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## **In Quest of Walter Smith: The Past, Present, and Future Impact of Visual Art in Adult Education**

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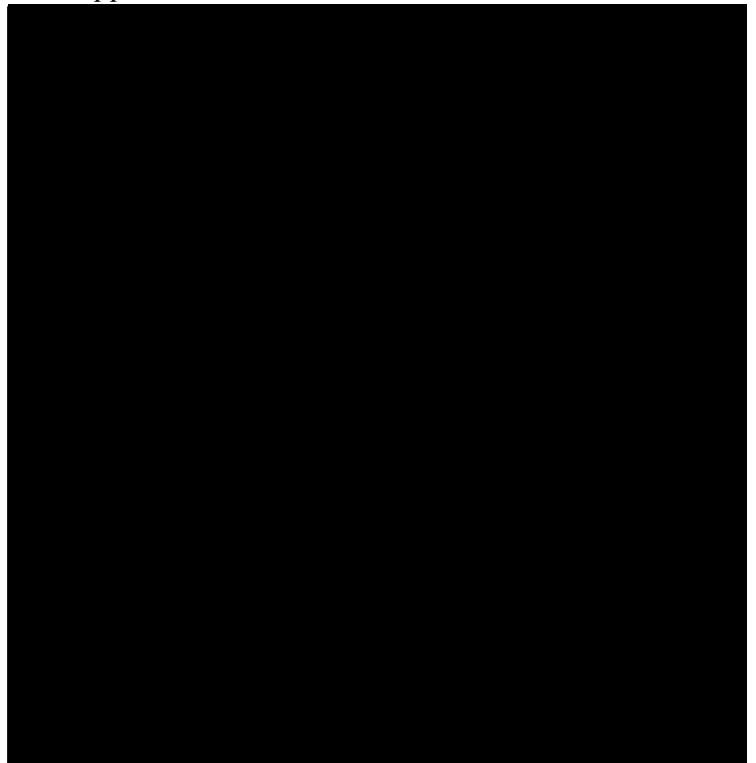
IN QUEST OF WALTER SMITH: THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE IMPACT  
OF VISUAL ART IN ADULT EDUCATION

by

Meredith Amanda Cole

A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Graduate School  
of The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:



December 2009

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## ABSTRACT

# IN QUEST OF WALTER SMITH: THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE IMPACT OF VISUAL ART IN ADULT EDUCATION

by Meredith Amanda Cole

December 2009

Walter Smith is a relatively unknown historical figure in the art world, but he is essential to defining adult education's past, present, and future in the area of visual art. His artistic endeavors in America sparked facets of the way art education is practiced today. However, along the way we have lost the tenets of social change which he sought but never accomplished. In chapter one, I introduce the purpose of the research. In chapter two, I explain the position Walter Smith entered when coming to America. I also detail Smith's Herculean social reform efforts for adult education and why popular appreciation of what he did was impossible. In chapter three, I analyze the changes in American adult art education inspired by Smith, and the paradigmatic changes in adult art education since Smith up to present-day. In chapter four, I assess documentation of the present situation of adult education in art in the United States. I review the thought process behind what is required in teaching adult students and its current practice. In chapter five, I discuss Paulo Freire's theory of social transformation as a backbone for adult art education within some possible frameworks: CBAE, DBAE, and through the aid of Internet and computer technology. In chapter six, I address the dichotomy that is simultaneously splitting the fields of adult education and adult art education.

*What if imagination and art are not frosting at all but the fountainhead of human experience? What if our logic and science derive from art forms and are fundamentally dependent on them rather than art being merely a decoration for our work when science and logic have produced it? ~ Rollo May*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sometimes our light goes out but is blown again into flame by an encounter with another human being. Each of us owes the deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this inner light. ~ Albert Schweitzer

A special thanks goes to Dr. Lilian Hill for graciously chairing my dissertation committee; her expertise and advice were very much appreciated. Also, many thanks to my committee members, Dr. Lin Harper, Dr. W. Lee Pierce, and Dr. John Rachal, who have guided and encouraged me through the entire dissertation process. Your unceasing devotion and care to each and every student is awe-inspiring. Thank you for supporting my passion in visual art research in the field of adult education. Thanks to my art professors: Shelbia Hatten, Walter Feldman, and Tony Janello; I have learned to see outside the box and retain my love of art. Their lack of artistic self-importance and many kindnesses are much remembered. Many, many thanks go to my mother, Dr. Kathy Cole, who has been the wind beneath my wings; she never let self-doubt and anxiety steal my dreams. Thanks to my family for their faith in me. Above all thanks to the One who is the ultimate social transformationist.

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## PROLOGUE

### A POSTMODERN WHIPLASH

I first experienced the split between the world of postmodernist-based high art founded on philosophical and intellectual content, and illustrative art, low art as a craft based on technical design skills, while working for my bachelor's degree in visual art at a private liberal arts university, at an art and design school, and while working on my master's degree in art education research at a public university. The love-hate relationship within art and art education has driven my passion to see art as a discipline in adult education socially transformed to provide equality of access for all adult learners, no matter what their background in art. Modernist/postmodernist controlling ideologies should not segregate who can and cannot create art.

Experiences with high art based on modernist/deconstructionist issues at the universities and art design/illustration for industry at a specialized art school disconnected me from the use of visual art. According to university fine art society, modernist lingo such as the term *kitsch*, something that appeals only to poor or lowbrow taste as in Maxfield Parrish, Norman Rockwell, and Bob Ross paintings, dictated exploration of only such contents and issues deemed worthy to explore in the visual art community. Issues such as sexual identity defined the path to being a part of the profound meaning-makers of the postmodern visual art world. According to the ideologies of the university art instructors, it was mandatory to learn about such genius artists as Piet Mondrian and Francis Bacon. The modernist/postmodernist theories defining the university visual art world, a flotsam of two interconnected and ephemeral paradigms with no useful foundation for promoting art for adult professional education,

was the key to the genius art focus for all adult learners. The postmodern mindset defining university art education for nontraditional adult learners was a paradigm which deconstructed anything politically or socially construed as status quo. But it created a pessimistic and nihilistic void for the instruction and practice of art in the university setting. The fundamental elements of history and techniques for art instruction were ignored in favor of forcing learners to follow the teacher's own deconstructionist ideology and aspire to the isolated "genius" artistic community where every art student was trained only to interact with other artistic elites. I believe that this is why university administrators do not know how to make art departments accountable for a respectful and thorough art department environment for adult learners in the isolation between the university visual art world and other university subjects.

According to the art school (which university high art society silently pegs as commercial sell-outs), art has to be an exact skill. Professors at the art school focus on art education training for technical and professional skills, while at the liberal arts public and private universities they focus on modernist/deconstructionist intellectual genius. It is a tug-of-war between the dichotomies of art perspective. This deconstructionist pessimism in the liberal arts university leaves little room for novice adult learners to understand visual art and how to gain art skills in a university setting for personal and professional use.

Not much has changed from the time of the adult art educator, Walter Smith, in the late 1800s. We are struggling just as he did for the democratization of art education. Smith, the first art educator to promote a formal system for adult art education in America, opened my eyes to what was wrong with the system of art education then and

now. Smith became an inspiration for me because he sought to reach beyond the artistic elitism which has dominated American art education past and present. He desired social reform for working class adults by increasing art education access and increasing the availability of practical design skills. The present study aims to explore Smith's own words in detail to reveal his personality and to present him as a pioneer adult educator before his time. For historical accuracy, I quote Smith's writings as evidence. I also address how Walter Smith's struggle with high art and low art is still the struggle today in the university institution. His emancipatory art education initiative for adults by increasing practical skills in art education is still applicable to our present rigid classification of postmodernist high art/deconstructionist ideals within the academic institution; the consequent subjugation of professional and industrial design in art education available for adults should expose how institutional dependence on progress ultimately leads to conformity.

CHAPTER I  
IN QUEST OF WALTER SMITH

“His very name may have contributed to the anonymity which became his lot. Other Smiths, to be sure, have their niche... but even these are not exactly household words.”<sup>1</sup> This was the beginning of an exposition Green wrote about the life of a man who was vital to the development of visual art education for working class adults in the United States: Walter Smith. Smith was brought to America in 1871 from the South Kensington School (currently the Victoria and Albert Museum) of Industrial Drawing and Crafts in England and was nominated simultaneously as the Massachusetts Director of Scholastic and Industrial Art Education, the Boston Director of Art Education, and later as the principal of the Massachusetts Normal Art School for art educators and the representative for the government’s agenda to institute formal industrial art education in all states.

According to Bolin,<sup>2</sup> Smith’s entrance into America coincided with the initiation of the 1870 Massachusetts Act Relating to Free Instruction in Drawing which made drawing in public schools mandatory and created free adult evening classes for cities with over 10,000 people. Adult education courses were few and far between, especially in relation to providing continuing professional education for working adults 15 years of age

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<sup>1</sup> Harry C. Green, "Walter Smith: The forgotten man," *Art Education* 19, no. 1 (1966): 3.

<sup>2</sup> Paul E. Bolin, "The influence of industrial policy on enactment of the 1870 Massachusetts Free Instruction in Drawing Act of 1870," in *The history of art education: Proceedings from the Penn State Conference*, eds. B. Wilson and H. Hoffa (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1985).

and older. The industrialists realized that internationally they were at the bottom in quality and craftsmanship of commercial goods. After assessing the British system of art education, some industrialists persuaded politicians to create a formal discipline for public art education that would increase American commercial competition in the international market of industrial goods. Adults would need to be educated in the elements of industrial designs to increase the craftsmanship of their products. Smith was chosen as the art educator for the job of turning American designers into competitors with European designers. Smith had a vast repertoire from his work in England of creating and instituting art education curricula with positive results for training skilled craftsmen. According to Thistlewood,<sup>3</sup> Smith believed that art education could lead to better hand-eye coordination which would mean better job skills, a better professional self-concept, and increase the quality of artistic appreciation in the lower working classes. Ultimately, these increased job skills could promote an increase in job competence which would enable workers in the United States to compete with some of the most skilled designers from France and England. Smith strongly agreed that he could be the one to do the job. However, though his duties were to institute a public art education curriculum for the Boston public schools for children up to the age of 14, his agenda for the increased institution of design criteria in industrial art was focused primarily on teachers in his Normal Art school and the mechanics and industrial workers who desired to better their education professionally in his evening classes. Walter Smith states,

*Mechanics are the sinew of our commonwealth, and deserve the highest consideration of educators. At the conclusion of a lesson, gray-haired mechanics*

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<sup>3</sup> David J. Thistlewood, "Social significance in British art education 1850-1950," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 20 (1986).

*have often almost overpowered me with thanks, saying to me, 'This lesson is worth hundreds of dollars to me' or, 'I shall work better all my life for this.' I have often found some pupil repeating the lessons to others poorer than himself.*<sup>4</sup>

He saw drawing as a language which any individual could learn to speak if given the right tools from education:

*It was demonstrated by fair experiment, that about a hundred percent of school children could be taught to draw well, and that demonstration shattered the ancient notion of genius monopolizing art powers. Indeed, not only is this true for children, but experience in the city of Boston shows that adults of nearly all ages can be taught also; the evening classes and the Normal School having pupils varying between the ages of fifteen and sixty, who are, without an exception, steadily acquiring skill in drawing. . . . The only real difficulty in teaching drawing to adults is found in the settled conviction in some people's minds that they are incapable of learning. It is the only fatal hindrance; for, until that is removed, little progress can be made. And the delusion usually occupies a well-fortified stronghold, and will not easily surrender.*<sup>5</sup>

Chalmers points out that Smith's work with the industrial laborers was not the first time art education evening classes had been held in the United States.<sup>6</sup> However, previous adult educators in the subject of art instruction could not decide whether to teach art formally for professionals or as an elite hobby. The question was, should art be taught for practical vocational skills or should art merely be a hobby for the elite? Also, previous art education was geared mainly towards early child education (learning to draw was seen as a tool to help children learn to write). During the late 1800s, those who could receive education in art were defined by those who could afford a liberal education not pertaining to a trade skill because, at this point in time, art was seen as an entertainment only for the

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Smith, *Art education: Scholastic and industrial* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1873), 16.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 9.

<sup>6</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *A 19th century government drawing master: The Walter Smith reader* (Reston, VA: NAEA, 2000).



upper classes which focused on teaching fine art painting to wealthy young women. If evening drawing classes were provided to adults, it was an amalgamation of various concepts of art education. Thus, the art education night classes were neither to train skilled designers nor to give them any tools which they could use for their professions.

Walter Smith also had a broader goal of making industrial art education a tool for social emancipation for the working class (mechanics, engineers, textile workers, etc.) through perfecting their ability to draw in free evening art classes. According to Smith,

*It has been this senseless estimate of art which, ignoring its capabilities for ministering to the highest requirements and capacities of men, and looking upon it as an exceptional characteristic of a few eccentric persons, this false judgment has alone been responsible for the absence of opportunities for its development into usefulness, and its elevation into the position of an element in all education.<sup>7</sup>*

Smith's mission in coming to America was ultimately to emancipate public art education from its high art/low art designations and provide equality of access to all learners no matter their socio-economic background. The elitist framework based on European fine art standards defined who could receive an art education. This framework was the wall Walter Smith sought to break down. In Smith's own words, he spells out the challenges faced in the field of visual art education for adults:

*Perhaps in no other occupation has so much misery been caused as by the mistaken choice of art as a profession by those who had not the capacity nor sustained strength to succeed in it. We seldom hear of architects, lawyers, engineers, or ministers dying in a garret of starvation, when possessing acknowledged powers in their professions; but it has been by no means rare in art. There is a lamentable disposition towards pride and light-headedness in art students, as though they alone monopolized the genius of the world but were irresponsible for its exercise. Now and then, when this fails them, they wage an unequal war with society, which ends but in one way; but, if it does not so end, men with originally excellent capacities are left to pursue embittered and disappointed lives, railing against society, and charging it with the responsibility*

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<sup>7</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 6.

*of their own useless careers. That arises from want of discipline to begin with, and the impractical nature of art study generally in the past; by which men have been limited in their studies, and tacitly allowed to regard industrial art as a prosy, inferior vocation, only to be resorted to as a last chance, whilst high art and poetical inspirations were the main business of life. How radically wrong this view is, may be seen by the biographies of many great artists of modern times, men who as sign-painters, wood-draughtsman, pattern designers for factories, or stone-carvers, passed through the useful vocation of industrial art to the highest attainments of fine art. That should be a lesson to light-headed art students, who frothily despise industry, and pine in garrets over some impossible ideal, the germ of proud idleness, from which the only thing to deliver them is practical contact with the industrial art necessities of their fellow human beings.<sup>8</sup>*

Smith further explains the elitist separation in education for the masses,

*Technical education in art and science may be described as the liberal education of the working classes who have not found a home in the universities, yet who require secondary instruction of a practical character in the industrial direction, as much as the theologian needs his Greek and Hebrew, the engineer his mathematics, the physician his chemistry and anatomy, and the statesman his philosophy and logic.<sup>9</sup>*

In Chalmers' view, Smith took the unstructured nature of art education and tried to make it applicable to the lower classes of adults who would never have been able to learn art and be able to use it for their needs. He saw the social class distinction separating mechanical/industrial low art from fine high art and sought to improve the social status of workers through using their training in drawing to provide them with better technical skills for their jobs. The transformation of the professional circumstances of adult designers could only be achieved if the individuals were willing to further their education and hopefully seek to use what they learned to increase their socio-economic position for their betterment as a person and as a skilled tradesman. Smith saw that this increase in artistic skill and craftsmanship could engender a sense of self-worth and

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<sup>8</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 159.

<sup>9</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 21.

social emancipation from the segregated population of working class laborers who were only motivated to meet basic needs and not reach for anything greater than themselves and their lot in life (Smith's dilemma can be represented by understanding Maslow's hierarchy of needs).<sup>10</sup> Smith hoped to improve workers' sense of self from the lower level of merely meeting the basic physiological needs, working hand to mouth, up to the heights of self-reliance and empathy through art education for a greater sense of self-worth and individual consciousness of a better life purpose for themselves and others.

