Waldorf teacher keep the child's mental life fluid and creative, rather than allowing it to become rigid.

Such an approach fosters an analytical approach to learning, which Steiner reckons is healthy because it "wakes the child up" to what is within and prepares him or her for the individually free activity of the mature intellect later on. It is particularly appropriate for inner mental work, such as math and reading. Thus reading in the Waldorf school also proceeds from the whole to the parts, so that whole words are considered first and only later analysed into individual letters (Steiner, 1920/1981, p. 127). (Learning to form the letters themselves requires a different procedure, as already mentioned, in which the activities of drawing are carried over into writing, as a foundation for later reading).

On the other hand, while analysis fosters an independent spirit, synthesis is required to deal with the external world and other individuals within it. Steiner specifically developed the new artform of eurythmy, which is a required subject for Waldorf students at all grade levels, in which the Self is brought into relation with the Group through specific movement exercises. As Childs (1991) points out,

There are definite principles involved in how the movements are made and the 'choreography' devised; nothing is arbitrary. The rationale behind the teaching of eurythmy in Waldorf schools is impossible of brief exposition, being a study in itself.... (p. 189)



Nevertheless, eurythmy can be understood at a very simple level as related to gymnastics in the same way psychology is related to physiology (ibid.). In this way something of the social element in relation to the individual can be glimpsed. In her article, "What is Eurythmy doing in school?", Mary Watson (1979) draws attention to this "social element of the eurythmy lesson" in which "the importance of learning to move together as a group can lay the foundations for working together in other spheres, and living together with the true community spirit which is often so lacking in our time" (p. 29).

The balancing of synthetic with analytic emphases in the Waldorf school curriculum is itself an artistic practice, just as is the balancing of all those aspects of the inner and outer life discussed already in a previous section of this chapter, and the careful rhythmical coordination of curriculum with the patterns of human growth and development. Yet in a sense, such practices could perhaps be established and then simply dictated to teachers, without requiring their imaginative and creative involvement at all. Speaking to this point, Childs (1991) asserts that "Rudolf Steiner himself maintained that in many respects Waldorf schools were "method" schools, in that if certain teaching methods are adopted, certain results will follow" (p. 202).

Childs goes on to acknowledge the danger that all such "methods" could easily degenerate into "a rigid system to be applied by rule-of-thumb" (ibid.). It is likely to counter this danger that Waldorf schools function independently, without principals, superintendents, or departments of education, under the sole jurisdiction of the faculty of teachers themselves, who meet and study together regularly in an attempt to continually recreate the goals and ideals of Waldorf education through a living, flexible involvement.

More particular artistic involvement is required of the teacher in other ways too. For example, as Finser (1994) describes, birthdays are special occasions in Waldorf schools, and as part of the celebration, the teacher generally selects or composes a special verse, and perhaps a picture as well, to share with the birthday child (pp. 26-28). Such a composition is designed not only to point to qualities already manifest in the child, but also to possibilities for future growth. Two of Finser's examples from first grade are included here to give a more concrete idea of the imaginative way such a message is conveyed:

For Doug: *Courage to do what is right,  
 Courage to speak what is true,  
 With this as my goal I can do no wrong  
 For my heart will always be strong.*

and for Michael: *Swirling and twirling and dancing with mirth  
 Little snowflakes fall gently to earth.  
 This way did I come on the day of my birth.  
 And if I listen, oh so well,  
 I might just hear the snowdrop bell.*

Not great art perhaps, but imaginative and influential nonetheless. As Finser reports, "At the end of first grade, each child received a handwritten copy of his or her birthday verse with illustrations shaded in color. Some of the children later told me that these illustrated versions had remained on their bedroom walls for years" (ibid.).

Finser (1994) gives many other examples of ways in which Waldorf teachers continually work artistically and imaginatively to plant seeds to live and grow in the inner life of the child, without conscious direction. An example taken from his year teaching fourth grade involves a fairly detailed description of how numerous poems and verses were chanted each morning in connection with the main lesson. During one such session, he happened to mention "as an aside that lines in a verse have 'feet,' and that poets alternate long and short feet for different effects" (p. 74). He then reminded them of the many iambic poems they had learned in earlier years, and he drew their attention to the dactylic forms they had learned in the current year. Often such casual, low-key comments, with no immediate further emphasis, were intentionally slipped into the day's experience: "In such ways I began to lay a foundation for the formal study of poetry that we would be doing in seventh grade" (ibid.). Following Steiner, Marcus (1995) explains that art arises out of that dreamy, twilight zone connecting the physical life in which we are continually unconsciously immersed, and our conceptual life in which we "wake up" to a conscious awareness of ourselves and our surroundings: Waldorf teachers intentionally cultivate the child's experience of that zone through artistic teaching and activity.

This careful preparation of new conceptual understandings through previous physical experiences means that Waldorf students are guided through an organic

development whereby the new is continually metamorphosing out of the familiar. It is this ever-changing yet always integrated enhancement of learning that supports the healthy growth of the higher cognitive faculties (i.e., Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition) out of the sensory-based cognition with which we are so familiar already.

A very direct connection can be seen, for example, in the attention given during the elementary grades to artistic modelling. Younger students work with beeswax, since it is from living creatures and responds noticeably to warmth; older students work with mineral earth (clay), in accord with their development towards greater objectivity. At all levels, Steiner (1923/1989) tells us,

modelling is cultivated as much as possible...albeit in a primitive way. It has a wonderfully vitalizing effect on the child's physical sight and on the inner quality of soul in his sight, if, at the right age, he begins to model plastic forms and figures. So many people go through life without even noticing what is most significant in the objects and events of their environment. As a matter of fact, we have to learn how to do it before we can see and observe in the way that gives us our true position in the world. And if the child is to learn to observe aright, it is a very good thing for him to begin, as early as possible, to occupy himself with modelling, to guide what he has seen from his head and eyes into the movements of fingers and hand. In this way we shall not only awaken the child's taste for the artistic around him -- in the arrangement of a room, perhaps -- and distaste for the inartistic, but he will begin to observe those things in the world which ought to flow into the heart and soul of man. (p. 192)

From such a passage it will be evident that art, as practiced in Waldorf schools, reflects scientific goals as well as artistic ones, including accurate observation and careful attention to detail. Indeed, as Childs (1991) points out, quoting the late A.C. Harwood, Steiner himself was "an artist among scientists and a scientist among artists, and a universal genius in an age of specialists" (p. 167). This characterization carries through to the Waldorf curriculum, where science is approached phenomenologically rather than theoretically, and careful observation is held in higher regard than deduction (ibid.).

Waldorf educators know that when physical senses and physical capabilities are well schooled, and feelings are allowed to colour experience through sensitively explored sympathies and antipathies, then the stage is set for healthy Thoughts, Imaginations,

Inspirations, and Intuitions to emerge in due course. Graduates of such schooling are prepared not simply for careers in specialized subjects, but rather for life as a whole, with an integrated intelligence capable of turning in any direction required. Even more importantly, they will have what Steiner (1923/1989) calls the "great essential", that is, to be "wide-hearted" and "able to participate with their hearts and souls in culture and civilization as a whole" (p. 211).

Though art is central in such an education, such flexibility is not simply the result of haphazardly fitting in lots of art activities whenever, wherever, and however it suits the teacher! Nor is it a matter of substituting intellectual study for the element of real art (Steiner, 1923/1989, p. 203). Many years after the foundational work of Rudolf Steiner, Francis Edmunds (1986), long-time Waldorf educator and founder of Emerson College in England where Waldorf teacher training and related anthroposophical study courses are offered, writes about Waldorf education in these words:

For myself, I think the education as given by Rudolf Steiner is as *new* now as ever it was and is likely to remain new for a long time to come. It is a question of how far we can rise to the newness of it.

The conception of the human being out of which this education has grown is, at best, even now only beginning to be realised -- man as a being of body, soul, and spirit! The three phases of childhood, pre-school (meaning pre-dentition), elementary school reaching to puberty, and the precious years of youth in the upper school, demand to be fully understood and appreciated, both in inward activity and in outer practice. Even the most experienced feel they are only beginning, so that each day is a challenge as to where we are and where we need to go.

The teacher requires knowledge and proficiency, but knowledge of a kind to fire the imagination and stir the intuitions. Intuition, ever self-born, is by its very nature ever new. Intellect we must have to grasp the outer dimensions, but it is a *disciplined life of intuition* we must cultivate within ourselves. Intuition, inspiration and imagination are quickening forces for the life of will, feeling, and thinking. Waldorf education has been described as an education of the will -- not a will imposed by the teacher upon the children -- but a conjuring forth of the will of each child -- a glad response and not an enforced one. For the teacher this means to cultivate objective love, without which there is no real growing. (p. 7)

This echoes and elaborates Steiner's (1923/1989) own words: "This capacity of love, devotion and unselfishness...is really the foundation of the art of teaching" (p. 188).

Paradoxically perhaps, the very capacity for such love arises through a process of inner metamorphosis and transformation, a process of enhancement, which can become familiar and possible for us through the experience of "real artistic creativity" (always being careful to distinguish this from "any kind of symbolic interpretation") (Steiner, 1914-15/1984, p. 154). It is this fundamental realization that convinces Steiner (1923/1989):

Nothing must be left undone in the way of imbuing the child with artistic feeling at the right age in life. Our civilization will never receive an impulse of ascent until more art is introduced into the schools. Not only must the whole teaching be permeated with the artistic, but a living understanding of art, called into being by the teacher's own creative powers must set up a counter-balance to all prosaic conceptions of nature and history. We deem this an all-essential part of Waldorf School education. (pp. 194-195)

Thus it is that artistic activity itself, as well as artistic teaching, contribute to the "enhanced intelligence" intended in Waldorf schools through Waldorf education.

### Summary and Conclusion

Shepherd (1983) draws attention to the contribution Steiner made in understanding in more detail the implications inherent in the widely recognized fact that human beings are creatures who think, feel, and act in this world (p. 175 ff.). Steiner's contribution in this regard can be summarized very briefly in terms of his analysis which reveals that while each of these three dimensions of human life ultimately involves the whole person, they are nevertheless centred in different parts of the body, and each functions in a characteristic way. Thus human thinking is typically related to the head, with its associated nerves and sensory organs, and evinces little or no physical movement in its functioning. Human feeling is typically related to the chest area, with the heart and bloodflow, and the intake and outflow of breath, both of which are manifestly rhythmical. Human will-action-gesture is understood in terms of our energy (metabolism) and our limbs, both of which are characterized by fairly constant physical activity.

In order to correctly educate a person to fully develop her universal – and at the same time unique – human potential, all three aspects of the person must be the focus of pedagogical and curricular attention. Contrary to much public education, in which the brain and intellect receive the most attention, Waldorf education attends to all aspects of

the developing person. Mental exercise is important, but insufficient and deadly on its own. Rhythmical involvement, as indicated earlier, must be consciously fostered. And occasions for active, physical work must abound.

This holistic focus is translated directly into the curriculum<sup>32</sup>: Thus, in addition to traditional "academic" subjects such as geometry and mathematics, history and geography, literature and language, the natural and physical sciences, there are also taught in every Waldorf school a number of artistic subjects, including singing, instrumental music, drawing, painting, sculpting, eurythmy (movement), and drama, which are consciously chosen to foster a rhythmical alternation between conceptual understanding and active engagement with actual physical materials, in order to explore, for example, such varied qualities as form, colour, intensity, design, repetition, and relationship, as well as to illustrate, express, and recreate through different media new understandings first received through the teacher's standard presentation format, the *oral essay*. Teaching artfully in this way is tremendously *exacting*, says Shepherd (1983), though also *richly rewarding* for the teacher: "For he must learn to think like a child, to suffuse the dry content of intellectual thought with feeling and will, which is the first step towards that higher knowledge which is the aim of Spiritual Science" (p. 180).

Waldorf education is centred in artistic experience. Through this focus it works to bring about a transformed intelligence, first among the teachers themselves, and then through them to their students as well. The way this happens is that through art the sensible and supersensible worlds are brought into relation: Deeds are enacted which lead to understanding, and ideas are brought to life through physical works. This enables human beings to feel a unifying relationship throughout all aspects of their experience.

This relationship is expressed rhythmically through a balanced oscillation, or breathing, between all manner of polar opposites, including sleep and wakefulness, life

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<sup>32</sup>The information presented here on Waldorf curriculum is drawn from the school brochures of several Waldorf schools in North America, and especially from *The Waldorf School Curriculum - An overview for American Waldorf School teachers*, given to me by the Calgary Waldorf School when I visited there in 1994.

and death, remembering and forgetting, inner and outer, open and closed, expanded and contracted, and so on. It is also experienced fundamentally in terms of the One and the Many. A living and fully conscious awareness of this relationship happens when a person realizes in her own experience the creative power to understand it. Such understanding cannot be maintained intact, however; it must undergo continual re-birth. In so doing it expresses a primary *force of manifestation* characteristic of all existence.

This creative power to manifest what is otherwise imperceptible becomes itself intentionally manifest among human beings through art, which is nothing else than the physical and willful expression of conscious aesthetic awareness, or, alternatively, the conscious aesthetic awareness of physical and willful expression. If children are helped to experience and to understand this through their education, Steiner claims they will be prepared finally to participate wholly and freely in a new and highly moral art, that of community building, a fully transformed "architecture" in which mere physicality is recast in terms of relationship.

The moral implications of the artistic approach in Waldorf education are rich and complex. "Indeed," says Childs (1991), "the implications for the life of society of the Steiner philosophy, pedagogy and didactics are far-reaching indeed, but very worthwhile studying and attempting to work out" (pp. 203-204). If social scientists are to be judged "by their ability to predict the social consequences of a given social situation", as Childs (1991) suggests (p. 204), then Steiner deserves attention. Many of his insights regarding consequences of certain mainstream educational practices have already been realized: police needed to keep order in schools; people *talking* about human rights but *acting* out of a will for power; young people expressing in later life what was impressed on them earlier (especially noticeable through the effect of television); economic malaise at all levels of government; entrenched attitudes of bigotry and racism (see Childs, 1991, pp. 203-205).

Steiner's remedy centers on a new-found freedom for the individual, realized in relationship. Art is deemed an effective means to learn about such freedom in relationship, because of the required combination of discipline and initiative, wilful thought and thoughtful willing, active attention and attentive activity, service and

mastery. As Steiner (1923/1989) makes clear over and over again throughout his educational work, "If he acquires an understanding of art, the relation of the human being to his fellow-men will be quite different from what it could be without such understanding" (p. 193). Indeed, Steiner even said, "there will be as much deceit and criminality in the world as there is lack of art" (Junemann & Weitmann, 1994, preface). But for those children who learn to create, no matter how primitive or clumsy their attempts, a new world opens up; their inner nature is "uplifted"; and they acquire "a second level of humanity alongside the first" (Steiner, in Junemann & Weitmann, 1994, opening quotation). Here is the rationale for art in Waldorf education.



## CHAPTER FIVE: Art at the Periphery

For more than a century as public education has spread and developed in Canada, art has been variously defined but almost always accorded peripheral status relative to the "basics" such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and, more recently, science and technology. In this chapter I review this situation and explore possible patterns within it. Because there is no completely obvious coherence in mainstream education in English Canada overall, it is not possible to summarize or characterize it effectively without appealing to some artificial analytical framework. As Marshall (1973) explains, "... the schools are a public trust and their activities are always a reflection of conflicting social values. What appears ... mirrors the increasing pluralism and freedom of a multi-culture nation" (p. 9). By contrast, the Waldorf view discussed in the last chapter appears highly coherent, perhaps because it is deeply rooted in the nexus of ideas embodied in the work of just one man.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This should not be taken to mean that Steiner encouraged a dogmatic approach. His purpose was to elucidate guiding principles, not to impose a doctrinal, formulaic method:

We must be very clear that there is no need to make our methods rigidly uniform. For of course one teacher can do something which is very good in a particular case, and another teacher something else which is equally good. So we need not strive for pedantic uniformity, but on the other hand we must adhere to certain important principles which must be thoroughly grasped. (Steiner, 1919/1967, p.25)

In spite of the fact that many people were devoted to him (N.B. Uhrmacher, 1995, argues that Steiner fits Max Weber's characterization of a charismatic leader, see p. 397), Steiner actively resisted their tendency to simply follow his lead and repeatedly insisted they must develop their own initiative out of a fully awakened consciousness. A method for doing this was communicated by Steiner through straightforward presentation, in his book Knowledge of Higher Worlds. Any application of the method, however, together with the results arising from such application, were understood to necessarily reflect and express the power of the individual. For example, in the closing remarks of the preparatory course he gave for teachers of the new Waldorf school in Stuttgart, Steiner (1919/1967) emphasized this key point yet again:

*The teacher must be a man of initiative in everything that he does, great and small.... maybe*

### Miller's Analytical Framework as a Basis for Description and Review

In view of the great diversity of curricular and pedagogical thinking present in English Canadian mainstream education during the past hundred years or so, I contrive coherence for my present purpose by using as reference points three approaches to curriculum, each of which is clearly evident within the Canadian context. I adopt these from Miller's (1988) analysis of 19th and 20th century eurocentric curricular thinking, in which he subsumes fundamental philosophical, psychological, and social contexts under three broadly conceived but clearly distinct curricular positions (p. 4). Although other

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there will come moments when you feel uncertain how or when to bring one thing or another into your teaching, or in what place to introduce it, but if you remember rightly what has been brought before you during this fortnight then thoughts will surely arise in you which will tell you what to do. Of course many things ought really to be said many times over, but I do not want to make you into teaching machines, but into free independent teachers. All that was spoken of during the last fortnight was given to you in this same spirit. The time has been so short that for the rest I must simply appeal to the understanding and devotion that you will bring to your work. (pp. 164-165, italics original)

As might be expected, not all Waldorf teachers follow this advice in the same way. The result is that Waldorf education is sometimes perceived as dogmatic and ritualistic. For example, Miller (1988) reports well-known educator Mary Caroline Richards as saying, "when she reads Steiner it tends to facilitate her creativity while some of her Steiner colleagues tend to close off" (p. 127). Solway (1989), in a much more dramatic exposition of the same theme, describes Steiner as "a despotic *imperium*" subject to such "inescapable defects" as "the tendency for a vast apostleship to pervert or adulterate the original scriptures, and the temptation on the part of the less gifted or charitable members of the sect to assume the mantle of prophecy, revelation, and instruction" (p.117). In any event, there is no single individual who has influenced Canadian English mainstream education to the degree that Steiner has influenced Waldorf education.

analytical schemes are possible,<sup>2</sup> this one is attractive because it is relatively simple to follow, described in detail, reasonably well known among educators, easily accessible, and developed in recent years by someone working in English Canada with reference to the Canadian context.<sup>3</sup> The three positions are characterized in terms of transmission, transaction, and transformation strategies. Although not mutually exclusive (Miller, 1988, pp. 6-7), they each disclose fundamental educational attitudes which show themselves through pedagogical practices as well as curricular principles.

Using these three categories to articulate general patterns in English Canadian mainstream education as a whole, I direct attention in each case to the fact that art has generally been accorded peripheral status in terms of both curricular and pedagogical priorities, conveniently poised to be jettisoned from the public educational context whenever time, money, or other resource energies become unduly strained. The import

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<sup>2</sup>For example, Miller himself five years earlier published an analysis of The Educational Spectrum in terms of different "orientations", including behavioral, subject/discipline, social, developmental, cognitive process, humanistic, trans-personal, and meta-orientations. Marshall (1973) discusses educational frameworks within a philosophical spectrum including idealism, realism, perennialism, pragmatism, and existentialism. Macdonald (1995) prefers to link various curricular approaches to three basic referents: cultural heritage, social uses, and personal interests (p. 99). Bloom (1956) categorized educational objectives underlying all curricular approaches in terms of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Whitehead (1929/1969) argues for a three-fold method of education through a literary curriculum, a scientific curriculum, and a technical curriculum (p. 48). Hunter (1994) lumps all curricular decisions into two basic categories: the philosophic (concerned with ends) and the scientific (concerned with means). Schipani (1984) discusses curriculum in light of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, a "paradoxical symbol" expressing a three-fold unity of gift, promise, and demand (p. 122). Confluent educators (cf. J.H. Brown, 1996) contrast participator and spectator theories of knowledge as fundamental to all curricular design. Many other such variations exist.

<sup>3</sup>John P. Miller is a professor in the Curriculum Department of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, where he has worked for a number of years after teaching in secondary schools in Ontario.

of this chapter is to introduce some clarity into *why* and *how* art has been so positioned for so long. For example, are there historical, social, political, philosophical, or educational trends which shed light on this? Are there convincing reasons why the situation may have developed (or should continue) in this way? What alternatives are there? Before beginning the historical review, I offer brief descriptions of the three positions in terms of the philosophical, psychological, and social contexts they reflect.

*Philosophical contexts.*

The *transmission* position reflects the idea that values, skills, and knowledge are simply impressed on students due to the passive receptivity and docile malleability of the students.<sup>4</sup> Movement is unidirectional *from* the teacher *to* the student: Education is conceived as 'instruction' in the sense of the Latin root expression 'instruere - to pile

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"This view has a long history in educational thought, from at least the time of Plato, who in his dialogue *Thaetaetus* characterizes the student metaphorically as a smooth wax tablet on which various impressions can be made. Locke's famous metaphor of the child as a blank slate ("tabula rasa") repeats the image. Paulo Freire, along with others, extends our metaphorical understanding of this educational approach through such further references as filling an empty jug, and depositing money in a bank account. The telling point in all such metaphors is that the student is conceived as a passive recipient merely absorbing, taking in, or being impressed by what is presented. As Dewey (1938/1963) remarks in connection with such education, "Since the subject-matter as well as standards of proper conduct are handed down from the past, the attitude of pupils must, upon the whole, be one of docility, receptivity, and obedience" (p. 18). It is worth noting, in order to avoid possible confusion, that Montessori (1949/1967) makes a more subtle distinction in terms of the mind's potential for absorbing impressions: She distinguishes between the older child or adult's mind, which she claims does receive impressions passively, such that they "pour into us and we store them in our minds; but we ourselves remain apart from them, just as a vase keeps separate from the water it contains"; and the young child's mind which is actually formed, even transformed, by its active involvement with whatever impressions enter it: "...the child undergoes a transformation. Impressions do not merely enter his mind; they form it. They incarnate themselves in him...We have named this type of mentality, *The absorbent mind*" (pp. 25-26). In writing about transmissive education, Miller is concerned with the adult-type process as described by Montessori.

upon or pack in'. As Dewey (1938/1963) notes, "The subject-matter of education consists of bodies of information and of skills that have been worked out in the past; therefore, the chief business of the school is to *transmit* them to the new generation" (p. 17, italics added). According to Miller (1988), the underlying world view here is one of isolated, atomistic units, with little or no awareness of possible relational complexity arising from mutual give-and-take (p. 4).

In contrast to this, the *transaction* position reflects a view of education as dialogical exchange, such that values, skills, and knowledge arise from a two-way process of intellectual interactions involving not simply a passive receptivity to new ideas, but also an actively questioning "exploration" of them. Miller (1988) claims this approach is directly related to the scientific method and involves "intelligent problem-solving....in which the student reconstructs knowledge": Where the transmission position can correctly be described as mechanistic, the transaction position must be seen as constructive (p. 5).<sup>5</sup> Of these two curricular positions, Miller suggests the transaction

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<sup>5</sup>Constructivism is a term which carries subtly different implications within different areas of educational discourse. For example, Greene and Ackerman (1995) credit the "cognitive revolution" as described by Gardner (1985) with effecting a strong bias toward constructivism viewed in terms of "ideational" rather than "social or discourse processes" (p. 384); whereas others, like Rorty, 1978, have focused on "discussions of social construction of reality"; and still others "associate constructivism with child development, often from a Piagetian perspective" (p. 383). Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule (1986) mix the individual ideational focus of the cognitivist with the developmental view to explain constructed knowledge even at adult levels in Piagetian terms: "To understand is to invent" (p. 133).

In the present context, constructivism refers to what Greene and Ackerman (1995) identify as an "early attempt" to "model" the "assumed interactivity" of cognition: "The cognitive revolution did free the composer from behaviourism and from inquiries into a priori structures of meaning (e.g., Chomsky, 1972), but it often depicted the composer as a 'problem solver' who...mapped old knowledge onto new knowledge encountered..." (384). More recently, the model has been considerably complexified to account for additional factors, including 1) the "intentional creation of contexts for meaning making", 2) questions of "given and assumed authority" in

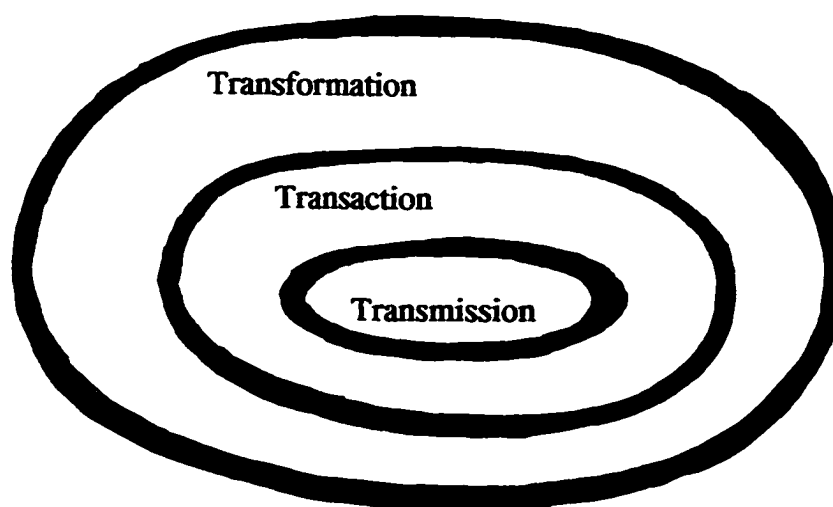
position is more pragmatic, since it focuses specifically on a problem-solving approach enabling both teachers and students to experience the benefits of the scientific method -- as remarked by Dewey -- through "getting at the significance of everyday experiences of the world in which we live", and thereby gaining the wherewithal with which to improve the conditions of humanity and the world (ibid.).

Miller's (1988) third curricular position, termed *transformation*, also focuses on improvement (personal and social) but is distinct from the transaction position by virtue of its holistic emphasis, in which "the student is not just viewed in the cognitive mode, but in terms of his or her aesthetic, moral, physical, and spiritual needs" (p. 6). The holistic emphasis of this view is also evident in the deep awareness it engenders of complex interweavings and interconnections between human beings and the universe, instead of "the more restrictive scope of an atomistic perspective" (Miller, 1988, p. 7). Miller claims that problems of social fragmentation and individual alienation are potentially resolved through a transformative approach, as is any confusion as to the relationship between linear thinking and intuition, or so-called mind-body connections (ibid.).

While the transmission position by itself presents a very restricted view of curriculum, it can be reconceived as part of a transactive approach, which in turn can be viewed as but one aspect of a transformative one (Miller, 1988, pp. 6-7). Holistic, transformative education would then incorporate the broadest, most inclusive view of curriculum. Miller (1988) diagrams this potential relationship like this (p. 7):

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terms of "task composition and task representation", 3) the "influence of communities" on establishing "intertextual and intersubjective spaces" within which to understand meaning, and 4) the "criss-crossing of various modalities such as graphic, aural, imagistic, and physical systems of meaning" (ibid.). Dr. Steven Burns reminds us that in all such educational discourse, the meaning of constructivism needs to be distinguished from the one more commonly understood by philosophers, who view constructivism (in which it is assumed there is no reality except that which we construct) as the opposite of realism (personal communication, June 18, 1996).



Miller (1988) claims that the broadest, most inclusive (holistic) view is the transformative one expressed in the work of humanist educators such as Froebel, Tolstoy, A.S. Neill, and John Holt, among others, all of whom are committed to the healthy unfolding of individual potential through personal growth and development (p. 6). In complementary fashion, educational theorists such as Michael Apple and Henry Giroux argue for the healthy unfolding of societal potential (rather than individual) through political and social growth (ibid.).

Although Miller is convincing, I think, in arguing that the three curricular positions described can indeed be integrated into a unified framework in terms of their graduated perspectives, the philosophical underpinnings which he ascribes to each of them appear more resistant to such integration. For example, Miller (1988) links atomism with the transmission position, pragmatism with the transaction position, and holism (based on the perennial philosophy) with the transformation position (pp. 10-28), yet these philosophical positions tend to exclude each other almost by definition.

In Miller's account *atomism* is characterized by a reductionist and materialistic view of reality, a reality we know through our senses and approach in a supposedly value-neutral<sup>6</sup> way, and which we are able to control through increasingly sophisticated

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<sup>6</sup>In the light of Lyotard's (and others) critique of the "grand narrative" of western eurocentric thought concerning accuracy of representation and legitimate knowledge claims (see Greene, 1997, pp. 388-389), "value-neutrality" must be understood as a misnomer since it cannot in fact free itself

technological advancements based on empirical findings. *Pragmatism*, Miller suggests, counters the atomistic philosophy of "segmented experience" with the view of a universe in which everything is in continual flux, values arise in connection with changing contexts and consequences, and knowledge of both the material and social world arises in connection with scientific experimentation based on the testing of speculative hypotheses. *Holism*, claims Miller, stresses the fundamental unity of the ever-changing universe and insists that individual human beings are implicated in this union in a profoundly intimate way: All human knowledge, value, and social responsibility arise from the degree to which human beings become capable of understanding and appreciating this unity.

*Psychological contexts.*

Besides distinct philosophical underpinnings, there are also broad and contrasting psychological viewpoints reflected in each of Miller's three positions (1988, pp.29-45). While the philosophical orientations tend to inform specific curricular choices, associated psychological theories of learning tend to inform the choice of specific pedagogical practices. The following table briefly indicates the key aspects of the psychological contexts linked to each of Miller's three curricular positions, in terms of both *focus* and *location* of increasing psychological awareness (Miller, 1988, p. 29):

<u>Position</u>	<u>Psychology</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Focus</u>
<i>Transmission</i>	<i>Behavioral</i>	<i>Body</i>	<i>Behavior</i>
<i>Transaction</i>	<i>Cognitive</i>	<i>Mind</i>	<i>Intelligence</i>
<i>Transformation</i>	<i>Transpersonal</i>	<i>Self</i>	<i>Wisdom</i>

Behavioral psychology focuses on external, observable behavior rather than internal, understood awarenesses. Since positive and negative reinforcements are seen to increase or decrease particular behavioral responses to particular stimuli, students are manipulated directly through external influences brought to bear in particular educational

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from the value it places on itself, that is, on being (or attempting to be) value-neutral. Thus, there is no doubt that values and attitudes, as well as skills and information, form part of the content conveyed through transmissive education.



situations. This accords well with the transmission position, where the student is deemed to be essentially passive and malleable.

Instead of focusing on behavior, cognitive psychology directs attention to intelligence, most often in the restricted sense of mathematical-logical intelligence, as distinct from Gardner's (1985) now widely publicized and much more inclusive theory of multiple intelligences, including for example linguistic, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, inter-personal, and intra-personal as well as mathematical-logical modalities. Since cognitive psychology reflects an interest in mental processes, educational settings are typically organized to enhance cognitive functions through the intellectual engagement of students. This accords well with the transaction position, where the student is deemed to be necessarily active and involved mentally.

Transpersonal psychology expands interest in the inner life of human beings beyond a merely intellectual engagement to a more broadly conceived spiritual involvement within the world. While this is often closely tied to a particular religious tradition, it need not be, as the secular traditions of both Jungian psychology and psychosynthesis<sup>7</sup> amply demonstrate. Transpersonal psychologists typically acknowledge

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<sup>7</sup>According to an advertisement for an introductory workshop, entitled *Reclaiming our wholeness*, held in Lower Wolfville, NS, on January 21, 1995, psychosynthesis is: an approach to human development fostered by Roberto Assagioli beginning around 1910 and continuing to the present day. It is both a theory and a practice where the focus is to achieve a synthesis - a coming together - of the various parts of an individual's personality into a more cohesive self. That person can then function in a way that is more life-affirming and authentic. Another major aspect of psychosynthesis is its belief in the higher or transpersonal self. The higher self is seen as a source of wisdom, inspiration, unconditional love, and the will to meaning in our lives. Psychosynthesis is founded on the basic premise that human life has purpose and meaning and that we participate in an orderly universe structured to facilitate the evolution of consciousness. A corollary is that each person's life has purpose and meaning within this broader context and that it is possible for the individual

potential for "higher levels of consciousness" beyond the rational, and educational settings and activities are specifically designed to facilitate experience of these various other types of consciousness. This accords well with the transformation position, where the student is deemed capable of transforming self and society through realizing new potentials.

*Social contexts.*

For Miller (1988), the transmission position harmonizes with a laissez-faire socio-economic approach in which the market mechanistically regulates itself in response to the activity of autonomous units acting in their own self-interest (pp. 46-47). Competition is encouraged; supervening social issues are ignored; and life's activities become fragmented in individual experience (ibid.).