The rationale of the current thesis is to investigate the details of Walter Smith's life in adult art education work in England and America, Smith's focus on social reform through adult art education, and the possible reforms to current adult art education practices that would meet Smith's unfulfilled goals for adult art education. I desire to show that Walter Smith's struggle with the segregation of high art and low art is our same struggle in the subjugation of commercial/illustrative design art to the ideals and standards of postmodern deconstructionist high art today. The primary focus is on the life and goals of Walter Smith in order to assess imperfections in the current system of adult art education. By assessing the past and present ideologies and practices in art education, future adult learners will be more informed about how to use what they learn both personally and professionally without being rejected from participating in the art world.

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<sup>10</sup> Maslow's pyramid of needs consisted of the fulfillment of the more basic needs at the base of the pyramid in order to achieve individual self-actualization and an ability to empathize with others at the tip of the pyramid. Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and personality* (New York: Harper Collins, 1987).

## Synopsis of Study

Smith's influence on our current system of adult art education past and present should be brought to light. His artistic endeavors in America sparked facets of the way adult art education is practiced today. However, along the way we have lost the true tenets of social change which he sought in order to liberate adults from an elitist framework which defined and segregated art education. In the context of chapter two, I explain the position Walter Smith entered when coming to America during the Industrial Art Movement and his role in the creation of a framework for teaching adult art education. Chapter two also reveals Smith's social reform influence through adult art education and why popular appreciation of what Smith did for the lower classes was impossible in the increasing middle class aspiration of Boston society. In chapter three, I analyze Smith's influence in American adult education and paradigmatic changes in adult art education up to present-day. In chapter four, I assess the present practices of university adult art education in the United States. I review the thought process behind what some adult art educators consider essential in teaching adult students and its current practice. In chapter five, I discuss a social transformational backbone for adult art education through addition of some possible frameworks: CBAE (community-based art education), DBAE (discipline-based art education), and student and instructor use of Internet and computer technology in institutional visual art education courses. I assess how Walter Smith's original goal of social reform through adult art education can be extended through these curriculum mediums to reach Paulo Freire's concept of adult critical consciousness. In chapter six, I address the historical dichotomy of technical and

social change educational emphasis in universities that is splitting both adult education and art education available for adults.

## CHAPTER II

## PAST: ART AND THE INVISIBLE MAN

There are few people who could have walked in Walter Smith's shoes. In only a twelve year period, he created and enacted an entire system of public art education founded on European principles for child skill attainment and for adult vocational needs. But the driving force behind his ambition was a desire to bring art into the reach of the lower class workers. These were the people he struggled for and who would never have had access to an art education. Only by comprehending his vision for social reform in adult education through providing equality of access in practical art instruction can his indomitably stubborn and dogmatic nature be understood.

## Walter Smith before America

Walter Smith was loudly proclaimed an obnoxious Englishman by many political and educational opponents. Even one of his contemporary admirers, Harry Green,<sup>1</sup> and Smith's own granddaughter, Nora Sheath,<sup>2</sup> assessed that Smith could be doctrinaire and obstinate. According to Chalmers,<sup>3</sup> Smith was a contradiction; he was indomitably sure of himself, even arrogant, and passionately ambitious. But, though demanding, Smith was an untiring and unceasing devotee to making a practical adult education available in technical art instruction for those whom society had neglected – the lower working class.

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<sup>1</sup> Harry C. Green, "Walter Smith: The forgotten man," *Art Education* 19, no. 1 (1966).

<sup>2</sup> Nora Sheath, *Some events in the life of Walter Smith* (Chesham, UK: Chesham Church Printing, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *A 19th century government drawing master: The Walter Smith reader* (Reston, VA: NAEA, 2000).

To some who knew him and admired him, like one of his Massachusetts Normal Art School students, he was a hero:

Walter Smith (1836-1886)  
 As eaglet borne to earth on sweeping wing.  
 Came he, whose vision wide, we gladly sing.  
 In English meads were passed his childhood days;  
 A noble youth he grew, whom all could praise.  
 Those bluest eyes! That laugh of merry ring!  
 With lofty purpose was his heart ablaze.  
 Knowledge he sought and gained, in countless ways.  
 Till filled with light, to others, light, could bring.  
 His honest zeal and high success brought fame.  
 Columbia cried "Come over and help us here!"  
 Our trail he blazed, and high the path he trod.  
 We stoned our prophet – him we now acclaim.  
 Home went the valiant heart. Love draped his bier.  
 And Victory's wings bore back a soul to God.<sup>4</sup>

However, Chalmers believes that Smith, whether one likes him or hates him, is an essential figure in the history of art education. He states,

History has value; it is for ourselves so that we can understand the past and its impact upon the present and the future. We are the "coming generation{s}" referred to by Clarke. An art educator without knowledge of Walter Smith is impoverished. No matter what we think of the man, we who teach art and art education in public institutions are inheritors of Walter Smith's 19<sup>th</sup> century art education dream. Personality and politics led to his dismissal from positions in Massachusetts, but in today's academic environment, with its supposed safeguards against discrimination, Walter Smith would receive tenure and promotion to professor.<sup>5</sup>

Though it is difficult to find any of the speeches, workbooks, cards, curriculum plans and academic writings from Walter Smith, there are some authors who have managed to dig him up in several historical writings. Stankiewicz assesses that all of the authors who have written about Smith's life have done so with different factual and

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<sup>4</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*, 2.

<sup>5</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*, 3.

emotional arguments. According to Chalmers, Stankiewicz,<sup>6</sup> Green,<sup>7</sup> and Korzenik<sup>8</sup> present Smith as a tragic hero while Efland<sup>9</sup> sees Smith's life as a comedy of errors. Chalmers points out that all of these views help define the nature and circumstances surrounding Smith's life and provide us with Smith's real identity: tyrant, hero, none or both? However, presenting whether Smith was nice or mean, good or bad, is not what the present study aims to show. It does however strive to reveal Smith's work as an adult educator through creation and institution of a public and practical form of art education. To save time in describing this subfield of adult education, it will heretofore be stated as adult art education.

Smith defined himself as being born from a lower class. He firmly pointed out that he was "*not to the manor born.*"<sup>10</sup> Thus, his central focus and struggle was with class divisions. However, because of Smith's indomitable nature, the newly available technical instruction for the lower classes, and Smith's own voracious use of self-help information, he improved his social status and moved into the budding middle-class. Seeking to become better than what he came from, Smith strongly believed in self-help

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<sup>6</sup> Mary A. Stankiewicz, "So what: Interpretation in art education history," in *Art education historical methodology: An insider's guide to doing and using*, ed. P. Smith (Pasadena: Open Door Publishers for the Seminar for Research in Art Education, 1995).

<sup>7</sup> Harry C. Green, *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Diana Korzenik, *Drawn to art* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1985).

<sup>9</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *A history of art education: Intellectual and social currents in teaching the visual arts* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> Walter Smith, *Practical education. Paper read at the Essex County Teachers' Association meeting, held at Salem, April 12, 1878* (Boston: A. J. Wright, Printer, 1878a), 7.



information,<sup>11</sup> especially books on the lives of great men such as the one written by Samuel Smiles.<sup>12</sup> But Smith would always be made conscious of his origins and they became the foundation for his work with the lower classes. Equality in art education access for adult lower-class workers became his primary passion. Chalmers points out, “whereas the upper classes were concerned with the muse and inspiration, Smith and men of his origins wanted an art education that was down to earth and practical.”<sup>13</sup> Smith corroborates his statement:

*In art study as in every study worthy of the attention of intelligent persons, there must be no hap-hazard or rule-of-thumb processes, taught like tricks, and caught like fevers, by slight of hand or insensibility, - a favorite mode with those who assume to be geniuses themselves, and require inspiration in their pupils, contenting themselves with vague generalization concerning the sentiments of art, whilst they are running away from its truths, as well as from Nature's exact and scientific methods.*<sup>14</sup>

### Smith's Beginnings

Smith was born in rural obscurity in the small town of Kemerton England. As a butcher's son, he had few if any prospects for changing his station or his profession from that of his father's. Furthermore, being one of eleven children, Smith would have no way

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<sup>11</sup> Walter Smith, *The importance of a knowledge of drawing to working men: A lecture delivered in the Mechanics' Institution, Keighley, November 24, 1859* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Company, Printers, 1860).

Walter Smith, "Self-education in art," *The Builder* (December 7 1861).

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Smiles, *Self-help: With illustrations of conduct and perseverance (with a centenary introduction by Asa Briggs)* (London: J. Murray, 1858/1958).

<sup>13</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>14</sup> Walter Smith, *Popular industrial education: The answer to a question. "The Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art, Philadelphia, Penn.: How can this institution best promote the cause of popular industrial art education?"* (Boston: Rand, Avery & Company, 1882a), 81.

to pay for a professional education. But it was in 1850 through the chance influence of an Anglican minister, Reverend Walter Blunt, that Smith's odds of achieving more than what he was born into changed. Blunt, a well-educated Cambridge scholar, saw something special in Smith though Smith was only a village boy with few prospects. It was typical during the time period for well-educated men to take on paying pupils, but Smith was from a poor family and most likely could not pay a fee for the education. Blunt, seeing something special in Smith, began to supplement Smith's local education with poetry, music, Greek, and drawing lessons. And when Blunt moved to London a year later, Smith went with him and Blunt paid for furthering his formal education.<sup>15</sup>

At the age of 15, Smith attended the Great Crystal Palace Exposition of 1851 to see the art and design skills across Europe, but with tragic results. England's artistry and the design skills of English craftsmen were found wanting especially in comparison to the French system of industrial art education.<sup>16</sup> It was a national embarrassment for England. Even at such a young age Smith felt the shame of it acutely. This was perhaps the greatest influence on Smith's lifelong struggle to promote industrial design art skills for all classes of people.

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<sup>15</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Walter Smith, *Report on the works of pupils in the French schools of design...with a comparison of the French and English systems of art education, and suggestions for the improvement and modification of the latter* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Company, 1864).

Walter Smith, *Prize report on the art educational section of the Paris exhibition of 1867 ... and suggestions for the advancement of technical instruction in England* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Company, 1869).

Smith attended Marlborough House where he advanced his education by taking classes in freehand and mechanical drawing, perspective, geometry, painting, and figure drawing. The institution also held evening classes available for him in some of those same subjects. According to Smith's grandchildren, he was trained to be a sculptor and could have been an equal to some of his friends and artists such as Holman-Hunt and John Everett Millais.<sup>17</sup> Smith also had access to show his work at the Royal Academy of Art, but he saw a greater value in studying curricula available for instructing the lower classes in better design skills. His social concerns and desire for a more equitable extension of art education ruled his professional desires. The Marlborough House included the Department of Practical Art where Smith met a like-minded and highly influential advocate of art education, Sir Henry Cole. Cole was a slick-talking bureaucrat who organized the Department of Science and Art at South Kensington as England's defining program of technical art education. Smith admired and respected his work in South Kensington.<sup>18</sup>

It was also through the influence of English churchmen such as Reverend Blunt that Smith adopted the social concerns for the lower working-class. One vicar from Leeds, Reverend Walter Farquhar Hook, was particularly influential with Smith. As Yates states, "he was a strong supporter of factory reform, profit sharing and popular

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<sup>17</sup> May S. Dean, "The story of the life of Walter Smith," May 28, 1949, Massachusetts School of Art, Boston, MA.

John Rocke, "Walter Smith – A pioneer of art education 1836-1886," *Yorkshire Illustrated* (1952).

Nora Sheath, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

education. He supported mechanics' institutes...[and] was, in fact, more in sympathy with the aspirations of the working classes than the Leeds Nonconformist, liberal establishment."<sup>19</sup> Chalmers believes that Smith's Anglican upbringing had a strong impact on the duty he saw in making art education a tool for social concerns. Smith states,

*Every man has his mission, and if I can destroy the belief that some men are created by a just God to become his interpreters of the beautiful, whilst others are destined to be born blind like kittens and puppies, and unlike those interesting quadrupeds, remain blind all their lives, and until they die, then I shall feel I have done one man's work, and die happily when my time comes.*<sup>20</sup>

Smith's consciousness of the inequality of opportunities available to the lower classes gave him a newfound zeal and an almost holy mission.

While at Marlborough House, Smith began to write about his beliefs on adult education issues in design practice and the inequalities of instruction available for adult learners of different social classes. He was only 19 when he precociously began to write to *The Builder*, a professional art education journal. His sensitivity to the social inequalities in the world of art education became more acute. Around the same time, Smith was selected from among other students to undertake a new course at the Marlborough House for art students seeking to become art masters. During Smith's training, where he received a weekly stipend for his artwork and for teaching at some local village schools, the course was moved to South Kensington. Smith points out,

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<sup>19</sup> Nigel Yates, "The religious life of Victorian Leeds," in *A history of modern Leeds*, ed. D. Fraser (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 254.

<sup>20</sup> Walter Smith, *Speech to the House and Senate of the State of Pennsylvania, February 15, 1877 on industrial art education considered economically* (Boston: Lockwood, Brooks & Company for the Pennsylvania Museum & School of Industrial Art, 1877), 18.

*I very well remember being in the court-yard of the house in which the Prince of Wales at present lives – Marlborough House – then the headquarters of the Government Department of Science and Art, in which I studied for ten years, and seeing the future South Kensington Museum drawn into the court-yard in a single wagon. That wagon-load of goods has had more influence upon the destinies of the United Kingdom than the existence of her fleet. That wagon-load of goods has grown into the present South Kensington [Victoria and Albert] Museum.*<sup>21</sup>

In 1859, Smith was appointed Assistant Master and later Headmaster of Leeds School of Art. Smith's writings to *The Builder* at this point in time centered directly on his consciousness of class divisions and social concerns:

*The avowed object of the Department is the art education of the people, the opening up of new thoughts, and the placing in the hands of the lower classes a medium of expression and a weapon for work which have hitherto not been possessed by them. The obvious reason for this is, that it must necessarily increase national prosperity, for by making us more artistic and a more intelligent people, by teaching us the relation that thoughts bear to things in cultivating the one and facilitating the production of the other, we became more independently powerful, more productive, and consequently, more wealthy.*<sup>22</sup>

It was Smith's dedication to making art education available to all adult mechanics and manual laborers through the Leeds evening classes which drove his ambitious nature.<sup>23</sup> Though adult evening classes had been held before Smith in England, the classes were few and far between and mostly only available to adult learners in the more populated cities. Smith sought to extend art education into several small towns so that the town workers and those in the larger cities would have equal access to better-paying jobs. After a few years of renowned success, many small towns such as Huddersfield, Halifax,

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<sup>21</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 19.

<sup>22</sup> Walter Smith, "What are the functions of the art-certified master?" *The Builder* 15, no. 772 (1857): 665.

<sup>23</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

and Bradford asked if he would also be the director of their school of art education. His granddaughter, Nora Sheath, states,

When my grandfather was twenty-four, he was invited to become the Principal of the Leeds Art School, and accepted the invitation. Soon he was receiving invitations from neighboring Art Schools to become their Principal too, and he jokingly said, "Then I had better do just that". So he, over the next twelve years, became responsible for the schools of Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Keighley, and, of course, Leeds. I suppose it was during those years that the compelling conviction of his life was formed, that all [individuals] of whatever class, had it in them to draw, and could be taught to do so.<sup>24</sup>

The extension of train access into these small towns allowed Smith to take on all of the art schools that asked him to help redesign their curriculums for better adult access to evening classes and a better quality of art education.<sup>25</sup> And five years after his designation as Headmaster of Leeds, Smith proudly stated,

*The Leeds school has, during the last five years of its existence . . . given instruction to 5,000 pupils of the middle classes; taught 2,500 working men in evening classes; has educated four art masters, has been referred to in evidence given before a commission of Parliament by the chief inspector of art-schools as the type of a successful school of art; is now carrying on art-work of all the great towns of the West Riding, [of Yorkshire], teaching thirty National schools, thirteen middle-class schools, five evening classes in mechanics' institutes; two branch schools of art, and its own classes in the central school.*<sup>26</sup>

One of Smith's older brothers, Daniel, who was originally an agricultural laborer, worked to become a shopkeeper in Leeds. But through the influence of Smith, he took evening mechanical classes from his younger brother at the Leeds Mechanics' Institute, received one of the first Art Master's Certificates, and later taught evening classes at the Leeds Mechanics' Institute. The Mechanics' Institute was a guaranteed passage en route

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<sup>24</sup> Nora Sheath, *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>25</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Walter Smith, "Schools of art," *The Builder* (January 21 1865): 48.

to an increase in social status for the English lower-class workers. Morris discusses the rise in the middle-class status of many Leeds-trained citizens:

Within the expectations of many craftsmen was a life-cycle mobility from apprentice to journeyman to master. The promised myth of upward social mobility which was created in the 1840s reflected aspects of the experience of the lower-middle-class and skilled working-class men who dominated the membership of the Mechanics' Institutions.<sup>27</sup>

The type of adult workers who took the evening art classes at Leeds and at its branch schools during the year of 1863 were listed as follows:

Agents and factors 1; architects and apprentices 6; blind makers 1; boiler makers 1; book sellers and print sellers 1; boot and shoe makers 2; bricklayers 1; builders and apprentices 2; cabinet makers 4; carpenters, joiners, box makers 16 carvers (stone) 2; clerks and cashiers 28; cloth sappers and pressers 1; designers and modelers 1; drapers 1; draftsmen 9; engineers (mechanical) 18; engravers and etchers 3; ferriers and veterinary surgeons 2; fishmongers 1; glass cutters, embossers and engravers 1; grocers 1; iron mongers and apprentices 1; lithographers 1; maltsters 1; manufacturers 1; masons, stone and stone cutters 5; mechanics 94; merchants and ship owners 2; messengers, office boys, porters 4; millwrights and mill-hands 6; miners 1; modelers and molders 3; painters, house 8; pattern makers 10; photographers and colorists 2; plumbers 2; shipbuilders, carpenters, and wrights 20; students 4; teachers, governesses, pupil teachers 32; terra cotta makers 1; toolmakers 1; upholsterers 4; victuallers 2; wire workers 1; wool sorters 2; no occupation 37.<sup>28</sup>

The Leeds evening school art curriculum instructed adult learners, 15 years of age and older, in elementary mechanical and architectural drawing classes consisting of learning how to draw copies of screws, wheels, mechanical parts, shading, junctures of solids and spheres, and elements of mechanical and architectural drawing; more advanced classes started out with studying the various styles of architectural design, figure drawing,

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<sup>27</sup> Robert J. Morris, *Class, sect, and party: The making of the British middle class, Leeds 1820-1850* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1990), 255.

<sup>28</sup> Minutes of evidence taken before the Select Committee on Schools of art. *Report from the Select Committee on schools of art together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, appendix and index* (London: House of Commons, 1864), Appendix 11, 309-313.

ornament design, clay 3-D concept modeling, drawing from casts and shadowing, and water color and color principles painting.<sup>29</sup> Smith's American adult evening classes and Massachusetts Normal Art School classes would ultimately be scheduled within the same progressively difficult and thorough curriculum for adult learners.<sup>30</sup>

In 1864, Smith began to realize that he could not endeavor to maintain the growth in adult art education evening schools for the lower classes if the government was against his efforts. The government, rather than originally paying the art education instructors according to their certifications, changed to paying them according to the number of their students who could pass the rigorous national testing from the Department of Science and Art. Smith states,

*Working men have not the means of studying long enough to become equal to passing severe examinations so that results may be claimed on them, nor is the kind of study they require the sort upon which payment on results can be claimed. You will see, then, that a master in my position is placed in this dilemma: he has two classes of pupils, one from the lower middle classes, and one from the working classes: if the former compete with the latter, and beat them, then no payment on results can be claimed, and the Art Master loses his income; if he refuses to allow such a competition of the two classes of pupils, the best class will leave and the mechanics and artisans of the lower classes will not obtain the same results, so that the master loses his income that way. The moment the working-man finds he is being made use of to suit the master's income, and not to be taught for the advancement of his own trade skill, he will believe himself to be sacrificed to a Government idea, and leave the school and I believe he would be perfectly justified in doing so....<sup>31</sup>*

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<sup>29</sup> School of Art, Leeds Mechanics' Institute, *Minutes of meetings of the art school committee, August 26, 1854-January 27, 1868* (Leeds: Handwritten in the collection of the West Yorkshire Archives, 1854-68), August 6, 1863.

<sup>30</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Minutes of evidence taken before the Select Committee on Schools of Art, *ibid.*, 194-195.



Also, the Leeds Art School Committee demanded that Smith spend more of his time at the central institute at Leeds rather than helping redesign the smaller town art schools and mechanics' institutes' art classes. To this, Smith was adamant that he was more necessary in the outlying areas. Smith was subsequently dismissed and moved on to create and become the Headmaster of the Institute of Art and Science in connection with the Science and Art Department of South Kensington. But Smith was not satisfied. So, in 1870, when Henry Cole, head of South Kensington, sent him notice that Boston officials were looking for an experienced art master who would be interested in developing a new system of industrial art education, Smith took it. *The Builder*, a faithful proponent of Smith's ideals, exuberantly announced Smith's journey to America:

We hear that the nomination of the Science and Art Department, Mr. Walter Smith, headmaster of the Leeds School of Art and Science, who has for twelve years been actively engaged in the promotion of art education in the county of York, has received an invitation from America to go and give practical advice in the establishment and organization of a system of art education, including schools for the training of teachers, schools of art, etc. These new agencies for technical education are to be modeled on a combination of the English and French systems, and it has been Mr. Smith's long experience in the one and intimate acquaintance with the other which have led to his selection for so important a work....Mr. Smith has started for America, and will be away a couple of months.<sup>32</sup>

However, he would be away much longer than predicted.

#### Coming to America

America before Smith was a hodgepodge of differing methods of art instruction. Smith acknowledged that there was public art education before he came, but it was an eclectic mix of fine art emphasis. Evening classes were provided to well-bred ladies who wanted to better their tastes in artwork. Also, there was no system in Massachusetts for

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<sup>32</sup> "Art education for America," *The Builder* (May 13 1871): 371.

educating art teachers for public schools. The primary means of art education transmission had been through workbooks done by William Bartholomew who would eventually be one of Smith's many enemies in creating a public system for art education in the United States. However, most of the public instruction in art did not convey art as a practical discipline; it had no useful foundation.<sup>33</sup>

From the Puritan standpoint, art was seen as the frivolous occupation of the controlling aristocratic elite from which they had fled to America. However, in the 1830s and 40s, though general studies in grammar school (the three Rs along with studies in Latin) could lead to a better social position by attending Harvard and obtaining an elite profession in law, medicine, or divinity, some of the elite Bostonians began proclaiming the need for a more practical and technical education for the lower working classes. According to Efland, Horace Mann, secretary for the Massachusetts Board of Education, was a great proponent of this practical and publicly allocated education. Mann, himself, was a member of Boston's social and intellectual elite. As Green states,

In Mann's time, Boston's upper class was made up of men of property (bankers, merchants, and shippers), the clergy, members of the bar, the magistracy, and those associated with the University. Respectability depended then on one's property, education and religion. The union of these three conferred upon her social and intellectual aristocracies a sense of social responsibility overriding immediate class interest. This is not to say that their actions on behalf of education were wholly selfless. Rather, they saw universal benefit for the commonwealth as a whole through the creation of better living conditions, in which the less fortunate classes might come to share in the privileges, comforts and advantages of civilized society.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Arthur D. Efland, "The introduction of music and drawing in the Boston schools: Two studies of educational reform," in *The history of art education: Proceedings from the Penn State Conference*, eds. B. Wilson and H. Hoffa (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1985).

<sup>34</sup> Harry C. Green, *ibid.*, 70.

By 1870, Boston had moved from an agricultural to an industrial economy based on large textile mills and other enterprises, and it was now interconnected with other cities through railroads. But industry brought squalor, greed, corruption and crime to the cities. Education was seen as the answer to all the societal evils of the Industrial era. Even some Harvard professors, once strongholds of industrialist support, began to decry the evils of the industrial-age degradation of society.<sup>35</sup>

According to Bolin,<sup>36</sup> public availability of art education became the talk of the industrialists in the late 1860s. After the 1867 Paris Art Exposition, American industrialists realized as England had done in 1851 that her artisans were dismally behind the times and visibly less skilled than the French and English designers. This realization initiated a national endeavor during the new industrial era to make art education more practical in relation to providing more technically-skilled workers for the industrialists. These industrialists hid their ulterior motive of increasing international commerce in the rhetoric of practical public education inside the moral facade of social reform for the lower classes. The industrialists, such as Edward Hale and Francis Lowell, realized that they could increase commercial craftsmanship by espousing the ideals of industriousness towards personal and societal improvement and ultimately the social mobility of the lower working classes for their benefit. Subsequently, politicians, impressed by the number of important industrialists petitioning for public industrial art education, created the Massachusetts Drawing Act of 1870 which allocated public school industrial art

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<sup>35</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Paul E. Bolin, "The influence of industrial policy on enactment of the 1870 Massachusetts Free Instruction in Drawing Act," in *The history of art education: Proceedings from the Penn State Conference*, eds. B. Wilson and H. Hoffa (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1985).

education for all social classes of children and evening industrial and mechanical drawing classes for day-laborers in cities with over 10,000 citizens. The industrialists' petition (Boston, June, 1869) stated,

To the Honorable General Court of the State of Massachusetts  
 Your petitioners respectfully represent that every branch of manufacturers in which the citizens of Massachusetts are engaged, requires in the details of the process connected with it, some knowledge of drawing and other arts of design on the part of skilled workmen engaged. At the present time no wide provision is made for instruction in drawing in the public schools. Our manufacturers therefore compete under disadvantages with the manufacturers for Europe; for in all the manufacturing countries of Europe free provision is made for instructing workmen of all classes in drawing. At this time, almost all the best draughts men in our ships are thus trained abroad. In England, within the last ten years, very large additions have been made to the provisions, which were before very generous, for free public instruction of workmen in drawing. Your petitioners are assured that boys and girls, by the time they are sixteen years of age, acquire great proficiency in mechanical drawing and in other arts of design. We are also assured that men and women who have been long engaged in the processes of manufacture, learn readily and with pleasure, enough of the arts of design to assist them materially in their work. For such reasons we ask that the Board of Education may be directed to report, in detail, to the next general court, some definite plan for introducing schools for drawing, or instruction in drawing, free to all men, women and children, in all towns of the Commonwealth of more than five thousand inhabitants.<sup>37</sup>

The rejoinder of the politicians was the 1870 Drawing Act:

Section 1. The first section of chapter thirty-eight of the General Statutes is hereby amended so as to include Drawing among the branches of learning which are by said section required to be taught in the public schools.

Section 2. Any city or town may, and every city and town having more than ten thousand inhabitants, shall annually make provision for giving free instruction in industrial or mechanical drawing to persons over fifteen years of age, either in day or evening schools, under the direction of the school committee.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Board of Education (Massachusetts), *Thirty-fourth annual report* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers, 1871), 163-164.

<sup>38</sup> Secretary of the Commonwealth, *Acts and resolves passed by the General Court of Massachusetts, in the year 1870* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers, 1870), 183-184. Approved May 16, 1870.

Charles Callahan Perkins, a passionate advocate of practical public art education, inspired the politicians and industrialists to look to England for an art educator who would fit their needs. This was the beginning of Walter Smith's career in America. According to Efland,<sup>39</sup> Perkins, head of the Committee on Drawing, was a faithful advocate of Smith's goals for building a completely comprehensive system of public art education for individuals of all ages and social classes. Smith sincerely believed the industrialists' rhetoric for a comprehensive practical public system of art education. Smith passionately embraced American rhetoric of educational emancipation in his statement:

*The tendency of modern education is to elevate the attainments of all, rather than to increase the knowledge of a few and the great example which America has gloriously offered to the world is making education as free as the light and air of heaven to every human being who is born under her flag. ...Neither ancient, medieval, nor modern times can show a greater spectacle than this, - that the deliberate wisdom of the free American people has decided, and carries out by its own free choice, the principle, that society should guard and protect the young from the neglect or poverty of parents, and insure that every possible citizen of the future shall be qualified by education to discharge his or her duty to the State....I can find no words in the English language which adequately express my admiration of this feature in American society; and, when the prejudices engendered by my own education in an ancient country sometime rise up within me, I look out mentally to the schoolhouses, and then remember the neglected children of England and some other European countries, and all my dissatisfaction vanishes. In place of it comes the sensation that people capable of performing so far-seeing and profound an act of justice to the weak and defenseless may be trusted in every social relationship; and from the flag-staff of national sentiment I haul down the union-jack, and as a teacher I run up the stars and stripes of my adopted nationality.... Patriotism is virtuous when one's country is in the right. It is mere clannishness when the country to which we owe allegiance is in the wrong; and this sentiment, "My country, right or wrong," is not the cry of the man, but the howling of the patriotic slave.<sup>40</sup>*

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<sup>39</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Walter Smith, *Drawing in graded public schools* (Boston: Osgood & Company, 1872), 4.

Smith immediately began creating the new curriculum in America with the aid of Perkins and other art educators, industrialists, and lay people who believed in and could help sponsor the cause.<sup>41</sup> By 1876, Smith had published 15 books, curriculum guides, and pamphlets and at least six articles documenting his lectures around the state (for example his exposition lectures)<sup>42</sup> that gave Industrial art education a practical and discipline-based framework to the study of art. It was to be provided from childhood to adulthood and used expansively for industry and as an interdisciplinary tool for industrial writing or industrial arithmetic. Smith emphasized that primary and secondary education (primary, grammar, high school) in the public schools should have a general focus, taught by regular school teachers, while the postsecondary education (Evening Drawing Schools and the Massachusetts Normal Art School) should be specialized and taught by art specialists.<sup>43</sup> Time frames for schooling were set up as follows: three years of primary school art education; six years of grammar school art education; three years of high school art education; one year normal art school for teachers (or more); two years of evening drawing school for designers.

Smith's approach to adult art education in the Evening Drawing School and the Normal Art School was predicated on his South Kensington conceptions of art

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<sup>41</sup> Walter Smith, *Industrial drawing in public schools* (Boston: L. Prang & Company, 1875a).

<sup>42</sup> Walter Smith, "Art education at the exposition," *New England Journal of Education* (July 10 1875b).

<sup>43</sup> Walter Smith, *Report on the present condition of drawing in the public schools of the city of Boston, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty, addressed to the school committee, April 13, 1880, by Walter Smith, director of drawing in the public schools of Boston, by the requisition of the school committee on February 10, 1880* (Boston: Rockwell & Churchill, City Printers, 1880a).

instruction. He was trained to see drawing as a language, an art, and a science. The breadth and depth of Smith's dream for public industrial art education was something that few men could have put into practice. He envisioned a curriculum format for primary and secondary education where students could use what they learned in other subject areas while adult learners could use a more specialized curriculum in their particular industrial vocation. Beginning in elementary schools, Smith determined that students should gain knowledge in: learning geometric forms and artistic dialect, practicing to draw ornament and elementary principles from pictures and blackboard representations, learning design principles by focusing on simple geometric forms, learning to use the artistic vernacular to express pictorial knowledge, freehand drawing recall, and learning the names of geometric forms.

Smith also believed that manual skills were not the ultimate educational objective of the learning process, "*so much as the thoughts they induced and the habits of accuracy, observation and self-reliance they have helped to create.*"<sup>44</sup> Smith based his art curriculum design on the South Kensington format for art education:

Ornament should arise out of and be subservient to construction; the true office of ornament is the decoration of utility; ornament therefore ought always to be secondary to utility; true ornament does not consist in the mere imitation of natural objects, but rather in the adaptation of their peculiar beauties of form or colour to decorative purposes, controlled by the nature of the material to be decorated, the laws of art, and the necessities of manufacture; ornament requires a specific adaptation to the material in which it is to be wrought, or to which it is to be applied. From this cause the ornament of one fabric or material is rarely suitable to another without proper re-adaptation.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Walter Smith, *Board of Education (Massachusetts): Thirty-ninth annual report* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers, 1876), 75-76.