Predictably, a fundamentally different social context harmonizes with the transaction position (Miller, 1988, pp. 47-48). Based on the premise that human beings can bring about improvements for themselves and their world through intelligent and rational involvement, the transaction position is strongly allied with notions of rational planning and social engineering. Science and technology enjoy exalted status, since they are predicated on the active involvement of the rational intellect. Basically pragmatic, this approach works well if the people involved are able to agree on what is reasonable. Without such agreement, however, confusion mounts; things fall apart; and chaos reigns.<sup>8</sup>

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to discover this. (no page number)

<sup>8</sup>Chaos, valued negatively, has traditionally been contrasted with order, which is valued positively. However, as Briggs (1992) reminds us, chaos does not lack order; it is just nonlinear and so manifests a different order than the linear patterns with which we are more familiar. It is highly interesting to me that research in such areas as chaos, fractals, turbulence, and self-organising systems reveals that *the same thing* may be conventionally orderly and distressingly chaotic at different times in its own history. The points of transition prove to be of special interest:

Some scientists confine their idea of the chaos phenomenon to the boundary area between stable and purely random behavior. Others prefer to think in terms of degrees of chaos (with randomness at one extreme), arguing that underlying all degrees of

The transformation position reflects the relatively recent re-emergence of an ancient perspective, in which everything is seen to be interconnected through both time and space, as well as invisible and immaterial relationships (Miller, 1988, pp. 48-58). Often described in ecological terms, this approach is linked to a shift in mindset from the "bigger is better" syndrome to a preference for projects at a "human scale" -- that is, at a level which allows humanity to harmonize with its surroundings rather than to master or conquer the natural world.<sup>9</sup> Change is neither denied nor resisted but is allowed to

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chaos is a fundamental holism. But even the holists would agree that the most fertile area of chaos study lies along the ferociously active frontier that has been found to exist between stability and incomprehensible disorder. (Briggs, 1992, p. 21)

<sup>9</sup>Rachel Carson's (1962) book Silent spring is credited with sounding the alarm in recent years about the enormous problems created by a profit-driven economy geared to increasing scientific (especially chemical) control of the environment. The problem, as she explains, is not that the *physical environment* is destroyed directly through such control, but that *life* becomes stilled when too many chemicals are introduced each year to allow for the timely adjustment of living beings. Without life, the environment as we know it ceases to exist! As she argues, "the *impetuous* and heedless pace of man rather than the *deliberate* pace of nature" lead to a rapidity of change in which "there is no time" for a living response (Carson, 1962, pp. 6-7, italics added). Indeed, "time is the essential ingredient" (ibid.). Without an appreciation for time, and for the need to *take time for deliberation* as well as action, life is extinguished; the unliving, unloving world left after such a development could not sustain itself and would eventually simply deteriorate. It is thus through understanding and adopting an appropriate *rhythm*, and through respecting *development in time* over *objectification in space*, that we learn to experience harmony within our natural surroundings and natural processes.

Alvin Toffler (1990) confirms the trend toward ever increasing acceleration within modern economies (due to faster communication technologies), but argues there is now a "positive feedback loop" in place "that accelerates the acceleration" and eliminates the possibility of resisting the acceleration if a society wants to have power vis-a-vis other societies (p. 398): "Development strategies make no sense, therefore, unless they take full account of the new role of knowledge in wealth creation, and of the accelerative

come about *non-violently*, following the principle that *opposition is not to be objectified*.<sup>10</sup>

### Principles and Practices of Art in Transmissive Education

Sutherland (1979) reports that English Canada's public school curriculum in the latter 19th and early 20th centuries<sup>11</sup> was centred on the traditional subjects of reading,

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imperative that goes hand in hand with it" (p. 409). Also, as time becomes more "valuable", more and more "knowledge is used to shrink time intervals" (ibid., p. 399). Toffler (1990) claims this will lead directly to "the formation of a 21st-century economy that will operate at nearly real-time speeds", with "the entire wealth-creation cycle [being] monitored as *it happens*" (p. 398, italics original). Through metaphoric descriptions such as "speeded up metabolism" and "faster pulse rate" (i.e., of information flowing through the system), Toffler creates an image of dynamic vitality which can only suggest some new form of life altogether (i.e., at a social rather than an individual level), or a form somehow akin to cancer, where growth proceeds so rapidly in one part of an organism that it succeeds in extinguishing life in the whole.

<sup>10</sup>Miller (1988) distinguishes between this transformative position linked to holism, and the transformative position linked to Marxist sociology and defended so persuasively by such writers as Michael Apple and Henry Giroux:

One of the problems with Marxism is the objectification of the person. There is simply no recognition of the inner life of the individual and if there is, it is simply reduced to economic explanations. What we have in Marxism are faceless individuals whose identity is based on their class. More than that, the classes are divided into the good guys (proletariat) and the bad guys (bourgeoisie) and there is no compassion for the bad guys. Finally, Marxism is materialist and does not acknowledge the spiritual side of human nature. (p.55)

<sup>11</sup>I start at this point in history because it corresponds with the period during which the ideas inherent in Waldorf education were first coming into focus in Steiner's work.

writing, and arithmetic (p. 50). Simple history and geography, singing, and drawing<sup>12</sup> were auxiliary subjects added occasionally to 'leaven the fare' (ibid.). Curricular content was determined by a class Reader containing a wide range of literature, science, and history selections, along with Bible stories, classical stories, myths, and poetry.

The pedagogical method used was a five-step process derived from the ideas of European educator, philosopher, and psychologist Johann Friedrich Herbart<sup>13</sup> : Following Herbart's ideas, lessons were planned systematically and formally "to move

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<sup>12</sup>Pearse (1992) notes that drawing appeared as a distinct subject in the Nova Scotia public school curriculum as early as 1850: By the 1890's it was more commonly subsumed under the general term "art" or "handwork", and typically included mechanical and industrial as well as fine art drawing (p. 86).

<sup>13</sup>Herbart (1776-1841) was one of a number of German philosophers who, inspired by the unclarities and contradictions arising from Kant's attempt to distinguish reason from belief, attempted during the early nineteenth century to "restore knowledge to its full rights again" (Steiner, 1914/1973, p. 122). Herbart studied under Johann Gottlieb Fichte at the University of Jena in 1794, although his later ideas contrasted with important aspects of Fichte's thought; after university, Herbart became a tutor in Switzerland where he came under the influence of Pestalozzi, the great Swiss educator. In 1802 he joined the Faculty of Goettingen University and began a career as university professor of philosophy and pedagogy. His writings on education were translated and published in English as follows: The Science of Education, 1892; Letters and Lectures on Education, 1898; The ABC of Sense-Perception, 1896; The Application of Psychology to the Science of Education, 1898; An Outline of Educational Doctrine, 1901 (Steiner, 1923-25/1991, pp. 434-435).

Herbart's educational ideas were highly regarded throughout Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century. They were promulgated by a number of staunch devotees, outstanding among whom was Robert Zimmermann, professor of philosophy at the University of Vienna from 1861 to 1895, whose lectures Steiner attended while a student in Vienna. Steiner delved deeply into Herbart's work in both pedagogy and philosophy: His friend and mentor, Dr. Schroer, however, did not share in the widespread enthusiasm for Herbart's views, finding them "pedantic and prosaic"; Schroer was instrumental in encouraging Steiner to critically examine Herbart's educational ideas, and to explore the alternative implicit in Goethe's work (Steiner, 1923-25/1991, p. 56).

sequentially through the stages of preparation, presentation, comparison, generalization, and application" (Sutherland, 1979, p. 50). Dunkel (1967) reports that the three main divisions of education for Herbart were instruction, discipline, and training:

Discipline keeps the child obedient and attentive so that instruction and training can do their work before the child has developed a proper will of his own. Training works constantly with instruction and discipline to form the will directly through such means as environment, examples, and ideals. Under discipline, the child acts rightly because he must; under proper instruction and training, he acts rightly because he wills to do so. (p. 484)

Steiner had experienced the influence of Herbart in his own education: One of his teachers at the Realschule was a strong follower of Herbart, creating an interest in Steiner to know more about this approach. Thus, coincidentally with experiencing the effects of it, Steiner also studied Herbart's educational philosophy and psychology<sup>14</sup>. His study of Herbart continued for a number of years (Steiner, 1923-25/1991, pp.48ff.).

In discussing Herbart's philosophical contributions to world thinking, Steiner (1914/1973) notes that Herbart starts from a point exactly opposite Hegel's starting point:

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<sup>14</sup>In a course of lectures for the new teachers at the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany, Steiner drew attention to the fact that Herbartian pedagogy "founded its educational standards on Herbartian psychology" (Steiner, 1919/1990, p. 26). Although Dunkel (1969) argues initially that for Herbart "the psychology-pedagogy relation was much less obvious and explicit [than the ethics-pedagogy relation], at least at the superficial level," he goes on to confirm Steiner's view by asserting that

probably a fairer estimate is obtained, however, if one looks at the general principles underlying the pedagogy rather than at specific references and inferences. In this larger sense Herbart's psychologocial ideas indubitably permeated the whole fabric. (pp. 98-99)

While it is not remarkable that pedagogical practice should be founded on psychological insight, what is noteworthy here is Steiner's insistence that Herbartian psychology itself expresses an inadequate idea of the human psyche or soul, making any pedagogy derived from it similarly inadequate: "The essential content, the relation of the individual human being and the whole universe, has been lost. Without this, it is not possible to understand what it means to be human, nor how to educate human beings" (Steiner, 1919/1990, p. 27).

Where Hegel embraced the notion of contradiction as fundamental to his whole understanding of reality and process, Herbart – more mathematically and logically minded – was sufficiently disturbed by contradiction to conclude that it can only ever give evidence of superficial appearance, not reality itself (pp. 185ff.). For Herbart, true reality must be comprehended through abstract thought as "a plurality of simple, never-changing entities": The appearance of contradictory reality arises when we perceive the various relationships among such entities, not the entities themselves (ibid.).

A significant educational implication of this Herbartian view is that the human soul or psyche "is, as are all other real entities, simple and unchangeable in itself" (Steiner, 1914/1973, p. 187). Just as an individual number does not change when it is involved in different relations (i.e., 3 is still 3 whether it is added to 4 to make 7, subtracted from 5 to make 2, multiplied by 6 to make 18, or divided by 1 to make itself), neither does the human entity change as a result of all its numerous relations in the world. The most anyone can do is to pay attention to the play of relations concerning any particular person, and to realize that such play centres on one simple entity, which, however, in itself can never be intimately known or changed.

In this view, self-consciousness exists only as spectator-consciousness (that is, observing and calculating the potentially confusing effects of varied relationships, without the possibility of changing inwardly through reflexive involvement of Self within relationship), and never as participator-consciousness (that is, one in which consciousness itself undergoes a change precipitated by its own awareness of itself as a being in relationship with other beings). Here there is no chance for the Self to awaken to an inner, active involvement with learning, nor does it become aware of (or experience) transformative possibilities within the Self as a result. In a detailed discussion of Herbart's view of the human soul (in the sense also of mind, or psyche), Dunkel (1969) confirms Steiner's analysis of the chief difficulty of Herbartian psychology: "To put the matter bluntly, Herbart was going to have trouble moving from his noncontradictory, unchanging reals to the shifting, contradictory, paradoxical world of human experience" (pp. 44-45).

As Steiner (1914/1973) notes in reference to Herbart's view, "Man's actions and artistic creations are completely without foundation in this world picture" (p. 189). Black

(1966/1984) cites research conducted by the Eastern Arts Association of the United States whose conclusions are even stronger and indicate that teaching methods based on imposition of concepts which do not arise from the child's own experience do not simply *ignore* the child's creativity, but *positively block it* (p. 28).

What apparently happens is that a stereotypical pseudo-understanding literally takes the place of a more flexible, responsive understanding characterized by appreciation of subtle differences. In this way concepts are learned which can only be characterized as "rigid", "dead", or "mechanical" because they are not capable of adapting to changing conditions. In similar fashion, Whitehead (1929/1967) warns against training children in conceptual thinking which is essentially *inert*, because ideas are "merely received into the mind without being utilised, or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations" (p. 1). Very recently Osin and Lesgold (1996), in a historical review of educational research findings, repeat the argument that "for too long, we have seen learning as the storage of verbal material in the mind [leading to] severe problems, especially the disjunction between school learning and competence in the world" (p. 623).

The dynamic is the same when a too-detailed course of study is assigned for teacher use, posing "a potential threat to the initiative of the teacher" who is reduced to becoming "a tool, mechanically following directions which may be completely wrong for the children, the surroundings and the immediate situation" (Hart, 1984, p. 26). Given Black's<sup>15</sup> (1966/1984) definition of art as "the assertion of that positive, essential

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<sup>15</sup>In the introduction to Readings in Canadian Art Education, MacGregor (1984) reviews Black's background: C. Dudley Gaitskell and Sam Black rank high among the persons who gave shape to and dominated Canadian art education in the 1950s and 1960s. They were separated geographically (Gaitskell in Ontario, Black in Vancouver) and occupationally (Gaitskell with the Ministry of Education, Black with the University of British Columbia). But they shared a common regard for the philosophy of the British scholar, Sir Herbert Read, and it was Read's ideas that formed a significant part of the philosophy of the Canadian Society for Education Through Art. The Society was formed in the early 1950s, and has been a national force ever since.



freedom to be an individual; an individual capable of constructive diversion and creative action" (p. 23), it is not surprising to find such art absent in a transmissive approach.

Indeed in the transmissive position art is more likely to be viewed either as a necessary vocational skill, or as a polished veneer rounding out the accomplishments of gentlefolk. This second view follows an old pattern already remarked by Locke (1693/1934) over two hundred years earlier, when he was asked to advise on the education of the son of a wealthy friend:

When he can write well and quick, I think it may be convenient not only to continue the exercise of his hand in writing, but also to improve the use of it further in drawing; a thing very useful to a Gentleman in several Occasions; but especially if he travels. (p. 136)

In parallel manner, the first view (i.e., of art as necessary vocational skill) connects with the notion of artisans and craftspeople who are technically competent to produce useful articles for the occasions of daily life.

Collingwood (1938/1958) explains how these two views -- that is, art as luxury over and above the practical demands of life, and art as technical competence directly tied to the practical demands of life -- are in fact two sides of the same coin (pp. 15-41). Both are results of what he calls "the technical theory of art": a theory implicit in the long-established use of the terms *fine arts* and *practical arts* (ibid., p. 36).

The technical theory of art is based on what Collingwood (1938/1958) claims is an obsolete definition of art, better understood today as *craft* (p. 15). Characterized by a number of clearly identifiable principles in terms of the relationship between ends and means (including the crucial differentiation between form and matter), the technical theory of art was first worked out by the Greeks and, whether they intended it or not<sup>16</sup>,

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Gaitskell was a prime mover in the formation of that organization, and he and Black were furthermore active in the International Society for Education Through Art, giving Canadian art education a visibility abroad that it had never enjoyed previously. (p. 3)

<sup>16</sup>Collingwood (1938/1958) admits that not all ancient Greek philosophers promulgated the technical theory of art as he describes it: He mentions Plato in particular as sometimes

has since become the basis "upon which both the theory and the practice of the arts has for the most part rested down to the present time" (Collingwood, 1938/1958, p. 19).

The two prominent standpoints from which most people view the world (according to Collingwood), namely economics and psychology, both suggest that art is intended to produce pre-ordained reactions to specific stimuli:

To the economist, art presents the appearance of a specialized group of industries; the artist is a producer, his audience consumers who pay him for benefits ultimately definable in terms of the states of mind which his productivity enables them to enjoy. To the psychologist, the audience consists of persons reacting in certain ways to stimuli provided by the artist; and the artist's business is to know what reactions are desired or desirable, and to provide the stimuli which will elicit them. (Collingwood, 1938/1958, p. 19)

In a painstaking discussion of the errors, implications, and confusions inevitably involved in this view, Collingwood (1938/1958) argues that art considered as mechanistic stimulus for a pre-ordained response (economic or psychological) amounts to nothing more than an "anti-aesthetic" rather than an "aesthetic" view, since it matches the operation of any drug, "noxious or wholesome" (p. 34). On the other hand, if the stimulus-response dynamic is not identified as art *per se*, but "as a consequence arising in certain conditions out of the nature of art", then psychology has in fact done precious little to illuminate the real nature of art, whatever it may be (Collingwood, 1938/1958, pp. 35-36).

Collingwood (1938/1958) argues that the long-standing tradition of "the beautiful" is concerned not at all with art as such, but with craft — that is, beauty refers to what is admired as being well done, well executed, well crafted, well presented, well devised, well suited to needs or desires, well designed, well integrated, well constructed, well thought out, and so on (p. 39).<sup>17</sup> To imagine that an aesthetic experience consists simply

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suggesting a different view (p. 19).

<sup>17</sup>In this connection, it may be pertinent to share something of my own experience during eleven years of job-sharing an elementary school music position. My partner and I naturally coordinated efforts each year to present several school-wide musical concerts for the parents and community. Although we worked well together, and our areas of expertise were complementary, there was nevertheless a subtle difference

in the pleasant response we feel to something perceived as "beautiful" is to misunderstand

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in philosophy underlying our approaches to performance. Whereas my partner understood a "good" artistic performance to be well-rehearsed and technically perfect, I understood "good" artistic performance to entail a spirited sharing of something which was both moving and inspirational in direct proportion to the care and attention invested in it by the performers themselves. Frequently we ended up with the "best of both", that is, a *beautifully crafted* presentation which was also *spirited and moving*. On one occasion, however, when I had experimented all term with an after-school xylophone program for a group of "troublesome" boys, and then secured my partner's (dubious) agreement to include them in the end of term concert, I realized that in spite of tremendous spiritual investment on their part, and what was for them actually an impressive performance, my partner felt that it was not up to the performance standard she upheld. In following school terms such students continued to play and learn for themselves, but were never again included in school-wide concerts. This was a deep, inexplicable disappointment to me at the time.

Through teaching in Cape Breton each summer, I am aware of similar performance dynamics elsewhere. Considering that Cape Bretoners are more and more highly regarded for their spirited and moving renditions of music and dance, I find it noteworthy that at community concerts throughout the island people of all ages (especially children) easily participate both formally and informally in the "fun". Without fail, their spirited involvement is welcomed and encouraged by those attending, even when the performance is not technically perfect. In contrast, at community events in and around my home near Wolfville (on the mainland), performers of all ages are tacitly expected to be technically polished before "deigning to present themselves publicly". Spirited but amateurish efforts are sometimes met with outright disapproval; there is often criticism, embarrassment, or patronizing tolerance. Whatever the reasons for this are, it reveals a different view of art from the one in Cape Breton.

Yet a third example of such differences may be gleaned from the fact that Acadia University, in a recent art show featuring work by students, faculty, and alumnae, refused to exhibit any paintings which were not framed. When asked why a picture on stiff paper couldn't simply be hung from a clip, the curator replied that it would "look tacky", though she was visibly disconcerted to hear that Dalhousie University had not had a problem with displaying artwork in this way in a similar show (personal communication, October 1996). Her point was that work which was not well presented would not be *beautiful* and so could not properly be considered art.

art (Collingwood, 1938/1958, pp. 40-41). That such misunderstanding must somehow underlie the view of art as it appears in transmissive education is all too clear:

The aesthetic experience is an autonomous activity. It arises from within; it is not a specific reaction to a stimulus proceeding from a specific type of external object....aesthetic theory is the theory not of beauty but of art. The theory of beauty, if instead of being brought (as it rightly was by Plato) into connexion with the theory of love it is brought into connexion with aesthetic theory, is merely an attempt to construct an aesthetic on a 'realistic' basis, that is, to explain away the aesthetic activity by appeal to a supposed quality of the things with which, in that experience, we are in contact; this supposed quality, invented to explain the activity, being in fact nothing but the activity itself, falsely located not in the agent but in his external world. (ibid.)

Gaitskell<sup>18</sup> (1969/1984), through recalling his own experience, gives an illuminating picture of "art" in Canadian public schools reflecting a transmission position:

When we got into the schools what did we find but Thorndike stimulus-response psychology, where you push the button and somebody does something; where you repeat and repeat and repeat until somebody is conditioned to do a thing. Some of these curious activities that were going on in the schools! People were learning principles of design where the teacher was saying, "Now every design has to have so and so, now learn it. And if you can't write it out, come back after school." There was not much chance of thinking you could not deduce things. You had to accept them in a mechanical way, and memorize them and repeat them like the multiplication tables. They were doing shading and perspective drawing. In all these activities, they were making photographic drawings. They were doing exercises in colour, and as far as history was concerned, it was just a memorization of facts, not a history of art.... The psychology was that of Thorndike, as I said, which was straight behaviourism, and a man in Toronto called Peter Sandiford wrote a textbook about behaviouristic psychology in relation to education and this was the bible everywhere. You couldn't get away from it. It was steeped in Canadian art education or art education was steeped in it.<sup>19</sup> (p. 7)

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<sup>18</sup>See footnote number 15 in this chapter.

<sup>19</sup>In his text Educational psychology: An objective study, Sandiford (1930) aligns himself with what he calls the new psychology "dominated by the scientific attitude and aim.... Its data are the facts of experience which are communicable and verifiable" (pp. 2-3). Since "science demands objectivity and experimentation, modern psychology, in contrast with

With Collingwood and Gaitskell, Black (1966/1984) concurs that art in a transmissive education was not the same thing as art defined later on: "I am aware that what passes for art in a great number of schools and education institutions is not art at all" (p. 20).

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ancient, is, therefore, objective rather than subjective; experimental rather than speculative" (ibid.). He continues:

Its extreme form, usually called behaviourism, is a purely objective, experimental branch of natural science, more closely related to physiology than to any other of the sciences. Its subject-matter is the behaviour or activities of human beings. With consciousness as subject-matter it will have nothing to do, claiming that consciousness is neither a definable nor a usable concept so far as science is concerned. But some critic might say that physiology also studies behaviour objectively; wherein does it differ from psychology? The answer is simple. Whereas physiology studies the actions of parts of the body - organs and the like - psychology studies the reactions of the body as a whole. Such a conception of psychology makes a clean break with the past. Especially does it break with consciousness and introspection. (Sandiford, 1930, p. 3, italics added)

To even conceive of the body as a whole would seem to imply a necessary awareness of relation which belies Sandiford's further claim that "Behaviourism discards consciousness because it cannot provide the factual data demanded by a natural science" (ibid.). In any event, he understands modern psychology to say,

let the individual enjoy conscious experiences as much as he likes;... but do not let him impose his introspective speculations on the scientific world. There they have no place at all, nor, so far as can be judged at present, can they ever find a place. They are, however, the legitimate province of the speculative philosopher. (Sandiford, 1930, p. 3)

In his discussion of mental images in relation to memory, Sandiford notes that "conventional psychology" is concerned with images in relation to sensation and perception; psychologists following this approach often classify people into "visibles, audiles, olfactives, gustatives, and tactiles, according to the dominant type of image used in remembering" (Sandiford, 1930, p. 237). For his part, he dismisses all this because "the treatment is so highly speculative, and so little open to experimental investigation, that we gladly leave this aspect of the subject to the metaphysicians who revel in introspective orgies of this nature" (ibid.).

Concerning the widespread dissatisfaction with mechanical teaching methods aimed at uniformity and passivity among students, however, Thorndike (1911) suggests that such dissatisfaction should not be credited to anything intrinsically faulty in the methods themselves, but rather to the fact that no method of schooling is suited for all, and so inevitably problems arise whenever one method is socially mandated for the public at large (p. 44ff.). In other words, as education became acknowledged and accepted during the latter nineteenth century as a public duty, and school attendance became compulsory,<sup>20</sup> methods which formerly were perhaps effective applied to a relatively small section of the population suddenly were clearly unsuitable when applied on a much wider scale. For example, as Thorndike (1911) argues in the following passage:

The environmental stimulus adequate to arouse a certain power or ideal or habit in one man may be hopelessly inadequate to do so in another. Washing bottles in a drugshop was, if a common story is true, adequate to decide Faraday's career; and the voyage on the Beagle is reputed to have made Darwin a naturalist for life. But if all the youth of the land were put to work in drug-shops and later sent on scientific expeditions, the result would not be a million Faradays and Darwins, or even a million chemists and naturalists. All that one man may need to be free is a vote; but even a long education in self-direction may be inadequate for another. Being told a few words suffices to secure the habit of reading in one child, while the child beside him remains illiterate after two years of careful tuition. The amount of stimulus required in some cases is so infinitesimal that the power seems to spring absolutely from the man himself. (p. 47)

Thorndike (1911) identifies this dynamic of individual differences as one of two important limitations on the influence any environment has on shaping the individuals subject to it; the other is the question of whether the environmental force is avoidable or not by the individual (p. 45). In other words, the effects of any education are greatly intensified if exposure to that education is made compulsory. Taken together, these two

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<sup>20</sup>While I do not have exact dates for these changes in North America, it is likely that they followed after similar changes were made in Europe. Clouder (1995) notes that "in most western European countries compulsory free elementary education started coming into being between the 1860s and 1880s and was then extended to secondary education in the twentieth century". (p. 2).

factors could perhaps account for much of the dissatisfaction with education as it was in the early part of this century. Not only was the traditional education being extended to many additional pupils for whom it was apparently unsuited, but attendance was compulsory, in keeping with the fact that education was now considered to be a public duty rather than a private choice. The results of these two limitations were that actual art education in public schools suffered even though "art" did enjoy some social status by being included in the curriculum at all.

Yet another reason for the "somewhat violent reaction against the uniformity of method that for so long clutched and mechanized the schools" is identified by Suzzallo (1911). He acknowledges the mounting protests by parents and by youths themselves, but the pivotal factor in bringing about change was, in his mind, when school supervisors were introduced and "the supervision of teachers became as inflexible and as unindividual as the teaching of children", causing a situation in which "the teachers themselves were caught in the iron machinery of their own making" (Suzzallo, 1911, p. v). Hart (1984), writing from a different perspective several generations later, confirms that awareness of individuals as individuals is vital for teachers as well as students:

Linking what occurs in the pupil-teacher relationship with what occurs in the teacher-supervisor relationship indicates significant parallel purposes....In the job of trying to guide teachers, especially in art where the background of teachers varies greatly, personal contact is important. Trying to accomplish further development through memos, directives, outlines, lectures, workshops, or impersonal group demonstrations offers only superficial help. When an individual becomes acutely aware that what is being said has immediate meaning to him, these facts will become significant and useful additions to understanding. (p. 26)

The "iron machinery" of the "good old days", has been described somewhat caustically by Gaitskell (1969/1984): The teacher "talked all the time", telling the students exactly what they were to do and what they were to draw, giving drills for the development of specific artistic skills, teaching principles of design didactically; requiring memorization of facts, and fostering competition among students; marking, grading, and testing the students' artwork as if it were somehow possible to establish measures that were valid, reliable, and objective (pp. 9-11). Rarely was there recognition or

appreciation of the individual learner with an idiosyncratic background, independent style of learning, individual needs, unique talents, self-aware purposes and creative possibilities. Most of the teaching was apparently

based on the belief that, from the earliest moments human beings must be told what to do, how to do; what and which to like and how to like it. Such proclaimed aims as teaching children to think all too often mean 'think as I do' or in art education mean 'see as I see', 'like what I like', and even 'work as I work.' Such methods of art instruction can only ensure one outcome: an utter distaste for art in a whole generation. (Black, 1966/1984, p. 20)

Although singing classes were ostensibly used as relaxation periods to break up the more strenuous academic fare, they too were generally taught from a transmissive position in the early part of the century (Hill, Richer, Putland, Barton, and Dunning, no date). For example, songs were generally chosen by the teacher so that a set sequence of pre-determined theoretical characteristics would be gradually introduced to the students and assimilated by them: songs with quarter notes only, with divided beats, with held notes of varying duration, and so on; songs in the various flat and sharp keys; songs with simple and compound rhythms; songs with basic chordal accompaniments and countermelodies; songs with repetitive refrains, rondo form, recitative motifs, and more.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, the songs themselves would generally be taught "by rote": The teacher would sing a phrase, clap a rhythm, or chant the words, and the students were expected

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<sup>21</sup>Although my discussion highlights the fact that this approach was used early in the history of Canadian public education, this should not be understood to mean that it no longer exists in Canadian schools today. In fact, the opposite is true, since the transmissive approach has proven to be remarkably persistent in mainstream schooling and will probably always have some part to play in educational endeavors. For example, in my own mainstream teaching in Nova Scotia during the 1980's, I was given a music curriculum to teach which specified at which grade level each note was to be introduced, each rhythm reinforced, each interval mastered. The assumption that learning can be subdivided into discrete units which are introduced, reinforced, and mastered sequentially reflects the atomistic and behavioristic underpinnings of the transmissive approach in education.



to repeat exactly what they had heard.<sup>22</sup> Although note reading was not necessarily included in all singing programs, wherever it was present it was characterized by "laborious and uninteresting drill" (Morgan, 1947, p. 6). Musical tables were presented for memorization; rules were provided for finding the tonic in various keys; set definitions of musical terms were to be learned by heart; scale studies were practiced repetitively.

In all singing classes, detailed instructions were given as to how to stand, to breathe, to articulate words, to count time, to modulate dynamics: In virtually all respects the children were expected to follow the lead of the singing director. This focus

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<sup>22</sup>An unexpected glimpse into the deep-seated eurocentric bias of this view is possible through Bess Lomax Hawes's (1972) anecdotal report of an experience she had when researching and recording the clapping rhythms of Black Georgia Sea Islanders:

The Islanders, of course, don't count their rhythmic patterns out; they "feel" them and do them. Learners will likely have to count, but some of the "feeling" that makes this complex musical interplay possible may be made clearer by the following incident. Taping one day, I wanted to be sure I had captured each rhythmic part clearly and asked the Islanders to record for me, starting their clapping parts consecutively. I asked Mrs. Jones, who always clapped lead baritone, to begin and explained that I wanted Miss Emma Ramsey, the group's stellar tenor clapper, to come in next so, as I put it, "I can see how her clap rhythm works against yours." Mrs. Jones smiled gently. "Emma don't clap *against* me; she claps *with* me."

Suddenly the cultural gulf between us yawned very wide indeed. To me, as to all white Americans, I suspect, a person who is "with" me must do just what I am doing, must copy my movements (and my ideas and my speech and my dress and my clapping). "Clap with me, children," and all the little first-graders watch carefully to see when the teacher spansks her hands together so that they can do it then, too. To Mrs. Jones and the Sea Islander, to be "with" somebody means to respond to them, to complement and support their silences, to fill in their statements (musical, physical, and verbal) with little showers of comment, to answer their remarks -- to clap a *different* pattern. (p. 24)

on expert, authoritative direction by the teacher is typical of the transmissive approach.

Not until the locus of authority as it was understood in society at large began to shift during the early twentieth century was there a similar shift in how authority was to be viewed within educational contexts. Even then, a certain amount of transmissive education persisted in both singing and drawing classes, due to the enduring notion that technical competence necessarily plays a part in all artistic activity. As Collingwood (1938/1958) reminds us, even when it is understood that art itself does not consist in technique, it is nevertheless true that a "vast amount of intelligent and purposeful labour,... [and] painful and conscientious self-discipline" plays a part in all artistic endeavour (p. 26).

In his discussion of the Group of Seven, those practicing artists who during the early part of this century developed a distinctively Canadian style and subject matter in their painting activity, Lord (1974) explains how parallel dynamics were operating within the educational and the commercial art world in English Canada. Just as teachers in schools initially assumed an unquestioned authority over their students, and supervisors assumed an unquestioned authority over the teachers, so did the imperial art centres of the Old World assume an unquestioned authority over artistic expression in Canada. Dominated by an "art-for-art's sake formalism", art in the imperial centres was understood as a luxury for the wealthy and privileged: Because of Canada's continuing colonial condition, many artists simply "duplicated patterns from the imperial centres rather than originating their own" (Lord, 1974, p. 118). Similarly, educational art was simply a matter of children following the teacher's directions in order to produce pleasing, predictable results.

As resistance to imperialism grew during the early decades of this century, and national commitment to Canada was strengthened through a growing printing and publishing trade featuring local subject matter for local consumption, so did the socialist ethic and democratic spirit rise (*ibid.*, p. 116). A consciously anti-imperialist patriotism, combined with increasing employment opportunities in the fields of commercial design and illustration, led to an upsurge in interest in a new Canadian visual art, one which would be free and independent of formalist conventions, rooted firmly in the colours,

shapes, design elements, contrasts of light and shade, and actual subject matter experienced by Canadians in their own land (Lord, 1974, pp. 115-8).

Just so did the "anti-authoritarian" educational sentiment arise that children should be free to express in their drawings and paintings what they themselves experienced: As Steggle (1984) remarks, by the early twentieth century the "phenomenal impact of *child art*... was to revolutionize the teaching of art as a school subject" (p. 55, italics original). And in 1913, the Supervisor of Education for Halifax wrote,

The impulsive tendency towards art in all the stages of civilization shows that it is a fundamental characteristic of the human mind, not a mere luxury. The perfection of art is coincident with highest civilization. In modern times the development of art has become an industrial necessity. (McKay, 1913, p. 157)

Catalogues for the Group of Seven painting exhibitions at the Art Gallery of Toronto in the early 1920s echo this view at the level of the practicing artist within society at large:

These pictures have all been executed in Canada during the past year. They express Canadian experience, and appeal to that experience in the onlooker. These are still pioneer days for artists and after the fashion of pioneers we believe wholeheartedly in the land. Some day we think that the land will return the compliment and believe in the artist, not as a nuisance or a luxury but as a real civilising factor in the national life. (cited in Lord, 1974, p. 136)

Increasingly, students too were understood to be "pioneers" in learning new things. More and more they were expected to participate "wholeheartedly" in the learning process, to reflect on their experiences, and to express both their experiences and their reflections openly and unabashedly with others.

Nor was the anti-authority movement absent from musical contexts. As Morgan (1947) notes, a new democratic spirit was evident:<sup>23</sup> "Elementary school music should

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<sup>23</sup>Lilla Pitts (1947), past president of the USA Music Educators National Conference, testifies to the widespread collaborative input given by educators across North America during the 1940's toward the goal of reforming and improving music education during tumultuous times during which "it was evident that music education had to come to grips with the drastic influences and major changes in ideas, institutions, and conditions that were affecting every other area of human thought, action and association" (Pitts, 1947, p. ix). She

be for all the children of all the people....The elementary school child must be surrounded by situations that bring him all types of musical experience which he can enjoy....each one of us is under the necessity of searching out procedures of teaching that will make our classroom the highest example of a functioning democracy" (pp. 4, 5, xii).

These trends give evidence of some of the social and political forces behind the growing awareness of the constructive possibilities of transactive education, indicating a shift from the rigidities of behavioristic psychology to the interactive opportunities of cognitive psychology. That not everyone fancied the freer, independent spirit, however, is clear from Frye's (1940/1971) reminder that the "predigested picturesque" was often preferred to "new problems of form and outlines"; and "dreamy association-responses" were in many cases preferable to "detached efforts of organized vision" (pp. 201-202).

Similarly, in education not everyone who talked about the need for change was willing or able to actively foster it. Hart (1984), for example, notes that as late as 1947 most elementary school teachers in Ontario were expected to teach art when their own instruction in the subject was limited to a one-year course in Grade 9: "Since teachers-in-training have only a limited time for art, many new teachers (especially in the Primary Division) find themselves trying to apply a variety of art media and techniques that they know very little about" (p. 25). Add to this the further fact that

All of the problems of teaching are compounded in the art lessons. There are more materials to prepare and distribute; there are more chances of minor but disrupting accidents occurring when children are working with messy materials; there are more techniques to apply to each of a variety of materials. (ibid.)

Given this situation, and the feeling of helplessness it can so easily engender, it is perhaps not surprising that many teachers simply preferred to continue a transmissive education

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notes, however, that this commitment toward "widening horizons" in music education actually began in 1907, when the MENC was founded, and that from that time it had been "gathering power each year and will continue to do so with increasing momentum so long as loyal music educators, such as the thousands whose experience and cooperative effort are represented in these pages, continue to inhabit the earth" (ibid., p. x).

based on the Herbartian system of authoritatively imposed instruction, discipline, and training, long after such education on its own was deemed inadequate by the mounting wave of progressive education.

A further point in Herbart's world view is that where relationships exist, human beings experience feelings -- positive feelings where the elements in relationship are concordant with each other, and negative feelings where the elements in relationship are discordant. Understanding the fact that feeling accompanies perception of relationship allows human beings to comprehend both ethics and aesthetics: Moral and aesthetic feelings thus arise -- in the Herbartian system -- not in terms of things in themselves, but in terms of relations between things (Steiner, 1914/1973, pp. 188-190). Thus, moral feelings are evoked by the relation between 'moral elements', such as will and conviction, or strength and weakness, while the elements themselves are simply amoral. Similarly, aesthetic feelings are evoked by the relation of 'aesthetic elements', such as the juxtaposition of different colours, or foreground and background, or different musical tones, while the individual colours or tones themselves are aesthetically indifferent.

In practice, this understanding meant that teachers generally took a formalist approach, unwittingly asserting the value of conventional designs and structures by virtue of the fact that human beings generally take for granted as fitting that with which they are most familiar. Though Dewey (1934/1958) later argued against such a theory<sup>24</sup> on the grounds that colours and tones actually perceived 'satisfy our vital needs and habits'

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<sup>24</sup>Dewey (1934/1958) wrote in response to Vernon Lee, "an artist of undoubted sensitiveness, [who] has developed this theory most consistently" (p. 101). That it accords with Herbart's theory can be seen from this description:

Sensory qualities are said to be non-esthetic because, unlike the relations we actively enact, they are forced upon us....What counts is what we do, not what we receive. The essential thing esthetically is our own mental activity of starting, traveling, returning to a starting point, holding on to the past, carrying it along; the movement of attention backwards and forwards, as these acts are executed by the mechanisms of motor imagery. The resulting relations define shape and shape is wholly a matter of relations. (ibid.)

as much if not more than relations we impose upon them, he recognized the significance involved in *actively* assigning relations to particular elements *passively* perceived:

The recognition of the roles of relations and of activity on our part (the latter being physiologically mediated in all probability by our motor mechanisms) is welcome in contrast with theories that recognize only sense-qualities as they are passively received and undergone. (p. 102)

The possibility that motor activity actually mediates such mental activity was present also in Dewey's own thinking; it explains to a large extent why he valued physical activity in school – not for its own sake, but for its mediational value in fostering mental activity.

Perhaps enough has been said to indicate how logical and convincing were many of Herbart's ideas. Furthermore, as Steiner (1914/1973) points out, Herbart's work "has become fruitful in the field of pedagogy" precisely because Herbart was able to articulate "laws of psychological processes" which "make it possible for us to devise a technique in education for the development of mental abilities" (p. 191). Many others besides Steiner have realized that to have command of a reliable technique when confronted with a difficult task is definitely attractive to most people! Steiner attributes this attractiveness to the fact that such technical competence "awakens a feeling of security".

What is bypassed in such a view however, at least in Steiner's analysis, is the necessity for people to take initiative: Once the "thought material is supplied", "everything else can be left to logical necessity, which works automatically" (ibid.). To further illuminate this point, Steiner (1914/1973) contrasts Herbart's thinking with Hegel's, which is "saturated with reality": There is "more warmth, more life in this mode of thinking", with the result that "the thinker continually has to take the initiative" (p. 191). Of course, this is harder, because it requires effort and "constant support of the soul forces", which may or may not be up to the task (ibid.). Thus, whenever the "products of instruction" primarily "stress display of technical skill and too frequently reflect the teacher's ideas and tastes," it can be taken as a signal that methods have been used which are likely to kill initiative and "which take the responsibility of choice and decision out of the child's or student's hands" (Black, 1966/1984, p. 20).

Much of the import of Steiner's own educational work can be understood as an attempt to actively resist the temptation to automatically produce and reproduce technical

competence for its own sake. Instead, he was vitally concerned with strengthening soul forces sufficiently to enable individuals to take initiative in their lives.<sup>25</sup> In this sense, Steiner developed a way of thinking and an approach to education which contrasts sharply with Herbartian views and was more in tune with the progressive education movement.

To repeat, the Herbartian approach to education was widely practiced and well regarded throughout English Canada during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>26</sup> Sutherland (1979) ties the widespread appeal of this approach to the strongly

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<sup>25</sup>This is such a key issue that it deserves further mention. Steiner (1929) emphasizes it like this:

Verily, this is written in the karma of every single anthroposophist: "Be a man of initiative, and beware lest through hindrances of your own body, or hindrances that otherwise come in your way, you do not find the centre of your being, where is the source of your initiative. Observe that in your life all joy and sorrow, all happiness and pain will depend on the finding or not finding of your own individual initiative." This should stand written as though in golden letters, constantly before the soul of the anthroposophist. Initiative lies in his karma, and much of what meets him in this life will depend on the extent to which he can become willingly, actively conscious of it.

You must realise that very, very much has been said in these few words. For in our time there is extraordinarily much that can lead one astray with respect to all that guides and directs one's judgment; and without clear judgment on the conditions of life, initiative will not find its way forth from the deep foundations of the soul.

<sup>26</sup>In a broad review of curriculum development in Canada, Tomkins (1979) cites Phillips' assertion that Herbartian influence was felt from "coast to coast" (p. 13). Tomkins does not endorse this assertion outright, but suggests that it stands as "an interesting historical hypothesis worth testing": He does however imply that support for the hypothesis can be inferred from the widespread influence of the Herbartian movement transmitted through teacher training programs which made use of a well-respected text on Public School Methods published in 1908 under the co-editorship of the prominent American Herbartian Charles McMurry (ibid.). Tomkins (1979) also cites Quick's research which purportedly demonstrates that "Herbartianism became dominant in Ontario by

nationalistic mood arising in Canada during the latter half of the nineteenth century,<sup>27</sup> a mood which encouraged "school promoters" to adopt educational methods "to ensure that all children learned to believe, to think, and to behave in the same way" (p. 49). To be sure, during the very years when English Canada was creating its public education system (between the 1840's and the 1880's), there had been major disruptive factors at work: rapid westward expansion, intense local and regional loyalties at odds with the push towards confederation, and anxieties created by the civil war going on just south of the border, to mention but a few. As McDonald (1979) explains:

The confusion and contradiction that prevailed during this early period were painfully evident to Canadian educators. At one level a virtual political war was being waged by the linguistic and religious

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1905, especially in teacher training, to the point that under its influence the next thirty years would be a distinctive educational era in that province" (p. 6). In his discussion, Tomkins -- like Sutherland -- explains the appeal of Herbartianism for Canadian educators around the turn of the century in terms of its perceived "potential for bringing order out of curriculum chaos at a time when the demands of new disciplines and new knowledge needs were increasingly importunate" (ibid.).

<sup>27</sup>This early sense of nationalism reflected the drive to unify and consolidate a vast diversity of experience across Canada. Not until some cohesion was achieved on this score did the further aspect of nationalism develop in terms of anti-imperialism. These two waves of nationalism had opposite effects on education: The pull to consolidate Canada first influenced educators and policy makers to impose a relatively uniform treatment on all students; the later pull to separate from imperialistic powers influenced them to become more attentive to issues of freedom and individual difference. In both cases, the results were caused by nationalistic fervor: The difference might be expressed imaginatively by considering that at one moment the need to establish identity in terms of a strongly centered union was uppermost, while later the need arose to affirm identity as a multiplicity of individuals. I suspect that a similar dynamic operates at personal as well as national levels. Such reciprocal relations between unity and multiplicity parallel to a certain extent the reciprocity of center and periphery. Both are explored mathematically through projective geometry in texts like Whicher's (1989) Sunspace: Science at a threshold of spiritual understanding; they are key issues in this thesis as well.



minorities over the educational issue, while at another level a sustained attempt was being made to make the classroom an instrument for national unity by demanding that it accept as one of its primary roles the making of future citizens who were loyal and committed to the new political reality. These perverse problems did not daunt schoolmen, although their responses varied depending on the period, issue, and place. If there is a common thread that runs throughout their responses, however, it is the unquestioned belief that solutions lay in adjustments to the school curriculum. (p. 63)

In a recent discussion of "national-consciousness goals and realities in south and east Asian education", Tarvin and Faraj (1989) note that educational goals may be divided into three major types: (1) national-consciousness goals, (2) economic development goals, and (3) individual-enrichment goals (p. 238). While all three types are generally present in any educational system at any time, Tarvin and Faraj argue that the specific plans of action adopted by educators and social planners clearly reflect one or another as a current focus of attention (*ibid.*).

Following this argument, it is easy to understand that in a time of intense nation-building, such as was present during the mid and latter 1800's in Canada, educational methods were adopted which were likely to enhance the solidarity of the state rather than the individuality of the person. Hence the preference in English Canada during the latter half of the nineteenth century for a philosophical, psychological, and pedagogical system such as Herbart's, which allows for the development of competence while disallowing any basis for individually creative questioning or challenging of the status quo. As McDonald (1979) confirms, the primary focus of educators at that time was the "matter of producing law-respecting and law-abiding citizens":

During those early years one objective of schooling was clearly and consistently articulated and it seemed to subsume all other declared objectives of education. There is overwhelming evidence to show that character training was believed to be the primary objective of schooling. With near missionary zeal and insignificant resistance, it was urged that what Canada needed most was 'good' citizens who lived morally upright lives according to the norms of an assumed Christian standard; a standard that was self-evident to those properly socialized.(p.66)

That such a focus could diminish the significance of individual intellectual goals is clear from the comments of Adam Crooks, Ontario's first Minister of Education, who "warned

in a series of public addresses to local teachers' associations that teachers were not to promote the 'intellectual culture' of youth at the expense of 'moral culture' (Crooks, 1876, p.8, in McDonald, 1979, p.66).<sup>28</sup>

Gradually, however, in response to changing social conditions within Canada as a whole, two "increasingly self-conscious groups of reformers" introduced pressures to change the curriculum in two contrasting ways (Sutherland, 1979, p. 51). On the one hand, there was increasing interest in promoting schools which would be "more humane, more child-centred, and more responsive to the way in which children grew" (ibid.). Many of these reformers were devotees of Friedrich Froebel's European kindergarten movement: In their desire to protect and improve Canadian families, they advocated "reverent love for the child, profound respect for his individuality as the element of divinity in him, and freedom and self-activity as the conditions of most perfect growth physically, intellectually, and spiritually" (Sutherland, 1979, p. 52).

On the other hand, there was simultaneously an increasing interest in promoting schools which would prepare young people in more practical and more directly relevant ways for the "rapidly-changing nature of work" available in the adult world (Sutherland,

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<sup>28</sup>In an interesting but more intense example of this dynamic as played out in relation to the Waldorf schools in Germany some years ago, Barnes (1979) reports that the Nationalist-Socialist government which came to power in 1933 "immediately set about undermining and destroying the Waldorf schools, as well as all of Steiner's work. It was publicly stated that there could not be a system of schools within a National-Socialist state that had as its expressed goal the education of children and young people to think for themselves" (p. 3). In both the German and Canadian examples, it is interesting to note that morality is defined in public terms which dictate the individual's responsibility, and that "thinking for oneself" in such a system is deemed seditious. More recently, educators and sociologists influenced by Marxism have worked to expose the idea that "thinking for oneself" is an impossibility in any case, while anthroposophists prefer to follow Steiner's indications that thinking for oneself, or what he preferred to call free spiritual activity, is indeed possible but only in relation to its polar opposite, namely Love manifest as a cognitive force. This point will resurface in my analytical chapter.

1979, p. 51). There was a great need for skilled and efficient workers in agriculture and industry: Schools were called upon to provide more agricultural, industrial, and technical education (Sutherland, 1979, p. 52). From both points of view public schools were deemed effective units for social control:<sup>29</sup>

In modern society schools could be made to contain the whole of the next generation within their walls. Public employees controlled and directed Canadian children for a growing portion of their lives. Moreover, schools assembled children in a way that one could get at them conveniently; educational authorities had already gathered, organized, and roughly classified them according to such criteria as age, sex, ability, and the neighbourhood in which they lived. (Sutherland, 1979, p. 51)

Pressure for a new, improved curriculum continued from both directions for several decades. By the 1920's, the two streams had more or less converged into "a new public consensus on what English-Canadian education should be" (Sutherland, 1979, p.51).

Generally called "new" or "progressive" education, it included a kindergarten, followed by an elementary school curriculum including manual arts, manual training, domestic science, nature study and school gardening, health, and physical education, along with the more traditional subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic (ibid.). The child-centred reformers were happy to include manual training as "a means for the development of brain, eye and hand, through handicraft", while job-centred reformers were happy to include manual training as explicitly pre-vocational training, since "children would learn rudimentary tool-handling skills and the principles underlying mechanical operations" (Sutherland, 1979, p. 52).

In the "new" education, students were expected to take an active role in their learning (ibid.). This indicates that progressive education relates more to the transaction curricular position than to transmission. It is time then to shift attention to this second position, though it must be borne in mind that transmissive education was not *replaced* so much as *augmented* by a transactive approach . That is, there was increasingly more variety demonstrated in terms of how educators approached their responsibilities.

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<sup>29</sup>The recent upsurge of home-schooling in Canada suggests growing resistance to the assumed desirability of this.

### Principles and Practices of Art in Transactive Education

Miller (1988) suggests that the scientific method, with its emphasis on the forming and testing of hypotheses, informs the pragmatic educational vision reflected in the transaction position. The learner is deemed to have an active part in the learning process. Information may be presented and instruction offered, but knowledge can only be constructed through a dynamic process of question and response, in which hypothetical, speculative, and established ideas are all formed and reformed in a never-ending dialogue with ourselves, each other, and the world around us.

Dewey (1949/1965) offers support for this view when he reminds us that pragmatism arose out of the "intellectual and moral ferment generated...by the new scientific developments of the middle of the nineteenth century" (p. xi). As Peirce (1931-1935) describes, these developments were particularly outstanding during the period from 1846 to 1859 and included, among other things, new applications of the statistical method (for example, in the moral and political sciences; and in molecular physics, giving rise to the kinetic theory of gases), new discoveries of fundamental laws in physics (such as the conservation of energy, and the mechanical theory of heat), and new possibilities for understanding evolution and thus also theology (through Darwin's researches and the theory of natural selection) (vol. VI, par. 297).

These developments shared a key feature in that they all demonstrated how chance could be understood in a positive light in accounting for the world as we know it (ibid.). Wiener (1949/1965) gives considerable weight to this idea among western thinkers of the late nineteenth century and reminds us, as Peirce had before, of "the tremendously sweeping character of the idea of chance variation, appearing in Quetelet's and Buckle's sociological statistics, invading exact physical science, and supporting the revolutionary hypothesis of Darwin concerning the origin of species" (p. 5). This set the stage for the rise of pragmatism, which, according to Wiener (1949/1965) and Dewey (1949/1965), arose as a "daring philosophical experiment...to face the contingency of nature and to render it intelligible without leaning on a providential intelligence" (p. 17).

The high regard for scientific method and the growing understanding of the positive effects of chance variation, combined with the generally liberal slant of Anglo-

American political thinking of the day (cf. Kramnick & Watkins, 1964; also Russell, 1959), provoked an incipient movement among Canadian educators during the early decades of the twentieth century away from an authoritarian, transmissive education, in which the student was to be merely passively accepting of whatever was authoritatively presented, towards a more democratic, transactive education, in which each and every student is to be equally involved with the teacher in constructing knowledge.

For example, Wiener (1949/1965), in an analysis of early pragmatism which Dewey (1949/1965) calls "extraordinarily well-documented and penetrating" (p. xi), remarks that "none of our pragmatic thinkers failed to criticize the prevailing belief in automatic progress guaranteed by infallible dogmas or inflexible traditions" (p. 29). Similarly, Wiener asserts that "Running through all our early pragmatic thinkers is a strong sense of liberation", resulting in the "pragmatic proclamation of intellectual freedom" (ibid.). More specifically, as part of his discussion, Wiener (1949/1965) makes explicit "how Peirce attempted to convert the Darwinian ideas of chance variation and natural selection into the idea of an evolution of the mind by means of a logical competition among thoughts, which eliminates ideas not fit to stand for the truth fated to be discovered by those who investigate" (p. 24).

Although early pragmatism emerged out of Peirce's 'Metaphysical Club' at Harvard University during the 1870's (Wiener, 1949/1965, p. 19); was later modified and further developed by William James, long-time professor of psychology at Harvard (Russell, 1959, pp. 276-279); and became widely known as "the dominant force in American philosophy" through the further modifications of John Dewey, who in 1894 became professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago (Russell, 1959, p. 296), it was not at all unusual -- then or now -- for US American academics to heavily influence Canadian educators, as Tomkins (1979) notes in his discussion of the Canadian situation:

An interesting feature of the reform movement was the extent of participation in it of university administrators and academics....

The gradual professionalization of Canadian educational theory and practice, including curriculum development, became in essence Americanization. By 1920 the practice of commissioning American experts for advice on Canadian education problems had come into vogue. (pp. 7-8)

Indeed, Tomkins (1979) agrees that the work of Canadian educators "was often borrowed from Americans", and this was the case even though Canadians sometimes attributed American ideas to British sources for political reasons (p. 9). As he insists, "particularly for Canadians...American committees and related curriculum projects have undoubtedly been important influences down to and including our own day" (Tomkins, 1979, p. 10).

Dewey was especially influential (Russell, 1959, p. 296). His ideas were often those behind the call for "new" and "progressive" education, based on scientific inquiry and active involvement. For example, Tomkins (1979) reports how Alberta tried, in the late 1930's, to revamp the entire elementary curriculum in one year, only to kindle frustrations among both the "well-meaning reformers" and the "earnest young, mostly female teachers with a high school education and a few months of normal school training who were expected to implement John Dewey's supposed curriculum ideas overnight" (p. 14).

It is interesting to note Miller's (1988) interpretation of Dewey's educational approach in terms of pragmatism, an interpretation which apparently is widely shared by others: "Pragmatism with its emphasis on reflective intelligence has formed the theoretical bases for many inquiry approaches to curriculum" (p. 17). Russell (1959) concurs that "Dewey shares with Peirce the view that inquiry is all-important" (p. 296). As regards the crucial factor of "reflective intelligence", however, Russell asserts that Dewey followed Bergson<sup>30</sup> more than the pragmatist philosophers (ibid.). Pring (1973)

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<sup>30</sup>According to Russell (1959), Henri Bergson [1859-1941] was "In France, the most influential philosopher of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" and "stands in the irrationalist tradition which goes back to Rousseau and the romantic movement" (p. 292). His most famous book, Creative Evolution, details a creative process in life, analogous to artistic creation, in which an active but invisible, vital force works continually within material nature to transform reality in a way which the theoretical intellect can never fully understand because of its propensity to abstract and differentiate things, making the intellect only fit for grasping discontinuities: Comprehending the continuity and constant creativity of life requires a different awareness, which Bergson calls intuition (ibid.).

Science, based on the intellect, is successful only insofar as it disregards certain aspects of life, either because it deems them "slight enough to be negligible, or

explains how Dewey's ideas arose in conjunction with a "theory of experience" which was essentially "an attempt to root out dualisms of any kind" by denying "the distinction between the theoretical and the practical" (p. 143). In other words,

the theoretical was but an offshoot of the practical; knowledge arose primarily from past problematic situations and was directed towards the settlement of problems.... The value of knowledge therefore lay not in itself or for its own sake but in the degree to which it served the purpose of inquiry. (ibid.)

Dewey (1938/1963) describes the key point of inquiry-based education (also dubbed "new" or "progressive") as the need for actively involving the learner in setting goals:

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because it intends to take them into account later on" (Bergson, 1907/1947, p. 283). In this way, human beings contrive through perception and through science to "isolate or close artificially" whatever is *objectified* (ibid., p. 287). In contrast to all such artificiality, Bergson recognizes that whatever is alive has within itself some kind of force which is "a search for individuality, as if it strove to constitute systems naturally isolated, naturally closed" (p. 286). Dewey was perhaps influenced by Bergson's argument to the effect that since we can be consciously aware of our own continually emergent and innate "search for individuality", we can therefore conceive of our life intuitively and holistically as "a kind of creation" in which "we are creating ourselves continually":

...just as the talent of the painter is formed or deformed -- in any case, is modified -- under the very influence of the works he produces, so each of our states, at the moment of its issue, modifies our personality, being indeed the new form that we are just assuming.... This creation of self by self is the more complete, the more one reasons on what one does. (Bergson, 1907/1947, p. 280)

Steiner (1914/1973), who had read and studied Bergson's works as well, describes his thinking on this point like this:

Bergson believes that a transformation of our usual mode of thinking is possible so that the soul, through this transformation, will experience itself in an activity, in an intuitive perception, in which it unites with a reality that is deeper than the one that is perceived in ordinary knowledge. (pp. 421-422).

It should be evident from earlier sections of this thesis that something like this can be recognized as a key idea in Steiner's thought as well.

There is, I think, no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process, just as there is no defect in traditional education greater than its failure to secure the active co-operation of the pupil in construction of the purposes involved in his studying....The teacher's suggestion is not a mold for a cast-iron result but is a starting point to be developed into a plan through contributions from the experience of all engaged in the learning process. (pp. 67, 72)

Though Dewey was considered "the leader of the movement in favor of the active school" (Hovre, 1931, p. 135), mere activity was never Dewey's (1938/1963) main goal: "Overemphasis upon activity as an end, instead of upon *intelligent* activity, leads to identification of freedom with immediate execution of impulses and desires" (p. 69, italics original).<sup>31</sup> Indeed, "A person whose conduct is controlled in this way has at most only the illusion of freedom. Actually he is directed by forces over which he has no command" (Dewey, 1938/1963, p. 65). Real freedom, for Dewey, constitutes the power to be *intelligently active*, a power he describes like this:

power to frame purposes, to judge wisely, to evaluate desires by the consequences which will result from acting upon them; power to select and order means to carry chosen ends into operation. (Dewey, 1938/1963, p. 64)

Although pragmatists are generally "convinced of the importance of action", and certainly Dewey encouraged the practice of increased physical activity in progressive schools<sup>32</sup>, nevertheless it is worth emphasizing that the really important activity in

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<sup>31</sup>Dewey is likely calling attention to what Whitehead (1929/1967) calls the "activity of thought", which, combined with "receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling", comprises the essence of human culture (p. 1).

<sup>32</sup>He discusses two main reasons for this: First, the "artificial uniformity" of the class which results from "enforced quiet and acquiescence" is dissolved, thus allowing the teacher to better know and relate with the students as they really are. Second, the demand for "physical quiescence" in traditional schools puts "a premium upon passivity and receptivity" such that "genuine reflection" can never occur, since it is only possible following "periods of activity in which the hands and other parts of the body beside the brain are used" (Dewey, 1938/1963, pp. 62-3).



Dewey's approach to education is the activity of the intelligently reflective mind.

Whether or not this has ever actually been well understood in Canadian classrooms is not at all clear. For instance, Tomkins (1979) describes an almost "schizophrenic orientation" in Canadian education arising from the continued confusion of conservative and progressive educational aims and methods (p. 11).

Rooted as it is in the pragmatic philosophic tradition and in Dewey's (and perhaps through him also Bergson's) ideas of the reflectively active intelligence, progressive education clearly incorporates the interactive dynamics identified in the transaction position described by Miller. From the one time "harmless dabbling" which was "something of a social asset to the rich and very idle", art had already been "elevated to some status in schools by being linked with industry and providing training in coordination and dexterity for intending factory operatives" (Black, 1966/1984, p. 18).

As the call for progressive education in schools became stronger, and industry increasingly chose to organize its own training programs separately, the purpose of art in public education shifted anew, and art was increasingly understood as a means for facilitating personal expression and individual creativity through a constructive engagement of the learner (ibid.).<sup>33</sup> A number of variations on this theme led eventually

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<sup>33</sup>Hovre (1931) offers an extensive review of the *naturalist* view of philosophy and education so prominent in western euro-centric thinking from at least the time of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903): By *naturalism* he means a worldview based on the principle that "the more man yielded himself passively to nature, the more he eliminated himself, the more closely he would attain to truth" (p. 46). In Hovre's (1931) analysis pragmatism (William James, 1907), humanism (F.S. Schiller, 1903 and 1907), activism (Rudolf Eucken, 1907), personalism (Max Scheler, 1913), the philosophy of action (Blondel, 1893; Laberthoniere, Boutroux), and the philosophy of *elan vital* (Bergson, 1905) all arose as anti-naturalistic movements (pp. 34-35). Importantly, Hovre (1931) also draws attention to the fact that expressionism arose as an anti-naturalistic movement in art at the same time as these movements arose in philosophy:

Expressionism is the forward march of humanity, of mind, of personality, of creative force, of liberty; in a word, of the whole life of the soul in the domain of art. From the viewpoint of

to a broad diversity of art programs and orientations, although Stevenson (1979) notes that "overall, the academic curriculum was not challenged seriously by "softer subjects" and "frills" [including music and art] throughout the 50's" (p. 98).

Black (1966/1984) describes how different this new mood in art education was from the old, established order; yet because the new, progressive movement was never able to completely eliminate the traditional mode of education, both continued (and continue to the present day) to exist in a fundamental and unresolved "tug-of-war between opposing beliefs" (p. 15). According to Black (1966/1984) there is on the one hand the authoritarian and totalitarian belief, rooted in the doctrine of original sin, that aims for "conformity and uniformity through curbs and controls": The teacher is the authorized and authoritative decision-maker, while the learner must adhere to "set rules and rigid principles" in a pre-determined "formula for education" in which the results are "comfortable and guaranteed" (pp. 15-16).<sup>34</sup>

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Naturalism art was nothing more than a copy of nature, a mere reproduction. From the viewpoint of Expressionism, on the contrary, it is a gift, a talent. Art is, above all, creative; it is personal; it is a product of the mind. Thus, Expressionism is not merely a new "manner," a new ideal of art; but it is the aesthetic revelation of an Anti-Naturalistic conception of life. Expressionism constitutes the artistic and literary interpretation of Pragmatism, of Humanism, of Activism and of Personalism. (p. 47)

Stevenson (1979) cautions that a time-lag must be taken into account in looking for evidence of such new ideas actually filtering into classrooms, however, since "wide differences existed between this public, professional rhetoric and common practices among teachers" (p. 98). As he explains in reference to the Canadian context, except for a few pre-war excursions into progressivism... [whose] depth of actual impact remains very questionable,.... the pros and cons of progressivism constituted a debate relegated almost exclusively to elementary schooling during the late 1940's and throughout the 1950's. (ibid.)

<sup>34</sup>While the results might arguably be far from "comfortable and guaranteed", Armstrong (1976) goes so far as to suggest that much current graduate school writing --

As a counter-balancing force to this, there is another belief, rooted in the doctrine of free will, which is "democratic in nature and permissive in method": Here the teacher can never be all-knowing but is always learning anew from ongoing interactions, while the student enjoys an exactly similar involvement; teaching in such an educational context amounts to little more than providing "opportunities for the learner to explore, experience and to create" (Black, 1966/1984, p. 16). As Black insists, "It is a case of recognizing each as an individual, encouraging differences and accepting personal expression" (ibid.). Again it is art-educator Gaitskell (1969/1984) who provides a vivid description:

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especially theses and dissertations -- involves such strict adherence to set traditions, established patterns, and conventional formats that it amounts to little more than a technical exercise characteristic of transmissive education, in which the dictates of academic fashion as interpreted by senior academics are directly imposed on students. In particular, he mentions the hesitation of most graduate students to assume authority in their writing, their sense of being "tyrannized both by their facts and their disciplines", their "slavish reliance upon the citation of facts and views of predecessors", their sense of having no freedom "to range creatively and with confidence over the domain", their lack of a sense of importance in their work: Overall the educational context is such that the student feels little recognition "of the importance of one's self as ground for one's views", with the result that little opportunity exists "to engage on that voyage of simultaneous self-discovery and phenomenon-discovery which provides the foundation for his presumption of the importance of his work and his presumption of authority" (Armstrong, 1976, pp. 23-25).

I submit that a more detailed description of the student perspective within a transmissive context is hardly likely to be found! In many ways it evokes Freire's (1992) dramatic notion of the "oppressed" as the one who must follow the *prescribed behavior* outlined by the "oppressor" (p. 31). In Freire's (1992) analysis both the oppressed and the oppressor are fated to remain dehumanized and inauthentic so long as the oppressed continues to "prefer gregariousness to authentic comradeship...[and] security of conformity with their state of unfreedom to the creative communion produced by freedom and even the very pursuit of freedom" (p. 32). Happily, I can report from my own experience that graduate student writing need not reflect a totally transmissive context characterized by the terms of an oppressed-oppressor relationship, but that both transactive engagement and creative communion are sometimes possible, if not always easy.

We were influenced by the great movements in the 1880s in the U.S., then just seeping into Canada. The Group of Seven was not over, but we knew about all the expressive work that was going on in France and elsewhere. It thrilled us. Believe it or not, although we're a little younger than the 1880s, expression was the thing that we looked at. We knew about expressionism in general, Matisse and Rouault. We were thrilled by it. And we knew that art was something to do with expressiveness: an expression of the person who is saying something. We knew that this had to be wrapped up in some kind of package called design or form. And so we were concerned with the designs that a person used. We knew that art wasn't all beauty by then, by my generation. We knew about Toulouse-Lautrec and we knew about Goya, people like that who did not use beauty as the ideal. (p. 7)

Much as personal expression was admired, however, the practicalities of nurturing art in this way within the classroom presented major obstacles. As Gaitskell reports,

You could hardly find anything expressive in the whole of Canada. Once in a while a very brave teacher might come to Canada from England and might try a little expressive work, but the school board jumped on them right away because they were wasting material, and they were making the classroom messy, and the janitor didn't like it, and so on. (p. *ibid.*)

Although in the early decades of this century "manual arts" were typically listed for inclusion in every elementary curriculum, Hart (1984) acknowledges that teachers were not able to apply the basic philosophy of individual expression to anything much besides drawing and painting (p. 27). Any three-dimensional work, for example, typically deteriorated into mere busywork with little "thoughtful exploration": She deplures what was soon to develop as a "national phobia" to "make objects from junk into end products which are still junk" (*ibid.*). At the other extreme was something equally misguided, from her point of view, namely the production of superficially beautiful objects using expensive materials but little creativity, as, for example, laminating leaves or butterfly wings between sheets of plastic material (Hart, 1984, p. 28).

Although abundant commentary exists on the way social trends and values affect visual art and the teaching of it in our schools, it is also possible to discern some of the same trends in relation to music. For example, Glenn Gould's comments on performing music reveal an acute awareness of the way questions of authenticity and authority play into the performer's task: "The performer has to have faith that he is doing, even

blindly, the right thing, that he may be finding interpretive possibilities not wholly realized even by the composer" (cited by Payzant, 1978, pp. 155-156). And as Gould was to work out in his *New Philosophy* of recording, even the decisions of the performer are not sacrosanct, because of the artistic possibilities inherent, for example, in all the electrical adjustments involved in making a recording: "...the decisions of the composer and of the performer are subject to overruling in further artistic decisions, to revision and alteration in keeping with the possibilities and the limitations of the available apparatus" (ibid.). These ongoing developments, in which each step of a process is subject to later modification, typify the mode of thinking characteristic of the transactive position.

The question of authority in all such examples is of paramount importance. It is a question that fundamentally concerns not only the composer, performer, and technician, but the listener as well. In terms of classroom practice in Canadian school music programs, Andrews (1989) notes that in spite of some detailed research into the potential for participatory, cognitive meaning-making in school music programs,

rote learning [is still] a major problem with performance-based music instruction.... Reception learning, that is where content is presented verbally to students, is the predominant form of school instruction because it is more efficient than other methods, such as inquiry or discovery" (p. 5).