<sup>45</sup> Most of these principles of art education are the ancestral link to the present-day art phrase, "form-follows-function"—the three Fs. School Committee of the city of Boston, *Annual*

While Smith was defining and instituting industrial art education in the Boston public school system, he knew he would not find any regular teachers capable of teaching the South Kensington principles the way he believed that they should be taught. Thus, it was essential to create a normal school to instruct regular school teachers in public art education. However, getting funding to create the school required much politicking and speeches to the *Bostonian* and even Massachusetts elite. Sheath states,

Eventually, on November 6<sup>th</sup> 1873, the Massachusetts Normal Art School opened in a building in Pemberton Square in Boston. Soon this house was overflowing with students; they came from other towns and States as well. Walter Smith devised four classes, A, B, C, D. Everyone had to start with A, which was a disciplined founding in drawing, the basic teaching in the whole course. The other three were taken over the next three years and covered practically everything else. Of course, at this time he was teaching students to be teachers, devising the courses, writing the books, lecturing throughout the States and as the years went by, he was instrumental in establishing evening drawing classes in 20 cities. The first two years were barely through before the School won a silver medal at the Centenary Exhibition in Philadelphia and a gold from their Mechanics Association, and by 1880 the School had outgrown its original home twice, and yet another move was contemplated.<sup>46</sup>

Chalmers emphasizes that there were nine years of compulsory education in Massachusetts.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, after the age of fourteen, individuals could get work, continue their education, or individuals could do both with the aid of the Evening Drawing Schools. Boston evening classes, Smith's parallel to the Mechanics' Institute evening classes in England, were open to all social classes. The principles of South Kensington were set as the foundation for adult art education instruction. Function and

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*report of the Standing Committee on drawing 1870-71* (Boston: Rockwell & Churchill, City Printers, 1871), 15-18.

<sup>46</sup> Nora Sheath, *ibid.*, 5.

<sup>47</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*



utility became the primary focus of the adults' belabored drawings. Dexter,<sup>48</sup> an evening school instructor, recorded the nature of the drawing schools in 1880. He reported that Boston's evening drawing schools were filled with around 600 students whose work consisted of about seven very detail-oriented drawings pertaining to their line of industrial vocation.

George Bartlett, an English educated evening school art instructor, became the head of Boston's Tennyson Street Evening Drawing Class. In 1877, he led a class of 378 students with the similar ideology and framework that Smith had led his evening drawing classes in England:

The Tennyson-street School is divided into two distinct departments, free hand and instrumental, in each of which a graded course is adopted. As the students avail themselves by the instruction given, in order to gain greater proficiency in their daily avocations, the various branches of drawing ... are made as far as possible to bear directly upon their individual requirements. After the students have acquired sufficient skill to make a good outline, they are advanced into the next grade, where they have to make light and shade drawings in the various mediums from flat examples, and during the time they are engaged in these studies their instructor gives the lessons in elementary and applied design. Having made satisfactory progress in the more elementary part of drawing, they are graded into the advanced class. Here they have to draw entirely from the round, comprising models, casts from historic ornaments, the antique, etc. In this class they are taught to develop form by means of light and shade in all the various mediums. They also have to make drawings from groups of colored objects, and by this means are taught the power of transmitting color into light and shade.<sup>49</sup>

Smith was demanding of his students' abilities because he believed in what they were capable of accomplishing. Smith reasoned that all adult learners could use what they

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<sup>48</sup> Arthur Dexter, "The fine arts in Boston," in *The memorial history of Boston, including Suffolk County, Massachusetts 1630-1880*, ed. J. Winsor (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1881).

<sup>49</sup> Report of the Committee on Drawing in Ellen Glavin, "The early art education of Maurice Prendergast," *Archives of American Art Journal* 33, no. 1 (1993): 5.

learned in the industrial drawing classes towards their professions just as he had done. This commercial and industrial foundation was used many times in Smith's writings. He believed that vocational training in adult education in art would allow workers to need less on-the-job training since they could understand concepts of adept technical skill and design implementations more quickly. Thus, as in Smith's example of the machine-shop in Worcestershire, Massachusetts, art educated workers were paid a third more than workers with no skills in industrial drawing.<sup>50</sup>

Though Smith was demanding of the evening school students, he was also relatively thoughtful and considerate of their individual learning needs. He was a contradiction to typical 19<sup>th</sup> century dictatorial pedagogues who used a regimented discipline-based format for both child and adult education. He cared about the working environment of the adults in the evening classes and believed in challenging them, but not with undue understanding of the hardships of their day-to-day life. Smith (quoted in Roderick and Stephens, 1978) states,

*He, the artisan, must be in his work shop from six in the morning to seven o'clock in the evening, As he must go home to take some refreshment after work and ...will generally put off his working dress, he cannot conveniently reach the lecture room sooner than half-past eight o'clock...No lecture can be less than an hour long so that it will be nearly ten o'clock before he can reach home; and he will then be fully prepared for rest. Thus it is evident, that supposing a workman to devote the whole of his leisure time to this object, an hour and a half in the day is the utmost he has at his disposal.<sup>51</sup>*

Smith addresses public art educators:

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<sup>50</sup> Walter Smith, *Industrial art education: A lecture delivered in Philadelphia, April 23rd, 1875 by Professor Walter Smith, state director of art education for Massachusetts* (Boston: L. Prang & Company, 1875c).

<sup>51</sup> Walter Smith in Gordon W. Roderick and Michael D. Stephens, *Education and industry in the 19th century: The English disease?* (New York: Longman, 1978), 55.

*The most absolute requirement in teaching is to have sympathy with the taught, and a desire to raise them to the same elevation of knowledge as the teacher occupies; and this must be done gently and without wrathful excitement. To triumph over and trample under foot the imperfect aspiration of the pupil, is to abandon the true character of the teacher and assume the position of a tyrant, who meets the cry for help with a battering ram, and offers the lump of stone to one who is perishing for lack of bread. In other words, seed-time and harvest are not the same, and yours is the seed-time, an exhibition of faith in the futures. The best success in education is not always attained by the strictest and severest teachers, and you may hinder people by driving ahead of them and frightening their understandings into confusion, as well as by neglecting to teach them what they ought to learn.<sup>52</sup>*

Smith was becoming more popular than ever, at least in industrialist rhetoric.

However, though industrial art education was a popular thing to espouse, the Boston elite did not consider industrial technical art education a necessary part of the upper-class education. Manual training skills, working with one's hands, in any subject area was considered a lower-class activity. The Boston "Brahmins" were highly intellectually educated and aped British aristocracy through the primacy of their fine arts support. Industrial art education was designated only for their workers. Smith was inside Boston society for 12 years, but he was never accepted into the clique of Boston's high society. The social stratifications Smith encountered on entering Boston mirrored, if not more strongly, the English social class distinctions and segregations.

Smith and his large family of twelve children lived in South Boston in an area primarily inhabited by the working classes and Irish immigrants. Though the Smiths lived in a less run down part of the neighborhood, it was not the living area for the wealthy

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<sup>52</sup> Walter Smith, *Industrial drawing in public schools: A course of three lectures addressed to the principals and teachers of the primary, grammar, and high schools of the city of Boston* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1875d), 19.

Boston elite. According to Chalmers,<sup>53</sup> Boston was itself a contradiction of beliefs, both rhetorically promoting education-based social reform and simultaneously advocating isolationism between different cultures, classes, and religious affiliations. Smith's station was designated by the fact that he was only a lowly technical instructor of art education and as an outsider in Boston, he was conscious of his lower-class status in Boston high society.

However, Chalmers points out that it is essential to understand the Boston class conflict on an educational level as well, because this would be one of the main reasons Smith fell out of favor with his elite supporters later in his career. Above all, it is important to understand that Smith came from England, a place which supported scientific and technical education, and moved to America, a place where the main type of institution supported by the wealthy was the university. According to Chalmers, Smith's background in scientific and technical education for the lower middle and lower working classes did not provide him with an understanding that the American university was a symbol of aristocracy for the aspiring middle class and upper class Bostonians.

The divergence in the nature of the university and the technical institute can be seen by comparing Boston's Harvard University and the Lowell Institute. Harvard University, a center for the philosophical and intellectual elites, was founded in 1638 and, like the English universities, did little to promote popular education (and certainly not art education) within its curriculum. Smith did not have an educational background in a philosophically-founded university education; he dealt only with discipline-based scientific instruction. The Lowell Institute was a technical institute and more familiar to

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<sup>53</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

Smith's area of experience. Lowell was founded in 1839 as an open center for lectures in science and philosophy, and it also supported industrial art instruction in the Lowell Institute Free Drawing School until the advent of the Massachusetts School of Technology in 1861.<sup>54</sup>

Smith was not aware of the two-facedness in American rhetoric for the education of all classes of people and what was actually supported – elite university education. Smith would never have been able to go to one of the few English universities; he had neither the upbringing nor the money to put him there. However, he did have Walter Blunt who provided him with a scientific and technical education with which he could take care of himself. Smith determined that if he got where he was by using what he learned to support himself, others could do it also. Yet, most American support did not follow this track of educational social reform for adult art education though they espoused that they did. Thus, Smith's adult education activities, especially his Massachusetts Normal Art School, did not receive a great deal of support from the Boston elites. So, in 1878, Smith's Board of Visitors from the Massachusetts Normal Art School sought financial support by explaining their plight to those who would listen:

The modern technical university, while it appeals to the intelligence of all practical men, makes no appeal to the faith or superstition of wealthy benefactors, as did medieval institutions, and it is of too recent origin to have enlisted the patriotic sympathy of the many who have money to devote to educational purposes. Universities and colleges for general and professional education have practically monopolized bequest and the donations and left industry unprovided for. Yet in recent times in some European countries, not only wealthy and patriotic men, but the more far seeing governments have recognized the need for practical education in art and science, and are supplying it with unsparing hands. This is the case where apprenticeships to trades are still zealously maintained.

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<sup>54</sup> The Massachusetts School of Technology is now the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

We, in this country, where they have been generally abandoned, were doing little or nothing for the production of skilled labor...the nation provides a professional education for its soldiers and sailors only, and leaves other professions to shift for themselves; and states though sometimes found to be large contributors to advanced education, prefer to leave the majority of such educational enterprises in the hands of private persons or organizations.<sup>55</sup>

Stankiewicz points out that Smith's English system of art education standardized and focused art education in America.<sup>56</sup> Yet, Smith's desire for social reform would be thwarted by the local control of politicians and a lack of federal accountability of school content. In other words, no one could back up the Law of 1870. Smith's social reform ideals were not being backed up by the industrialists and Boston elite who had espoused it at the beginning. Though Smith acknowledged their lack of help, he continued to speak out for the lower class adult worker. He tried to reach out to any wealthy Massachusetts groups interested in art education issues and sought to touch their sympathies with the lower working-classes. Smith states,

*My sympathies are very strongly with that young American mechanic who at sixteen years of age is educationally dropped into the gutter, and left to graduate in the school of the world, the flesh and the devil. We can do better for him than that and if for him, then also for society. Put into his hands a pencil and a pair of compasses, and teach him the intelligent use of both before he leaves the day school. Afterwards, utilize his spare time in the evenings, by employing the power already acquired in drawing, in the study of Art and Science applied to his own branch of industry, and we shall find that by so doing we shall not only assist him in heading off, or crowding out, some of the temptations to wrong and harm to which persons of his age are peculiarly liable, but shall also put into his hands the lever by which he can move the world.<sup>57</sup>*

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<sup>55</sup> Board of Education (Massachusetts), *Forty-first annual report* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers, 1878), 40-41.

<sup>56</sup> Mary A. Stankiewicz, "Perennial promises and pitfalls in arts education reform," *Arts Education Policy Review* 99, no. 2 (1997).

<sup>57</sup> Walter Smith, 1877, *ibid.*, 39-40.

Korzenik points out that Smith believed all individuals deserve equal access to an education and made many radical statements about the need for equal education and equal access to professional opportunities for women in art education.<sup>58</sup> This was an extremely touchy subject during Smith's time. Smith was conscious of the plight of women in the work force. His own English scientific and technical art education was segregated in art instruction according to gender. But Smith did not believe in gender inequality in technical art education. His normal school curriculum was taught to men and women alike in the same place. In defining his belief in gender equality, Smith wrote to John Eaton, United States Commissioner of Education:

*No difference is made in the studies of the 2 sexes; in this respect varying from the arrangement from the London School, which omits the scientific part of the course in the education of its lady students.... It seems to me that an infinite amount of good would be done by opening up the whole field of art instruction and art workmanship to the gentler sex. I hope there shall be absolutely no distinction made in eligibility or disqualification of sex in the students. It is only fair and honest that both should have identically the same training and the same opportunities for becoming valuable persons... and then we shall attain to one great result...we shall double the agency and area of art culture, and provide employment for a large number of excellent persons who suffer a lack of it now.*<sup>59</sup>

Smith believed that women's ignorance of practical industrial skills was keeping them destitute. Widows were typically the loser in an era geared towards industrial production. In a society which promoted proper female education in home-making and needlework, women were left with no practical occupational knowledge with which to take care of themselves. Smith tried to show that industrial art education could be a valuable

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<sup>58</sup> Diana Korzenik, "Why government cared," in *Art education here*, (Boston: Art Education Department, Massachusetts College of Art, 1987).

<sup>59</sup> Walter Smith, *Art education: Scholastic and industrial* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1873), 29.

knowledge for women to be able to provide for themselves either as art education instructors or through commercial avenues, pointedly asserting that women's design skills in needlework could be an asset for the textile industry.

Though Smith was successful in creating a normal art school for adult educators and maintaining a formal curriculum for the working class laborers in the evening drawing schools (and creating a complete framework for educating both child and adult through writing workbooks, curriculum guides, and traveling around to different states to stir up support for his efforts), he was not satisfied. He believed that adult laborers should have the benefit of an industrial art education in the smaller cities as well. Just as at Leeds, he felt the need to reach out to the smaller communities which had no way of providing a technical adult education to its laborers so that they could compete with more knowledgeable workers in the larger cities. Thus, when Smith had met the needs of all the cities with at least 10,000 individuals required in the law of 1870 by providing access to evening drawing schools, he began a petition to the government for adult art education in the smaller cities having at least 5,000 inhabitants. In 1874, Smith voiced the need for an amendment to the 1870 Massachusetts law. He wrote, "*It would materially help forward the cause of industrial drawing, if all towns having a population of more than five thousand were required to establish free evening drawing-classes.*"<sup>60</sup> He continued,

*I would...state the statute of 1870 be amended to include all towns of 5,000 inhabitants and upwards, instead of those only which have 10,000 and upwards.... Experience has demonstrated that there is as much need of industrial art education in the smaller...centers of population, and in Europe it is not unusual to find the most successful classes in quite small towns. Another argument...is, that the young and enterprising mechanics of a village generally*

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<sup>60</sup> Board of Education (Massachusetts), *Thirty-seventh annual report* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers, 1874), 62.



*migrate to the towns and cities, where, if ignorant of the scientific or artistic of their business, they have to compete on unequal terms with those in the larger towns who have had opportunities for instruction. Their labor is of less value to employers, because less productive and of a ruder quality, and they must content themselves, therefore, with lower wages, a penalty to be paid as the price of being educated in a town with less than 10,000 inhabitants, in which no means of industrial education were provided and the value of skilled labor was ignored.*<sup>61</sup>

Bolin also gives reference to a compatriot of Smith who simultaneously worked towards the amendment of the law.<sup>62</sup> The Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, Joseph White, was a contributing member of the ratification of the Drawing Act of 1870, though he had some qualms with it when it was passed. He pointed out that the act would eventually be amended whether by himself or others to ensure a more comprehensive state involvement. White, like Smith, was discontent with the law's mandate of industrial drawing only in cities and towns with populations greater than 10,000, rather than the 5,000 population figure originally proposed. Smith and White desired to make the act applicable to more people by reaching out to some of the smaller cities which would subsequently double the number of towns involved in opening up evening drawing industrial art schools to lower-class workers. Smith and White worked together professionally when they both taught evening classes and gave lectures to local teachers in some of the smaller towns. Perhaps this was where Smith began to influence White to file a petition in 1875 for the amendment of the Drawing Act for the benefit of more adult learners. The House Committee on Education met over several weeks to debate White's

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<sup>61</sup> Board of Education (Massachusetts), *Thirty-eighth annual report* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers, 1875), 39-40.