In the transactive mode, it is no longer possible to identify the "teacher" as sole authority. As Collingwood (1938/1958) notes, there is a basic level of constructive participation inherent in all conscious activity, whereby all individuals become the authors of the meanings they understand in any given situation. This reflects the cognitive learning theory of David Ausubel (1963) as well, who argues in connection with school music teaching that "reception learning can be genuinely meaningful without prior discovery experience or problem-solving activity, and that the weaknesses attributed to the method of expository verbal instruction do not inhere in the method itself but are derived from various misapplications" (p. 16). As an example of eliciting meaningful learning without resorting to an inquiry, discovery, or problem-solving approach, Ausubel (1963) describes his use of an instructional device called an "advance organizer":

Advance organizers consist of introductory material at a higher level of abstraction, generality, and inclusiveness than the learning task itself. The

function of the organizer is to provide ideational scaffolding for the stable incorporation and retention of the more detailed and differentiated material that follows the learning passage, as well as increase discriminability between the later and inferring concepts in the cognitive structure. (p. 29)

Suchman (1972) has broadened the definition of advance organizer to include "any idea, image, recollection, abstraction - any available pattern that can add to the meaningfulness of an encounter" (p. 174), thereby giving it very wide applicability. As Andrews (1989) points out, such an organizer

can be a rule, principle, or generalization presented as a statement, didactic description, question, demonstration, or even a musical recording. The form is less important than that it be clearly understood and related to the material it is organizing. The advance organizer prepares students for an upcoming learning experience by integrating new ideas with those currently held in cognitive structure.... and invests the new material with logical meaningfulness in relation to cognitive structure. (pp. 9-10)

Collingwood (1938/1958) gives an example of the kind of meaningfulness which can arise from recognized patterns when he points out that we can distinguish between *listening* imaginatively and (re)constructively in order to conceive a tune from a succession of tones, and merely *hearing* those tones as distinct noises:

The noises made by the performers, and heard by the audience, are not the music at all; they are only means by which the audience, if they listen intelligently (not otherwise), can reconstruct for themselves the imaginary tune that existed in the composer's head.

...the listening which we have to do when we hear the noises made by musicians is in a way rather like the thinking we have to do when we hear the noises made, for example, by a person lecturing.... We hear the sound of his voice; but what he is doing is not simply to make noises,... The noises are meant to assist us in achieving what he assumes to be our purpose in coming to hear him lecture, that is, thinking for ourselves. (pp. 139-140)

This kind of participation involves constructivism as a logical (patterned) construction of personal meaning and personal understanding. In fact, it has much to do with what we generally identify as learning as a whole. Cognitive developmentalists research the developmental factors which impact on the learning process of the individual, and social learning theorists research the social factors involved in establishing the context within which such learning takes place. Both streams of research have had a large impact

on curricular principles and pedagogical practices which characterize Miller's transaction position in public schools.<sup>35</sup>

The general historical trend has been from an earlier awareness of individual cognitive developmental factors, toward a more recent awareness of social and contextual factors impacting on cognitive development both individually and communally. As Gantly (1989) points out, developmental psychology emphasized learning resulting from one's own activity, whereas social psychology has emphasized learning resulting from our observation and vicarious experience of others' activity (pp. 81-82). In this way, the "activity" advocated by Dewey and other progressive educators gains an ever more complex significance within education.

Over the years, the two streams of visual arts and musical arts have developed in tandem. In the transmissive classrooms so common at the turn of the century, music education consisted of singing by rote imitation, with perhaps some part-singing, and piano accompaniment by the teacher. In transactive education many more opportunities for student involvement in music-making became possible, including playing instruments, visually mapping melodies, reading and writing music notation, and interpreting music through movement and illustration. Nevertheless, many of the specific skills involved still required a technical training and an imposed discipline in order for the students to acquire standard levels of competence, hence they continued to be taught from a basically

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<sup>35</sup>Gantly (1989) refers to three main models in learning theory: the behavioral, the cognitive, and the transactional (p. 81). The behavioral model "assumes the learner is the product of his/her environment"; the cognitive model "assumes that the learner acts upon his/her environment to determine what is and is not learned"; and the transactional model assumes that in addition to the cognitive involvement of the learner, the context in which the learning takes place also partly determines what is and is not learned (ibid.). In relation to Miller's classification, the behavioral model accords with Miller's transmission position, while the cognitive and transactional models both are reflected in Miller's transaction position. The two dimensions of constructive involvement on the part of the learner in Miller's transaction position (i.e., individual and social/contextual) make it difficult to disentangle the curricular and pedagogical issues at stake.

transmissive orientation even within a progressive setting.<sup>36</sup>

On the other hand, teachers such as Betty Murray, in Tatamagouche, NS, were able to bring their "Dewey-inspired lessons" from the Truro Teachers College alive in

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<sup>36</sup>I have only given the briefest of glimpses into how confusions of creativity, authority, and legitimacy abound in educational settings. In a long and detailed account concerning "The place of intention in the concept of art", Savile (1972) reminds us, for example, that the spectator's creative act of *understanding* what an artist means is different from the artist's creative act of *generating* (intending) that meaning in the first place: "[The spectator] does not simply aim at producing an interpretation of the text: he aims at reproducing what he takes the artist to have expressed in creating the text....there is nothing mysterious or paradoxical about that, nothing which prevents us from taking our own approach to art as a central case of understanding, and the artist's as a central case of generation" (p. 173). (Of course, not everyone agrees that "understanding" is correctly aimed at the artist's intentions rather than the "artistic text" itself [cf. Walton, 1990], but that is a different concern than the one addressed here).

The analogy to education becomes apparent when we realize that in terms of deciding whose meaning is to be deemed authoritative, the creative artist's or the creative spectator's, we are essentially engaged in the problem -- as Savile (1972) sees it -- of "settling where the limits of responsibility for action lie" (p. 174). It is exactly the same issue, as far as I can see, which distinguishes Miller's transmissive and transactive educational positions, since the "limits of responsibility for action" are what must also be settled in terms of the student-teacher relationship.

In a more reflexively complicated pattern, expressed, for example, in the concept of the "open work", artists (teachers) may attempt straightaway to avoid this inherent power struggle by *intentionally* inviting the spectators (students) to become co-creators of meaning, through refusing to present their work as if it could somehow be authoritatively pre-established as complete, closed, finished, or in any way independent of those who would experience it. Instead, it is explicitly and intentionally identified as "open" such that any creation of meaning is on-going and intersubjectively involving of all who would participate. To what extent a spectator/student *responding positively* to such an invitation has acted with personal initiative is still unclear to me: It is more common to recognize autonomy in terms of resistance rather than in terms of obeisance. To appeal to a telling image: " 'Come into my parlour,' said the spider to the fly."



their classrooms in exemplary fashion.<sup>37</sup> Harris (1994) reports that for such teachers the curriculum guide was not wholly ignored, but neither was it followed slavishly; students were engaged in "learning by doing", and what they were asked to do involved "activities that would serve them in their daily lives" (p. 372). In describing Murray's music program, Harris (1994) notes,

The most remarkable part of her work...was her teaching of music. I am not sure that 'teaching' captures the flavour of this activity where, in one former student's words, children "sat round the pot-bellied stove, drinking cocoa til late in the afternoon, sight-reading exercises, preparing for the spring music festival, an operetta, a church event or just singing for the joy of it. She successfully taught children who were thought to be tone-deaf to sing and enjoy music...*we challenged one another* to sing the most difficult intervals and passages". (p. 373, italics added)

As much as student involvement was valued and self-expression encouraged in such programs, Hanley (1989) confirms that a program based totally on self-expression - such as had been attempted for a while among visual art teachers -- was never really practical for music (due to noise and space constraints): In any case, there was little or no philosophical direction as to why music was included in the curriculum at all, except that most music educators believed it to be important (pp. 102-103)! Even today Hanley (1989) maintains, "the philosophical underpinnings are usually unvoiced and hence largely unrecognized, incoherent, or unsatisfactorily stated" (p. 103).<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Miss Murray started her teaching career in 1940 in the one-room school of Barrachois, across the Waugh River from Tatamagouche, with a student body of 40 students ranging from Kindergarten level to grade 9. With a B.A. from Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, as well as a full year of professional training in education at the Provincial Normal College in Truro, she was better prepared for a teaching career than most young teachers at that time (Harris, 1994, p. 372).

<sup>38</sup>This situation is rapidly changing. More and more, especially in light of Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, coherent rationales for music education, as well as for art education in general, are being expressed. Witness, for example, the strong rationale included in the May 1995 Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Arts Education in Nova Scotia, or Pearse's (1984) article on "World

Nevertheless, four basic approaches can be identified. They include music for fun, referentialism, formalism, and expressionism (Hanley, 1989, p. 102), as follows:

- 1) Music is pleasurable in and of itself. It provides an enjoyable break from other activities. The goal of music education is to have fun singing, playing, listening, and moving together; to relax and have a good time.
- 2) Music conveys all sort of messages in the form of stories, ideas, and emotions. Song lyrics are of paramount importance, and melodies, harmonies, and rhythms simply enhance the meanings gleaned from the text (or the title of instrumental music). The goal of music education is to gain an appreciation and understanding of the messages which are conveyed.
- 3) Music represents a formal, intellectual challenge to the mind. The complex patterns and relationships made manifest in melodies, harmonies, and rhythms are understandable through abstract analysis. The goal of music education is to achieve a formal understanding in this way.
- 4) Music expresses various moods and arouses various feelings. It has a therapeutic effect, for example, in augmenting or diminishing tension, excitement, apathy, depression, or other such sensitivities. The goal of music education is to intensely experience and deeply appreciate these various moods and feelings, mostly however through listening to recordings and interpreting the music made by others. (Just as self-expression in visual arts was often discouraged because it was 'messy', so was self-expression in music discouraged beyond the most simple levels because it was generally noisy and required a large space for movement.)

According to Hanley's study, the "music is fun" approach continues to be by far the most common in mainstream English Canadian public elementary schools (ibid.). This suggests a widespread, though perhaps tacit, adherence to the theory not so much that art is *expression*, but that art is *play*.

Dewey (1934/1958) connects "art as play" with the concept of individual freedom, thereby exposing an interesting link between this approach and the transactive position described by Miller. Thus while he says that play actually transforms itself into work in human beings as it becomes increasingly *ordered* (in terms of activities and materials),

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Hypotheses, Root Metaphors and Art Education Rationales". At the same time, parents themselves are often passionately and directly supportive of school music programs, a fact which carries weight with elected educational officials even when no clear rationale is articulated.

Dewey (1934/1958) argues that "philosophical implications of the play theory are found in its opposition of freedom and necessity, of spontaneity and order" (pp. 278-279). In other words, esthetic experience has generally been understood as "a release and escape from the pressure of 'reality'" such that "freedom can be found only when personal activity is liberated from control by objective factors" (Dewey, 1934/1958, p. 279).

In seeking to disallow this view, Dewey moves much closer with his ideas of art to what Miller describes as a transformative position in education, rather than a transactive one. Indeed, the recent upsurge of interest among educators in Dewey's work may well indicate a budding recognition that his ideas have as much if not more to contribute to understanding transformative education as they have had in the past to understanding transactive education! For example, he asserts,

The spontaneity of art is not one of opposition to anything, but marks complete absorption in an orderly development. This absorption is characteristic of esthetic experience; but it is an ideal for all experience....

The issue...has to do with the way in which art performs liberation and release.... The matter at stake is whether release comes by way of anodyne [opiate, narcotic; ie. escape through the *an*-aesthetic], ...or whether it is accomplished by manifesting what actual existence actually becomes when its possibilities are fully expressed....

The activity that is free from the standpoint of the self is ordered and disciplined from the side of objective material undergoing transformation.

....art is the fusion in one experience of the pressure upon the self of necessary conditions and the spontaneity and novelty of individuality.

Individuality itself is originally a potentiality and is realized only in interaction with surrounding conditions. In this process of intercourse, native capacities, which contain an element of uniqueness, are transformed and become a self. Moreover, through resistances encountered, the nature of the self is discovered. The self is both formed and brought to consciousness through interaction with environment. (Dewey, 1934/1958, pp. 280-282)

Perhaps this passage best serves as a transition point to a fuller consideration of the transformation position, as described by Miller. It is difficult in any case to clearly demarcate a boundary between transactional and transformational education. The whole issue of creativity in art education, for example, can be fruitfully addressed from either position. In moving on to consider the transformational orientation, therefore, I do not

mean to imply a clear-cut break in this narrative, so much as an extension of meaning towards a more holistic concept of interaction.

Principles and Practices of Art in Transformative Education

Miller (1988) identifies the transformation position with holistic thinking based on the "perennial philosophy", with transpersonal psychology concerned with the unconscious Self at the center of all experience, and with an understanding that social life reflects crucial dynamics of interdependence. He distinguishes it from the transaction position which, although similarly concerned with relational interdependence, focuses mainly on intellectual involvements and tends to exclude such other dimensions of existence as emotional, volitional, aesthetic, intuitional, inspirational, and spiritual, all of which tend to be incorporated in holistic views. Miller also distinguishes it from the transmission position by virtue of the fact that transformative education is mainly concerned with the unifying effect of various relations and interconnections among diverse parts, while transmissive education is more concerned with individual units.

Although the "vision of wholeness" underlying transformative education defined in this way can be traced back at least as far as Pythagoras in the West, and is also found among most Eastern traditions (Miller, 1988, p. 27), as well as Native American traditions,<sup>39</sup> and although an holistic vision was clearly distinguished from a mechanistic one in North American educational theory as early as 1923,<sup>40</sup> it has not been widely

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<sup>39</sup>Witness, for example, such records as Storm's (1972) Seven Arrows, "one of the undisputed classics of Native American literature", which reveals the "profound integrity of the Medicine Way" as it "re-creates the nonlinear way in which the native mind penetrates the western boundaries of time and space" (inside back cover).

<sup>40</sup>Ogden (1923) writes,  
The science of education is markedly affected by principles of mechanistic interpretation of life. There is another hypothesis equally consonant with scientific method and procedure. A mechanism is an assemblage of parts which work together by virtue of their juxtaposition.... The idea that the universe is an arbitrary association of parts carries with it in the corollary that everything can be analyzed into ultimate or irreducible

visible in English Canadian mainstream educational *practice* in the past. Indeed, Miller (1988) suggests that its only actual appearance in English Canadian mainstream classrooms is by way of recent interest in confluent education (p. 24). (Miller acknowledges Waldorf education as transformative as well, but of course this has not been part of mainstream education in Canada.) By contrast, both transmissive approaches (in terms of competency-based instruction) and transactive approaches (in terms of inquiry-based learning) have a much longer history in mainstream education in English Canada (ibid.).

According to G.I. Brown (1996), confluent education is rooted in the client-therapist relation associated with gestalt therapy<sup>41</sup> (p. x). From its beginning in the USA in the 1950s, the notion of confluent education became honed and refined over the next two decades, culminating in the founding of an innovative graduate program in Confluent Education at the University of California at Santa Barbara in the 1970s (ibid.). Though

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elements....

The alternative: that nature works not with elements in arbitrary juxtaposition but with figures and with forms;.... the conception of a figure or form is based upon an integration, not only of parts but of *members* whose reality involves the membership-character of belonging to some whole. (p. 343; cited in Skinner, Gast, and Skinner, 1926, pp. 764-65)

Also, Whitehead (1929/1967) argued that educators should "eradicate the fatal disconnection of subjects which kills the vitality of our modern curriculum. There is only one subject-matter for education, and that is Life in all its manifestations" (p. 7).

"As Barott and Kleiveland (1996) remind us, the idea of "gestalts" was conceived during the early part of this century by German psychologists working in the field of perception (p. 65). Leading figures include Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Kohler, Kurt Koffka, and Kurt Lewin. Perls (1973) defines it like this:

A gestalt is a pattern, a configuration, the particular form of organization of the individual parts that go into its makeup. [It is this] organization of facts, perceptions, behavior or phenomena, and not the individual items of which they are composed, that defines them and gives them their specific and particular meaning. (pp. 2-3)

the program itself grew and changed due to "a lively group creative process", the purpose of confluent education remained that of "putting human beings at the center of the process of conceiving and communicating ideas" (G.I. Brown, 1996, p. x).

When the Santa Barbara program eventually closed in 1993,<sup>42</sup> students had attended from many other countries, including Canada, and the CE approach had been incorporated into a variety of contexts, including education, law, industrial and labor organizations, social services, politics, teacher education, educational leadership and organizational change, and innovative research methods (ibid., pp. xiii, xi). In all such contexts, as J.H. Brown (1996) reminds us, confluent education provides for what is called "deep learning", a technical phrase pointing to two crucial factors: 1) "multiple forms of awareness", and 2) "acceptance of personal responsibility" (p. xxi). These two conditions are both necessary and sufficient, he claims, for deep learning to occur (ibid.).

Kvernbekk (1996) describes how confluent education goes beyond "purely intellectual discussion" to "explicitly involve...emotions, feelings, and imaginations" in the learning process (pp. 1-2). In the 1960s such integration was attempted mainly in terms of well-defined cognitive and affective dimensions of human experience (Miller, 1988, p.110). In the following decades, however, broader and broader integrations have been attempted resulting in a four-dimensional concept of personal wholeness:

1) intrapersonal - the most internal of our feelings and self-perceptions, together with

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<sup>42</sup>Although no explicit reason is given for the closure of this program, founder George Brown (1996) suggests that it may have been partly caused by his own increasing involvement with "the fascinating world of organizational leadership and institutional change" during the 1970s and 1980s which distracted him more and more from following up "on the early visibility of the program and its promise for education" (p. xiii). He also mentions things connected with the program such as innovative methods of teaching and learning, atypical university faculty-student interactions, application to a wide variety of fields besides education, an unfortunate lack of "disciplined philosophical inquiry into the theory and practice of confluent education," and the perennial need to define confluent education for others not involved in it (ibid., pp. ix-xiv). It is not clear whether or not these factors contributed in any way to the closure of the program.

various subpersonalities and subselves which combine within us to make us "who we are";

2) interpersonal - our relations, perceptions, and communications with others;

3) extrapersonal - our social context in terms of the structures within which we function, including, for example, the school, the community, and society at large; and

4) transpersonal - the cosmic or spiritual envelope containing the other three and within which we all exist; it "provides the universal context for examining basic questions of meaning and spirituality" (Miller, 1988, pp. 110-111).

Education is said to be *confluent* when attention to several of these various dimensions is intentionally integrated within some particular learning situation (ibid., p. 111). For example, Kvernbekk (1996) tells of a first grade teacher demonstrating the parts of a flower with the aid of big chart drawings while the students each took apart a flower to isolate and identify the constituent parts, during which time the name and function of each part was explained, and after which they all went into the cafeteria where the children acted out the various functions of the flower parts in free, improvisational movement (p. 2). He concludes, "This might serve to illustrate how experience, involving fantasy, feelings, and activity connect with the subject matter....I think those first-graders well understand the function and importance of petals and the knowledge is constructed from within the activity" (ibid.).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Based on my own teaching experience, I find this description too brief to determine whether or not the claims for achieving understanding and knowledge construction through such activity are plausible or not. For a more extensive, and possibly therefore more convincing account of the merits of interdisciplinary teaching, I recommend Joyce Boorman's (1973) book on Dance and language experiences with children. Boorman, professor in the Faculty of Physical Education of The University of Alberta, claims no connection with confluent education theory; nevertheless, some of her opening remarks appear to reflect a similar perspective:

There are many ways in which we can invite children to share their heritage,.... If language is indeed the "key" to a child's being able to participate fully in the act of living, then no subject specialist can afford to ignore the role that language plays in mathematics, art, music, social

For a lesson with older children who have been reading a novel together, Schleifer (1975) outlines the tasks one teacher assigned like this:

1. Close your eyes. Get into your own private space. Now -- from the book you read, try to see the person who means the most to you. Put the person somewhere, either in a place he would naturally be according to the book or a place where you can imagine his being. Try to see every part of the person. What does the hair look like? What color? Length? Curly? Straight? Windblown? Neat? Notice the ears. What kind of nose? Notice the skin. Clear, pimply, tanned? How do you see the mouth? Full? Drooped? Clenched? What is the person doing with the hands? How does the person stand? Walk? What kind of clothes? See them distinctly -- the colors, the style, etc.
2. When you are ready, open your eyes. Write a description of your person's appearance.
3. Choose one word from what you have written that is the essence of the description of the person. Write it down.
4. Now write down what to you would be an opposite word -- one word.
5. Tell your words. Talk about them.
6. Turn your paper over. Draw, in lines or colors, the way you see the person. Don't try to draw a photographic picture. Show the person through shapes, colors, and lines. Talk to others. (p. 252)

As Miller (1988) points out, the connection between self and subject matter which both of these teachers attempted to stimulate is only one of three possible types of connections recognized in confluent education (p. 110). The other two possible connections are subject-subject, and subject-community.

The two examples above both serve double-duty by illustrating how a teacher can utilize subject-subject connections as well as subject-self connections: the first graders combined a science and vocabulary lesson with a movement activity; the older children combined language study with drawing. Many such opportunities exist for interdisciplinary combinations at all grade levels, even among educators who have not

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studies or creative dance. (Boorman, 1973, p. xiii)



heard of confluent education by name. Indeed, Case (1994) reports "widespread support" within Canada "for the idea of reducing fragmentation within the curriculum" (p. 83); the desirability of making increased subject-subject connections within the curriculum is clearly widely recognized in Canada at this time. Nevertheless, Case (1994) cautions, along with Coombs (1991), that

Given the diversity of things currently called curricular integration, it is tempting to conclude that the notion serves no serious purpose in thinking and talking about what is desirable in curricula; that its only use is as a slogan to garner support for curricular changes thought to be desirable for any of a vast assortment of reasons. (p. 1)

Widespread movements such as "whole-language" have encouraged integrated teaching of related learning tasks, causing the concept of holistic education as "integrated curriculum" to prosper. Similarly, interdisciplinary studies at both the secondary and tertiary levels of education are increasingly common.

In this respect, it is interesting to note that although theme teaching is a popular and "commonly employed" approach to integrating the curriculum at the elementary level, Case (1994) easily demonstrates that it does not necessarily fulfill its promise of making education more relevant, or making the curriculum necessarily more integrated (pp. 84-89)! For example, short-term goals for integration (sometimes called *horizontal integration*) are frequently met at the expense of long-range goals (*vertical integration*), as when "everything studied in one unit is closely tied to one theme, say that of 'bears,' and the following unit has 'weather' as its theme, [such that] students may become confused about the connections among their studies" (Case, 1994, p. 85).

Also, as Case (1994) argues, the hasty abandonment of discipline-based study in favour of organizing curriculum around 'loosely defined themes' shows scant regard for the fact that traditional disciplines do in fact "provide integrative principles", since they share "standards of evidence, fundamental explanatory concepts, and methodological procedures" (pp. 86-87). And although he acknowledges that discipline-based study is certainly not the only way to integrate subject matter, Case claims "it is misleading to imply that non-disciplinary studies are inherently integrative" (ibid., p. 87). Following further discussion of this matter and others related to it, Case (1994) concludes that

prevailing understandings of curricular integration within Canada are "rather crude" (p. 89). Osin and Lesgold (1996) note that "current thinking in the educational community" supports the idea that children learn best through working on projects which require "proficiency in different knowledge areas from several disciplines" rather than "classical teacher presentation" in discrete subject areas, though lack of agreement on what a 'project' is necessitates "careful consideration" of what is meant by "project-based education" (p. 640).

Hackbarth (1996) is also concerned with the integrative nature of the traditional disciplines, but with a slightly different emphasis, suggesting that "Each discipline may be characterized by the carefully contrived perspective that it takes toward the world," and that all perspectives are necessary to complete a whole, unified education (p. 25).<sup>44</sup> In other words, it is not subject matter per se which is important, but rather the particular mode of questioning and investigating to be experienced in each discipline which students must experience. According to Hackbarth, only when this is understood and taken into account do the cognitive and affective dimensions of learning become most successfully integrated: Here then is yet another insight into possible interconnections between self-subject, and subject-subject (ibid., p. 26).

Ultimately such interconnections – and many other variations are possible – are what confluent education is all about, with the final goal being that students "learn to *conduct their own lives with integrity*, based on the *integration of knowledge and love*, which is wisdom" (Hackbarth, 1996, p. 39, italics original). The transmission model of education is thus transformed by educators in order to create confluence between the learning we do in relation to the cognitive and affective dimensions of self, and the learning we do in relation to the social contexts within which we find ourselves (DeMeulle & D'Emidio-Caston, 1996, p. 45).

Barott and Kleiveland (1996) are careful to add that confluence is desirable not

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<sup>44</sup>Martin (1988) argues, however, that even this view is limited, since all traditional disciplines as they now stand reflect a gendered perspective which privileges men in our society. This indicates something of the level of complexity which inevitably plays a part in all such discussions.

only between thoughtful and emotional learning, and between the individual and her social context(s), but in terms of physical activity as well (p. 69). Recognizing that "mental, affective, and physical activity" are all parts of a whole establishes what Perls (1973) has called the "Holistic Doctrine": Emotions are deemed the source of energy, physical activity is deemed the most intense involvement an organism has with its environment, and mental activity (in which abstract symbols are substituted for physical involvement) is deemed a less intense involvement between organism and environment which allows the organism to save time, energy, and work (Barott & Kleiveland, 1996, p.69).

Understanding the unity of an organism in terms of thoughts, feelings, and actions makes it possible to "translate and transpose from one level to another" (Perls, 1973, p. 14). Thus educators can facilitate a "move toward integrated and effective action" in and among their students by offering "intervention strategies" which create awarenesses in their students of thoughts, feelings, and actions at intrapersonal, interpersonal, and extrapersonal levels (Barott & Kleiveland, 1996, p. 69).

At the intrapersonal level, attention is focused on the creative nature of the individual (DeMeulle & D'Emidio-Caston, 1996, p. 45). Self-awareness, reflection, and meta-processing are stimulated by the use of autobiographies, storytelling, personal narratives, and portfolios, while coercive or pressured situations are carefully avoided so that unconscious memories and emotional pain do not become overwhelming (DeMeulle & D'Emidio-Caston, 1996, pp. 49-53). Shapiro and Mortola (1996) also report the use of brief meditations, guided imagery, and silence to get in touch with the inner self (p. 83).

Interpersonal awareness is stimulated by cooperative learning techniques, collaborative leadership approaches, small group dynamics, and cross-group communications (ibid., pp. 54-56). Just as in intrapersonal learning, in interpersonal learning also such quasi-artistic modes as story-telling and journal writing are used to evoke a heightened awareness of perspective in relation to others. Also popular among confluent educators are such techniques as role-playing, simulation exercises, listening skills practice, and the 'fishbowl' method (Shapiro & Mortola, 1996, p. 87).

At the social-contextual level, confluent educators understand that each individual has the potential to change the system as a result of changing personal awareness and behavior (DeMeulle & D'Emidio-Caston, 1996, pp. 57-61). Thus, the interconnections inherent in social life parallel the interconnections inherent in physical life, where quantum physics has revealed that a particle may appear both as a "thing" and as a "relation" (G.I. Brown, 1996, p. xii). The social context is dynamic, and each individual has "an important role to play as a participant" and co-creator (DeMeulle & E'Emidio-Caston, 1996, p. 57). Graphics, metaphors, and journal writing are some of the ways in which social-contextual factors are explored (ibid., p. 59).

Behrens (1996) notes that confluent education easily partners with action science<sup>45</sup> (also called *action research*, or *participatory research*; cf. Maguire, 1987) since both involve individuals who, through their personal awareness and sense of responsibility, are actively engaged as agents of change within societies and organizations (p. 98). Effectiveness arises from the fact that "Confluent education is a holistic orientation to learning, wherein affect and cognition are conjointly utilized as pedagogical instruments" (ibid., pp. 98-99). The relationship between the individual organism and its environment is conceived as dialectical, in that it expresses a "relationship of mutuality to one another" (Barott & Kleiveland, 1996, p. 69).

Schon's (1983, 1987) idea of the reflective practitioner and Freire's (1987) notion of praxis both identify a similar notion. According to Barott and Kleiveland (1996), the idea comes from Lewin's (1935, 1951) field theory, in which he shifted attention away from the study of the past, which had become so popular due to the influence of psychoanalysis, to the study of the present, in which the quality and scope of current awareness of self and environment is critical (p. 70). In this sense, the split between

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<sup>45</sup>For those readers unfamiliar with this term, Langenbach, Vaughn, and Aagaard (1994) describe "action science" as an "ideological, reform-minded theory" like critical theory, post-modernism, radical theory, and feminist research in that all of these "maintain that the social order should be changed in some fundamental way, and this belief is reflected in their research" (p. 16).

intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions is seen as somewhat artificial, since "The gestalt approach views humans as being at one and the same time, both individuals and members of society" (Barott & Kleiveland, 1996, p. 71).

From this perspective, the boundary between individual and society becomes pivotal in establishing the grounds for all functional and dysfunctional behaviour. In other words, if an individual cannot "find and maintain the proper balance between himself and the rest of the world", he will not be able to function effectively within that world: If he impinges too far on society, criminal behaviour is the result; if an imbalance manifests in the opposite direction, and society impinges too far on him, he will become neurotic (ibid.).<sup>46</sup>

The boundary itself is maintained as part of a self-regulating system, based on the principle of homeostasis and a rhythm of "contact and withdrawal", such that an individual rhythmically reaches out into the community in order to satisfy a need, and withdraws again when the need is met: The healthy organism is the one which "constantly interacts with a changing environment maintaining a state of adjustment" (Barott & Kleiveland, 1996, p. 67).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>The model suggests to me that a similar dynamic could be postulated from the perspective of society, rather than the individual, though I have not come across much discussion of this in my reading. In this case, when society impinges too far on the individual, the result might be conceived in terms of the social inertia arising from excessive conformity tied to automatic (habituated) response, more or less after the fashion of social insect colonies, while the opposite effect, caused by individuals impinging too far on society, might conceivably be termed acts of sedition. It may be that Plato's decision to eliminate artist/poets from his ideal Republic was on some such grounds as this; certainly censorship of the artist is typically invoked as a necessary means by which to stabilize society.

<sup>47</sup>A similar dynamic from the societal perspective might involve a community periodically encouraging strong leadership on the part of a particular individual, alternating with periods of resistance to such social forms in favour of renewed emphasis on the equal rights and privileges of all. No doubt there is considerable theoretical discussion of such dynamics within political and managerial theory, though this

Key to this process is the individual's perception of the relation between self and environment at any given moment. Just as perception of foreground and background in the classic gestalt example of the "vase/pair of faces" depends on how our interest is engaged and where our attention is focused at a particular point in time, so does our perception of self and environment shift depending on the specific focus of our interest and attention in any given situation (Barott & Kleiveland, 1996, pp. 65-67).<sup>48</sup>

Although confluent education clearly names a holistic and integrative approach, it appears to actually be part of a much bigger movement throughout North American society in general towards more holistically oriented awareness, a shift that first became widely visible in the 1960s (DeMeulle & E'Emidio-Caston, 1996). While the rising popularity at that time of gestalt therapy certainly provided one stimulus for interest in

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is an area of scholarship with which I am unfamiliar. However, I can draw attention to an interesting reversal of this dynamic within community: Perera (1986) has found The scapegoat complex to be a means by which societies of all sizes periodically strengthen and reform themselves by assigning all potentially disruptive tension to some one individual who is then cast out from the society as a means of preserving it. Another example of group action designed to remove responsibility from the individual is the ritualistic murder embodied in the ancient English sword dance in which a ring of dancers interlace their swords around the victim's neck, and as the swords are withdrawn, they are all pressed inwards so that the neck is severed by all without any one person alone being responsible for the murder. Firing squads employ a similar principle in that only one rifle, which remains unidentified, is loaded with live ammunition though all are fired simultaneously.

<sup>48</sup>Again, it is provocative to consider this dynamic from a social point of view rather than an individual one (in so far as this may be possible). In this regard, Dr. Steven Burns has suggested that the time for significant individual contributions within philosophy is perhaps declining, and broader, socially-based perspectives are taking their place, as demonstrated, for example, by the current influence of "feminist" thought (personal communication). Afro-centric and First Nations' perspectives might similarly qualify as examples of social perspectives replacing what was formerly tied to individual contribution. At the same time, many feminists are aware that different feminist perspectives are possible, linked, for example, to race, class, and age.

holistic models of education, other influences were also felt.

For example, the work of Carl Jung was also becoming popular: MacDonald (1995) calls attention to the fact that Jung was greatly interested in concepts of integration and wholeness, together with the complementary concept of alienation, both intrapersonally and interpersonally (p. 82).<sup>49</sup> Also at that time there was a burgeoning interest in Eastern spiritual traditions, all of which posit a fundamental wholeness to the universe, life, and human experience which has been long overshadowed in the west by Cartesian dualism, popularly referred to as the mind-body split (see, for example, Tarnas, 1991). This interest has been hugely reinforced by the fact that western science, especially in physics and medical biochemistry, more and more reveals similarities with eastern spiritual views (see, for example, Capra, 1975; also Northrup, 1994).

Even more pointedly, the whole science of ecology has been gradually emerging as a necessary holistic perspective touching on every aspect of existence, if indeed existence as we know it is to continue (note, for example, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, a pivotal work in stimulating interest in ecology, first published in 1962, as mentioned earlier). Other evidence includes the fact that widespread experimentation with psychedelic drugs sparked interest in alternate forms of consciousness; brain hemispheric research created new awarenesses of mental function; and the works of Castenada (1976, 1977, 1993) and others alerted many to the possibility that culture and tradition restricts our awareness as much, if not more than it broadens it.

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<sup>49</sup>An example of how such concerns become echoed in the wider educational world can be found in Jane Roland Martin's (1988) essay on "Becoming educated: A journey of alienation or integration?", in which she discusses many important aspects of holistic education, such as curriculum integration, the stunting or enhancement of emotional growth, and awareness of gender, without referring to Jung, or confluence, or holism per se, although she does refer to a proposed "expansion of the educational realm" in order not to "replicate a split" inherent in society between productive and reproductive processes (368-369). A holistic view is often signaled by references to *healing, healthy, whole, or holy*, which simply underscores the root meaning of these words. In this case, the idea of "not replicating a split" is understood as an affirmation of healing and is synonymous with transformation.