<sup>62</sup> Paul E. Bolin, "Overlooked and obscured through history: The legislative bill proposed to amend the Massachusetts Drawing Act of 1870," *Studies in Art Education: A Journal of Issues and Research* 37, no. 1 (1995).

proposal of amendment.<sup>63</sup> However, because the legislators did not act on the amendment, it never passed and subsequently died on the Senate floor.

Smith was spreading himself too thin in order to make art education equally accessible to all people, and Boston officials began to complain that he was not doing the job that he had been paid to do in the public schools; this was the same problem Smith encountered at Leeds. Smith had to remind Boston officials that his job in installing an industrial art education framework into public schools was not his only job. He was also responsible two days a week for his normal art school and, primarily, for the development of evening drawing schools in cities with 10,000 people. He used his weekends where they were needed most – either for the benefit of the Boston public school system, in evening drawing schools, or in Massachusetts institutions of adult industrial art education.<sup>64</sup>

Smith was highly criticized for his breadth of control in art education and for his formidable personality. These two features along with the political pandering surrounding the issue of public art education would be part of the spark for Smith's dismissal.<sup>65</sup> Smith felt the increasing tide of ill will against his ambitions. In defense of his record of work, Smith outlined his responsibilities, but to no avail with the growing mob of dislike

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<sup>63</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Documents printed by order of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, during the session of the General Court, 1875* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers, 1875), no. 156, 2.

<sup>64</sup> Isaac E. Clarke, *Art and industry. (Drawing in the public schools. U.S. Senate Report, 46th, Congress, 2nd session, Vol. 1)* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885).

<sup>65</sup> Mary A. Stankiewicz, 1997, *ibid.*

surrounding him. Smith, claiming that his work was essentially “*devisory, advisory, and supervisory*,”<sup>66</sup> sought to address the attacks on his record of work:

*I was informed that how, when, or where this work had to be done must rest entirely with me, and that this freedom of action entailed complete responsibility to the School Committee and the public for the success or failure of the work. This alone was plain....I was informed that, whilst no one should interfere with my work, I should be held strictly accountable for its success or failure, for that was the only true test the committee could apply to it....This charge I undertook on those conditions, involving confidence and trust on the part of the committee, and responsibility on mine....The contract was never written, the duties never defined, and the engagement never limited in time. The committee knew what they wanted to have done; I knew how to do it; they asked me to do it, and I accepted.... Perhaps no stranger ever displayed as much confidence in strangers as I did by undertaking this work, nor relinquished more on faith of verbal promises....This city has changed not only its belief in the practicability of teaching Drawing, but its opinion also as to the value of Drawing when acquired by all people. One of my duties has been to justify this change, and hasten it, for by that alone was it possible for me ever to reach the development of plans and methods of work which made heavy drafts on the faith of many. Then I have had to create my implements of work as we went on....There were no geometric solids, for teaching Drawing from the object, manufactured in this country. So I had to make designs and arrange, in the ordinary way of business, that they should be worked out here. The Worcester Technical School undertook to manufacture them, and they were therefore available to us, made at home, and better than we could import and cheaper. Then, when I wanted to have Perspective and Drawing which was scientific and instrumental taught in the schools, the great cost of implements, boards, scales, squares, and other things, made the outfit too expensive for the schools. So I went to work and invented a paper instrument, which combined in one all the costly apparatus, and cost ten or fifteen cents to buy, as a substitute for tools which cost several dollars to provide them as an outfit for each pupil. Again, there were no text-books which enabled pupils to study the principles of, and the exercises in, industrial Drawing. Then I had to undertake to produce them, and through the channels of trade made them available to our schools without risk or outlay on the part of the city, more than for ordinary stationery. I have done that work, also, and am now completing it for the higher grades of High Schools, evening classes, and Normal School.<sup>67</sup>*

Smith furthers his defense,

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<sup>66</sup> Walter Smith, 1880a, *ibid.*, 53.

<sup>67</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 53-56.

*As a rule I have always devoted the first three week days to the city, and the fourth and fifth to the State, and shared the sixth for general work between the two.... The duties of the Director of Drawing have been to create a plan of instruction in Drawing, and to organize the means by which it could be introduced and carried on. This has involved entire responsibility to the Drawing Committee, to whom all plans of instruction, arrangement of normal and other classes, results of examinations, and other details of work and administration are submitted and explained before being adopted and authorized by them. The following have been among [the Director of Industrial Art Education's] duties: Teaching - Normal instruction to both the special teachers and the regular teachers of all the grades of the schools. This was begun in 1871, and has continued up to this day. In recent years, since the number of special teachers has been reduced, he has also taught in the Normal School, and does so now: Supervision - The personal supervision of the High Schools and Evening Schools, and such other schools or classes as appear to need his service, or he requires further information about than that which comes from general direction and examinations; Examinations - Preparing all plans of work, all papers or circulars to teachers, all examination exercises for every grade and every class in day and evening schools, the normal classes for teachers and the candidates for teacherships from outside, examining, marking, classifying, recording, and reporting on all the exercises worked at examinations, and designating the subjects for which certificates are issued, or teachers; diplomas are to be awarded by the committee; Administration - Advising with the Drawing Committee on technical subjects, such as changes of teachers; development of the subject; fitting class-rooms for drawing; selecting examples and illustrations for teaching; organizing for and arranging exhibitions of pupils' works, which for six years were annual, now only triennial, examining and reporting to the Drawing Committee the works so displayed giving, when occasions need it, general lectures to the day-school teachers, of all grades; referee, professionally, to the Drawing Committee, on all technical matters, appertaining to practical teaching and Drawing. Incidentally the designing of examples for instruction for the Primary and Grammar Schools, without which the plan of instruction could not have been carried out... has been done. The High and evening School examples have been nearly completed, and are now being given in the High-School normal class, though not yet published, and will so be available for the other grades more advanced or higher.<sup>68</sup>*

However, this massive list of responsibilities and accomplishments from Smith would not prevent his dismissal.

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<sup>68</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 59-61.

## Falling out of Favor

According to several authors, there were differing events during Smith's career in America which foreshadowed his dismissal. In order to understand why Smith was dismissed, one must try to see all of the people and circumstances surrounding Smith's time in America. The theories of Frances Belshe,<sup>69</sup> Arthur Efland,<sup>70</sup> Harry Green,<sup>71</sup> James Parton Haney,<sup>72</sup> Diana Korzenik,<sup>73</sup> Gordon Plummer,<sup>74</sup> and Foster Wygant<sup>75</sup> help explain history.

Belshe theorized that a throng of Massachusetts specialists (artists) were dissatisfied with Smith's agenda of using only general educators to teach art in public schools.<sup>76</sup> Smith disapproved of using specialized art teachers in public classes because their entrance into the room would make students feel that their own regular teachers were somehow less important and that the subject of art was extraneous to daily life. So,

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<sup>69</sup> Francis B. Belshe, "A history of art education in the public schools of the United States" (PhD diss., Yale University, New Haven, CT), 1946.

<sup>70</sup> Arthur D. Efland, 1985, *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Harry C. Green, "The introduction of art as a general subject in American schools" (PhD diss., Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA), 1948.

<sup>72</sup> James P. Haney, *Art education in the public schools of the United States: A symposium prepared under the auspices of the American Committee of the Third International Congress for the development of drawing and art teaching, London 1908* (New York: American Art Annual, 1908).

<sup>73</sup> Diana Korzenik, 1987, *ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Gordon Plummer, "Collage: People, places, and problems in our historic continuum," in *The history of art education: Proceedings from the Penn State Conference*, eds. B. Wilson and H. Hoffa (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1985).

<sup>75</sup> Foster Wygant, *Art in American schools in the nineteenth century* (Cincinnati, OH: Interwood Press, 1983).

<sup>76</sup> Francis B. Belshe, *ibid.*

these specialists, who were now only allowed into the few teaching positions at the normal art school or the evening drawing schools, lobbied powerful political figures in order to have Smith thrown out.

According to Efland,<sup>77</sup> Smith's dismissal was related to the change in educational ideologies. At the beginning of the industrial period, Boston elites promoted the use of education as a way of socially reforming the lower classes through providing them with a practical vocationally-useful education; though what they actually wanted was social control over the lower classes. However, towards the late 1870s, the ideology changed. The Boston middle classes began to desire social mobility to the heights of the elite in the same arenas of interest and along the same paths – a university education meant elite status. Simultaneously, the Panic of 1873 pushed many to question the costs of public art education and whether it was a worthwhile discipline. They also began pushing for less bureaucratic curriculum rigidity and school system inflexibility. One of these reformers, Charles Francis Adams, son of John Quincy Adams, and Samuel Eliot, took up the mantle to fight the bureaucratization of industrial drawing and subsequent creation of industrial art automatons. Efland points out,

A schism developed within Boston's elite classes concerning their basic view of general education and its overall function in society. I support this contention by comparing the views of Samuel Eliot and Charles Callahan Perkins.... [whose] views focused on the deepening social conflict over the great dividing issue of whether schools should educate individuals for social mobility, or equip them merely to meet the needs within their present social class.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Arthur D. Efland, 1985, *ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Arthur D. Efland, 1985, *ibid.*, 120.

It was the age old argument: drawing should be a tool for self-expression towards social mobility versus Smith's belief that drawing should be a skill for vocational use and interdisciplinary learning for all individuals no matter what social class. According to Stankiewicz, Amburgy and Bolin,<sup>79</sup> art educators during this period disliked the association of a vocational focus to art within the context of manual labor. Thus, the division in art practice was framed around the elite disapproval of manual labor. Any form of manual labor stank of lower class status and deprived the middle classes of their focus on the three Rs and Latin required for most individuals to be able to go to the university. Though the lower classes would never be able to reach the "height" of an elite university education, the middle classes wanted the chance to fit into Boston's upper class society. Thus, education was seen as a way of equalizing opportunities to gain a university education and work up the social ladder. Smith's focus in education had been on providing individuals with skills with which they could do a job to support themselves, but it changed in the new ideology to a focus on achieving elite status with no need for skill attainment. Efland points out that there was an ideological change from a utilitarian to an idealistic focus in education. However, neither Smith's practical education agenda nor the agenda for social mobility could provide enough impetus for art education to be maintained as an endeavor in public education.

Efland also points to the bureaucratization of the school system – from lay members not well educated in art to a hierarchy of professionals specialized in art with

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<sup>79</sup> Mary A. Stankiewicz, Patricia M. Amburgy, and Paul E. Bolin, "Questioning the past: Contexts, functions, and stakeholders in 19th-century art education," in *Handbook of research and policy in art education*, eds. E. W. Eisner and M. D. Day (London: Taylor & Francis, Inc, 2004).

Smith at the controls. Also, there were conflicts of beliefs of social class mobility within the technical versus general education of the public schools. Katz states,

The withdrawal of lay zeal had left school systems open to capture by professionals, who, quickly seeing the advantages of bureaucracy, had acted with dispatch to build large hierarchical, differentiated, uniform and rigid organizations which, in the 1870s, a new generation of lay reformers discovered with horror.<sup>80</sup>

Specialized teachers found themselves ousted as sources of art experience so that Smith's system would be correctly taught. Greedy publishers pushed Smith's system on ignorant school boards as the new invention of Walter Smith; Smith denied having invented it as the one best system.

According to Chalmers, Smith was not trying to get rid of art specialists. He merely thought that art should be taught as a tool rather than a fine arts focus on exceptional genius for only a few people. But the persecution from teachers was especially disheartening. Chalmers states,

Although Smith actually saw a role for specialists who would teach advanced industrial drawing, design, and historical ornament, opponents saw these claims for what it seemed – personification of Walter Smith's personal power through the elimination of other experts who did not agree with his system. In addition to angering the specialists, these moves made him even more unpopular with a significant and vocal group of teachers. By disallowing popular and elective studies, he also demanded greater adherence to his system from the Massachusetts Free Evening Drawing schools. He was unpopular on many fronts. Walter knew that he had critics, but using a metaphor from his rural childhood he urged the importance of "plowing ahead." His major supporters were his own students at the Normal Art School....<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Michael B. Katz, "The emergence of bureaucracy in urban education: The Boston case, 1850-1884 (Part one)," *History of Education Quarterly* 8 (1968): 171.

<sup>81</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*, 120.



One of Green's dissertation theories defined Smith's dismissal as a result of political demagoguery.<sup>82</sup> A politician who sought the governorship of Massachusetts saw industrial drawing as an extraneous expense of the educational system which increased public taxes; he ran his campaign on this issue basing it on the fact that art could not be justified as a utilitarian subject and that no one likes to pay taxes for an unnecessary school subject. The financial panic of 1873 aided this line of offense. Industrial art became an easy target in the malaise. Green points out that Smith's notion of practical art education was exactly like what the Puritans believed art should be. However, the practical focus Smith placed on art never reached the eyes or ears of the masses of Bostonians and thus, art was seen as a frivolous pursuit on which to spend public taxes. Drawing was an easy target and one on which the politician could harp and quickly get the voting public's attention. If the politician puffed up the small issue enough, the public would believe that it was an essential issue and forget other important issues in the campaign.

Haney tied Smith's dismissal to jealous publishers who saw Smith receiving lots of royalties from his workbooks, books, curriculum guides, and drawing cards.<sup>83</sup> One such publisher, Louis Prang, made a great deal of money from Smith's publications and Smith eventually called his hand on it. However, other publishers became agitated at the monopoly Smith held on his material and sought to accuse him of cheating them. This public confrontation was carried out in the newspapers. Although some publishers called Smith a greedy cheat, it could have simply been their avarice and the fact that the public

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<sup>82</sup> Harry C. Green, 1948, *ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> James P. Haney, *ibid.*

did not like their educators to be tied to anything corrupt. Also, Smith's proud nature and inability to tolerate injustice made him a pill for politicians who did not like dealing with unpopular and unmanageable appointees.

Korzenik describes Smith's strong personality as the catalyst for his dismissal. Smith's proud and intolerant nature made it hard for others to control him.<sup>84</sup> He had spent his life being educated in art education which he felt sure would be the right system to use in redefining art in America. However, what he was overtly saying was that America did not have any artistic skill. And, Korzenik points out that the public was tired of hearing this line of derogation. However, as a starting impetus, America was moved to action when Smith told them that they were not up to England's standards (whom they were desperately trying to become equals with). However, this line of reverse psychology began to backfire on Smith. No one was sorry to see a man go who criticized American art and some newspapers began to blame Smith's arrogance and Englishness.

Chalmers defines Smith's "Englishness" as his Achilles' heel.<sup>85</sup> Coming from a society with set standards and values, Smith was rooted in his development as a child who learned to be obedient and grew to an adult whose education increased his social status and position as a Captain of the Yorkshire Yeomanry, a reserve officer to keep the peace, who was used to being obeyed. Even his proponent, Isaac Edwards Clarke stated,

He embodied all the characteristics of the English type, and in this fact there was abundant opportunity for friction ...with Americans. Fully conscious that he was master of his subject in all its relations, as he unquestionably was, and knowing

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<sup>84</sup> Diana Korzenik, 1987, *ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *ibid.*

that there was no one else in the United States who could justly claim any such fullness of knowledge, he was intolerant of its assumption...<sup>86</sup>

However, by the late 1870s, Smith began to recognize the rift between English and American ideals. Many critics lashed out against him claiming that he wanted to put their children onto an educational track of industrial labor. Smith disagreed claiming that his intentions were to make art available as a tool for all social classes, not to be used to segregate society. In a self-protective speech to legislators, Smith stated,

*Some of you may think that I have not done justice to American Industrial Art, while I have overestimated that of the country in which I was born, England, I would answer that, just now, I am in a better position to take a perfectly impartial and disinterested view of this subject than I ever was before, or ever hope to be again; or than any man who is either an American nor an Englishman ... at the present time I am ... a man without a country, having ceased to be a subject of Her Majesty Queen Victoria – God bless her! – whilst I am not yet permitted to become a citizen of the United States... Though I may not vote, I am permitted to speak, and being a man without a country, ought to be able to speak without unduly waving either the Stars and Stripes or the Union Jack [both flags were included in his primary drawing manual]<sup>87</sup> And I pledge you my honor, I have tried to forget both and yet be faithful to both. I am also the father of American children as well as English children, and ought to be permitted to say something about how my share of the taxes should be expended in their education.<sup>88</sup>*

But in the same speech he stated:

*I wish to speak now of the possibility of bringing this country forward to the same level of success in Industrial art as that obtained in other countries, such as England, France, and Germany. ... We have stood still long enough, hiding our talents in a napkin, and being deceived with the story that success in Art was not our inheritance. ... To stand still at the present day, means going behind, for other*

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<sup>86</sup> Isaac E. Clarke, *Art and industry. (Part 2, Industrial and manual training in public schools, U. S. Senate Report, 46th Congress 2nd session, vol. 7)* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), XLIV.

<sup>87</sup> Walter Smith, *Teachers' manual for freehand drawing in primary schools* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1875e), 99, 102.

<sup>88</sup> Walter Smith, 1877, *ibid.*, 41.

*people are progressing; and if we stand still amidst universal progress, we must inevitably drift to the rear. Stagnation, in this progressive age, is retrogression.*<sup>89</sup>

The *Boston Evening Transcript*, an antagonist of Smith's system of education wrote an article about the debate entitled, "An Un-American System":

The advantages an imported director of education enjoys over native educationists is that he can view the factors of a given problem without any of the peculiar susceptibilities of a born American. His vision is constitutionally free from the sentimentality which bother American educators, that all men are born free and equal, and that every child in Massachusetts has a chance to be whatever any other child may be. Your English educator more conveniently classifies the children in the public schools at once into those who are intended for employment in the constructive industries. Having assured the existence of these classes, the rest of his convictions follow easily. The truth is, however, entirely unlike what an Englishman (who remains an Englishman much longer than Frenchman remains a Frenchman or a German a German in America) would suppose. We have no class "intended for employment in the constructive industries." Every mother's son of our Yankee schoolboys is intended for the United States Senate. If not, which one is not? Would anybody dare to go into the public schools of Quincy and pick out and set aside those boys who are "going to college." And those who are intended for Mr. Walter Smith's artisan class? What would be the principle of selection, the boy's looks or the wealth of the boy's parents? ...This is confused and confusing, we admit; persons and things are better classified in England.<sup>90</sup>

Plummer points to another facet of Smith's dismissal in the persona of a Reverend Alonzo Miner.<sup>91</sup> A powerful religious man, Miner persuaded the Massachusetts Normal Art School to move into one of the buildings that his church owned. Reverend Miner, a member of the governmental board overseeing Boston's system of education, wanted rent for the building which Smith was not willing to give. Smith told him that the building was not big enough, nor did it have the right facilities for the school. Also, Smith found that Miner's building was a hang-out for prostitutes and Smith's pupils kept being

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<sup>89</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 16.

<sup>90</sup> "An un-American system," *Boston Evening Transcript*, February 24, 1881, 4.

<sup>91</sup> Gordon Plummer, *ibid.*

mistaken for its inhabitants. When Smith told him of the predicament, Miner refused to believe the allegation. This conflict of interest led to a bitter and public battle between the two stubborn men.

Miner was a Unitarian and, thus, according to Plummer, part of the upper-class Boston elite. So, when Smith refused to do what Miner wanted, an aggressive and public dispute ensued led by Miner and others who were gathering together to kick Smith out. Sheath states,

During the last two years he spent in Boston, some of the members of the Board, who employed him on a yearly basis, made unjustifiable attacks on him, in particular the aforementioned Dr. Miner. But the students of the School presented him with a gold watch as a token of their regard, inscribed and dated June 24<sup>th</sup> 1880, together with an address of confidence.<sup>92</sup>

Wygant discovered other sources for Smith's dismissal.<sup>93</sup> One was Samuel Elliot, Boston Superintendent of Education following the removal of Smith's advocate John Philbrick, who decried the lack of freedom of imagination in Smith's system of art education. Another reason Smith was attacked was because of his disassociation with the idea of beauty. In essence, Smith was made the scapegoat for everything in order to get him out of office, no matter if the accusations were true or not.

Peter Smith corroborates Efland and Korzenik's perspectives on Walter Smith's dismissal.<sup>94</sup> However, Smith also believes that the whole system for Walter Smith's industrial art education was an impossible and costly feat. It was unfeasible to design the

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<sup>92</sup> Nora Sheath, *ibid.*, 8.

<sup>93</sup> Foster Wygant, *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Peter J. Smith, *The history of American art education: Learning about art in American schools* (London: Greenwood Press, 1996).

public system of education around a narrowly focused goal to produce designers for a single industry in a multi-focal industrial Boston society. Also, the push to make general teachers competent instructors of art was improbable considering the difficulties of teaching the subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic in large classes of students. To force teachers to begin to use challenging visual concepts in a non-literary and non-arithmetic manner with students was too much to ask of the frustrated primary and secondary teachers who saw little use for art education. Peter Smith states,

When industrialization developed to the point of shaping American life, then home or apprentices training in making of functional and decorative objects became impractical. A single item's manufacture would be broken down into discrete steps, each the work of a person unaware of how to do the other steps. The worker became an anonymous, easily replaced cog in the system of manufacturing. At the same time, Western fine art had exalted the individualistic artist, the person whose work was so unique and marked by "personality" [genius] that only he or she could produce all its parts and shape it from start to finish. This autonomous individualism was the ideal in every field in society for those who aspired to have a full life above the ceaseless toil of the lowest depths of society, and the survival of the fittest economic mutations of Darwinism reinforced its seeming validity. Romanticism's heroic artist experiencing life's extremes became a model for the autonomous individual. Smith's insistence on drawing for preparation for work in industry touched a nerve in American beliefs. Smith's ideas denied social mobility in Americans...[who] wanted to see all individuals capable of heroic achievement. Smith seemed to believe in each individual having a predestined place in the social order. His supporters may very well have simultaneously combined belief in fixed roles for working classes and in social mobility for those who could acquire money without consciously realizing the contradictions of their beliefs. Thus, the Smith-Industrial Drawing system was out of step with American educational rhetoric and the American art scene. It seemed to fall somewhere between art (the autonomous individual) and worker training (the individual as autonomous cog). In one sense it fitted 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial reality. In another sense, it violated American myths about life, individualism, and art.<sup>95</sup>

This dualism between American individualism and conformity would reverberate through art education's history.

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<sup>95</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*, 35-36.

## End of a Movement

Early on, Walter Smith foretold the reason for his dismissal in America:

*You know that it is as dangerous to be a few years ahead of the times as it is ridiculous to be a few years behind them – the first laying you open to the charge of being a fanatic, and the second of being a fool; whilst those who neither hold onto their convictions after others have deserted them, nor by their own researches make discoveries of what will come in the future, modestly assume the characters of infallible judges, laugh at the past, doubt the present, are skeptical of the future, and only profoundly happy in contemplation of their own wisdom. But the class who thus act are numerous, and no more to be ignored than the grasshoppers in Nebraska or the law of gravitation. Whilst, however, society remains much the same in all ages in its verdict upon those who disturb its peace, it has learnt to listen to, instead of imprison and persecute its disturbers of the present. Had Morse and Stephenson been contemporaries with Galileo, they would inevitably have shared the prison with him; living in the light of today, they are listened to, and finally enshrined in the public heart.... We who have traveled at the rate of sixty miles an hour have learnt to be cautious how we laugh at projects we don't comprehend, and it has taught us to give a fair hearing, and in most cases a fair trial, to proposals which promise benefit to society.<sup>96</sup>*

What he stated would be a self-fulfilling prophecy. He was the revolutionary he mentioned in the statement. This, however, would lead to his downfall in American high society.

By the late 1870s, Smith began to see the writing on the wall. He knew that he would never be able to create a national art institution in America as in England because of the increase in antagonistic and dissenting voices. Instead of getting angry, he sought out Canada as a likely place to continue his work. Smith's efforts in Canada, a much more conducive place for English industrial art ideals in 1882, prospered so much that Smith's texts had been published as the art education manuals for Canada normal and

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<sup>96</sup> Walter Smith, 1875d, *ibid.*, 40-41.

public schools up until the early 1900s.<sup>97</sup> However, Smith discovered that he would never be able to fully institute his system of art education anywhere. So, he returned home to England in 1883 and was appointed to the position of Director of the Art Department at Bradford Technical College. Though England hailed him a hero, Smith was devastated with the loss of his dream and the attack on his proud indefatigable nature.

Smith's rise in social class and his position in America were all dependent on the powerful and wealthy classes. He relied on the fickleness of wealthy patronage which when eliminated, left him a pitifully broken man. Smith, aware of his origins and disillusioned with the capriciousness of the elite, arranged for his body to be buried in a small nameless cemetery next to his father and mother and those who loved him as a boy, not with the elite in Bradford's Undercliffe Cemetery. Smith died on September 14<sup>th</sup> 1886, sixteen years after he sailed to America. According to Chalmers, some of Smith's descendents have feigned that Smith died of tetanus while pruning his roses. However, Smith's death certificate states that he died from cirrhosis of the liver, a common disease of alcoholics.<sup>98</sup>

Clarke states,

With characteristic enthusiasm he gave his whole heart to the work; he accepted America as his home and the home of his children. Realizing the magnitude of the task before him and the glory of success in its accomplishment, he gave to it all the wealth of his richly endowed nature; and the results effected by this one man's work and influence were marvelous. The various official reports of that time . . .

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<sup>97</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, "South Kensington and the Colonies II: The influence of Walter Smith in Canada," in *The history of art education: Proceedings from the Penn State Conference*, eds. B. Wilson and H. Hoffa (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1985).

<sup>98</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, 2000, *ibid.*



give ample evidence of the profound impression made by this man upon educators and legislators.<sup>99</sup>

Smith never heard these praises, but they were what he lived and died for. Though persecuted for his beliefs, Smith upheld those for whom he was fighting. In a letter on the inside cover of a lecture he gave to the Massachusetts Teachers Association in 1878, Smith wrote a poem entitled “Laborers in the vineyard:”

*Two men I honor, and no third. First, the toil worn Craftsman that, with earth-made Implement, laboriously conquers the Earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard Hand; crooked, coarse; wherein notwithstanding lies a cunning virtue, indefeasible royal, as the scepter of this Planet. Venerable too is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled, with its rude intelligence; for it is the face of Man living man-like. Oh, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly-entreated Brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed; thou wert our Conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. For in thee, too, lay a God-created Form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of Labour; and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on; thou art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.*

*A second man I honor, and still more highly; Him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the bread of Life. Is not he, too in his duty; endeavoring towards inward Harmony; revealing this, by act or by word, through all his outward endeavors, be they high or low! Highest of all, when his outward and his inward endeavor are one; when we can call him Artist; not earthly Craftsman only, but inspired Thinker, who with heaven-made Implement conquers Heaven for us! If the poor and humble toil that we have Food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he may have Light, have Guidance, Freedom, Immortality? These two, in all their degrees, I honor; all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.<sup>100</sup>*

Smith had lost the dream with which he came to America. His belief in the American rhetoric of justice in education for all had died. Smith would later realize that his passion

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<sup>99</sup> Isaac E. Clarke, *ibid.*, XLV.

<sup>100</sup> Walter Smith, *Industrial education and drawing as its basis. Address delivered at the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Teachers' Association* (Boston: Normal Art School, 1878b).

was not corroborated by the Boston elites. But remembering some of Smith's more eager appeals to American justice, reveals him as an innocent cog in a political agenda for lower class social control. His passion for social reform drove his art education agenda:

*The foundation stone of American liberty says that all men are born free and equal, as teachers, it is our business to see that this means freedom from ignorance, and equality with the best. As the greatest living writer on art has expressed it, we may abandon the hope or if you like the words better, we may disdain the temptation of the pomp and grace of Italy in her youth. For us there can be no more the throne of marble, for us no more the vault of gold; but for us there is the loftier and lovelier privilege of bringing the power and charm of art within the reach of the humble and the poor; and, as the magnificence of past ages failed by its narrowness and its pride, ours may prevail and continue by its universality and its lowliness. . . . The paintings of Raphael and Buonarotti gave force to the falsehoods of superstition and majesty to the imagination of sin; but our art may have for its task to inform the soul with truth, and touch the heart with compassion.... The steel of Toledo and the silk of Genoa did but give strength to oppression. And luster to pride. Let it be for our furnaces and our looms, as they have already richly earned, still more abundantly to bestow comfort on the indigent, civilization on the rude, and to dispense through the peaceful homes of nations the grace and the preciousness of simple adornment and useful possession.<sup>101</sup>*

### Smith's Influence

George Bartlett, an adult art educator after Smith who taught at Boston's Warren Avenue Evening Drawing School, was Principal of South Boston's "Working class-School of Art," and was Principal of the Massachusetts Normal Art School, stated,

"Passé, not up to the times," are remarks which are often made by persons in criticizing many excellent methods in our art schools; but criticisms of this nature generally emanate from those who have little or no knowledge of the fundamental principles which should govern the various branches of the so-called art education in our public schools and art institutions. They would have us believe that the adoption of every new fad into the curriculum of art education is a sure sign of progress; whereas it should be regarded rather as an expression of restlessness, lack of stability or purpose, or a futile attempt to make eternal principles conform

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<sup>101</sup> Walter Smith, 1872, *ibid.*, 13-14.

to the whims and fashions of our day.<sup>102</sup> Bartlett, a proponent of Smith's art endeavors, predicted the contemporary situation of art education. The current framework for art education in higher institutions tends to retain the unstructured nature of art education before Walter Smith; university provided art education for adult learners is unable to define whether to emphasize high art or art for technical literacy and thus, whether it should be personally (maintaining personal liberation through social change) or professionally (endorsing traditional understanding of the history and norms of art education within society) focused.

The industrial art period of Walter Smith was a moment of social and political awareness in America that artistic class distinction could be eliminated through the advancement of worker skills. However, Walter Smith's strictly pedagogical stance on craftsmanship ultimately did not promote personal expression and critical consciousness. However, art can simultaneously enable personal and social consciousness and explore different historical artistic techniques without being divided against itself. Smith's influence is still felt today in public school art education and in art institutes such as the Rhode Island School of Design and the Massachusetts College of Art and Design (which now offers a Bachelor Degree in Fine Arts, a Master of Science in Art Education, a Master of Fine Arts, and a Master of Architecture). There are also Brazilian parallels of Smith's art education influence.

Smith desired a social reform foundation for adult art education in America. Much of the information about the relationship between Walter Smith, the Freirean critical social theory,<sup>103</sup> and art education was interwoven in the works of the

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<sup>102</sup> George H. Bartlett, *Pen and ink drawing* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1903), 219.

<sup>103</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, rev. ed. (New York: Continuum, 1970/1995).

Brazilian author, Ana M. Barbosa. Barbosa, seeking to point out how Walter Smith, Paulo Freire's adult education theory of social transformation, and art have influenced her country, states that the simultaneous rejection of slavery in the United States and Brazil during the mid-to-late 1800s led abolitionists in Brazil to make "frequent statements about the necessity to extend education to the people and slaves";<sup>104</sup> thus, they looked to American adult educational leaders like Walter Smith to help in the socio-economic emancipation process for the betterment of the people and the country.