Still another factor involved the work of European philosophers, psychologists, and especially phenomenologists becoming more easily available in English translation, thus stimulating a heightened interest among North American social scientists to understand the epistemological implications inherent in the concept of "lived experience", as, for example, what it means to "live in the moment" or to "experience life to the full". Finally, cognitive science research, reaching a climax perhaps in Gardner's new articulation of the theory of multiple intelligences, has increasingly suggested that there is indeed a much richer, much fuller way to understand and to promote educational development than has hitherto been realized in schools. No doubt there are other dynamics also that could be identified, but even these few should make it clear that besides the specific movement of confluent education itself, there have been numerous social forces at work in recent decades to create a noticeable momentum towards a holistic view of education.

The question which arises is, how do these various forces and tendencies get expressed in terms of art and the curriculum in English Canadian mainstream education? It is not easy to untangle such influences and to reliably determine their effect. Nevertheless, some indications are discernible and some tentative conclusions are possible.

One of the most obvious ways in which art, especially visual art, appears in the mainstream curriculum is as a medium for expressing personal creativity. Tacitly following Rousseau (perhaps), educators have tended to assume<sup>50</sup> that school-art is

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<sup>50</sup>According to Travis (1984), This concern over the necessity for expression in art has prevailed in the West for the better part of the last 200 years. Within the context of the growth of mass, public education, it is important to note that the growth of art in education is contained completely within this time period and, inevitably, the dominant expression theory in the arts became increasingly important in the school system. A random survey of the literature about art and artists will support the contention that we are still convinced of the validity of the expression function of art. (p. 95)



ideally a form of self-expression in which personal feelings, preferences, and idiosyncracies, undefiled by behaviour modification impositions and social training, can be freely explored and shared.<sup>51</sup> As Travis (1984) explains, "The heart of the Expression theory proper, as it applies to the fine arts, is surely this: that an artist not only may but should deliberately seek to give expression to his own inner states of feeling in works of art" (p. 96). This view has been surprisingly resistant to change in Canadian schools during most of their history, prompting Travis (1984) to comment, "many of the official educational policies of most Canadian provinces still adhere to this view,"<sup>52</sup> and there are countless numbers of teachers perpetuating this loyalty to the Expression theory" (p. 97). Steggle (1984) concurs that the supposed "therapeutic value" of art is what accounts for its continued inclusion in public school systems, though he notes that this perception also accounts for art being "regarded as a fringe activity...a time-killing pastime" (p. 56).

Not everyone agrees that the influence of expressionism on art in English Canadian mainstream schools has been as steady and unquestioned during this century as Travis or Steggle would have us believe. For example, Black (1966/1984) mentions that "self-expression" deteriorated rapidly into "free-expression", giving art a bad name as messy, undisciplined, and aimless (p. 18). It was criticized quite strongly because it "led to blind uncritical acceptance of anything and gave a license to the commonplace" (ibid.).

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<sup>51</sup>This description does not apply so well to the musical arts, as mentioned earlier, since the social coordination necessary for performing choral and instrumental groups to harmonize effectively, as well as the technical requirements for playing an instrument and traditional expectations for interpreting musical scores, have encouraged retention of a large competency-based component in these artistic activities. Creativity and free expression do come into play more easily in movement activities, however, provided suitable space is available.

<sup>52</sup>In a footnote, Travis notes that this information was taken from a 1974 doctoral dissertation which records a survey made of art education policies appearing in official provincial programs of study. Revised policies during the 1980s and especially the 1990s reveal a changing trend in the way art is perceived in Canadian schools.

Perhaps in order to counteract the bad impression, and to make art more meaningful again through reestablishing some common purpose and direction, educators turned to the idea of using art to correlate and integrate other subjects in the curriculum: This subsequently became the vogue, especially in elementary schools (Black, 1966/1984, p. 18). Stimulated in the late 1940s and early 1950s by the ideas of Sir Herbert Read [1893-1968], a "distinguished [British] poet and a critic of art and literature", as Steggle reminds us (1984, p. 57), who has been widely anthologized in the educational field, many Canadian educators found renewed purpose and vigour for their teaching in Read's idea that real education is indeed only possible *through* art.

Writing extensively about art, perception, imagination, temperament and expression, unconscious modes of integration, natural forms, and the aesthetic basis of discipline and morality, Read developed many of his ideas from detailed studies of children's drawings, as well as informed philosophical reflection on the works of many western and eastern writers. When the Canadian Society for Education Through Art was formed in the early 1950s, a national force was established through which Read's ideas became increasingly well known and practiced in Canada (MacGregor, 1984, p. 3).

Read's overall aim had more or less crystallized over time into an explicit campaign for Education through art: that is, an "*aesthetic* education – the education of those senses upon which consciousness, and ultimately the intelligence and judgment of the human individual, are based" (Read, 1943/1958, p. 7). As well as this "adjustment of the senses to their objective environment", Read's aesthetic education also enabled the individual to develop the faculties necessary to "externalize two inner existential states": 1) a "somatic, proprioceptive state" connected with a "store of imagery derived, not from external perception, but from muscular and nervous tensions which are internal in origin", and 2) those "subconscious levels of the mental personality" which express awareness through detached images which "appear with apparent casualness during states of day-dreaming, hypnosis, or ordinary dreaming" (Read, 1943/1958, p. 8).

Without such education, Read (1943/1958) maintained, children could not develop integrated personalities, with the result that society tends to become dominated by "arbitrary systems of thought, dogmatic or rationalistic in origin, which seek in despite

of the natural facts to impose a logical or intellectual pattern on the world of organic life" (p. 8). Read (1943/1958) was greatly concerned that such patterns prevent human beings from learning how to achieve a "natural rhythm and symbiotic balance" in the body-politic, from learning to reconcile discipline with freedom, and from learning how to promote effective individual and social integration (pp. 306-307). The key, as Read (1943/1958) realized, was not simply to recognize or indeed even create social, moral, and artistic patterns in our individual and collective lives, but to avoid all didacticism so that the patterns are "perceived afresh by each nascent sensibility: otherwise the pattern merely kills the life it should contain" (p. 306).

It is possible to glimpse something of Read's impact on school art in Canada from Steggle's (1984) comment that his words had "a tonic effect" on teachers (p. 58). Many teachers took heart from such statements as these, published by Read in 1953:

Art cannot be learned by precept or by any verbal instruction. It is, properly speaking, a contagion, and passes like fire from spirit to spirit. But always as a meaningful symbol, and as a unifying symbol. (p. 26)

Fired by Read's enthusiasm, teachers were also impressed by his clear vision. Through his ideas they gained a new confidence in what education itself was all about, and a new understanding of how art meshes with it. In 1954, through UNESCO, a worldwide organization of teachers was formed to advance Read's ideas on art and education. This comment by him a few years later indicates something of the import of his vision:

The main difficulty encountered in our exposition of this policy is due to a misunderstanding of what we mean by the word *art* -- a word as ambiguous as the word education. But again one must persist in using the conventional word and trust that the challenging association of these two misunderstood words will produce some illumination in the public mind. What I have in my own mind is a complete fusion of the two concepts, so that when I speak of art I mean an educational process, a process of upbringing; and when I speak of education I mean an artistic process, a process of self-creation. As educators, we look at the process from the outside; as artists, we look at the same process from the inside; and both processes, integrated, make the complete man. (Read, 1966, p. xxviii)

Steggle's (1984) draws attention to a point made by prominent American educator Thomas Munro in 1941, that how art fits into the curriculum depends on what the social function of art is understood to be -- is it simply "detached and trivial," or an "integral

vital factor in society" (p. 59), as Read and his followers, for example, supposed it to be? The "isolationist" makes art a separate subject, with the attendant risk that it soon becomes "overly specialized, aloof, and artificial"; the "integrationist" merges art with the rest of the curriculum, through such avenues as theme teaching, project work, and core curriculum experiments, with the attendant risk that it soon becomes "overwhelmed by other approaches and made a mere handmaid to other departments, as in the making of posters for English and social studies" (Munro, cited in Steggle, 1984, p. 59).

Though Read's idea of education through art has continued quietly over the years, and shows signs of renewed vigor in recent reformulations of provincial policy, the notion of curriculum integration through art, at least as practiced in the 1950s, gradually became too unfocused to work well. In Black's words, "Art as an aid to correlation fell absolutely flat, because the results were neither one thing nor the other, neither Art nor History or Geography or whatever the unfortunate subject chosen" (1966/1984, p. 18).

In the absence of a commonly accepted rationale for art in the schools, Viktor Lowenfeld's ideas, expressed in his books on The nature of creative activity (1939) and Creative and mental growth (1947), soon sparked educators to reconsider more deeply the phenomenon of creativity in art (Gaitskell, 1969/1984, p. 8). Although some found his theory about two main kinds of people, the visually oriented who tend to record obvious surface detail, and the "haptic" (from Greek, haptikos) or "inner people" who tend to think deeply about things in terms of their hidden qualities, to be imprecise and misleading, nevertheless Lowenfeld's work proved fruitful because it linked artistic creativity with cognition rather than with emotional self-expression (ibid.).

He particularly stressed parallels between creativity in science and creativity in art. Because science was already held in high esteem, this caused a subtle shift to occur: "Lowenfeld and others, by emphasizing creative growth turned the claims of art education into that of creativity training itself" (Black, 1966/1984, p. 18). Creativity became a strong new focus for teaching and research, but was valued for its role in all learning, leaving art again with no clear rationale for its particular significance, except among those who continued to espouse its value as a medium for self-expression (ibid., p. 19).

Read's ideas about "education through art", and Lowenfeld's ideas about art linked

to creativity, though valuable for the inspiration and stimulation they provide, are perhaps examples of what Pearse (1984) and Day (1972) identify as rationales that justify art as a *means to something else*.<sup>53</sup> Numerous variations on the theme exist, as has already been indicated to some extent: Art can enhance self-expression, promote creativity, integrate the personality, educate the imagination, strengthen intuition, counter the influences of an overly mechanized world, point the way to social harmony, revitalize the whole educational process, and so on. Even more clearly, art can provide us with skills with which to busy ourselves during future leisure time; it can heighten our sensitivity and critical awareness of the world around us; and it can help us to understand and to appreciate our cultural heritage (Pearse, 1984).

As significant as these various rationales might be, they nevertheless all tend to keep art on the periphery of educational concern, at least as long as it is the end and not the means itself which forms the real target for the educators. Perhaps this has contributed in recent years to the temptation for some to insist on "art for art's sake" -- a slogan which has been taken up by the aesthetic education movement (Pearse, 1984, p. 43).<sup>54</sup> Indeed, overall this trend reflects "the most currently influential rationale among

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<sup>53</sup>Dr. William Hare asks if this is a fair portrayal of Read's views (personal communication, March 1997). I recognize that different understandings of Read's ideas are possible: My own understanding is based on such passages as this, "But art, I shall maintain, is...as a *mode of knowledge* at once its own reality and its own end" (Read, 1936, p. 2, italics added). Similarly, we read, "The development of these obscurer *modes of apprehension* has been the purpose of art;..." (ibid., p. 6, italics added). Again, Read (1936) cites Hegel's claim that "'in his attempt to grasp through thought as a *means* the nature of life, man rather renders nugatory this very aim'", and then adds, "it may be that for this reason a philosopher must first *reach a comprehension of reality through the sensuous medium of art*" (p. 135, italics added). From such remarks I infer that Read sees art as a means to vital knowledge rather than as an end in itself.

<sup>54</sup>The phrase itself indicates how much the mood in art education has shifted away from his ideas, when one considers Read's (1953) published and often repeated remark to the effect that "We do not insist on education through art for the sake of art, but for the sake of life itself" (p. 26).

contributors to the art education literature...that art in the curriculum need not be justified on instrumental grounds but that it is unique and valuable in and for itself...[since it] provides experiences and knowledge accessible through no other subject" (Pearse, 1984, p. 42). Although this view enjoys support from the growing appreciation for Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, Pearse (1984) argues that the underlying argument is nevertheless weak because it "is circular, is open to diverse interpretations at many levels, and is so broad and diffuse as to be confusing" (p. 42-43).

A more positive development may be the fact that critical approaches to art have become increasingly championed by artists themselves, and gradually there has appeared an emphasis on the educational potential of the arts, through a "formal, critical enquiry approach" (Travis, 1984, p. 97). As Travis (1984) notes, this is largely due to a shift in attention from the "unique and private interior of each artist" to a "sense of public involvement in the arts" (p. 97). Increasingly, art is deemed to be "public and participatory" rather than the "precious incarnations of artists' feelings" (ibid.). Hanley (1994) also calls attention to the "political and public shift in interest to the social context and relevance of the arts" (p. 198).<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Edgar Friedenberg (1965) offers an interesting analysis of the social function of schools which relates to this idea: An extremely important social function of the school -- and, I believe a major reason for our continued unquestioned support of it -- is to protect society from "subjectivity"; from people with an excessively personal style or approach to situations, who threaten or antagonize their co-workers, fellow citizens, and indeed, in extreme cases, society itself. Our comparative neglect of the humanities in the school curriculum is, I should judge, another aspect of this, not passive, but active. The arts and literature are not ignored as useless; they are quarantined as dangerous. We keep the humanities on a low budget, much as we do the federal antidiscrimination agencies -- to keep them from getting too dynamic. Yet, we cannot afford to break with the tradition they represent; in a mass society they must be preserved -- indeed, pasteurized -- to render their vital ferment inactive while preserving as much as possible their flavor. (p. 177)

While this shift in attention is still working its way down into the schools, it is already visible to a limited extent through the use of new technical media, including video film and computer graphics. It is also visible in the broadening focus for aesthetic education to include not just the practicing artist, but the art critic and art historian as well (Pearse, 1984, p. 43).

Keeping this shift of attention in mind, it is instructive to consider Hanley's (1994) critical analysis of the recently re-designed elementary arts curricula in the provinces of Ontario (1993), British Columbia (1992), and Saskatchewan (1991).<sup>56</sup> (A similar revision of policy in Nova Scotia is underway, following the Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Arts Education, *Making the arts accessible to all students*, which was made public in May 1995.) Hanley (1994) structures her analysis around the three curriculum positions advanced by Miller and used here as well: transmission, transaction, and transformation. Juxtaposed to this framework is another, adopted from the work of Grenier (1990): three conceptions of art as hierarchic (traditional), differential, and symbolic. Hanley's (1994) aim is to examine the assumptions and values underlying the provincial curriculum policies in light of these two frameworks (p. 200).

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If Travis and Hanley are right, and there is indeed a shift currently underway to understand art as "public and participatory" rather than as individual and exclusively subjective, then Friedenbergs's analysis could be taken to suggest that art is logically due to become more highly valued within schools, since there would be less and less need for society to "quarantine" it.

<sup>56</sup>Although Quebec is also considered in this analysis, I have omitted discussion of it here because of my declared focus on English Canadian mainstream education. A further qualifying statement, as Hanley (1994) also notes, is that curriculum policy at the provincial level is not necessarily at all the same thing as curricular or pedagogical practice at the classroom level, especially given the time lag required for implementation of new mandates (p. 197). Nevertheless, Hanley argues for the value of analyzing policy documents "on the assumption that such documents have a significant impact on arts education and should not be neglected as researchers become more involved in examining classroom practice" (ibid.), a view which I support in this thesis.

In Ontario, the curriculum under scrutiny is for grades 1-9. Four broad content areas are identified as a variation on traditional subject designations: Language, the Arts, Self and Society, and Mathematics/Science/Technology. The achievement of personal and social responsibility is targeted as the overall goal of education. This is to be encouraged through intellectual stimulation, emotional support, and active inquiry. A complex, interrelated, and interdependent world establishes the educational context. The arts are specifically sanctioned as a means to "develop the mind and nurture and reflect our spiritual aspirations" (Hanley, 1994, p. 205). Literacy in the arts is important and entails an "understanding and appreciation of the creative process", as well as development of the "principles and techniques that serve the creative purpose" (ibid.). "The arts" are identified as dance, drama, music, and visual arts; four broad topics are deemed fundamental to them all -- understanding form, exploring meaning, understanding function, and communicating (Hanley, 1994, p. 206). Hanley concludes that Ontario's position is predominantly transactive, "despite the attempt to seek connections because there is little discussion of personal discovery, of self-awareness, or of the individual bringing about change. Instead, schools prepare students to adapt to change" (ibid.).

In British Columbia, the Fine Arts (including dance, drama, music and visual arts) are identified as one of four strands in the revised curriculum. "Aesthetic and artistic development goals", however, apply to all strands in the curriculum and are "to enable students to discover and respond to creative and imaginative expression, create, experience a sense of wonder, explore and express their human spirit, value the expressions of cultures, and be aware of and appreciate design" (Hanley, 1994, p. 203).

The primary function of the school is "to provide for intellectual development and an appreciation of learning", but as part of an "integrated experience and... [with a] global educational focus" (ibid.). Integration among all content areas is expected, while the integrity of each discipline is also to be preserved. Education is characterized as a "continuous, flexible, sequential, experiential *process*" in which both critical and creative thinking are important: Schools should produce "educated citizens" interested and engaged in "lifelong learning". Evaluation and assessment are understood to be crucial components in the learning process. Because of the consistent focus on the participatory,



evolving nature of the educational process, especially in terms of artistic and aesthetic sensitivities, Hanley (1994) finds this curriculum<sup>57</sup> basically transformative (p. 204).

In Saskatchewan, the new curriculum policies for art education have been issued separately for each grade from 1-5. Each level typically includes an introduction and curriculum guide for dance, drama, music, and visual arts, together with an interrelated unit connecting them all through reference to a particular theme: The intention is to preserve the integrity of individual arts while also demonstrating their commonalities through such themes as "Making sense of things", and "Learning to perceive/see/hear".

All four arts are required for all children at all levels, with a certain number of minutes allotted in the timetable per week (eg. at grade 5, 200 minutes per week are reserved for art education). Together the arts comprise one of seven main areas of study at the elementary level.

A problem-solving approach is mandated throughout, both for creative self-expression and assessing the expressions of others. Evaluation, reflection, and critical thinking are highlighted as means to move from less informed to more informed judgments. Overall the program is modeled on the Discipline-Based Art Education approach introduced by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts in California: It "interweaves three components" which are each to receive equal emphasis -- the creative/productive, the cultural/historical, and the critical/responsive (Hanley, 1994, p. 202). Because the affective dimension of human learning is de-emphasized and the cognitive dimension highlighted, the revised Saskatchewan curriculum is deemed transactive (ibid.).

In her summary, Hanley (1994) calls attention to three general points visible in each of the new provincial curriculum policy documents concerning the arts in education:

- 1) a growing recognition of the cognitive nature of the arts, (following from Gardner's [1993] work on multiple intelligences), together with a growing awareness that other subjects besides art may also have aesthetic objectives;
- 2) a turning away from the long-established practice of sequencing discrete learning

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<sup>57</sup>Although the new policies address education at all levels, Hanley points out that her analysis is restricted by and large to policies concerning grades 1-7.

objectives as building blocks toward the full mastery of some knowledge or technique (a practice which has been especially prominent in music education programs); and

3) an increased emphasis on assessment of student learning in the arts, in contrast to earlier practices resting on the assumption that the arts were unsuitable for assessment because they were linked too closely with such highly subjective qualities as emotions, intuitions, fantasies, imaginations, and so on (p. 207).

In addition to these three clearly visible developments, there is also evidence for a gradually emerging view as to the social nature of art, correlating with a decided shift away from granting legitimacy to any notion of a "privileged canon of Western art" (Hanley, 1994, p. 208). Finally, although Gardner's ideas about the fundamental nature of various artistic intelligences (eg. spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, and interpersonal) are welcomed by art education advocates, Hanley claims that there is as yet little evidence that the deeper educational implications of Gardner's theory have been considered (*ibid.*).

Based on her analysis, Hanley (1994) argues that the expectations of arts education in Canada are still largely confused and unfocused (p. 208ff.). One point of commonality is that arts curricula during "the past decades" have generally been *experiential*; however, this has been practiced in two widely contrasting ways. Progressive approaches have tended to emphasize art as *process*, while performance or studio-based approaches have tended to emphasize art as *product*. Each is subject to a risk: Process-oriented programs tend to degenerate "into a lack of standards and unstructured, purposeless activity,...[leading] too often...to the belief that the arts are frivolous", while product-oriented programs tend to result "in the exclusive view of the arts and...the belief that only the 'talented' should study the arts" (Hanley, 1994, p. 209).

In the face of a virtual stalemate between these two approaches and their attendant risks, art education appears to be on the verge of taking new direction based on the education of aesthetic sensibility, or what Smith (1992) calls "aesthetic percipience" (p. 52), and what the recent "state-of-the-art review of arts literacy in Canada" tentatively defines as "a level of awareness, understanding, and valuing in one or more of the arts" (McIntosh, Hanley, Van Gyn, & Verriour, 1993, p. 103).

It seems that artists support this direction, judging from the 1991 Task Force on

Professional Training for the Cultural Sector in Canada which asserts that "Artistic values are disappearing from our schools....Artists are discouraged....artists no longer know whether anyone is listening to them; in short, whether they have an audience" (pp. 4,8). Hanley (1994) agrees: "It has been a number of years since the development of audiences or consumers has been a major or even minor consideration in arts education" (p. 209).

However, in a public address at the Opening Plenary Session of the *Partners in Arts Education* forum held in Halifax in 1993, and subsequently printed in full in the Proceedings of that forum, Dr. Ronald N. MacGregor suggests that the concern from practicing artists for more and better arts appreciation on the part of the public, as expressed in the Task Force report mentioned above, amounts to "one prolonged whine, and appears to set out to alienate everyone not part of the arts community" (p. A-4). He contrasts the negative tone of this report with the positive tone of the report from a similar Task Force undertaken in 1992 on Challenges in Science, Technology and Related Skills. The difference is crucial, he claims, because a negative tone is generally taken as evidence that nothing constructive will be forthcoming, whereas a positive tone invites confidence and participation (ibid.).

This example serves to underscore Hanley's (1994) considered opinion that Canadians "do not have a shared vision of arts education among educators, artists, and the community. Indeed, the three groups often seem to be working at cross-purposes" (p. 210). The very fact, however, that such things are being passionately and thoughtfully discussed, researched, and evaluated is perhaps the best evidence possible of a transformative mood at work in Canadian art education today. That it is still mainly evident at the policy level is an important qualification: It remains to be seen to what extent classroom practice will be affected.

### Summary and Conclusion

The history of curricular and pedagogical concerns relating to art in English Canadian mainstream elementary schools over the past hundred years or so reveals an interesting but often bewildering array of approaches, understandings, values, priorities, orientations, and so on. Some broad trends can be discerned, as I have tried to demonstrate, yet overall there is not an obvious sense of cohesion or shared vision.

As Greene (1997) points out, this situation is intensifying throughout America just now due to ever-increasing pressures caused by "changing populations in our schools,...growing awareness of multiple meanings,... increasing diversity,... the impact of newly audible 'voices' seldom attended to before," and more (p. 387). Overall, it is a time urgently inviting us to forge an imaginative understanding of "multiple realities" viewed from "articulated vantage points" since "one-dimensional explanations" no longer promote general understanding in the way they were deemed to in the past (ibid.,p. 388).

This realization of the need for imaginative understanding draws attention to the import of this chapter, since it clarifies how my attempt to review the multiple realities of art as it has been conceived and experienced in English Canadian mainstream elementary schools for more than a century, through the articulated vantage points of transmission, transaction, and transformation based pedagogies and curricula, may indeed matter. From one angle artistic activity comes into the educational world as technically accurate representation, from another as emotionally satisfying self-expression, and from yet another as vital participation in a creative act of knowing which transforms reality just as it simultaneously transforms all awareness of that reality. Only through imaginative effort can such views come together sensibly; otherwise, we are doomed to quibble like the blind men arguing over which one best knew the nature of the elephant.

The telling point is whether the very educational system we strive to imagine is able to support such acts of imagination or not! My review suggests that there may be three possibilities: 1) educators may intentionally foster imaginative awareness, 2) educators may intentionally block, suppress, or cripple imaginative awareness, and 3) educators may simply ignore imaginative awareness, leaving it unsupported and weak but essentially undamaged. It would be harsh and unrealistic to suggest that education has not fostered imaginative awareness to some extent, just as it would be naive and simplistic to imagine that educators have not at times acted to block imaginative awareness. Nevertheless, my overall assessment of the situation is that ignorance, or lack of sufficient imaginative awareness itself, has left us with largely unsupported, weak capacities which are still potentially robust and responsive to intelligent attention.

This study is but one indication of the increasing willingness of educators to give

attention to such matters. The recent formation of a Special Interest Group in Arts and Learning in the American Educational Research Association (AERA) is another. The increasing activity and pressure across Canada towards curriculum reform involving a greater awareness of the arts is yet a third.

In order to summarize the educational trends discussed in this chapter, I have drafted a diagrammatic sketch illustrating the increasing complexity of views that has developed in art education over the past century and a half. Three "waves" are depicted: 1) the nationalistic movement, culminating around the turn of the century in a relatively stable period heavily influence by the educational philosophy of Herbart; 2) the progressive movement culminating in a relatively stable period during the middle of the century heavily influenced by the ideas of Dewey, in tension with traditional behavioristic education; and 3) the holistic movement now gaining momentum under the influence of Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, creating tension among educators who stress technical competence in terms of performance and product, educators who stress creative process in terms of meaning and emotion, and educators who stress multiplicity of form, not only for the practicing artist, but also for the art historian, art critic, and art consumer as well.

## CHAPTER SIX: Synthesis, Analysis, and Possibilities for Future Research

In Chapter Three, when describing the method of Goethean science used in this research, I pointed out my intention to balance imaginative understanding with critical analysis. Here in my concluding chapter I draw attention to the results I have achieved in this regard. Seeking to escape both reductionism and sentimentality, and seeking to incorporate both virtue (as in the ability to heal or strengthen) as well as awareness, I first detail several new understandings I have reached through the imaginative task of synthesis and the critical task of analysis, and then speculate as to further understandings which may be reached in the future given the time and energy to become attentive enough to realize them.

### New Understandings Arising from the Imaginative Task of Synthesis

From a personal puzzlement about the role of art in education, and an abstract puzzlement about the dramatic rise of interest in Waldorf education, I have come via my research to understand several things. First, apparent contrasts are not aloof in artistic experience but united in a profound and creative intimacy. As Dewey (1934/1958) says:

The distinctions, which become antitheses in philosophic reflection, of sensuous and ideal, surface and content or meaning, of excitement and calm, do not exist in works of art; and they are not there merely because conceptual oppositions have been overcome but because the work of art exists at a level of experience in which these distinctions of reflective thought have not arisen. (p. 160)

This means, among other things, that the question of art as means or end is a *philosophic* one, not an *artistic* one. If education is perceived artistically, a unity appears as regards the purpose of art which remains elusive to the philosopher.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Understanding this dynamic may help to clarify why I interpret Read (1943/1958) as viewing art as *instrumental* or *functional*, but in a way that is not sufficiently compelling to have had a stronger effect on art education. I recognize that it does appear as if Read tried to avoid a functional view, not by proclaiming "art for art's sake" but by claiming that art is "education turned inside out" (rather than something that serves education). The problem is that this definition itself aims at being *artistic* rather than *philosophic*, yet without fully understanding the difference between these two modes of definition. In trying to "fuse"

Second, while it is clear that learning goes on even when we are unconscious of it, as typified by the way young children learn to walk and talk for example, and it is also clear that learning can happen as the result of consciously attending, practicing, and mastering something of which we are fully aware, as is more frequently the case in adult life, it appears there may be yet a third possibility. With proper guidance, it seems to be that *out of consciousness itself* a person can come to experience a seemingly effortless learning just as profound as that which is enjoyed (or perhaps suffered) unconsciously by young children.

In cultivating a child's imagination through the elementary school years, Waldorf educators intentionally strive to offer the necessary guidance to support such learning, while mainstream educators typically engage in practices lacking sufficient coherence or integrity to do so, even if they (rarely) show awareness that such a possibility exists, preferring more often to train students in technical performance of one sort or another and to prepare them to be accountable for what they do. It is not that these are unworthy or unnecessary goals, only that they do not yet encompass the full range of human capabilities. Montessori (1948/1972), who through her early medical and later pedagogical interests made intensive field studies of the way children learn, explains what is at stake:

The child, in the first two years of its life, is preparing with its absorbent mind all the characters of the individual, although he is unaware of it.... The powers of the absorbent mind are obscured by degrees as the organization of the conscious mind advances; they are, however, still in existence during childhood, and permit, as is shown in our universal experience..., the "absorption" of culture to a vastly surprising extent.... But it is certain that things gained during the absorbing period are those which are fixed, not in the memory, but in the living organism, when they become the guide for the formation of the mind, for the character of the individual.... What is taken in by the child in the form of culture is like a permanent victory which kindles a blaze of enthusiasm, as if he were launched into a sudden conflagration. From this childhood-culture sparks

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art and education without being sufficiently clear about their individual distinctions, Read ends up "con-fusing" the two. From what I can see, this could explain why the Education through Art movement is admittedly provocative without being able to sustain a long-term vital impact on the development of art in education.

of intelligence are given off which lead to expansion.... Without the possibility of functioning in accordance with the mental characters which nature has furnished as a key to the secret of the creation of a human intelligence, the child suffers and deviates from normality. (pp. 376-377)

The possibility of coming to understand the kind of learning which affects not just our memory but our *living organism* has been, and continues to be, of serious concern to many educators. Osin and Lesgold (1996), for example, in their review of current educational practice and the pressing need for educational reform to solve the *inertness* problem identified so long ago by Whitehead (1929/1967, p. 1) and still evident in many classrooms today, have found three basic principles (derived from several different learning theories) put forward in recent years to address exactly this issue:

- 1) the principle of situated learning (following Thorndike's identical-elements theory of transfer), which suggests that knowledge is strongly tied to the situation in which it is learned and cannot be transferred to other situations "unless work has been done to abstract it sufficiently to apply to the new case";
- 2) the principle of construction (following cognitive learning theory), which explains how abstractions are formed as a result of observing a situation from multiple viewpoints and drawing logical conclusions which can then be tested in new situations; and
- 3) the principle of knowledge negotiation (following socio-structural theories of learning), which "provides a specific mechanism for knowledge construction that is motivating and, to a considerable extent, self-correcting" (p. 624).

This line of argument follows current trends stressing the importance of social influence for motivating people to learn (cf. Bandura's self-efficacy appraisals based on social interaction, Crain, 1992, pp. 183-186), rather than older though still popular theories of motivation based on the *influence of individual developmental drives* (cf. Maslow's hierarchy of individual needs culminating in self-actualization, Crain, 1992, pp. 320-322), *positive and negative reinforcement* (cf. Skinner's theory of operant conditioning, Crain, 1992, pp. 161-167), and *intrinsic interest in the world* (cf. Piaget's claim that "cognitive development is a spontaneous process", Crain, 1992, p. 129; also Aristotle's (1947) claim that "All men by nature desire to know" (p. 243).

In each of these familiar educational approaches, an attempt is made to try and determine what motivates children to learn, presumably in order that teachers may



increase the learning that occurs *by increasing the motivation of their students*. This brings me to a third important new understanding arising out of the research for this thesis: The need for increased motivation *disappears* when we come to understand and to respect how subconscious learning is accomplished, and then model our teaching on that pattern. Freire (1987) alludes to this when he says,

I never, never could understand the process of motivation outside of practice, before practice. It is as if first I needed to be motivated and then I could get into action! Do you see? That is a very anti-dialectical way of understanding motivation. Motivation takes part *in* the action. It is a moment of the very action itself. That is, you become motivated to the extent that you are acting, and not before acting. (pp. 4-5)

The fact that this is a potentially sinister approach can be troubling. After all, subliminal advertising accomplishes its goal of higher profits precisely through such "teaching". What can perhaps redeem this approach is the potential that exists to follow the process *in an increasingly conscious way and to intentionally develop love as a polar complement to freedom*. From what I see, this is the path which Rudolf Steiner paved for education, and the path Waldorf educators strive to follow.

In this section I discuss in turn each of these three new understandings and how they are tied to notions of art and cognition. First, there is the import of artistic experience as means or end. Second, there is the possibility of learning to think like a child, but with conscious awareness of doing so. Third, there is the challenge of schooling simultaneously both Freedom and Love.

*The import of artistic experience.*

One of the most basic attempts to come to terms with art surfaces in the question, 'What purpose does art serve?' Is art *functional*, that is, does it serve as a means to some other end? Or is it somehow an end in itself, serving no other purpose than its own intensification?

These questions point to a fundamental perplexity that has faced western educators for centuries, even millenia (and certainly far longer than the era considered in this inquiry). Curricular and pedagogical practices vary depending on what answer one accepts, as has been demonstrated in the previous chapter.

Yet overall, whether one understands art to serve the purpose of manual or technical training, to provide a gentle polish and veneer for a highly educated elite, to satisfy individual or common needs for self-expression, to create a pleasant diversion from more onerous tasks, to modulate learning challenges, or to develop and exploit the diverse talents of a community, in all these various possibilities there is little explanation as to why *art* should necessarily be involved, since these ends can all be met by other means, and accomplished in other ways. For example, technical training can be achieved through drill; polish for an elite can be met by lavish spending; self-expression can be undisciplined rather than artistic; relaxation and refreshment can be achieved through socializing, hobbies, sharing food, physical rest; learning challenges can be modulated through revised standards and expectations; and a community's diverse productivity can be developed and exploited without any artistic vision at all.

On the other hand, if one opted for the opposite tack, suggesting that art is important *for its own sake* without reference to anything else of importance, the question would soon arise as to why we should invest any time, money, or energy in it. In fact, the historical review of art in English Canadian mainstream education suggests that these very responses are indeed typical.

In light of this, it is especially interesting to consider a third stance as regards the purpose of art. It is one taken by Steiner himself, along with a few others, including, I would argue, Dewey, Langer, and Plato.<sup>2</sup> In this view it is clear that art is functional, but *uniquely so*. In other words, art makes possible something important and necessary, which cannot come about in any other way. To put it simply, art provides a meeting

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<sup>2</sup>Plato's views on art are a matter of some controversy, arising from his notorious exclusion of poets and artists from his ideal city-state, the *Republic*. The crucial point, however, is that he excludes those who practice *representation*, which -- on a closer reading of his work -- does not qualify as art in his view, though he does recognize that many others do accept the view of art as representation.

point of the spiritual and material worlds.<sup>3</sup> In order to become aware of this meeting, we must become involved with art.<sup>4</sup>

Art is a *unity of experience* which is neither fusion nor confusion, but a threshold upon which we stand in intimate awareness of two very different worlds: In touch with both the spiritual (i.e., inner, cognitive) and material (i.e., outer, physical) dimensions of human experience, art allows for integration without collapsing our involvement in the world into one or the other mode completely. In other words, necessity and freedom are brought into a fruitful and meaningful relationship in which both continue to have value.

To see the significance of this in education is to understand that the very young child responds to the world more through a subconscious, *willing involvement with matter* somewhat akin to priestly devotion, while an adult responds to the world more through a conscious, *thinking critique of matter* somewhat akin to scientific analysis. In between is the artistic realm, where beauty as an illusion tends to lead us "away from matter into the spirit, yet it does so through the life in the material" (Steiner, 1914-15/1984).

In this in-between world of artistic experience, spirit and matter confront us equally: Awareness of each is thus intensified simultaneously. Langer (1957) explains how this carries *import* differently than does language-based thinking and discourse:

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<sup>3</sup>Dewey (1934/1958) echoes Steiner's thoughts on this exactly: "...art itself is the best proof of the existence of a realized and therefore realizable, union of material and ideal" (p. 27).

<sup>4</sup>It would in fact be more accurate to acknowledge that Steiner recognized that this meeting of spiritual and material worlds is also possible through involvement with science and with religion, as well as art. However, under present conditions, art is the path of choice for educators, since it offers the easiest, most direct, and least complicated approach to such understanding. As his wife, Marie Steiner (1914-15/1984), explains in an introduction to one of his lecture cycles, religion has been hampered to a large extent "by the passion of the church for power," while science has been hampered "by the rigidity of thought born out of the materialistic age", leaving art as "one of the healthiest and most revealing and most direct" paths towards "the grasping of the ego in the fullness of life's experience, but also in sun-filled contemplation" (p. 1).

What is expressed cannot be grasped apart from the sensuous or poetic form that expresses it. In a work of art we have the direct presentation of a feeling, not a sign that points to it.... an Art Symbol does not signify, but only articulate and present its emotive content.... The import of art is perceived as something in the work, articulated by it but not further abstracted; as the import of a myth or a true metaphor does not exist apart from its imaginative expression.

The work as a whole is the image of feeling, which may be called the Art Symbol. It is a single organic composition, which means that its elements are not independent constituents, expressive, in their own right, of various emotional ingredients, as words are constituents of discourse, and have meanings in their own right, which go to compose the total meaning of the discourse. Language is a *symbolism*, a system of symbols with definable though fairly elastic meanings, and rules of combination whereby larger units – phrases, sentences, whole speeches – may be compounded,... Art, contrariwise, is not a symbolism. The elements in a work are always newly created with the total image, and although it is possible to analyze what they contribute to the image, it is not possible to assign them any of its import apart from the whole. That is characteristic of organic form. (p. 134)

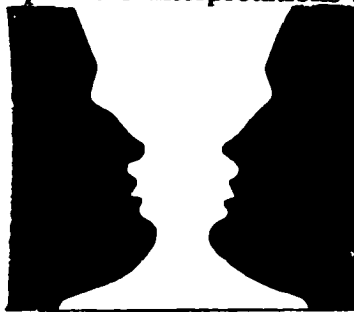
Dewey (1934/1958) notes that it is not just emotion which underlies the import of art, but perception as well: "In conception, things are distinguished that in perception and emotion belong together" (p. 160). And he identifies exactly what it is that gives the sense of organic form Langer mentions: "There is unity only when the resistances create a suspense that is resolved through cooperative interaction of opposed energies.... the unity in variety that characterizes a work of art is dynamic" (Dewey, 1934/1958, p. 161).

Here we come close to Steiner's view as well. The "cooperative interaction of opposed energies" is just what Steiner also sees in art, as in life, and it is this which the elementary child must experience again and again, from many different angles, if it is to eventually understand, participate in, and contribute to the integrity of this dynamic life process. The Waldorf teacher guides the child through these many necessary art experiences, with colour, tone, and movement, for example, in order to introduce not beauty so much as *health*, through a sense of the *wholesomeness* of art, and through art life. That such wholesomeness is frequently experienced also as *holiness* underscores the fact that art opens up a threshold in our awareness where we consciously engage with both matter and spirit simultaneously. Raab (1997) reports a former Waldorf student's

comments about her experiences in the lower grades which clearly describe this special sense of a threshold in awareness from which one can perceive the actual content and physical motives on the one hand, simultaneously with the spiritual qualities of beauty, loveliness, and "soul nourishment" on the other:

"The murals in the classrooms made us feel we were in paradise! To begin with it was the pictures in the First Class, drawn from fairy tales, which were to us the most beautiful. As soon as we moved to the Second Class, however, it was the murals of St Francis which were the loveliest. In the Third Class with its plant motives and the Fourth Class with its animal motives on the walls – eagles near the sun, lions, stags in the moonlight – it was these which in turn became the most beautiful. The artistic treatment of the classrooms gave our souls a special nourishment year by year that will last, I do believe, for the rest of our lives." (p. 5)

The wholesomeness/holiness of art is thus tied directly to the fact that it creates a unified experience of *distinction* (characterized by analysis and thought) and *communion* (characterized by synthesis and willing involvement) in dynamic tension, much as a Gestalt figure/ground exercise holds our attention so strongly because we are simultaneously aware of two possible interpretations in stark contrast to each other.



Through thinking consciousness of our own awareness, we experience a sense of antipathy, or separation, while through a selfless attentiveness and wilful surrender to the matter at hand, we experience a sense of sympathy, or immersion within something larger than ourselves. Here in the feeling life a rhythm is created from this interplay of sympathetic (wilfully attentive, even reverent) and antipathetic (critically thoughtful, even skeptical) energies.

Reid (1986), following Langer, is very clear about how this dynamic feeling must be understood as "living process becoming aware of itself" (p. 17). It is a necessary part of cognition, a part of knowing. As he argues,

In recent philosophical thinking about education, as well as in education itself, there has been a far too *exclusive* emphasis on the -- unquestionably important -- intellectual understanding and knowledge of facts. Critical understanding in depth is a function not of intellectual reason only, but of a devoted attention of the whole person -- whether it be in the field of facts or of values. In the knowledge and understanding of value, the union of thinking and feeling is particularly intimate. (Reid, 1986, p. 139)

Whitehead (1929/1967) makes a similar point in his plea that "romantic emotion" be granted its proper place in education because it is a necessary ferment "stirring in the mind", without which nothing of consequence can develop (pp. 17-18). Even when the needs of precision, systematic ordering, and accuracy are strongest, Whitehead argues,

romance is not dead, and it is the art of teaching to foster it amidst definite application to appointed task. It must be fostered for one reason, because romance is after all a necessary ingredient of that balanced wisdom which is the goal to be attained. But there is another reason: The organism will not absorb the fruits of the task unless its powers of apprehension are kept fresh by romance. (ibid., p. 34)

Steiner (1923/1986) also recognizes "balanced wisdom" as a goal of education (though it must itself be balanced by the complementary goal of "balanced moral action"), and he sees art as a means to advance towards both goals by allowing feeling, emotion, reverence, and devoted attention to be involved in the learning process in a healthy way.<sup>5</sup>

For art to serve this purpose, it is important that it not be *confused* with wisdom. As Steiner (1923/1986) notes, "...if there is no uncertainty about existence, being, or semblance, shine, if there is an attempt fully to delineate the essence of the spiritual, artistry ceases" (p. 75). Wisdom involves the fullest possible understanding, which for Steiner, like Plato, cannot be tied to particulars; it is wholly spiritual, that is, wholly

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<sup>5</sup>The long history of the separation of church and state in Western culture makes it easy to be suspicious of any state-supported appeal for reverence or devotion in education. The crucial point here, however, is that such reverence and devotion is explicitly fostered in terms of a student's own work and awareness, not blind obedience to external authority. In this light it is revealing to note that the Waldorf Schools were the first schools to be closed by the Nazis when they came to power in Germany, because they were clearly understood to promote independent, free thinking which could not be tolerated in a fascist state.

outside the physical, material world. Art, on the other hand, is important precisely because it brings spiritual understanding into immediate connection with matter through pattern, design, form: "The artistic is not permitted to reach the spiritual. Otherwise it would be...wisdom. For wisdom is no longer artistic, wisdom leads into the formless..." (Steiner, 1923/1986, p. 75).

As part of education, art becomes the mediator between the child's awareness and involvement within the material world, and its apprehension of spiritual (thoughtful) realities which invite a different awareness and involvement. Taking the time and patience, as Waldorf educators attempt to do, to carefully school children in this subtle interplay between what *matters both physically and spiritually* prepares the children for fully abstract thought, without severing the connection, or creating an artificial boundary between the realm of willing and the realm of thinking. Whitehead (1929/1967) agrees:

You cannot, without loss, ignore in the life of the spirit so great a factor as art. Our aesthetic emotions provide us with vivid apprehensions of value. If you maim these, you weaken the force of the whole system of spiritual apprehensions.... History shows us that an efflorescence of art is the first activity of nations on the road to civilisation. Yet, in the face of this plain fact, we practically shut out art from the masses of the population. Can we wonder that such an education, evoking and defeating cravings, leads to failure and discontent? The stupidity of the whole procedure is, that art in simple popular forms is just what we can give to the nation without undue strain on our resources. (p. 40)

In lecturing about the spirit of the first Waldorf school, Steiner (1919/1995) explained something of how complex a task it is to get the balance right between these different aspects of education:

The intellect is at first the highest mental aspect in each of us; but if we develop it one-sidedly, without a concurrent development of feeling and will, then we also develop a tendency toward materialistic thinking.... Specifically, we should not believe that when we develop the intellect, we also develop people spiritually. As paradoxical as that sounds, it is nevertheless true that we develop people's capacity to understand material things when we develop the intellect. By first tastefully, in an aesthetic way, developing the sensitivity, the feelings, we can direct the human intellect toward the soul aspects. We can give children a foundation for directing the intellect toward the spirit only insofar as we practice a development of will, even if we develop it only as physical dexterity....

How do we as teachers learn to develop will in the proper way? I recently pointed out that we learn to do it by allowing children to be artistically active. As early as possible, we should not only allow children to hear music, to see drawings and paintings, but also allow them to participate. (p. 49)

Although Steiner repeatedly urged that materialism and intellectualism were too one-sided on their own, he was not against them *per se*. What he sought was re-integration of all aspects of the human being, in terms of thinking, feeling, and willing. What has become fragmented in our experience he sought to re-unite. Regard for the material must be balanced by regard for the spiritual; thinking must be balanced by doing.

In this regard, even art (*especially* art) was not to remain "materialistic," by which he meant imitative, naturalistic, symbolic, allegorical, or representational. Naturalism had served its purpose in Steiner's (1923/1986) eyes, and now there was a different need:

I do not speak against naturalism. For a certain age it was right and inevitable.... We must make good use of what naturalism has brought us; must not lose what we have acquired by having for centuries now held up, as an ideal of art, the imitation of nature.... We must have the will to penetrate into this material world spiritually;... must -- though not by developing dry symbolism or allegory -- find our way back to the spiritual. Symbolism and allegory are inartistic.... (pp. 111-112)

In further discussion, he clarifies that what he regards as artistic is *attention to form as well as content*, rather than attention to either content or form alone. Using a fast, lively word rhythm to express happy excitement in a poem, for example, is more artistic than simply saying in so many words (i.e., prosaically, pedantically, academically), "there is an air of happy excitement here." From this it is clear that he is aiming at something like what Eisner (1997)<sup>6</sup> calls "distinctive form[s] of literacy, when literacy means, as I intend it to mean, a way of conveying meaning through and recovering meaning from the form...in which it appears" (p. 353). And again, "...each form of literacy has the

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<sup>6</sup>In light of Steiner's remarks about representation, it is unfortunate that Eisner's article is entitled "Cognition and representation". My sense, however, is that they are using the word "representation" in very different ways -- Steiner to indicate a copy of something external, Eisner to indicate an internally conceived meaning.



capacity to provide unique forms of meaning.... Schools serve children best when their programs do not narrow the kinds of meanings children know how to pursue and capture" (ibid.). Steiner (1923/1986) affirms, "One can be spiritual in forms, colors, tones, as well as words. Indeed, only then does one experience the really artistic" (p. 87).

Steiner is very insistent that the kinds of meanings available to children (and adults too!) must be *lively* if they are to do any good in this world. Abstractions simply do not qualify in this regard:

Abstract thoughts deaden artistic phantasy. Becoming more and more logical, one takes to writing commentaries on works of art. This is a terrible product of a materialistic age: scholars write commentaries on art.... If one picks up a *Faust* or *Hamlet* commentary, it is like touching a corpse.. Abstract thoughts have murdered the work of art.... The more one surrenders to purely abstract thoughts, dead thoughts, the more one becomes a stranger to art. For art desires and is centered on the living. (Steiner, 1923/1986, pp. 85, 84)

Trying to approach art, or nature, or life, or indeed anything in a *living* way requires artistic effort itself, not abstract theorizing. For Steiner (1923/1986), "If one has attained to a cognitional comprehension of the world, there arises a vital need not just to continue forming ideas but to create artistically in sculpture, painting, music, poetry" (p. 86).

It is this "*living cognition* that has been given wings by artistic feeling" which allows us to achieve understanding of something, as distinct from merely having a logical explanation for it (ibid., italics original).

When we are able to bring our knowing and our feeling together in this way, then we have also the impetus to act in the world: Goodness (through moral deeds) connects with Truth (through thinking/knowing) and Beauty (through feeling), just as reverence (in religion) connects with informed awareness (in science) and creative passion (in art) (Steiner, 1923/1986, p. 98).

Introducing art into educational experience allows this healthy integration to occur, setting the stage for moral action. Without such integrity, individuals are not capable of true morality in Steiner's view, and the well-being of the community becomes totally dependent upon enforced discipline, external control, accountability measures, police action, and so on.

Because art relies on a rhythm of sympathy and antipathy in human awareness, it has a crucial role to play in bringing human thought and human action into dynamic relationship with each other. In thinking, we have the freedom to be more independent and distinct,<sup>7</sup> in acting we are necessarily more interdependent and engaged. We realize how these must come together to be fruitful, when we recognize that we are able to think out of our freedom, but only when we have the will to do so; we are able to act out of our love, but only when we have the thoughtfulness to do so. Thinking and willing must be fully integrated (that is, through feeling) if either is to fully actualize its potential. Our freedom is affirmed in willful thinking warmed by feelings of care and attentive concern for Self and Other; our love is affirmed in thoughtful willing tempered by feelings of respect and awe.

When our thinking is brought into balance through a warming process, and when our willing is brought into balance through a tempering process, they become "properly" balanced — a balance we can only judge in our feeling awareness well-schooled by appropriate artistic experience — and we experience ourselves and all of creation as whole, healthy, and holy. It is for this reason that Steiner values art, to promote health in individuals and in the communities they form.

In education, art can serve to school the *feeling judgment*, the judgment we need to determine and constantly adjust the balance between thinking and willing for which we each must strive throughout our lives. Art teaches us to be aware of what Kuhlewind (1993), himself a well-known anthroposophist, calls *feeling knowing*: Such knowing is more than just abstract theory, logically deduced; it is a willingness to go ahead in the dark, unsure but alert, and to count this experience as equally important, valid, *weighty*, grave, and serious, as are our experiences of reason, thinking, logic, and so on.

From this view, one could imagine that the great Enlightenment project of the eighteenth century could not lead to full understanding precisely because it failed to perceive the heavy significance of the *dark* side of human nature and human existence,

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<sup>7</sup>The popularity of the German song, "Die Gedanken sind Frei" (Thoughts are Free), so popular among resisters during the second world war, bears eloquent testimony to this idea.

what Schopenhauer recognized as The Will. Without the will to be thoughtful, intellectual cleverness itself can be cold and cruel; without the will to be thoughtfully *compassionate*, passion can be inflammatory and wild, creating barriers and obstacles and distance between people, instead of real friendship; without the will to listen to reason, the will asserts itself as dominating and potentially destructive.

To weigh the balance of willing and thinking, and to know what is adequate in this regard, requires a *feeling* for what is needed in any given situation, but a feeling which is also a kind of knowing, a reliable basis for action. I reckon this is what is behind Aristotle's claim that virtues cannot themselves *be* rational principles accessible to knowledge, that is, *rules which can be known*, but that they do *involve* a rational principle (Aristotle, 1947, p. 441). In effect, the Artist is the very person who thus understands, and lives out of that understanding, that all creation and all creating can be *rational* (i.e., can involve a rational principle) without being *bound by formulaic, pre-determined, or known rules*. Developing the feeling awareness that allows for this kind of judgment and trusts it as a basis for action, is a task of immense significance for humanity today, in Steiner's view, if we are ever to come to terms with the many scientific challenges, social tensions, and acts of willful violence in our world. Educators can help to meet this task constructively by recognizing the pivotal role art plays in developing this crucial awareness.

*Learning to think as a child.*

The fact that very young children learn so much with so little apparent effort is a continuing puzzle. How is it they are able to absorb so much in such a short time? In a few years, with little or no formal instruction, young children learn to walk, talk, think, and relate to others in highly complex ways. Such learning happens even if there is no *pressure* to learn exerted from figures of authority, indeed such pressure often seems to complicate a process which otherwise proceeds quite "naturally" and "unconsciously".

Steiner is not alone in asserting that the young child is a being of intense *physicality*. She explores and comes to know the world through physical engagement, assuming only that she has sufficient physical and emotional nourishment to support such

engagement, and sufficient sleep to balance such intense involvement. With little evidence of conscious reflection or rational calculation, the young child exhibits tremendous vitality in striving to involve herself with all that surrounds her.

How different such a child is from the carefully calculating adult! Often highly pressured, the adult is more likely to seek time for research, reflection, and deliberation before taking action, sometimes devoting so much time to these tasks that the time for action simply passes by unheeded. Such deliberations may generate a superficial wealth of ideas, giving the illusion that much is happening, but, never realized in any way that *matters*, these ideas can only fade, contributing nothing creative to the world.

Echoing a long-standing philosophical concern about the relative value of the Intellect and the Will, this juxtaposition of learning styles raises a similar concern about the relative value of adult-like and child-like learning. More often than not, it is the intellect which is prized by the philosopher, and adult-like learning which is prized by the philosophical educator.

But if Intellect and Will must be integrated to generate morality, as the discussion in the previous section suggests, then a further question can be posed: What might be the consequence of integrating adult-like learning with child-like learning? Steiner's work suggests there is here a potential for "higher" types of learning, leading to ever deeper awarenesses and understandings of the universe and our place within it. Recent advances in neurogastroenterology offer a surprising explanation as to how it may actually happen. Just as art serves as an educational tool for supporting the feeling awareness necessary to integrate the Intellect and Will effectively, so art may serve as a path for effectively teaching us to integrate the child and adult's approaches to learning, to achieve an exalted form of learning which is both creatively involved and intelligently understanding.

In order to clarify Steiner's work further, I draw on insights from both Piaget and Montessori, two well-known and influential educational researchers who have published important analytical discussions of early childhood thinking and learning, based on

extensive scientific research.<sup>4</sup> Piaget's (1928/1959) idea of assimilation and Montessori's (1967) idea of absorption parallel Steiner's (1923/1988) idea of the young child as "giant sense organ": All three point to a uniquely receptive style of learning which involves a direct, formative influence on the child.

For example, Piaget (1928/1959) describes the typical capacity of the young child, until age 7 or 8, to *incorporate* influences from the surrounding world "into his own substance," rather than having them be superficially and externally *imprinted* "as on a photographic plate" (p. 256). Piaget's (1928/1959) explanation of how the process of assimilation "works" (see pp. 135-198) derives from his observations that young children are not bothered by logical contradiction the way adults often are, nor do children generalize their understandings as adults do. In short, young children appear to think and reason *unconsciously*, in a manner which Piaget suggest is best understood as *thought merging into action* (ibid., p. 145). By contrast, adults typically concern themselves with logical justifications for their various judgments; Piaget (1928/1959) notes the difference when he asserts, "The logical justification of a judgment takes place on a different plane from the invention of this judgment" (p. 146).

Thus two forms of intelligence, logical justification and invention (imagination) are recognized as distinct in Piaget's view (ibid., p. 201-2). While Piaget (1928/1959) finds the adult focus unquestionably mature and developed, the childish involvement with imagination is described as *disordered, chaotic, and ill-directed* (pp. 158-9).

Putting aside Piaget's evaluations for the moment, and examining his findings

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<sup>4</sup>Although admittedly a number of weaknesses associated with Piaget's world renowned research "have become increasingly clear over the past two decades," Gardner (1983) acknowledges that "the broad outlines of development as sketched by Piaget remain of interest" (p. 20). Montessori's work, like Steiner's, serves as the foundation for a worldwide alternative school movement. Often confused with Waldorf education (presumably since both operate as independent schooling movements), Montessori education embodies a curriculum and pedagogy with significantly different emphases from those found in Waldorf schools (especially in how the child's imagination is schooled), although many underlying insights into human nature and development are similar.

without prejudice against the child's way of thinking, we glimpse some interesting features of this child-like form of learning. First, Piaget (1928/1959) notes a characteristic *absence of reciprocity* between the child's viewpoint and the viewpoints of others (pp. 174-180). Second, he finds that children typically reason *transductively*, that is, from particular to particular, rather than from universal to particular (as in classical deductive reasoning), or from particular to universal (as in classical inductive reasoning) (*ibid.*, pp. 180-186). And third, Piaget (1928/1959) concludes that childish reasoning lacks logical rigour and is incapable of generalization because it is *not functional* in the technical sense that it lacks "the peculiar property of purely mental constructions like those of mathematics [which] is to be entirely reversible" (pp. 186-191).

The fundamental problem, according to Piaget, is that the child is sufficiently "ignorant of his own ego" and so "thinks he can reason directly about things without taking himself into account" (*ibid.*, p. 197). The child's reasoning thus becomes a *weaving* "between the organism and the external world by action (the movements of the organism), but without consciousness of its own processes on the part of this action, and consequently without conscious realization of its own existence on the part of thought" (Piaget, 1928/1959, p. 197).

Such "unconscious reasoning" affects actions only, and it is entirely sufficient for this purpose (*ibid.*, p. 213). Specifically, it requires simply that attention be "wholly turned towards the external world, towards action [and] in no way directed towards thought as a medium interposed between the world and self" (Piaget, 1928/1959, p. 213).

This process has an interesting characteristic. For any one child, the "sum of movements -- whether performed, begun, or imagined --" serve to construct a "succession of relations [which] does present something that is equivalent to a reasoning process," yet which is *not reversible* and is "*consequently without the element of necessity that would lead to generalization*" (Piaget, 1928/1959, pp. 197-8, italics original).

The lack of necessity for generalization is a crucial point. It raises the question of whether or not there is a legitimate reasoning process available to us, a respectable form of thinking and learning, which, instead of necessarily satisfying *general*

expectations, requires, at least to some extent, that we remain aware of ourselves as contingent, particular, and individually responsible beings, even after we become conscious of ourselves as existing and learning within a world involving other particular beings besides ourselves.

This possibility may simply amount to placing a higher value on Piaget's category of imagination than he did. But it also invites the suggestion that rational, logically reversible thought may in fact be *inappropriate and inadequate* for understanding human reality, even though it functions perfectly well in mathematical and mechanical realms. Indeed, Steiner (1920/1988) insisted upon this very point:

...the fundamental method of thinking that originated during the nineteenth century begins to fail, for a large part of the method rests on the principle of calculating from observed facts by means of the differential concept. When the observed conditions in a gas-filled space at a certain pressure are set down as differentials in accordance with the idea that we are dealing with the movements of ultimate particles, then the belief follows that, by integrating, something real is arrived at. What must be understood is this: when we go from ordinary methods of calculation to differential equations, it is not possible to integrate with these differential equations without losing all contact with reality.... It must be made clear that in certain instances one can set up differentials, but what is obtained as a differential cannot be thought of as being able to be integrated without leading us into the realm of the ideal as opposed to the real. Understanding this is very important in our relation to nature.

You see, when I initiate a certain process of transformation, I say that work is performed, heat produced, and from this heat work can again be secured by a reversal of the process. I will show you later the extent to which this applies to the inorganic in regard to heat phenomena. But an organic process cannot be reversed so simply. There are also great inorganic processes that are not reversible, such as the planetary processes. We cannot imagine a reversal of the process that goes on in the plant from the formation of the roots, through the flower and fruit formation. The process takes its course from the seed to the setting of the fruit. It cannot be reversed like an inorganic process. This fact does not enter into our calculation.... We must become aware of the extent to which our concepts and calculations are only conceptual in their content. (pp. 15-16)

If reversible generalizations generated by calculating logic are in fact misleading when applied to organic processes, then presumably some other kind of thinking is required.

Whicher (1997) offers this clarification:

Our most essential scientific task today is to achieve as clear an understanding of the laws governing the processes of growth and development in the living kingdoms of nature as modern science has done in the inorganic fields.... The laws of life and living processes are...not accessible by means of analytical thinking alone. The forces of life can only be understood by means of a far more comprehensive type of thinking, which may be attained by concentrating on detail, while at the same time widening the pictorial scope of investigation. There must be no vague, pictorial imagining; but, without losing the exact nature of analysis, an aspect of synthesis must be achieved. (p. 12)

Could this "more comprehensive type of thinking, attained by concentrating on detail, while at the same time wideing the pictorial scope" be anything like the transductive logic Piaget recognizes in the child's thinking, whereby the child connects particular with particular?<sup>9</sup> Is it possible that one could realize *rationally and analytically* that rational and analytical thought is not adequate to the task of understanding life? Is it plausible that one might *therefore consciously and intentionally seek to supersede one's own ordinary rationality and attempt something else? Is it possible for an adult to learn to think like a child? If the adult were aware of what was happening, would this awareness mean that the adult was thinking fundamentally differently from the child, or was simply differently aware of thinking? Do awareness and thinking involve different processes?*

In trying to come to terms with such questions, I find it helpful to consider Einstein's argument that a "flat fly" could never discover the third dimension (Kuhlewind, 1993, p. 124). In fact, Kuhlewind (1993) suggests that this is not quite right: A flat fly could not even discover the second dimension, because to glimpse it would require that the fly be, however slightly, above the plane in order to see it (ibid.). (It is a little like asking if the fish can know it is in water; or wondering which way to go if you are standing at the north pole and told to go south -- in all such cases something is clearly experienced although the meaning of it remains perpetually elusive). I don't know if this is right or not; it seems to me that the "fly" *might* be able to understand its experience

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<sup>9</sup>I am reminded of Aristotle's (1947) attempt to redirect inquiry to *particulars* following his complaint that, through the Platonic school's focusing on universal forms of thought, "The whole study of nature has been annihilated" (p. 271).



*imaginatively* even if it could not deduce it logically or verify it objectively. If so, then perhaps it is also possible for an adult to think as a child thinks, with the further condition that the adult knows what she is doing! In any event, it certainly seems as if that is what Goethe's *participatory science*, which so intrigued and stimulated Steiner, was all about (see Zajonc, 1993, pp. 203-6; also Lehrs, 1958, pp. 126-155).

Significantly, Goethe himself was an artist who understood that, "My perception is itself a thinking, and my thinking a perceiving" (Goethe, cited in Zajonc, 1993, p. 207). And Zajonc, distinguished professor of physics at Amherst College and a fellow of both the Lindisfarne Association and the Fetzer Institute, notes that even science proceeds in exactly the same way whenever it discovers something new: The "epiphanous moments in science" are due to the poetry which is at its heart (*ibid.*). It is the *artistic*, not the mathematical spirit which leads into the unknown, through *attentive perception* to actual, material phenomena, rather than conceptual modelling of logical realities (Zajonc, 1993, p. 210). Zajonc's (1993) discussion offers further clarification of this unusual form of thinking which is so intimately tied with perception:

Goethe's sense of scientific understanding is grounded in insight, not model building, and so is true to the heart of both science and art. Every scientific discovery from Galileo to Einstein can trace its origin to the eureka experience in which a phenomenon becomes transparent to the ideal, and an idea is seen. From this exhilarating moment, the scientist works to translate his or her insight into words and symbols. In the process, the eureka experience is often lost while its technical power is retained. Goethe was more interested in the former, seeking constantly for means that would permit everyone to have their own epiphany into nature's ways, to see ideas.... Goethe considered the realms of thinking and perceiving as interpenetrating.... To the artist, one final and all-significant aspect of this method is that in perceiving the archetypal phenomenon, one does not denude or degrade nature but exalt her. The sunset is still gloriously red, not reduced to differential absorption and scattering. The perception of a scientific idea does not require the death of the beautiful. (pp. 212-3)

Here we return to Steiner's idea that art places us at the threshold of two worlds: the material one in which we perceive, and the spiritual one in which we think. In creation we engage, as it were, in a conversation, both listening (in our thoughtful, reflective

awareness) and partaking (in our willful, active involvement) in a rhythmical interplay of receptive and productive energies.<sup>10</sup>

As Dewey (1934/1958) says, "The common element in all the arts...is organization of energy as means for producing a result.... In the esthetic object the object operates... to pull together energies that have been separately occupied..., and to give them that particular rhythmic organization..." (pp. 176-7). By allowing their students to experience this time and again, in infinite variety, Waldorf educators work with this rhythmic organization to strengthen the child's soul forces, the very forces that allow people to bring their thinking and doing together in an integrated and well-balanced way.

Montessori (1967) was similarly amazed by the power of the child's mind to absorb impressions from the world and to be *formed rather than filled* by them (p. 25). She likens learning in a child to an explosion "within the inner personality": "One thinks of those mountains which contain an inward furnace. Outwardly they seem solid and unchangeable, but one day there is a bang and flames come bursting out through the massive rock" (p. 171). Montessori was strongly impressed by the tremendously vital and passionate capacity of children to learn; she characterized the child's mind as a "devouring flame, never in repose" (ibid., p. 177). That it was unconscious was clear:

There is in the child a special kind of sensitivity which leads him to absorb everything about him, and it is this work of observing and absorbing that alone enables him to adapt himself to life. He does it in virtue of an unconscious power that only exists in childhood. (Montessori, 1967, p. 62)

For Montessori (1967), the "delicate work of formation" is always carried by the little child "in the depth of a profound psychological mystery": It is a "bringing to fruition," a realization of an "endowment" of "immense potentialities" (p. 17). The "human creative essence" driving the growth process is this remarkable faculty of absorption (ibid., p. 58). "The absorption of characteristics from the outer world is a vital phenomenon," insisted Montessori (1967, p. 59). In trying to understand how it actually

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<sup>10</sup>A paradigmatic example of this, it seems to me, is singing in harmony, where each singer must not only listen carefully in order to stay in tune, in time, and in balance with the others, but must also contribute his or her own voice to the whole performance.

functioned, she concluded that it is "a kind of vital memory," "which does not consciously remember, but absorbs images into the individual's very life.... Nothing has more importance for us than this absorbent form of mind" (Montessori, 1967, pp. 62,65).

It is important to realize that Montessori (1967) found that the unwary educator can actually destroy or cripple this innate capacity of children, for example by trying to forcefully impose a particular direction to the child's development (p. 256). In contrast, if the child is able to form emotional attachments to loving and caring adults with whom it comes in contact, it is as if her will -- though unconscious -- becomes positively aligned in accordance with the will of the other (Montessori, 1967, p. 258); as a result, the child has such "an intense and specialized sensitiveness in consequence of which the things about him awaken so much interest and so much enthusiasm that they become incorporated in his very existence" (Montessori, 1967, p. 24). Impressions of the environment are absorbed "not with his mind but with his life itself" (ibid.). The child's mind is one "which receives all, does not judge, does not refuse, does not react. It absorbs everything and incarnates it.... The Absorbent Mind welcomes everything, puts its hope in everything..., incarnating all in itself" (Montessori, 1967, p. 292).

This description of *absorbent mind* is likely to call up memories of old love-song lyrics, like these: "There were birds in the air, but I never saw them winging. ...never saw them at all, 'til there was you." For many adults, the experience of love, linked to reverence and devotion, is similar to the experience of a child's learning: Critical judgment is replaced by a wilful, feeling identification with something other than Self. Indeed, Montessori (1967) concludes that each individual *absorbent mind* is a miracle, a "personification" of a "great force," which is none other than Love itself (p. 293). Furthermore, love, in her view, is but one aspect of

a very complex universal force, which -- denoted by the words "attraction" and "affinity" -- rules the world, keeps the stars in their courses, causes the conjunction of atoms to form new substances, holds things down on the earth's surface. It is the force which regulates and orders the organic and the inorganic, and which becomes incorporated into the essence of everything and of all things.... It is generally unconscious, but in life it sometimes assumes consciousness, and, when felt in man's heart, he calls it "love". (ibid.)