In reference to the social upheaval in America, Smith states:

*What would it have been worth to that gray-haired man if it [art education] had been given to him forty years ago? I see in the class-rooms of the various cities, where drawing is being taught, more old men who have felt the lack of some technical instruction than of young men who have not yet discovered its value. Ancient mechanics, whose hands are stiffening with decay, and whose vision is getting dimmed by age, requiring to be assisted by little lamps on each desk in addition to the gaslight, are very frequent among the students: that tells a tale to those who are able to see and understand its meaning. In one room, where I saw an actual preponderance of old men, who were studying the same subject from the same book which I have taught to children of eight years old and upwards, a manufacturer made the statement that their designs cost them forty thousand dollars a year, every dollar of which went to England, France, and Germany. If a school of art had been in operation in that city for ten years, the designs would have cost that manufacturer perhaps five thousand dollars; and the dollars would have been kept within a mile of the mill, a clear gain of forty thousand dollars a year to the country in one city alone. That forty thousand dollars a year is one of the self-imposed taxes upon our ignorance we pay to other countries, and is a sign of our bondage and slavery to them. Having emancipated black slaves, it seems to me time to emancipate ourselves from this particular form of white slavery. And now it devolves upon me to say what we are doing to remedy all these evils, and provide facilities for study of art.<sup>105</sup>*

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<sup>104</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, "American influence on Brazilian art education: Analysis of two moments (Walter Smith and John Dewey)" (PhD diss., Boston University), 1979, 41.

<sup>105</sup> Walter Smith, 1873, *ibid.*, 33.

Since education for the lower classes was such a turbulent subject at the time in America and Brazil, many Brazilians felt that North American foundations in art education could be an instrumental tool in stabilizing the economy through preparing the people for industrial jobs. According to Barbosa,<sup>106</sup> this was the point where Smith's concept of adult education became important. Brazilian revolutionaries became drawn to Smith's work with the poorer working class in the United States through art education and they felt that Smith's method was a way to fight against an artistic elitism controlling the foundation of adult art education in the country. Barbosa emphasized that it was the artistic environment which gave Brazilians a sense of self since Brazil was known for its passionate artistic expression.<sup>107</sup> However, before the Brazilian revolution of 1870, the time that Walter Smith accepted his position as the director for art education in the United States, most of the artistic influence over elitist fads in Brazilian fine art descended from the European dictations of high art. Brazilian revolutionaries saw art as a unique economic boon for the masses and, ultimately for the country; they thought that it should be embraced in the training and promotion of native artistic skills in the poorer working classes and the newly freed slaves as a way for Brazil to try to compete with the world market.

Barbosa believed that the industrial art education movement in Brazil, triggered by social upheavals, led to a mass acceptance of Walter Smith's doctrine of art for

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<sup>106</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, "Walter Smith's influence in Brazil and the efforts by Brazilian liberals to overcome the concept of art as an elitist activity," in *Trends in art education from diverse cultures*, eds. H. Kauppinen and R. Diket (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1995).

<sup>107</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, 1979, *ibid.*

industrial and social reform.<sup>108</sup> However, this social reform for the working class through industrial art education was a volatile issue because of the class distinctions dividing the European-based fine arts emphasis and the industrial craft arts in Brazilian society. Barbosa pointed out that it was the prejudice of the upper class elite against any form of manual labor associated with industrial craft arts which made the introduction of industrial art difficult. According to Efland,<sup>109</sup> this same conflict gripped American ideology and policy in adult art education.

Barbosa stated that it was Smith's disavowal of segregation between high and low art which caused Brazil to adopt his system of art education by the early 1900s.<sup>110</sup> Some Brazilian politicians and educators used Smith's system to help encourage the lower classes. She describes one art education proponent, De Matos, who told Brazilians that,

This manual education is not properly the teaching of a craft, but the work of the hands applied to educational ends. It is the instilling in the students of affection and interest, and what is most important, the respect for work, habits of orderliness, exactitude and neatness, independence and confidence in themselves, and self reliance.<sup>111</sup>

Barbosa points out that until 1958, Smith's system of art education was still being taught in Brazilian schools.<sup>112</sup> Though Smith primarily used a mimetic system of art education, he was not unknowledgeable of art's other positive attributes and forms of expression.

Smith states,

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<sup>108</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, *ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> Arthur D. Efland, 1985, *ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, 1995, *ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> Anibal De Matos, *Bellas Artes* (Minas Gerias, Brazil: Imprensa Official, 1923), 122.

<sup>112</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, *ibid.*

*Drawing as taught in the schools should be essentially a preparation for the understanding and practice of industrial art – the first kind of art practiced by all nations. The instruction should comprise both instrumental and free hand drawing, the first to cultivate a love for and habits of accuracy; the second to develop power and skill in the observation and expression of the inexact; one is not more important than the other, but either alone is a very helpless accomplishment, whilst the...man who can handle pencil and compasses with equal facility is independent of either and master of the situation, whatever may be required of him in industrial art.*<sup>113</sup>

Smith also saw how Boston high society deplored anything to do with technical skill or manual labor. He realized, as did Brazilian politicians, that industrial art education could not be fully instituted in a society which turned its nose up at skill through laborious endeavor. Stankiewicz states that art was seen as a means for the betterment of society by raising the class status of mechanics and inspiring them to be more than tradesmen.<sup>114</sup> However, there was a split between the designations of what types of art should be taught to different social classes. The emerging middle class began to pander towards European tastes in fine art. In the late 1800s, the middle class sought to mirror the tastes and culture of European aristocracy. So, though rhetoric for social reform through industrial and technical drawing for all social classes was espoused by the leaders of the time by promoting the art education framework of Walter Smith, they ultimately practiced social control. The middle class began to disassociate itself from the lower class activities in order to reach higher up the hierarchical class structure where manual training skills were seen as crude.

Smith states,

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<sup>113</sup> Walter Smith, 1876, *ibid.*, 75.

<sup>114</sup> Mary A. Stankiewicz, "Middle class desire: Ornament, industry, and emulation in the 19th century art education," *Studies in Art Education* 43, no. 4 (Summer 2002).

*It is because of the economic value in the practical life of an observant and sensitive eye, and the usefulness to industry of that which is called a skilled hand, together with the great demand for skilled labor which now exists, in the creativeness and productiveness which that skill represents, that we have become accustomed to speak of the drawing we teach as industrial drawing, chiefly because of its preeminent value in the productive industry. But we might as well speak of the arithmetic we teach as industrial arithmetic, to guard ourselves from suspicion of being engaged in the education of mathematicians; or describe instruction in writing as commercial penmanship, for fear the writing we teach may be used by an author or statesman.*<sup>115</sup>

### Summary

Chalmers portrays Smith in terms of his resolute commitment and faithfulness, albeit tied to personal ambition.<sup>116</sup> Smith's strong social consciousness drove his ambition, not only for himself, but for others who had come from the lower classes with little educational opportunities as he had. Smith did more than many men ever will in one lifetime. Green stated, "By basing the instruction on principles that could be stated, and consequently could be taught and learned, and by promulgating these principles, Smith placed drawing as a pedagogical tool in the hands of every teacher."<sup>117</sup> Green also states, "It does not lessen Smith's achievement that today we would quickly repudiate his approach to art education, both in content and in method."<sup>118</sup>

In a pedagogically dominated era of adult education, Smith sought to make art education applicable to life. Smith did not seek to segregate the wealthy from the lower

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<sup>115</sup> Walter Smith, *Lectures upon drawing in the three grades of primary, grammar, and high schools of the city of Boston. Addressed to the teachers of the several grades* (Boston: Rand, Avery & Company, 1882b), 7.

<sup>116</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, 2000, *ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> Harry C. Green, 1948, *ibid.*, 125.

<sup>118</sup> Harry C. Green, 1966, *ibid.*, 5.



classes or to push individuals into lower class types of work. He endeavored to raise public consciousness of the need for educational attainment of common skills necessary for every individual no matter what their social class.<sup>119</sup>

Chalmers admiringly evaluates Smith's influence in America. He emphasizes that only through Smith could art currently be an accepted discipline in the public schools, in the creation of art schools, and later, in the admittance of art departments into institutes of higher learning. And only through Smith was art seen as a practical adult vocation no matter what their level of education or social class. Though the perspectives on Smith are divided in what to praise in him, at least we know it took a great man to do what he did in one lifetime. Perhaps Smith is appreciated best through Kahlil Gibran:

The lights of stars that were extinguished ages ago still reach us. So it is with great men who died centuries ago, but still reach us with the radiations of their personalities.<sup>120</sup>

Whether one agrees with Smith's theory or practice of art instruction or of his endeavors for social reform through art education, Smith was admittedly an example of one passionate individual whose life purpose sought to reach out and lift up others around him. He was an indomitably proud yet compassionate man who walked in all the light of understanding he could find.

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<sup>119</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, 2000, *ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> Kahlil Gibran on greatness in Anu Garg, *Another word a day: An all-new romp through some of the most unusual and intriguing words in English* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2005), 41.

## CHAPTER III

## PAST: REVIEWING THE PARADIGMATIC CHAOS

In order to fully understand how Walter Smith is pertinent to current adult art education, it is necessary to address the controlling art ideologies during Smith's time and those up to the present-day. Only when the aims and values of art education are understood through chronological changes within theories about art can today's framework for adult art education be revealed.

## Onward from the Industrial Art Movement

According to Efland,<sup>1</sup> there are four aesthetic theories which run the course of art history: mimetic theory, pragmatic theory, expressive theory, and formalist theory. Walter Smith worked within the mimetic theory in the Industrial Art Movement grounded in a scientific/rationalist ideology. Its premise on mimetic/imitationalist theory was through the process of learning by copying forms of nature. In 1872, Smith created a more progressively challenging format of learning through copying geometric forms. In order to promote the form of drawing during the Industrial time period, drawing was delineated as "Industrial Drawing," in order for it to be accepted as a subject in the public instruction curriculums. Most of the justification for drawing instruction necessity resided in the social aspect of it being considered essential for individual and vocational industriousness. Imitation of nature was the theory upon which industrial drawing sat. Smith's work with industrial art followed in Greco-Roman realistic and representational

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur D. Efland, "Change in the conceptions of art teaching," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

rules.<sup>2</sup> Yet, American obsession with representational art has been a tradition through the entire history of art instruction:

At the start of the white settlement of America, the European invaders and their descendants would probably have thought of art in mimetic terms. Art was to record the look of the world. Portraits were necessary to fix for ages to come the appearance of the holders of power or status. If mimesis was the chief focus of art as far as the white population of America cared, then (in precamera days) the content of art education was mastery of representation in its most realistic or naturalistic form. Drawing, especially drawing of the figure (since humans, or so we might think, are most interested in humans) would be the core of a school curriculum in art. Here it is necessary to refer to Gombrich and *Art and Illusion*.<sup>3</sup> Gombrich claimed that representing the world was a matter of learning the devices artists had previously used to create the illusion of realism. The mimetic artist would need to study the art of the past to learn the proper techniques. Schooling would be mastering of skills exemplified in models of past art. The method of teaching would be to require study of the "old masters" and setting up of problems to copy the skills of these artists and of requirement for drills to perfect skills....So as far as possible, individual quirks in representation would need to be suppressed. Of course, from at least the time of Giorgio Vasari, "manner" or individual styles were noted and sometimes prized. But because these were deviations from realistic representation, artists were under some compulsion to make it clear that they could represent the world "objectively," if they chose....The mastery of the skills for representing the world are still highly regarded and awarded. The "class artist" in elementary or secondary school is usually the student who has mastered to a higher degree than his or her fellow students some of these skills, and the general public more readily accepts a realistic rendering as "art" than the finest design or most dynamic but distorted image.<sup>4</sup>

According to Freedman,<sup>5</sup> drawing based on copying during Smith's time was a vestige of the Enlightenment which was founded on scientific rhetoric defining art

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<sup>2</sup> Peter J. Smith, *The history of American art education: Learning about art in American schools* (London: Greenwood Press, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Ernst Gombrich, *Art and illusion* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1961).

<sup>4</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*, 37-38.

<sup>5</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, "Educational change within structures of history, culture, and discourse," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. Neperud, R. W (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

education methods and guidelines for instruction. However, this scientific rhetoric was unscientific; it was merely founded on educational discourse based on assumptions of scientific truth. One such assumption was that the social world could be standardized and analyzed. Also, progressivism, through modification to more progressive paradigms, was seen as universally applicable and beneficial for social life in every culture. In this concept of change through paradigm shifts, change through scientific rhetoric sought to replicate Enlightenment assumptions of better and better methods through discovering scientific truths. These truths, however, were determined by professional agreement within disciplines. So, scientific rhetoric became the foundation for educational reform within rhetoric of social reform; yet, it ultimately translated into social stratification. Thus, while progressive scientific rhetoric affirms social reform through scientific solutions on the one hand, it actually engendered social control. Issues such as evolutionary biology and eugenics, the thought that the social hierarchy in America descended from inherent differences between ethnicities, social classes, gender, and genius was the hereditary trait only found in white European males, were used to solve social problems.<sup>6</sup>

Freedman found that art education supported scientific progressivism because art mirrored socio-cultural change and was seen as a discipline which would legitimize the social aims of scientific rhetoric. Through public school art programs, scientific progressivism's rhetoric promoted talent and the idea of certain races and cultures having artistic genius. Also, art was promoted as a way to encourage industriousness and psychological wellbeing. Freedman states,

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<sup>6</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, *ibid.*

In the late nineteenth century a dependence on the scientific expert and manager to construct an art education that would solve social problems developed.<sup>7</sup> There was confidence that a scientific common school would promote progress by solving problems of industrial production, such as the necessity for new industries to hire European trained designers, and resolving social conflicts, such as unemployment among the urban minority and poor. As education became secularized and professionalized, mechanisms of social control were represented as natural, objective, and scientific. Application of the latest expert thinking about labor management was thought to improve education by making it exact and efficient. Art education became a mandatory part of public schooling to instill designing skills and industrial ways of thinking....<sup>8</sup>

Walter Smith was the art education expert used to bolster this scientific rhetoric. He believed that his work in America was for social reform through industrial art education. However, Smith was used to push scientific rhetoric in order to achieve social control.

But Smith did not believe everything that the rhetoric promoted. For instance, Walter Smith did not believe that the concept of artistic genius and talent should segregate those who wanted to learn drawing skills. He felt that promotion of artistic genius through the foundation on a European fine art focus was divisive and unjust. Smith recognized talent, but was suspicious of it:

*Not only is it assumed that there is a mystery about the subject [artistic talent in a few individuals], but the claim is made that someone who is highly successful in the pursuit of art, is especially gifted and has a genius for it. One man, for instance, rises in public estimation as a physician and becomes very distinguished, whereupon the people call him "a genius." But what is the secret of his "genius?" I have examined somewhat into the lives of many great men, and have had the good fortune to have been acquainted with some; and having a little curiosity, I have tried to discover what this secret is. So far I have discovered all men who have arrived at greatness in any of the walks of life have been*

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<sup>7</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, *ibid.*

Kerry J. Freedman and Thomas S. Popkewitz, "Art education and social interests in the development of American schooling: Ideological origins of curriculum theory," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 20, no. 5 (September-October 1988): 387-405.

<sup>8</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, *ibid.*, 97.

*distinguished for one common peculiarity; and that is, they always worked about twice as hard as other men. It is popularly supposed that this secret of genius is that like the secret of some societies, it is one that will always be kept, because there is nothing to divulge! ... True, there are people who find it difficult to go on, who get discouraged and abandon their purpose at the first reverse; and I have discovered this – that if there is one certain sign of future success, it is that of having less confidence in your own ability and your own gifts than in your determination to go on. Those who succeed the best ultimately, are not those who show the greatest amount of talent in the beginning. Were I required to pick out of a class of scholars [the most talented]... I should perhaps point out one stupid and thick-headed – so thick-headed as not to know that he was stupid – but who would go right on; and as specimens of the class who invariably fail, I should pick out those who are on excellent terms with themselves, who do everything in an easy, sketchy, pretty way, and who would go on repeating it until they died, without making any improvement, simply because they are destitute of this determination to conquer, and are filled with a self-satisfaction resulting from overconfidence in their own powers.<sup>9</sup>*

He continues,

*I think then it is generally acknowledged that in order to build up a public system of education, we are required to treat all alike, that any expenditure of the public money contributed by all the people should be for the education of all the people, and not for that of merely a few.... I hold that we have no right in the public schools to teach specialties for the benefit of two or three individuals; what we have to do is to give all an education, so that all shall possess primarily the power of developing their best faculties.<sup>10</sup>*

Walter Smith disliked the hierarchical designations of high art genius and low art as manual labor and saw it as segregation of the haves and the have-nots; he believed this segregation was founded on elitist promotions of fine art (considered high art during Smith's time) as the only art.<sup>11</sup> Smith believed that all individuals should have the

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<sup>9</sup> Walter Smith, *Industrial art education: A lecture delivered in Philadelphia, April 23, 1875* by Professor Walter Smith, State director of art education for Massachusetts (Boston: L. Prang & Company, 1875c).