For Montessori (1967) this is "a real force, and not just an idea" (p. 295). It is "the most potent of all things"; it is "more than any of the energies that man has discovered and learned to use" so far (ibid.). It is a "tremendous phenomenon" infinitely deserving of our most careful attention and study: a "primordial energy" whose power has remained so far largely latent and inadequately understood (Montessori, 1967, p. 290).

To school such energy, such force, such power, the teacher must be extremely careful, particularly when the child begins to concentrate and be absorbed in something; any interference can disrupt the process and prevent the opening up of "a whole cycle of new activities" which such interest can spark (Montessori, 1967, p. 279). To support the child's absorbent mind, "The great principle which brings success to the teacher is this: *as soon as concentration has begun, act as if the child does not exist*" (ibid., p. 280, italics original). Such love is not sentimental, but highly disciplined (Montessori, 1967, p. 280).<sup>11</sup>

The vital interest and absorption shown by the young child is part of the healthy growth and development of what Montessori (1967) calls an "inner guide" (p. 101). It is a deep psychic response, not unlike what adults experience at a concert when "a rapt expression dawns on the faces of the listeners; [and] heads and hands begin to move in unison" (Montessori, 1967, p. 24). Just as "there are some insects which look like leaves and others which look like stalks, ...which they resemble so perfectly as to seem completely one with them," so does the child absorb "the life going on about him and become one with it" (ibid., p. 101). Through "absorbing the environment and coming to resemble it," not so much physically as do animals, but psychologically, "the child

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<sup>11</sup>My feeling is that such discipline requires immensely fine perception and fine judgment on the part of the teacher to determine whether or not the child is indeed in a concentrated state. Without the requisite care and ability to sense the correct moment, there is a real danger that a teacher may try to apply this rule *intellectually or mechanically* rather than feelingly, with the result that the child is inappropriately made to feel as if it does not exist. Such feelings, unanalyzed and misunderstood, can be carried for years, seriously distorting the child's growing ability to utilize its own feeling awareness in a healthy fashion.

builds his inmost self out of the deeply felt impressions he receives, and this especially in the first part of his life" (Montessori, 1967, pp. 101-2).

While Montessori recognizes that love and rapt attention to music are likely examples of the absorbent quality of mind at work in adults, van Manen (1990) goes even further to suggest that all research exists as "a caring act" in which "we question the world's very secrets and intimacies which are constitutive of the world, and which bring the world as world into being for us and in us" (pp. 5-6). From what I understand, he is here describing a conscious, intentional adoption of the child's typical way of thinking, not out of sentimental longing or romantic attachment, but out of a disciplined commitment to learn about the world. Is this not the participatory science that Goethe also advised?

Dewey (1934/1958) suggests something similar in his discussion of art and civilization when he argues that genuine *continuity* in this world is only possible through *imaginative absorption*, such as human beings typically experience in intimate friendship:

Philosophically speaking, the problem with which we are confronted is the relation of the discrete and the continuous. Both of them are stubborn facts and yet they have to meet and blend in any human association that rises above the level of brute intercourse. In order to justify continuity, historians have often resorted to a falsely named "genetic" method, wherein there is no genuine genesis, because everything is resolved into what went before.... The attempt to establish continuity by methods which resolve one set of events and one of institutions into those which preceded it in time is doomed to defeat. Only an expansion of experience that *absorbs into itself* the values experienced because of life-attitudes, other than those resulting from our own human environment, dissolves the effect of discontinuity.

The problem in question is not unlike that we daily undergo in the effort to understand another person with whom we habitually associate. *All friendship is a solution of the problem.* Friendship and intimate affection are not the result of information about another person even though knowledge may further their formation. But it does so only as it becomes an integral part of sympathy through the imagination. It is when the desires and aims, the interests and modes of response of another become an expansion of our own being that we understand him. *We learn to see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and their results give true instruction, for they are built into our own structure.* (pp. 335-6, italics added)

Montessori has characterized child-like thinking as a devouring flame, a power adapting itself to life, a construction of the spirit, a human creative essence, a vital phenomenon, a superior and unusually alive kind of memory, a receptive and non-judgmental capacity, an ordering and constructive capacity, a primordial energy, and a deep psychic response, as discussed in the preceding paragraphs. Although it is unconscious in the young child, she recognizes that adults too can experience it under special circumstances. If Goethe, van Manen, and Dewey are to be believed, it appears that adults can also learn to *intentionally access* this mode of thinking once they understand what it is and how it is best used.

Although neither Piaget nor Montessori makes explicit the connection to art as a means for schooling awareness, their analyses of how young children think support Steiner's claim that there is a fundamental difference between awareness in the young child and in the adult. A metamorphosis must take place as the child develops. If this is thwarted in any way, the person is left with a fragmented awareness that cannot effectively integrate adult rationality and analysis with the vitality and creativity so characteristic of the young child. The ability to calculate is alienated from the ability to feel or to care about the content of one's calculations; calculations and numbers are exalted over real beings; quantitative analysis is revered over qualitative awareness and understanding. On the other hand, if these two experiences are brought into relationship with each other, an enriched form of thinking becomes possible in which fragmentation is replaced by integration, allowing calculation and creativity to cooperate fruitfully.

The irony is that such integration cannot itself be fully calculated nor realized fully through analysis such as I attempt here! It can only be developed when a feeling awareness to guide, support, and direct it is also trusted. If Steiner is right, this feeling awareness is what is schooled by art, and it is especially appropriate to promote it during the crucial elementary years when the child is moving from its early thinking style to its adult style. In this way education facilitates the integration of thinking capacities rather than disrupting or fragmenting them.

Recent discoveries in the newly emerging field of neurogastroenterology suggest a possible physical basis for these two very different types of thinking. It seems that in

addition to the brain with which we are generally familiar, there is a second "lesser known but vitally important one found in the human gut" (The New York Times (Science Times), January 25, 1996, p. B5). Composed of "two networks of neural connections in the lining of the gastrointestinal tract," this second brain is known to "mirror the central nervous system" and to play "a major role in human happiness and misery" (ibid.). Only "loosely connected to the central nervous system," the brain in the gut "can mostly function alone, without instructions from topside" (The New York Times (Science Times), January 25, 1996, p. B5). It can send and receive impulses, record experiences, and respond to emotions: As well, "the gut can upset the brain just as the brain can upset the gut" (ibid.). Significantly, this second brain does not produce conscious thoughts, although it is reportedly responsible for our "gut feelings" about things.

The discovery of a second brain introduces some interesting possibilities about how our thinking happens. For one thing, Steiner's characterization of the threefold human being includes the organs of digestion and metabolism as part of the unconscious human Will structure. A brain in the gut could mean that human Will is activated and directed by that brain, with no conscious awareness. If it is loosely connected with the central nervous system through *emotions* rather than through conscious thoughts, then it would be perfectly understandable why we have to bring our emotional life into awareness if we seek to integrate our thinking with our doing.

A second point is that the location of a brain within the gut makes the common anthroposophical comparison of *thought organization* with *life organization* even more fascinating than it already is. As Lindenau (1985) points out, just as life processes include taking in food, digesting it, metabolizing it to create energy and new growth, and excreting some of what has been processed, making it available to fertilize more life, so does thought organization include taking in new ideas as "food for thought," considering them, becoming inspired and energized by them, and expressing some of what has been considered, making it available to stimulate more awareness.

If the brain in our gut is directly involved with our life processes, and the brain in our head is directly involved with our thought processes, then we would be perfectly in order to consider and trust our "gut feelings" as well as our logical analysis of a

situation before embarking on major life decisions which simply cannot be thought out or calculated completely due to unknown factors. In such a scenario the educational function of art becomes even more pronounced, since, as I have argued, it is the experience of rhythm engendered by art that allows different aspects of our awareness to come into fruitful relationship with each other. Understanding and supporting the connections between Thought and Will would then mean, in a physical sense, understanding and supporting the connections between the two brains. If these connections are dependent on emotions, as the scientific reports indicate, then understanding and supporting the emotional life of students becomes crucial to healthy education. Art offers a valuable and easily available way to provide such an education.

*Schooling for freedom and for love.*

In a recent critique of Waldorf educational practice, prompted by their work at the Centre for Critical Studies in Education at Roehampton Institute, Surrey University, England, Jackson and Astley (1995) articulate a persistently recurring theme which they have found concerns a number of the "up to six hundred Honours Degree students -- some of whom are ex-Steiner [School] pupils -- [who] are examining its [Waldorf] philosophy" as part of their Education Studies. Although clearly "enthusiasm for the non-materialistic Waldorf way is high and the will to understand is very apparent," they are puzzled by the notion of *child-centredness* which appears so often in Waldorf education literature. This puzzlement seems to reflect the fact that, especially with the younger children, the teacher is clearly in command of the whole educational context, making it unclear in what sense it can be understood as child-centred: "The teacher provides the spatial environment; she structures the day, controls the rhythms, invokes the rituals and it is she who offers the explanations..." (Jackson & Astley, 1995, pp. 26-27).

Jackson and Astley (1995) ask some hard questions: Are Waldorf educators keeping their children within an idealized cocoon? Have they sentimentalized childhood as being a state of grace? Do they *unwisely assume* their own authority, "projecting onto children imagined states of bliss, helplessness, the myth of unawakened reason?" (p. 27).

They cite Steiner's remarks as "dicta", claiming that his principles one-sidedly follow maturational processes only, with no regard for the effects on children of social



interaction. They are highly skeptical of the fact that young Waldorf students are "treated as inhabitants of a dreamy fantasy world, satisfied with mythical explanations to practical puzzles, unquestioning about the simple stereotypes of story and legend and faithful disciples of the teacher's words" (ibid.). And they ask a still more daring question, "Could Waldorf educators possibly *want* to encourage dependence rather than autonomy, reliance on teacher-authority rather than on evidence; could they *desire* to separate action from reasons for action, and judgement from grounds for judgement?" (Jackson & Astley, 1995, p. 27).

Waldorf curriculum and pedagogy are reduced in their eyes to an "Edwardian blur of homegrown pastimes," and the *implicit* curriculum — hidden behind "benign intentions" — they find to be "radically autocratic" (Jackson & Astley, 1995, p. 28). That parents of children in Waldorf schools sometimes share this reaction is confirmed by comments such as these shared recently on an email discussion group about home schooling:

My children attended Waldorf school since kindergarten. This is our first year of homeschooling. Dana is in 6th grade and Robin in 4th.... As I think back to their Waldorf days, it occurs to me just how structured it was. It was incredibly structured, although the presentation of the subjects was undertaken with incredible patience and reverence for the children, it was the classic (and probably original) "factory model" schooling. Desks in rows, very strict "rhythm" for the school day, everything very scheduled, much discipline on the classroom teachers' parts.... My son [Robin]...is having a hard time detoxing from the routine that was so helpful to him while at school. We're having a tough time buckling down to work, since my presentation is a lot different from his Waldorf teacher's. I think that he'll need a bit more time to get that out of his system and be able to motivate himself to learn. (Not that I won't be there, but there isn't that "herd mentality" that takes over in a very structured school). He seems to need that. (Michelle, personal communication, September 9, 1996)

More in tune with turn-of-the-century theories about early childhood thinking as *autistic*, after which it gradually becomes social, Waldorf education is, in Jackson and Astley's (1996) view, still caught in a "beguiling dream" from which most twentieth century thinkers (including Wittgenstein, whom they mention specifically but without

elaboration), have long since "escaped." They reject Piagetian theory in favour of Vygotsky's reputed claim that children's thinking develops *simultaneously with communication* as a result of immersion in social interactions; they hold that there simply are no "symbolic dream states of wordless childhood so much loved by fin-de-siecle theorists" (Jackson & Astley, 1995, p. 28).

Somewhat inexplicably, after explicitly stating that it is "patently absurd" to suggest "that Steiner-educated children are delayed in their development," they nevertheless comment that "the Waldorf approach seems to assume that they are" (Jackson & Astley, 1995, p. 27). And then they go on to ask the very question they identified as absurd, "is Waldorf early childhood theory holding children back?" (*ibid.*, p. 28). Having asked it, they proceed to speculate:

Delaying development may certainly be said to have benefits. Children are likely to be more biddable if the conditions of learning emphasize the teacher as plenipotentiary. They are more likely to conform to the norms of sentimentalized childhood. Certainly they would be alive to "classroom climate" -- that inescapable drenching environment of norms and standards. Their accomplishments would be those of the approved canon. They would uphold green, anti-materialist practices. They are also likely to be less "knowing" in that sly, pubescent pejorative sense of the term.

On the other hand they might be likely to take little responsibility for rule-making, learning dependence rather than independence, obedience rather than compliance, the habitualization of approved practices. Steiner and many later theorists certainly favoured surveillance and control: Rudolf Steiner recommended that children should be grouped in class according to their temperaments. That way the teacher has a clear command of the whole situation of the class. Because reading and writing are quietly excluded [up to about age seven], alternative sources for imagination and factual exploration and explanation depend on the teacher. There is also a predominance of ritual which...is typical of a stratified, as distinct from a differentiated, classroom organization and is itself essentially non-cognitive. It seems that there could be a powerful hidden curriculum at work, non-cognitively instilling tendencies, and dispositions inherent in the Waldorf way of life. (Jackson & Astley, 1995, pp. 28-9)

In order to explain why the results of Waldorf education are in fact unquestionably so much better than their critique might lead one to expect, Jackson and Astley (1995) appeal to an unsubstantiated and unsupported belief: "It is our true belief -- and here we speak for ourselves not for students -- that the excellences of a Waldorf education are

achieved in spite of the theory not because of it" (p. 29). With little or no *argument* to make their case, and relying solely on the stated concerns of students who have generally only read about Waldorf education "as just one of a number of approaches which they examine" and who have reputedly never even visited a Waldorf school or talked to a Waldorf educator, Jackson and Astley (1995) challenge the Rudolf Steiner Fellowship outright to "re-examine its principles with affectionate but unblinking severity" since it is "high time the theory caught up with them" (p. 29). "The shortcomings of carefully preserved Waldorf theory" are taken for granted by Jackson and Astley (1995), while "all the virtues perceived by the students" and "the many excellences of Waldorf education" which the students so clearly admire are "explained" for Jackson and Astley by their "hunch that the philosophy of Waldorf education is inspirational in an important sense: it attracts teachers of high excellence" who are able to succeed on their own merit, not only without benefit of sound theory but literally *in spite of* unsound theory (p. 29). It is a remarkable view at best, and one which has called forth detailed and vigorous responses from several Waldorf educators (cf. *Correspondence*, 1995, pp. 39-43).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Regarding the "hunch" that inspired teachers make excellent teachers, who succeed in Waldorf education despite the lack of a sound theoretical base, one Waldorf educator commented:

Our schools are mostly run by staff and teachers untrained in this task. Apart from one or two schools they are virtually bankrupt. Few of the teachers know much about Waldorf education and far fewer are actually trained. Most of the children are sent to us by people who have no idea of what Waldorf education is and often do not want to know. Our collegiate way of working is often no better than cripplingly inefficient and at worst it can be an open battleground. And still we succeed... I can assure you from very detailed knowledge of at least three schools that it is not due to attracting teachers of high excellence. While I know several teachers who are indeed outstanding, I know many, many more who are certainly rather less than impressive. The one uniform quality is that teachers are there because they want to teach. They also generally like children rather than educational careers. The hopeless salaries, funny ideas, long hours, infrequent training

Without going too far into the question of whether or not Jackson and Astley's view merits support,<sup>13</sup> nevertheless, for the purpose of my discussion here, it is useful for them to have articulated so clearly the concern about a *hidden curriculum* at work in Waldorf curriculum which might somehow be working against children's best interests.

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opportunities and complete lack of career structure etc. soon weed out any who are marking time or seeking an easy salary. (Correspondence, 1995, pp. 41-2)

<sup>13</sup>Although I have argued that "gut feelings" or "hunches" may well carry important messages to which one should indeed pay attention, this is not as simple as it may seem from my brief discussion. In general, while a "hunch" may well be worth heeding, this does not mean it should be immediately believed so much as that it should become the grounds for investigation by the rational, calculating intellect, at least as far as that is possible. It is this necessary investigation which is missing from Jackson and Astley's critique. Especially when a hunch is tied to fear, it is essential that the rational mind be brought to bear on the situation, since fear unchecked can be particularly disorienting and destructive. In the critique offered by Jackson and Astley, it appears as if their hunch is tied (at least to some extent) to a strong fear that Waldorf educators are being irresponsibly manipulative in their work with children, making it more imperative than ever that a rational investigation determine the merit of their claims. On the other hand, it would appear that Jackson and Astley are in fact voicing "honest" concerns, and such concerns should never be wilfully and unthinkingly disregarded. My own "hunch" is that attitudes (dubbed "soul colourings" in anthroposophical jargon) are key in sorting out such matters. For instance, Waldorf educators assert their *deep reverence and respect* for the child when they adopt the anthroposophical view that reading *per se* should not occupy the child's serious attention until her or his change of teeth indicates the requisite stage of development has been reached for it to be most beneficial. Parents, however, may see things in a completely different light, as the words of this parent reveal:

The local Waldorf school reaction apparently is to IGNORE reading by children considered too young to read, to not validate their reading, but to just ignore it and pretend that it didn't happen. ~gasp~ I just couldn't believe they would do that. It is such a disrespectful attitude. (RuthAnn Biel, personal communication, Sept. 10, 1996, italics added)

Clearly a form of education which intentionally bypasses critical reasoning at any point must bear the scrutiny of critical researchers who seek to determine whose purposes are being served by such educational choices.

The fact that children themselves appear to be in sympathy with the Waldorf approach is not convincing, since it is precisely their soul life (as expressed in their sympathies and antipathies) which may have been "unscrupulously manipulated." Thus reports such as the one from a mother whose daughter at age eleven had to leave the Waldorf school where she had studied for a number of years and was "still heartbroken for her beloved teacher, and probably will be for some time" (personal communication, Michelle, September 9, 1996), can do nothing to resolve this issue. Similarly, the *Former Pupils Gallery* feature appearing regularly in the journal *Steiner Education*, though full of published testimony in support of Waldorf education, must likewise be considered inadmissible evidence.<sup>14</sup> In short, it is very hard to answer the charge of possible abuse directly; conviction can only arise indirectly as a result of reputation.

There is plenty of anecdotal evidence that Waldorf education does support the child in the long run. For example, Lawrence Harwood (1994), son of A.C. Harwood and godson of both Francis Edmunds and C.S. Lewis, looks back from a long and happy career with the National Trust and comments:

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<sup>14</sup>Following the assumption that a "balanced" view is more convincing than a one-sided one, I suggest that some student testimony, as presented here by a recent graduate for example, may in fact carry substantial weight in deciding such issues: The wooden welcoming sign at the Green Meadow Waldorf School reads "Education Towards Freedom." These words were, and probably still are, the butt of numerous jokes by restless students, eager to reach beyond the narrow confines of the tiny campus and its intimate atmosphere. My fellowship year allowed me this journey outwards to an unknown end. Reflecting now on my experiences, I am thankful for the gifts I have received from my Waldorf education, and for the *capacity for independent thought, feeling, and action* that came forth at critical moments. (David Sciarretta, 1996, p. 31, italics added)

Undoubtedly, the roundness of the Waldorf education I received has helped me through many difficult situations when inner resources have had to be called upon to deal with the unforeseen or the problematic. A kind of self-confidence was perhaps the result of it not – certainly not! – based on the mastery of any particular subject-orientated skills, but more to do with confronting life as a whole with readiness to accept the slings and arrows that it brings. What I find difficult to say (even if it mattered) is to what extent my readiness for the world "outside" might have been had I received some more conventional education; but I do have a hunch that, although I might have progressed more impressively in certain given subjects, my preparedness overall would probably have been less complete. (p. 15)

Further testimony comes from a Waldorf educator writing in reply to Jackson and Astley,

We enjoy children who are immensely perceptive, etc. but do indeed work against scepticism as opposed to open-mindedness. The evidence is that this is educationally highly effective. Many of our former students find that one particular hardship of entering university is that while they approach ideas freely, actively and with many questions, they are met with apathy from fellow students and a requirement for conformity from their tutors. At this stage they prove themselves to be outstandingly autonomous. During an earlier stage, dependence was necessary and teacher authority was the intelligible factor as opposed to evidence which would require interpretation. The child clearly not only progresses past this stage but does so rather more effectively than many of his peers elsewhere. You are certainly right in saying that it is autocratic and radically so, but look at the results if you wish to criticise this. (Correspondence, 1995, pp. 40-1)

And James Shipman, of the History Department of the Marin Academy in San Rafael, California, writes:

What I like about the Waldorf School [in his locality it is an elementary school only, ending at Grade 8] is, quite simply, its graduates. As a high school teacher at Marin Academy, I have seen a number of the students who come from your program, and I can say that in all cases they have been remarkable, bright, energetic and involved. (The results of Waldorf education, no date, p. 1)

Similarly, Dr. Eickelberg, Professor of Biology and Director of the Premedical Curriculum at Adelphi University in Garden City, New York, writes about his teaching career spanning the decades from the early 1950's to the late 1980's as being a time of incredible change and diversity:

Throughout this dynamism of activity where values were under attack and standards of behavior were challenged, from time to time there would be a unique stabilizing influence in my classes: a Waldorf School graduate. And they were different from the others. Without exception they were, at the same time, caring people, creative students, individuals of identifiable values, and students who, when they spoke, made a difference. (The results of Waldorf education, no date, p. 2)

It is hard to think that such students have been "unscrupulously manipulated" to serve anyone else's benefit *at the expense of their own*, though this is not to say that a benefit to others does not also exist. Nevertheless, this sort of informal reporting will not satisfy the rigorous academic standards of anyone determined to be skeptical.

More convincing (perhaps) are the results of a study carried out in Germany for the Bonn Department of Education. Three independent scientists interviewed 1,460 former Waldorf students and "came to a prevailing positive result in favor of the Waldorf Schools" (The results of Waldorf education, no date, p. 4). Going against academic prejudices, the results of the study showed that a significantly higher proportion of Waldorf students, coming from an academically non-selective school, than students in the selectively streamed state schools preparing students for university, were able to pass the external state-wide exams. Again, there is no reason to suspect that Waldorf educational philosophy has held these students back through a hidden curriculum that works to their detriment.

None of this denies that there is an *implicit* curriculum in Waldorf education which is carried out without the student's full, conscious knowledge. However, this is nothing unusual and is probably unavoidable in any case. As Eisner (1997) points out in reference to American public education in general,

Minds, then, in a curious but profound way are made. Their shape and capacities are influenced by what we are given an opportunity to learn when young. Given this conception of the genesis of mind, the curriculum is a mind-altering device. Decisions that policy makers and educators make about what will be accessible to children help shape the kinds of minds they will come to own. The character of their minds, in turn, will help shape the culture in which we all live. (p. 350)

If the curriculum is *inevitably* "hidden" to a certain extent, the *critical* questions become even more clearly, "hidden from whom? by whom? and for what purpose?"

In Waldorf education the curricular and pedagogical rationale is explicitly available through educational publications commercially available to anyone who cares to purchase and study them, through a national lending library, and through Waldorf schools and teacher training institutes. Anyone is free to access this information, including parents, teachers, serious researchers, and those with a more casual interest.

In contrast, the curricular and pedagogical rationale of mainstream education is so varied as to make it almost impossible to know what approach any particular teacher or school might endorse. Even worse, there may be no explicit endorsement of *any* approach, making the particular educational practice to which a child is exposed very well "hidden" indeed. As one mainstream colleague remarked to Waldorf educator John Burnett (1995), "We don't necessarily find your philosophy easy to grasp but at least you *have* a philosophy which is more than most of us have any more!" (p. 35).

In light of such a sentiment, Jackson and Astley's further concern about the development of theory in Waldorf education is worth considering:

With the expansion of Waldorf education all over the world we should have expected lively debate about three things: principles and values -- for these are to some extent buried within cultures, including religious and political cultures; the curriculum, for what counts as knowledge has changed immeasurably since the 1920s; and finally human development and learning, since many former theories (including Piagetian ones) have wilted under informed and sustained criticism. (Correspondence, 1995, p. 42)

Steiner certainly encouraged teachers to use their heads, and to explore new ways of thinking and teaching, providing only that they follow the *spirit* of the Waldorf approach, which is to teach in harmony with the threefold nature of the human being. It is the respect given to this view which has preserved a coherent sense among Waldorf educators as to what education is all about. To debate and question the reality of this threefold nature would be counter-productive (since it provides the basis for the whole approach), while to understand it, and to make sense of it fully, is an immensely challenging task requiring deep thought and highly disciplined inquiry, together with social engagement and awareness, and willing involvement in actual situations, working to explore ideas through putting them into practice.



This *practice* is what lies at the heart of any valid critique, from the Waldorf point of view. Rather than criticize in abstract, theoretical terms, the challenge is to live with the ideas for a while, letting them guide and direct one's actions in order to see what develops, and then assess the approach based on the fruits of this experience. Such practice is just what is involved in artistic activity, as outstanding art educator Kimon Nicolaidis (1941) points out: Teachers can never help students to learn to do something directly; they can only teach their students how to meet challenges (p. xiii). In other words, there are "hidden processes by which inspiration works," and students must come to realize the nature of these processes for themselves (Nicolaidis, 1941, p. xiii). To facilitate this realization, the teacher's whole function at the beginning is to "enable students to have an experience," since it is only after an experience has been "well and deeply" had, that analytical methods can prove constructive (ibid.).

When a teacher arranges for her students to have experiences well and deeply *before* analytical methods are brought to bear, in order to prepare for a more effective analysis eventually, she runs the risk of being accused of teaching a hidden curriculum. It may be that such a curriculum (i.e., one which integrates other activities with thinking) is simply deemed suspect by any educator who prizes thinking above all.

To value experience as a necessary precursor to meaningful analysis indicates that feeling and doing are considered as integrally related to thinking, making what might be considered "hidden" an essential and inevitable part of education, less "suspect" than revered. To select and arrange for necessary experiences in a way that does not do violence to the student, a teacher must act out of thoughtful and disciplined love, just as the artist "in the final sense must be 'loving' [and] must care deeply for the subject matter upon which skill is exercised" (Dewey, 1934/1958, pp. 47-48). Only by balancing the teacher's "freedom" to control the curriculum with "love" for his students can the teacher use a necessarily "hidden" curriculum, based on experience in which thinking, feeling, and willing are integrally related, without violating the students' own freedom.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Paul Matthews (1994) follows Owen Barfield in calling this not Romanticism per se, but "Romanticism come of age" (p. 3). That is, it is not simply an emotional response involving

Discovering this necessary love does not happen by thinking alone; it is not something we can accomplish intellectually. Nor is it something we can force through sheer willful effort. Instead, it happens in relationship, in our feeling life, when we are able to bring a certain thoughtfulness into our practical, active goings-on, and when we are willing and able to direct our thoughts freely within such relationship.

In short, it happens when we are able to function with integrity, in a healthy and holy fashion, uniting our thinking, feeling, and willing in what Dewey (1934/1958) calls "a vital experience" (p. 55). Such experience qualifies as "*distinctively* esthetic," in Dewey's account (*ibid.*, italics original). It matches the work of art, in which "the end, the terminus, is significant not by itself but as the integration of the parts" (Dewey, 1934/1958, p. 55).

In Waldorf education the teachers consciously strive to create this integration in their own lives and in the experiences they offer their students. Working as it does, on the soul or emotional life of the elementary school children, it is deeply motivating though largely subconscious for them. As long as the teacher's freedom to think and the teacher's sympathetic feeling and care for the child are balanced, there is no danger to the child that the curriculum will work to his or her disadvantage. Ironically there is no purely intellectual way to judge this however, since it can only unfold in the future, nor is it possible to simply determine it wilfully, since its gradual unfolding will be affected by the will of others who are also involved in the outcome. Thus the one who would judge, in order to be effective at all, must *also rely on the feeling intelligence to bring the intellect and will into fruitful intercourse*. It is my suggestion that it is precisely the fruit ripening from such union which allows the only valid assessment of value in such

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confused feelings of Love and vague fantasies of Imagination, but the schooling of an exact and disciplined perception with eminently practical applications in such varied fields as farming, teaching, medicine, and so on. Matthews expresses my own experience when he says, "In this picture of the potentially free and creative human being I began to see how my old question concerning the split between objective study and personal search might be resolved" (*ibid.*).

a situation.<sup>16</sup>

This is why, when Jackson and Astley (1995) argue that it is perfectly valid for them to base a judgement on "methods [which] are for the most part conceptual and analytic rather than observational and empirical" (p. 25), I cannot help but return their critique with one of my own. The point is, to base a judgement about Waldorf education on mostly conceptual and analytic methods rather than observational and empirical ones is to already display a prejudice about what is of value, such that any judgement reached is likely to simply reflect the initial prejudice.

This point reminds us of the old adage that we only ever perceive what we are prepared to perceive. To see or hear something new and unfamiliar, we must somehow orient ourselves correctly toward the Unknown and prepare a welcoming reception. Dewey (1934/1958) recognizes this as a "going-out of energy in order to receive, not a withholding of energy" (p. 53). It is similar for Steiner: We can only hear something new if we have the *will* to attend to it sympathetically. The unknown must be met with Will, not with Thought. Only through having some experience is it possible to reflect on it. Yet, paradoxically, it is only when we realize *in our thinking* that we need to *pay attention to our feelings*, and therefore *engage the will* in order to perceive anything new,

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<sup>16</sup>For me, the image of the fruit as the "final proof" has never been more evocatively expressed than through Umberto Eco's (1988) words near the end of his complex novel, Foucault's Pendulum:

I should be at peace. I have understood.... Why doesn't understanding give me peace?.... Perhaps I haven't understood, after all; perhaps I am missing one piece of the puzzle.... Now I know what the Law of the Kingdom is...where Wisdom has gone into exile.... The truth...the only truth that shines in the night...is that Wisdom is revealed naked...and its mystery lies not in existence but in the leaving of existence.

Afterward, the Others begin again.... Along the slopes... there are peach trees... When you eat the peach, the velvet of the skin makes shudders run from your tongue to your groin.... when I bit into the peach I understood the Kingdom and was one with it. The rest is only cleverness. (p. 532)

that we actually begin to experience our own integrity and to trust that what we come to know of the Unknown is bound to have integrity in the exact same measure as we have achieved.

### New Understandings Arising from the Critical Task of Analysis

Given the relatively detailed characterisations presented in the previous two chapters on art at the center of Waldorf education and at the periphery of mainstream English Canadian education, are there any critical conclusions to be drawn as a result of this juxtaposition? Three possibilities come to mind, concerning fundamental educational visions, teacher training and preparation, and the willingness to embrace uncertainty.

#### *Fundamental educational visions.*

Any educational context in which multiple perspectives and values are superimposed upon one another will not be able to support a coherent, focused, centred approach to any subject, particularly those about which there is least agreement. Because the general Canadian society's understanding of art is and has been confused, a similar confusion is reflected in public educational programs. Without clarity as to why art matters, schools are unwilling to accord much time, money, or attention to it.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>An interesting and significant example of how the opposite of this principle is also true can be glimpsed in the Arts-Based Curriculum of the Faywood Public School in North York, Ontario. Principal Barry Wilde explains the school's philosophy and approach like this:

We believe that the Arts contribute significantly to the development of the literate person. They do so by affecting the manner in which human beings perceive and make sense of the world in which they live. The Arts enable us to develop a heightened sensitivity to and an awareness of the environment and permit us to connect emotion and reason.... In our Arts-based curriculum, the visual, performing and literary Arts are used wherever possible and practical to make learning more effective and satisfying for children. We also provide a multitude of opportunities for children to explore aspects of the Arts for their own sake. (Faywood Public School brochure).

At least two prominent Nova Scotia art educators, Brenda Porter (former Arts Coordinator of the Halifax County and Bedford District School Board) and Dr. Richard Mueller (NSCAD

By contrast, where an educational context reflects a strongly unified view, as in Waldorf education, there is more consistency and more willingness to carry out pedagogical and curricular procedures in accordance with the founding vision. Thus the centrality of art in Waldorf education may be due in large part to the simple fact that Waldorf schools stick closely to the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. Since he advocated a three-fold vision as the keystone to many areas of life, and since art occupies a central position in that vision, art is bound to be central in the education arising from that vision. That there is a clearly articulated rationale to support this undoubtedly helps, just as the lack of any dominant and clearly articulated rationale supporting art in mainstream education works to keep it on the fringe of concern.

*Teacher training and preparation.*

The second possibility, concerning teacher training and preparation, is linked to the first. In other words, since Waldorf educators value art highly, artistic activity forms a large part of teacher training programs. All Waldorf teacher trainees have lessons in singing, playing the recorder, form drawing, eurythmy, various techniques of water

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artist/educator), have made professional visits to the Faywood Public School to study, assess, and adapt the principles of an arts-based curriculum for possible use in Nova Scotia schools. Through such contacts, the idea of an "arts-infused curriculum" has begun to grow at the grass-roots level in several schools in Nova Scotia. Spurred on by the efforts of a small support group of educators, which was very active during the 1994-95 school year and to which I belonged, these schools are committed not so much to increasing formal art training for their students, though that is welcome, as to foster a greater awareness and appreciation of the creative process in everything we do as teachers and learners. Such efforts have been supported financially by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, to provide opportunities for still more teachers to improve their knowledge and expertise about how art can become a more meaningful and effective aspect of the public school curriculum. "Focus" schools in the Halifax area which specifically requested help during the 1995-96 school year included Beechvill/Lakeside/Timberlea School, Hillside Park Elementary, Ross Road School, Joseph Giles Elementary, Covenant Place, and Millwood High. In these schools, a key factor is the interest and enthusiasm of the principal -- the keener that interest, the more likely the school will develop art as an integral aspect of the curriculum.

colour painting, modelling with beeswax and clay, woodcarving, needlework, blackboard drawing, poetry recitation, and more. Thus experienced and practiced in a variety of artforms, teachers have the confidence and the competence to include art as a central component in all they bring to their students.

Similarly, where art is not necessarily deemed important, teacher trainees in mainstream educational programs are unlikely to gain exposure, let alone experience with different artforms. Afterwards, when they have their own classrooms, they are unlikely to introduce activities in which they feel ignorant and inept. However, at least two interesting exceptions have been documented and indicate that mainstream teachers do sometimes refine and redefine their own priorities as the need arises. For example, Sybil Marshall (1966), in her book *An experiment in education*, describes how she came to include art because she needed something to keep twenty-nine other children busy while she worked with one: The task of drawing seemed to answer her need nicely, and gradually led -- as she witnessed the positive results for her students -- to her development of what she has called "the symphonic method" in which all educational tasks are centred in artwork. Similarly, Linda Rief (1992) notes in her book, *Seeking diversity*, that she turned to art after finding that "ordinary" teaching, which she could manage quite well, was simply no fun! It is perhaps significant that neither of these teachers underwent formal, institution-based teacher training, so perhaps they were not as hampered by standard notions and conventional expectations of what is "appropriate and inappropriate" in the realm of teaching, as many school teachers apparently are.

#### *Confronting uncertainty.*

The third possibility is also linked with the first, though it is less obvious. Steiner's educational views position art in a very unique place, with a very unique function -- that of connecting the material and spiritual worlds. Because the realm of the spiritual includes the whole realm of *potential*, as well as *actual* realisation, it introduces a measure of uncertainty into human experience. In an increasingly uncertain world, an educational rationale that respects uncertainty, and teaches how to allow for it and to respond to it constructively, would be particularly welcome.

Waldorf education may be attractive precisely because it encourages us to meet

uncertainty with confidence, through developing the kind of tact van Manen (1990) says is "essentially situational" (p. 14) and linked to "a theory of the unique, suited to the particular case" (p. 20). Because art is intimately concerned with the unique and particular, while nevertheless requiring competence in general techniques and confidence in general understandings, it mirrors life in this regard and helps us to achieve this kind of tact. Rudolf Steiner frequently spoke about developing a higher kind of instinct, whereby teachers would learn to meet *new and unexpected* situations with confidence, knowing intuitively what to do or say even though the reality was unique and so could not be fully understood in terms of past insights.

Like artistic improvisation, such instinct is not unstructured; there are "frames" which create what Steinman (1986) calls a *charged space* within which spontaneity is free to arise (p. 81). Lacking such "charged spaces" (is a womb an example of such a space? does such a space become "charged" through the resistance afforded by boundaries and limits?) -- there can be no true creation, only potential energy never realised.<sup>18</sup> Such "charged spaces" can be created by communities as well as individuals, resulting in *community definition and identification* as distinct from individual self-actualization. This elucidates the recent movement in art toward *open work*: Necessary and inevitable structures do not disappear but are more fluid, allowing flexible participation; they are more suggestive and less definitive; limits and disciplines are determined cooperatively, increasing the *variety* of configurations without sacrificing the *reality* of configuration.

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<sup>18</sup>In a recent sermon honouring the strength and vitality of spirit which can sustain people in the face of oppression, Robert Wallace gave an illuminating example of this dynamic: His point was that although most people are "free" to play any musical instrument they choose, they are not really free to do so unless they are *disciplined* to do so (personal communication, April 27, 1997). It is ultimately the discipline which gives the freedom, and the freedom which invites the discipline. To impose discipline for its own sake is rigid and oppressive, leading eventually and inevitably to automatic, mechanistic, repetitive responses in which all vital creativity is annihilated; on the other hand, to imagine that freedom is possible without it is to guarantee that no real identity is ever created, and no real creativity is ever identified.

In this sense artistic experience is a training for life. It offers practice in responding to uncertainties, and in learning to perceive and develop hidden potentials. Because it is intrinsically rewarding, by virtue of introducing beauty as a necessary component of health, it reinforces our awareness and intensifies our attention. Without the *experience* of artistic activity, however, students and teachers are unlikely to appreciate it and to pass such appreciation on to others. Even worse, if the experience of the threshold between the material and spiritual worlds is not present, even though an activity is superficially identified as "art", it will not be rewarding and will serve to give art a bad name. This in turn is likely to block further valuing of art in the curriculum.

Thus a critical analysis of the two educational contexts considered in this research yields the possibility that art may well be valued centrally in Waldorf education because it follows a unified and coherent world view (as presented by Steiner), the teachers are well prepared to encourage it among their students, and it is "true to life" in ways that are intrinsically rewarding. Similarly, art may well be relegated to the fringe of mainstream English Canadian education because it reflects a confused and fragmented social view, the teachers are often ill-prepared to incorporate an artistic approach in their own teaching (and they have little or no understanding of how to recognize or share artistic relevance in any case), and what is erroneously called "art" is often meaningless and insignificant for those involved, thus prejudicing them against any further experience.

Even more problematic is the fact that if art requires simultaneous awareness of both material *and spiritual* realms, as Steiner would have us to understand, it is logical that it cannot enter an educational context in which spiritual reality is not acknowledged. Where such acknowledgment is inextricably confused with spiritual tradition, religious dogma, or church doctrine, this will likely prove to be an insurmountable barrier if education is to be controlled by the State, and separation of Church and State in educational matters is mandated. Do other possibilities exist for Canada? Must education remain in the controlling hands of the State? Is it possible to conceive of spiritual awareness in a way that is universally valid? Are compromises possible? Is the *logical* interpretation of this situation necessarily the only *true* interpretation?



### Possibilities for Future Research

In the process of researching and writing this text, I have begun to glimpse important possibilities for further understandings, although these are as yet in no way ready to be presented in a fully coherent fashion. It may be possible, however, to suggest the directions in which my thoughts are moving in this regard, in order to convey some sense of their import. There are several I particularly want to mention.

First, I sense that the "winnowing process" which Finser mentioned, and which echoes Plato's reference to winnowing at the end of the *Timaeous*, is an extremely important image which holds a key to a deeper understanding of the absorbent, receptive quality of mind discussed earlier. Linking ideas of vortices, suction, and levity one can begin to imagine how space can be created which is not simply nothing, but which is a powerful creative force in its own right because it *opens the possibility of fulfillment*.

Second, the contrast of ideas sparked by the juxtaposition of the words *aesthetic* and *anaesthetic* brings to mind the possibility that emotional awareness (that is, the ability to feel pain, or joy, for that matter) is an essential part of consciousness, and that art is therefore crucial because it is what calls forth the aesthetic, rather than the anaesthetic, experience. While the all too human tendency is to try and block pain through the use of anaesthetics, unfortunately carrying with it the result that part of our conscious awareness, including our awareness of joy, is forfeited at the same time, it may be possible to preserve the ability to feel both pain and joy without being debilitated or disempowered by the experience. In other words, just as art can bring us to an experience of *feeling thinking*, as I have argued in this text, so may art bring us to an experience of *thinking feeling*. By this I mean that our feeling must become aware, not so much of joy and pain *per se* (which already carry evaluative connotations), but simply of *physical reality* as it is with little or no emotional value attached except the positive value of the "on-goingness" of things. Such insights are well understood in the Native American tradition (see, for example, the works of T. Brown, Jr.), and offer a fundamentally different way for Eurocentric educators to approach education, perhaps through a schooling of perception as it is coloured by *feeling* rather than as it is

prejudiciously, if unwittingly, determined by taken-for-granted assumptions dictated by social and cultural upbringing. Oddly enough, such understanding may explain how it is possible to make sense of the long established scientific tradition of trying to be *value-neutral*, and it may re-open discussion of value-neutrality as a possible goal in science.<sup>19</sup>

Third, my work has led me to wonder to what extent theoretical work is driven by an emotional need to seek unity and integration. Positivism, as developed by Comte (1947), rests on an assumption of universality "which is necessary to its definitive constitution" (p. 225). Kinchloe, Steinberg, and Tippins (1992) point out that "if it was one factor which runs through Einstein's work and sets him apart from his colleagues, it was his omnipresent search for unity" (p. 176).

How would our educational theories and policies change if we were not so concerned with universality, with unity, with generality, with common truth? Does statistical truth offer a viable alternative? Such questions direct attention to fundamental issues in our ways of thinking, and -- even more -- to fundamental issues concerning our ability to communicate with others.

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<sup>19</sup>Dewey (1934/1958) argues a similar point: Struggle and conflict may be themselves enjoyed, although they are painful, when they are experienced as means of developing an experience; members in that they carry it forward, not just because they are there. There is...an element of undergoing, of suffering in its large sense, in every experience. Otherwise there would be no taking in of what preceded. For "taking in" in any vital experience is something more than placing something on the top of consciousness over what was previously known. It involves reconstruction which may be painful. Whether the necessary undergoing phase is by itself pleasurable or painful is a matter of particular conditions. It is indifferent to the total esthetic quality, save that there are few intense esthetic experiences that are wholly gleeful. They are certainly not to be characterized as amusing, and as they bear down upon us they involve a suffering that is none the less consistent with, indeed a part of, the complete perception that is enjoyed. (p. 41)

The notion that separate individuals could relate to some common truth is, for me, not unlike a traditional circle made up of a ring of separate points equidistant from a central focus. Yet projective geometry allows metamorphosis of such a circle into "a circle created by lines in a projective plane [in which] all the lines extend to infinity and every one intersects every other somewhere" (cf. Davidson, 1996, p. 26). Can this suggest a metamorphosis of our relations such that every individual potentially connects with every other individual through a unique relation which is nevertheless as objectively "truthful" as the common relation of the center to each point on the periphery of a traditional circle? As Davidson explains, "The center of the circle of lines is...a line at infinity.... This is a circle of inner movement (a line is a movement), a circle of initiative" (ibid.). Could there be a *truth of individual initiative* that somehow necessarily complements the common truth we are more willing and ready to acknowledge? How could we ever recognize such individual truths *as true*? What *standard* could apply?

Dewey's (1934/1958) distinction between standards in terms of comparison (i.e., quantitative measurement) and standards in terms of individual qualities (i.e., critical judgment) offers a possible direction in which to explore answers to such questions. The fact that in traditional geometry forms are created through measurement, but in projective geometry they are created through *relationship undefined by measurement* suggests another possible route for exploration.<sup>20</sup>

The various issues mentioned so far are all aspects of imaginative understanding which I have begun to explore and to ponder as a result of my present work. Given the time and the opportunity, I would enjoy considering them further and weighing their

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<sup>20</sup>Whicher (1989) calls attention to this "fundamental difference between the ancient and the new geometry: namely, *the transition from finite forms and their fixed measures to forms containing the concept of the infinite and involving the principles of movement and transformation*" (p. 15, italics original). Because the term "geometry" reflects its origin in land surveying techniques (thus, "earth measuring"), she suggests that a more appropriate name for the "new geometry" is projective *morphology*, since it indicates "the study of form and form-creating principles" without implying any measurement or measuring activity (ibid.).

possible significance for education. In addition to these, however, are possibilities for future work based on critical analysis about things already known (to some degree at least) as a result of this study.

During the course of carrying out this research, I have discovered at least three themes which would likely bear further analysis and yield important connections with the work I have presented here. These include 1) comparison (in terms of both procedures and outcomes) of the Waldorf educational focus on art with deBono's CORT program for perceptual training; 2) a more thorough historical accounting of the significance and influence on English Canadian mainstream education of Read's notion of "Education through Art", especially as it may inform present attempts at curricular reform; and 3) careful consideration of how the theoretical underpinnings of metacognition are changing current understandings of education.

The CORT program has been designed by deBono as a means for redirecting educational effort from critical thinking skills to perceptual skills. It has been adopted in Venezuela and incorporated state-wide into the educational system there. As a result, it should be illuminating to compare methods, rationales, and results of the schools using this program, and Waldorf schools which use art to school perception, and which also limit critical thinking to the later elementary and high school years. What do these two systems have in common? Are there significant differences which shed light on the whole notion of perception? Are there experiences in the CORT program which serve to explain some of Steiner's concerns, or vice versa?

Similarly, some of Read's ideas seem to match Steiner's in interesting and important ways. For instance, Read's (1943/1958) many appeals to Buber's philosophy and its implications for developing morality (see pp. 285-295), as well as his insistence that in his or her "originating activity" every person is "a special kind of artist...manifesting the form which our common life should take, in its unfolding" (p. 308), indicate a potential for rich and revealing comparison. Also, these claims by Read are startling echoes of Steiner's own views:

The imaginative does not stand over against the logical, the originating against the didactic, the artistic against the utilitarian, as a claimant to

which a concession must be more or less unwillingly made; the two processes are in absolute opposition, and though the end we desire may be called a synthesis, our contention is that the basis of all intellectual and moral strength lies in the adequate integration of the perceptive senses and the external world, of the personal and the organic, an integration which is only to be achieved by methods of education. (ibid., p. 220)

Where Read was widely knowledgeable about British education, and strongly influenced Canadian education, it would be useful to consider more carefully the impact which his ideas may have had or may continue to have on educational reform.

Finally, the subdivisions of metacognition into imaging, inner hearing, and executive control carry enough suggestion of parallels to Steiner's own higher orders of thinking that a more detailed and comparative analysis is called for to see how far and in what ways art may or may not be incorporated into metacognitive theory. Because metacognition has some significant affinities with Steiner's own views of cognition, as well as being closely allied with behavioristic psychology, it should be interesting and illuminating to see what, if any, interconnections might be possible between these two approaches to heightening critical awareness.

### Recapitulation

It is time to revisit some key notions. In doing so, I find myself unexpectedly following a fundamental precept of Waldorf education, long "forgotten" from when it was first pointed out to me by Detlef Hardorp (personal communication, 11 July 1995), internationally well-known anthroposophist and faculty member at the Rudolf Steiner Institute: "The main difference between Waldorf and mainstream teaching is that in the Waldorf approach you leave things open and enigmatic, and come back to them later on." The key notions which I revisit here are termed *distinction* and *communion*, first mentioned in the brief introductory account of my thesis given in Chapter 1, and repeated in the early part of this chapter.

One of the most poignant (for me) remarks made by Susanne Langer (1957) serves to remind me of my own task of the moment to bring the experience of writing this thesis to its "consummatory phase", as Dewey (1934/1958) puts it (p. 139): "We have had enough pursuit of meanings, and I know from experience that if you don't make an end

of it, there is no end" (Langer, 1957, p. 11). But since philosophy itself "deals primarily with meanings – with the sense of what we say" (Langer, , p. 3), something else is required to "make an end" of philosophical pursuit.

In part it is simply a matter of Will: One could just stop writing, "as if the tape ran out", one might say. But this would leave Thinking and Willing unconnected, individually expressed yet lacking any harmonious interrelation or unity. In short, it would amount to an expression decidedly *inartistic*, since art is what is needed – according to the thesis presented here – to bring about a balanced and coherent relation between parts.

To clarify *distinction*, while simultaneously revealing the possibility of *communion*, is an artistic task inviting demonstration as well as explication. Further discourse is liable to swing the balance towards Thinking; abrupt cessation swings it in the opposite direction towards Willing. In between, encompassing both, uniting both, lies the realm of Feeling. With Feeling comes the possibility of Art as a cognitive activity (a "thoughtful doing", similar to what van Manen calls "tact", Dewey calls "instrumental knowledge",<sup>21</sup> and Steiner call "love"), as well as the possibility of Art as an active cognition (a "willful thinking" which Steiner calls "freedom", and Dewey, 1934/1958, calls "a deliberate openness to life itself", p. 304).

It is one of the frustrations of many of today's educators that increasing efforts at integration, unification, and pluralistic classrooms precipitate unwanted (and often unprepared for) rivalries, antagonisms, and tensions. In short, attempting to facilitate communion (in the sense of building community) directly through a one-sided emphasis on sameness often seems to backfire. What is created is not awareness of communion, so much as awareness of antagonism. We experience what is particular with heightened awareness, if not outright resentment, when we are *expected to disregard* what is

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<sup>21</sup>Dewey (1934/1958) explains, I have from time to time set forth a conception of knowledge as being "instrumental." Strange meanings have been imputed by critics to this conception. Its actual content is simple: Knowledge is instrumental to the enrichment of immediate experience through the control over action that it exercises. (p. 290)

noticeably different. How can we disregard what we can only know through regarding it? It is a part of thinking to distinguish, to differentiate, to separate, to objectify; if this activity is not honoured somehow, it will nevertheless insert itself into our awareness, else we would not be aware at all.

Steiner's ideas about art, cognition, and education make it clear why this is so. There must be a rhythm of antipathy and sympathy, a harmony between thinking and involvement, between distinction and communion.<sup>22</sup> Sympathetic engagement with others, communal solidarity, and efforts at community building easily become skewed if uninformed by careful Thinking and deliberate thoughtfulness, just as antipathetic calculation, intensely specialized research, and individual self-actualization easily become skewed if unwarmed by a willing involvement and caring response to all around us.<sup>23</sup>

It is artistic activity which teaches us how to bring our thinking and our doing into balance, our awareness of Self and Other into balance, our sense of freedom and our sense of discipline into balance, our "calculation" and our "gut feelings" into balance, and our action and passion into balance. Without a distinct awareness of things, the artist would lack the technical ability to create anything. Without a sense of communion with things, the artist would lack the inspiration (motivation) to create anything.<sup>24</sup> The one-

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<sup>22</sup>Along this same line, Dr. David York calls attention to Martin Buber's notion of *necessary "uncoupling"*: If we are able to conceive "I and Thou" we enter into communion, but we cannot stay there; there is a constant cycle between a deep involvement in which there is no objectivity, and a recurring separation in which we assess the experience. This same cycle forms the nexus of Buber's theory of art (personal communication, 24 November 1994).

<sup>23</sup>This dynamic suggests an interesting reconciliation which may be possible between various theories of moral thought and activity, such as that presented by Kohlberg (1976), which gives high value to moral precepts and abstract principles, and Noddings (1984, 1992), which gives high value to caring and personal kindness (see also Crain, 1992, pp. 134-153).

<sup>24</sup>Dewey (1934/1958) illuminates this view with these comments:

Since art is the most universal form of language,

sided thinker who tries to explain inspiration ends up facing the obstacle of inert ideas, just as the one-sided doer who acts unthinkingly, either through habit or through external pressure, ends up facing the obstacle of becoming demoralized.

Through art we learn to cross-over from our thinking to our doing, and from our doing to our thinking. Through art we discover *the turning point* from science to conscience, and from conscience to science. In other words, we learn to connect our knowledge and our involvement with others, our understanding and our morality, our distinctly individual awarenesses and our communally responsible engagements.

In philosophy, at least as Aristotle conceived it, it is possible to move from wonder about *why* something is as it is, to such understanding that we would afterwards only be puzzled to discover that something *wasn't* as it was. In this development, although there is indeed some movement, it is simply a movement from one thought form to another: In such experience we find ourselves continually rooted in our thinking life.<sup>25</sup>

Through Steiner's anthroposophy on the other hand, there is the possibility of not remaining only *rooted* in our thinking life; in contrasting and complementary fashion, it

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since it is constituted, even apart from literature, by the common qualities of the public world, it is the most universal and freest form of communication. Every intense experience of friendship and affection completes itself artistically. The sense of communion generated by a work of art may take on a definitely religious quality. The union of men with one another is the source of the rites that from the time of archaic man to the present have commemorated the crises of birth, death, and marriage. Art is the extension of the power of rites and ceremonies to unite men, through a shared celebration, to all incidents and scenes of life. This office is the reward and seal of art. That art weds man and nature is a familiar fact. Art also renders men aware of their union with one another in origin and destiny. (pp. 270-1)

<sup>25</sup>"philosophy is said to begin in wonder and end in understanding. Art departs from what has been understood and ends in wonder. In this end, the human contribution in art is also the quickened work of nature in man" (Dewey, 1934/1958, p. 270).



is also possible to *blossom* through active engagement in the world. Just as the seed, upon germination, sends forth both the stem upward and the root downward, so does the healthily developing human being grow simultaneously both in terms of intellectual understanding of the world and willful engagement within the world. The source of energy for the germinating plant is neither the root nor the stem, but the seed which mediates and connects each to the other, just as the source of energy for the healthy human being is neither our thinking nor our doing, but our feeling life which likewise mediates and connects each to the other. Jascha Heifetz (in Exley, 1991) indicates a good example of this: "Take a child's hand, guide them [sic] over the piano keys to pick out a well-known tune, and from that moment he will have a heightened interest in music." The point is that the child will feel *delighted and excited* to recognize the tune, and through this feeling of delight and excitement she will seek to further both her activity and her understanding. Charles Ives (in Exley, 1991) also shows a profound awareness of this dynamic, as shown by this remark:

The future of music may not lie entirely in music itself, but rather in the way it encourages and extends, rather than limits, the aspirations and ideals of the people, in the way it makes itself a part with the finer things that humanity does and dreams of. (no page number given)

Detlef Hardorp (personal communication, 27 July 1995) is right, I think, to point out that we normally see the world through our concepts. This is the path of ordinary science, where theoretical models are constructed as a result of hypothetical conceptions being tested in the world. From what I understand, this is close to what Steiner calls the Gate of the Sun, by which he means a preference for emphasizing links between feeling and thinking, for connecting feelings with the clarity of thinking (Detlef Hardorp, personal communication, 27 July 1995), as I have certainly tried to do in this research project. But there is another route open, and that is the Path of the Moon, by which is meant the predilection for emphasizing the links between feeling and doing, for connecting feelings with the experience of active involvement in the world, which I have *also* tried to do in the course of carrying out this research. Indeed, it is this second path which comes closer to Goethean science, I believe, and which allows for the possibility of knowing in a *living* way, rather than through abstractions.

To become more aware of our senses and to experience our sensations as the direct engagement of will in the world opens new possibilities for experiencing and coming to understand things, as Dewey, as well as Steiner, seems to have well understood (see Dewey, 1934/1958, p. 22). Artistic activity requires us to pay attention to our senses in ways that thinking and doing alone can too easily avoid. Through such attention we keep both our thinking and our doing *lively and animated*. As Dewey (1934/1958) explains,

Through art, meanings of objects that are otherwise dumb, inchoate, restricted, and resisted are clarified and concentrated, and not by thought working laboriously upon them, nor by escape into a world of mere sense, but by creation of a new experience.... whatever path the work of art pursues, it, just because it is a full and intense experience, keeps alive the power to experience the common world in its fullness. (p. 133)

It is this liveliness that ensures the fructification of our ideas and our commitments. It is this liveliness that must become obvious through such a text as this, if it is to contribute something other than abstract concepts and inert ideas to the educational world, if it is to be something as much concerned with communion as with distinction. It is this liveliness that Steiner meant when he said, "...the spirit can be active while becoming, as it were, congealed directly in the form" (p. 16).

It is in fostering this life, this health, that art has such an important contribution to make in education. Art serves to form rather than inform, and what it forms is a life that is healthy and whole because it is not only intellectually enriched but also morally sound, because idea and virtue are both connected to feeling, such that cold, calculated thought is warmed by kindly compassion, while violent and fiery eruptions of energetic will are cooled by careful deliberation. Through artistic experience we learn to feel and to trust the necessary balance between thinking and doing. This feeling and this trust then become the seed from which healthy individual and communal life can grow.

Appendix A - Useful Addresses

*for information about anthroposophical activities in Canada:*

Anthroposophical Society in Canada  
Hill House, 81 Lawton Boulevard, Toronto, Ontario M4V 1Z6  
(newsletter available - Aurore)

*for information about Waldorf education in North America:*

Association of Waldorf Schools of North America  
3911 Bannister Road, Fair Oaks, California 95628  
(journal available - Renewal)

*for information about Waldorf early childhood education:*

Waldorf Kindergarten Assoc., 1359 Alderton Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20906  
(newsletter available - Waldorf Kindergarten Newsletter)

*for information about Waldorf education in Great Britain:*

The Steiner Schools Fellowship  
Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, Sussex, England RH18 5JB  
(journals available - Steiner Education and Paideia)

*for information about borrowing anthroposophical books and documents by mail:*

Library of the Anthroposophical Society  
RD 2, Box 215, Harlemville, Ghent, New York 12075

*for information about purchasing books on anthroposophy and Waldorf education:*

Trifold Book Service, 81 Lawton Boulevard, Toronto, ON M4V 1Z6  
Anthroposophic Press, RR 4, Box 94 A1, Hudson, NY 12534

*for information about Waldorf teacher training:*

Rudolf Steiner Centre Toronto, 9100 Bathurst St., #4, Thornhill, ON L4J 8C7  
West Coast Institute for Studies in Anthroposophy: 604-746-6980 or 604-985-3569  
Antioch Graduate School - Waldorf education, Office of Admissions, 40 Avon St., Keene, NH 03431-3516  
Sunbridge College, 260 Hungry Hollow Road, Spring Valley, NY 10977  
Waldorf Teacher Development Assoc., Box 2678, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-2678  
Waldorf Institute of Southern Calif., 17100 Superior St., Northridge, CA 91325  
New England Waldorf Teacher Training, Inc., Box 545, Wilton, NH 03086  
Rudolf Steiner College, 9200 Fair Oaks Blvd., Fair Oaks, CA 95628  
Emerson College, Forest Row, Sussex, England RH185JO

Appendix B - Doctoral Dissertations on Rudolf Steiner or Waldorf education

- Cavanaugh, M.P. (1990).** The holistic teaching methods of Francis Parker, John Dewey, Rudolf Steiner, Hughes Mearns, and Laura Zirbes: Literacy via the whole child. Michigan State University.
- Foley, M. (1981).** Rudolf Steiner's philosophy of history. Univ. of New Mexico.
- Foster, S.W. (1981).** The Waldorf schools: An exploration of an enduring alternative school movement. Florida State University.
- Galbreath, R.C. (1970).** Spiritual science in an age of materialism: Rudolf Steiner and occultism. University of Michigan.
- Glas, W.G. (1977).** An analytical study of the rhetorical thought of Rudolf Steiner with some implications for the teaching of speech. Wayne State University.
- Henry, M.E. (1990).** Private schools and the hidden curriculum. Univ. of VA.
- Huchingson, J.M. (1990).** A study of the relationship between years in the integrative, creative, and artistic Waldorf education and self-actualization. Wayne State Univ.
- Huchingson, R. (1990).** A comparative study between the behaviors of students in a public school program for the gifted and those in Waldorf schools in terms of Tenzulli's "gifted behaviors". Wayne State University.
- Lozoraitis, J.P. (1992).** An exploration of Waldorf education principles in a public school bilingual program for gifted students. University of Massachusetts.
- Marcum, U.B. (1989).** Rudolf Steiner: An intellectual biography. University of California at Riverside.
- Marshak, D. (1985).** Education for wholeness: The visions of human becoming and of education of Rudolf Steiner, Aurobindo Ghose, and Inayat Khan. Harvard.
- Moore, H. (1977).** Rudolf Steiner's contribution to the history and practice of agricultural education. Union Graduate School.
- Ogletree, E.J. (1967).** A cross-cultural exploratory study of the creativeness of Steiner and state pupils in England, Scotland and Germany. Wayne State University.
- Santomasso, E. (1973),** Origin and aims of German expressionist architecture: An essay into the expressionist frame of mind in Germany, especially as typified in the work of Rudolf Steiner. Columbia University.
- Siegmeister, W. (1932).** Theory and practice of Dr. Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy. New York University.
- Uhrmacher, P.B. (1991).** Waldorf schools marching quietly unheard. Stanford.
- Zachos, P. (1991).** Scientific discovery on formal operational tasks: A study of the relationship between scientific thinking and the discovery of scientific concepts by high school students. SUNY.

**Appendix C -  
Record of Visits to Waldorf Schools, Associations, and Teacher Training Centers**

- February 1992 -**      **Spring Valley Green Meadow School**  
Hungry Hollow Road, Spring Valley, NY 10977
- Spring Valley Waldorf Institute (now Sunbridge College)**  
260 Hungry Hollow Road, Spring Valley, NY 10977
- July 1993, 94, -**      **Rudolf Steiner Institute**  
                             **(Thomas College, Waterville, ME)**  
                             **C. Petrash, Registrar, P.O.Box 207, Kensington, MD 20895-0207**
- October 1994 -**      **Calgary Waldorf School**  
1915 36th Avenue S.W. Calgary, AL T2T 2G6
- March 1995 -**        **Alan Howard Waldorf School**  
228 St. George St., Toronto, ON M5R 2N9 (since moved?)
- Toronto Waldorf School**  
Box 220, 9100 Bathurst St., Thornhill, ON L3T 3N3
- Rudolf Steiner Center Toronto**  
9100 Bathurst St., #4, Thornhill, ON L4J 8C7
- Waldorf School Association of Ontario, Inc.**  
Box 220, 9100 Bathurst St., Thornhill, ON L3T 3N3
- March 1996 -**        **Cuernavaca Waldorf School, Cuernavaca, Mexico**
- April 1996 -**        **Rudolf Steiner School**  
Lower School, 15 E.79th St., New York, NY 10021  
Upper School, 15 E.78th St., New York, NY 10021
- June 1996 -**        **Bristol Waldorf School**  
Park Place, Clifton, Bristol, England UK BS8 1JR
- Michael Hall Steiner School**  
Forest Row, E. Sussex, England, UK RH18 5JB
- Emerson College**  
Forest Row, Sussex, England UK RH18 5JX
- Steiner Schools Fellowship**  
Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, Sussex, England UK RH18 5JX
- May 1997 -**        **Nova Scotia South Shore Waldorf School**  
South Shore Waldorf School Association  
RR #4, Site 12, Comp. 9, Bridgewater, NS B4V 2W3

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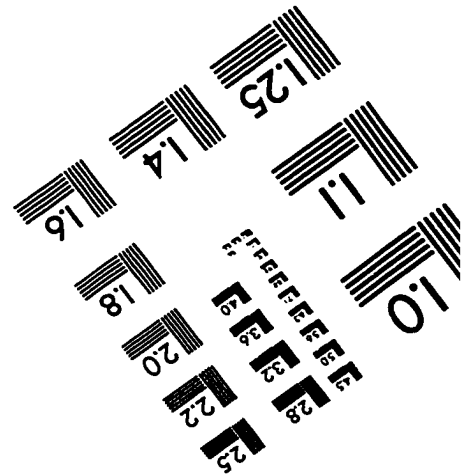
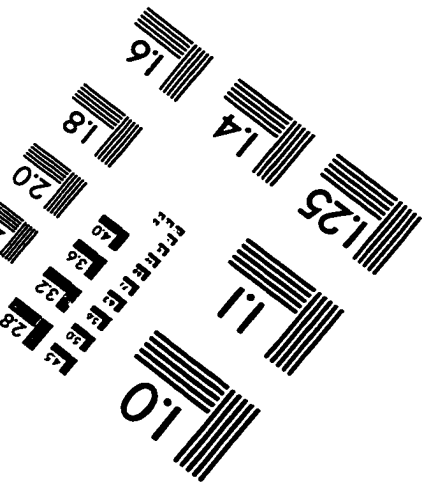
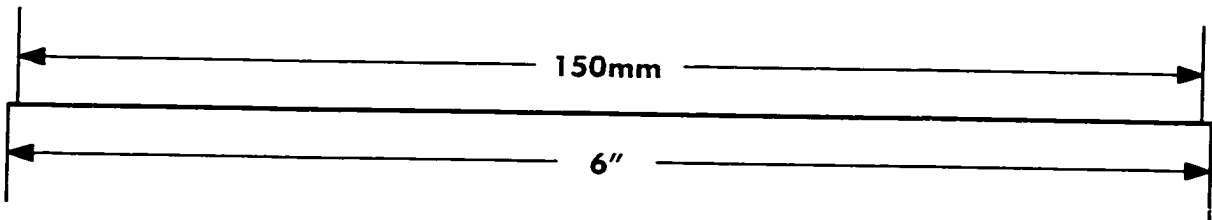
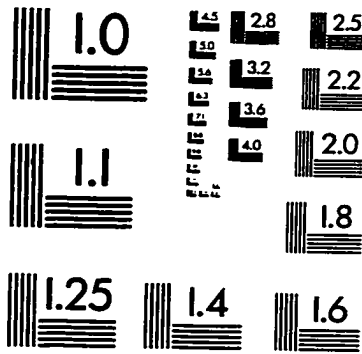
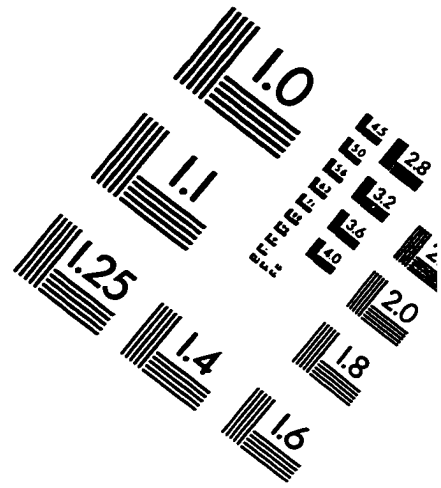
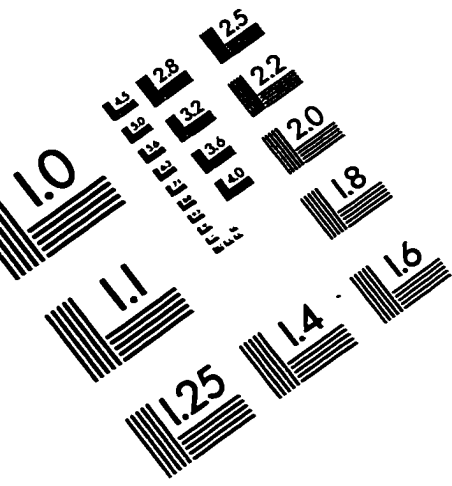
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