<sup>10</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Smith, *Art education: Scholastic and industrial* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1873).

benefit of learning drawing skills. He also disagreed on the segregation of a technical industrial art education for manual laborers; Smith felt that all individuals should have the benefit of artistic skill to use in their daily lives. However, Smith did agree that industrial drawing could induce industriousness and thus, socialization, of individuals through artistic focus on work ethic and efficiency through learning elements of a scientific technical process.

Romanticism, descending from the Enlightenment's concept of individuality and free will, was another foundation on which American artists such as the Hudson River School painters based their artwork. To Walter Smith, however, this picture-making fine arts focus was at complete opposites with the practicality of industrial technical drawing: art must be practical, a tool that anyone could use as an interdisciplinary skill during their life. Thus, according to Smith, the Hudson River Artists' (such as Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Cole) romantic approach to art was not practical and propagated the high art hierarchy. Interestingly, it was the first American artist group, the Hudson group, which became less popular at the same moment as the start of Smith's curriculum of industrial art. It is perhaps the lifelong disagreement between artists and art educators (like the art specialists/artists who disagreed with Walter Smith) about how art should be taught which began during this period in American history.<sup>12</sup> Smith continues,

Walter Smith, educated in the British system and experienced as a teacher in that system, brought this German-derived method to the United States. Diana Korzenik has sketched the energetic, if not always straightforward, efforts of Smith to establish drawing instruction in Massachusetts schools.<sup>13</sup> What Smith

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<sup>12</sup> Peter J. Smith, 1996, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Diana Korzenik, "Why government cared." *Art education here.* (Boston: Art Education Department, Massachusetts College of Art, 1987).

did not tell his Boston industrialist sponsors was that the South Kensington method he practiced had not succeeded in producing the sought after superior textile designers identified as its original goal. Instead, the system trained pedagogues needed for institutions created by bureaucratic machinations.<sup>14</sup> These pedagogues would in turn teach others to teach design and perhaps, but almost incidentally, turn out a few designers to actually work in industry. Visual art instruction tied to American public schools became the captive of a narrow view of education which in turn catered to a felt need to control parts of the population that were becoming in the eyes of the middle class Protestant “Natives” – despite American rhetoric – the unworthy poor.<sup>15</sup>

But, Chalmers affirms that Walter Smith sincerely believed this “American rhetoric” of social reform through an industrial art education.<sup>16</sup> He was not aware of the politics involved in the institutionalization of art education. The same issue exists today between university artist teachers and university art educators. The educators are still complaining about the need for art to prepare students with an understanding of art education for use outside the classroom (either therapeutic and/or technical). Artists are still claiming that art should be free of bureaucratic and economic initiatives.<sup>17</sup> This is part of the turf war inside university art departments.

Romanticism in art education, present in American art ideology before Smith’s industrial influence, began to take over in public art instruction after the industrial art movement. It would later become self-expressionism within the modern art paradigm.

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<sup>14</sup> Stuart MacDonald, *History and philosophy of art education* (New York: American Elsevier, 1970).

<sup>15</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*, 22-23.

<sup>16</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, "South Kensington and the Colonies II: The influence of Walter Smith in Canada," in *The history of art education: Proceedings from the Penn State Conference*, eds. B. Wilson & H. Hoffa (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1985).

<sup>17</sup> While the divergence between artists and art educators is important to point out within the university, university artists control the university art world and are subsequently the focal point in this assessment of current initiatives and practices in “university art education.” Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*



Having no foundation in realism or formalism, it became grounded purely on the expression of individual human beings towards freedom of expression, freedom of choice, and freedom to express emotion. Artistic style and mannerisms were highly valued in this artistic ideology.<sup>18</sup>

The industrial period defined artistic instruction geared towards adult education for industrial purposes, not child education. This differentiation found its grounding in the scientific/rationalistic approach to education. Art was seen as through a scientific lens that defined and verified universal objectives. However, this theoretical foundation fell out of favor with art educators and theorists. Romanticism and individual expression became the new fad. Arthur Dow, an American art educator after Walter Smith, taught art through emphasizing the elements of beauty (a foundation on romanticism) which he believed could be found in art.<sup>19</sup> The form, hue, contour, and textural elements began to define the practice of art. This formalist framework was the theory that all art consists of elements which form the basis of artistic perfection and beauty. But, Dow did not rationalize art education as a social necessity as Walter Smith did. Smith's promotion of industriousness and social reform framed his argument for requiring public drawing instruction. Dow felt no need for beauty to be justified within a social framework; it was complete unto itself. Later, during the "pure" formalist instruction of the modernist period, art instruction became empty of any representational images or social messages; it became void of anything but elements of line, form and color.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

After the Depression, another theory of art education arose. In 1935, Melvin Haggerty developed a concept that art should be related to life in order for individuals to be able to improve their living conditions (this sounds similar to Walter Smith's intentions for adult art education).<sup>21</sup> Art was shown to be important in the home, dress, and through community improvement projects which diverged from the elitist ideals of European fine art. Art for use in daily life became Haggerty's ideology for the pragmatic and practical instruction of art for adult learners. Art became a tool for practical and aesthetic problem solving in daily life.<sup>22</sup>

The foundation of art education for adults changed again to one founded on a psychologically-based art education framework which defined the stages and phases from childhood to adulthood. Efland found that it was individual differences based on the Enlightenment's promotion of individualism which began to define art education.<sup>23</sup> Human developmental stages became the defining features of an individual's environmental response inside the study of visual art and these stages were used to determine the individual behavioral features of different socio-cultural groups. Thorndike, like other educational psychologists, believed that social contexts became important if only to define individual behaviors according to their social environment.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Melvin E. Haggerty, *Art a way of life* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1935).

<sup>22</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

Because of the vast number of cultural influences in the United States, psychology was used to socialize the masses of immigrant children. However, just as the theory worked to validate individual differences, this focus promoted some social groups more than others. The Enlightenment's promotion of individualism was relative to which socio-cultural group was in power. The theory of psychological developmental practices, thus defined, sought to reach children at their early developmental stages. The notion that children were a *tabula rasa*, Latin for "blank slate," provided a framework for nature over nurture in art without adulteration. Adult intervention in child art was seen as an force which inhibited the individual freedom of creativity. The developmental stages of childhood were seen as the perfection of Enlightenment-based individualism for defining art education available for adults. In 1928, art educators Harold Rugg and Ann Shumaker promoted this foundation for child-centered art education for all social classes.<sup>25</sup> Their child-centered art education method became used simultaneously by adults under the name of creative self-expressionism. It was considered cathartic personal expression which rejected any outside interference from designated technical skills or artistic renderings.<sup>26</sup>

After World War II, Efland assessed that the basis for psychologically-based therapeutic adult art education had transformed again to one based on promoting democratic ideals.<sup>27</sup> The agenda was to promote social conformation through child

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<sup>25</sup> Harold O. Rugg and Ann Shumaker, *The child-centered school: An appraisal of the new education* (New York: World Book Company, 1928).

<sup>26</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

education before the children from different socio-cultural backgrounds and cultural behaviors could become a threat to traditional American democratic ideals. Freedman states,

The shift was a response to national fears of totalitarianism and preparation for a new international role for the United States. Political tendencies were described as personality traits and mental states. A concern existed that fascism resulted from and propagated an authoritarian personality; a psychotherapeutic form of schooling was needed to prevent such a personality from developing in children. Developing the democratic personality through a scientific approach to art education was considered vital in a world thought to divisively impose unhealthy, undemocratic principles on weak individuals.<sup>28</sup>

According to Efland,<sup>29</sup> the primary force driving the historical shifts in ideologies of art education is the socially perceived needs of the times. Walter Smith is a clear example of a theorist who promoted art education based on a social context. Social reform through adult education was seen as the method for promoting societal industriousness by improving the technical/industrial skills of working class laborers. In summary, Smith's mimetic view of adult art instruction was grounded in the thought that all art descends from repetition through objectively copying forms from nature. Dow promoted formalist elements as the structure for true art. Rugg and Shumaker saw psychological theory through individual creative self-expression as the basis for untainted art forms.<sup>30</sup> Haggerty pointed out the pragmatic viewpoint of art which did not separate itself from life as fine art did.<sup>31</sup> After viewing the movements and their characteristic

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<sup>28</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, *ibid.*, 101.

<sup>29</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Harold O. Rugg and Ann Shumaker, *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Melvin E. Haggerty, *ibid.*

traits, Efland found that each of the four aesthetic theories can be viewed in terms of their social contexts.<sup>32</sup>

TABLE 1. Aesthetics, Learning Theories, and their Implied Ideologies

Aesthetic Theory	Learning Theory	Implied Ideology
1) Mimetic Art is imitation	Behaviorism Learning is by imitation	Traditional morality: Social control
2) Pragmatic Art is instrumental	Learning is instrumental	Social reconstruction
3) Expressive Art is self-expression	Psychoanalytic Learning is emotional growth	Personal liberation
4) Formalist Art is formal order	Cognitive Learning is concept attainment	Technocratic control by experts

Mimetic theory, based on the artistic practice of imitation, concerns aspects of behaviorism through learning by imitation which focuses on traditional morality as justification for social control. To learn by imitating the behaviors of others is to come under the control of the various teaching stimuli provided by the instructor in order to preserve valued traditional norms. Both learning and art are done through imitation from environmental stimuli provided by teachers who control the focus and intensity of what is learned. Reward for artistic excellence, used since the 1700s, was seen as a way to reinforce valued cultural artistic norms of right and wrong. This learning through imitation was a part of common artistic training in public schools during the 1900s and is

<sup>32</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*, 29.

still found today, although current practice places less stress on methodical and stringent learning tasks and subsequent reinforcements.<sup>33</sup>

For formalist theory, art consists of formal elements where learning is focused on concept attainment taught by the technocratic control of experts. Using cognitive abilities to learn to speak in the language of the art form promotes learning the vocabulary and principles of making art as defined by experts through pre-defined rules for art instruction.<sup>34</sup>

Peter Smith states,

Formalism, the theory of modernism was never a concept appealing to a majority of the population..... Indeed, formalism in design fields, such as textile or automobile design, did become accepted, but the more the fine arts community emphasized and embraced formalism, the further it moved from acceptance by the average person. The public was willing to discard ornament in furniture or vehicles. It was all too happy to discard pictorialism dependent on a learned set of symbols from mythology in architecture, but in painting or sculpture, the public could not swallow the notion that narrative or reference to representation of the world is superfluous.<sup>35</sup>

Expressive theory is creative self-expression through psychoanalytic and a therapeutic focus on emotional growth which promoted personal liberation. Child-centered art became the dominating theme of art instruction. The developmental stages of emotional growth outside of adult societal norms became the key to personal liberation and true artistic expression.<sup>36</sup> According to Peter Smith, self expression was embraced as

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<sup>33</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*, 40.

<sup>36</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

a healing path to achieve catharsis in an individually constructive way.<sup>37</sup> Emotional expression was thought of as taking the lid off of pent-up negative emotions and un-dealt-with issues. However, this premise was not a strong enough reason for schools to hire teachers; what skills would a teacher be giving students if they could only help the release of students' inner turmoil?

The pragmatic theory of art instruction uses art as a tool for learning in everyday life. This practical application of art into life problems promoted an art which was socially responsive and socially reconstructive.<sup>38</sup> Instruction based on this theory promotes a learning environment based on the daily problems encountered by the learners. Personal and social problems provide the trigger for constructing experiential knowledge which can either alter or reaffirm one's view of the world. Efland points to John Dewey as the major proponent of this method of art education. Dewey's book, *Art as Experience*,<sup>39</sup> delineates creativity's foundation on reconstruction of life experiences through the process of creating. According to Dewey, intelligence can be reconstructed through various life experiences which either change or reinforce previous realities.

Efland states,

Teachers with these views would not impart formally organized knowledge but would organize learning around life-centered situations. The understandings we formed would be based on successive experiences where new knowledge may cause us to revise old understandings. Learning is thus a reality check. Truth is not absolute but emerges out of successive encounters, and its social utility is tested by whether it enables individuals and societies to adapt to changing circumstances. If our interpretation of reality is faulty, our response to change

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<sup>37</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> John Dewey, *Art as experience* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1934).

may not be successful, but if our responses are guided by assumptions that approximate the truth, we increase the probability of successful adaptation. A pragmatic oriented teacher would organize instructional resources for problem solving, and the evaluation of the instruction would be in terms of success experienced by students and teachers alike.<sup>40</sup>

These four aesthetic theories are defined by their social context within industrial decay and distress, economic depressions, massive immigrations, wars, and rumors of wars. The current postmodern ideology claims to be the assumption of all of these previous models. Thus, as Efland states, “our past lives on in our present.”<sup>41</sup>

### Modern and Postmodern Art Paradigms

The aesthetic theories which have run through the course of art education’s history have become the backbone for current modern and postmodern paradigms and are grounded firmly in present-day practices of art education available for adult learners. The era of modernism (roughly 1850 to 1950) was a reaction against imitation as a form of learning. Modernism consisted of formalist and psychologically-based self-expression approaches which justified art education instruction for adults. Modernists saw the materialism and greed of the times and sought after new spiritual and social principles by which to define themselves. The early avant-garde artists, a quixotic group of purists, became the symbol of the quest for freedom from corruption and societal impurities. However, during the later period of modernism, the avant-garde became disillusioned with the spiritual purity they sought within their art culture. Following in the path of the art critic, Clement Greenberg, the avant-garde began to say that there was no spiritual

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<sup>40</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*, 31-32.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*, 29.



purpose or higher calling to art other than a strictly formalist interpretation.<sup>42</sup> Gablik stated, “The real problem of modernity has proved to be the problem of belief – the loss of belief in any system of values beyond the self.”<sup>43</sup>

For Gablik,<sup>44</sup> the later formalist thread of modernism justified its existence by isolating itself from society in order to stay pure; pure line, shape, and color principles were seen as the ultimate artistic endeavor. Isolated from society, modern artists only referred to other like-minded artists which created an “art-for-art’s sake” agenda. The isolation of modernism involved an inbreeding of too many disunified types of art which sought originality and novelty as their justification for being called art. There was no impetus to relate to anyone besides themselves. According to Gablik, modernism became a form of aggressively suspicious individualism.<sup>45</sup> As a result, society turned against the avant-garde’s elitist and isolationist control of the visual arts. Abstract became the defining word for its oddity and self-absorbed nature. Peter Smith pointed out modernism’s divergence from representational (optic/op art) to non-representational (haptic art) artwork.<sup>46</sup> Riegl and Castriata state that the realistic versus non-realistic art

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<sup>42</sup> Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).

<sup>43</sup> Suzan Gablik, *Has modernism failed?* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1984), 29-30.

<sup>44</sup> Suzan Gablik, *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Suzan Gablik, *The reenchantment of art* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1991).

<sup>46</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*

focus was part of an “art will” which moves erratically in either direction throughout art history.<sup>47</sup>

The strains of formalism and expressionism further isolated the artistic community. Without these two theories, a right interpretation of visual images was not possible and the viewer was excluded from the artistic conversation between artists and art experts. Experts were needed to interpret the meaning of artwork for viewers. The artistic language was known only to the community of artists and doled out only to those inside the clique of the artistic elite (here an elite is the dominant group of a society who maintain their position by pressuring the less privileged groups of a society).<sup>48</sup>

Modern art conceptions ruled over what was included and excluded from the art world. Modern artists justified their art in novelty and genius by moving away from representational images and seeking methods of artistic abstraction. This method is still taught in the art education available for adult learners in university art departments across America. This retaliation to copying or teaching technical instruction has filled most university adult art educators with the conviction that representational work is bad art. Artistic genius promoted through novelty and uniqueness has taken over educational frameworks for adult art education today.

Gablik points out the need to reassess whether these controlling features should still be the defining forces in adult art education inside higher educational institutions.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Alois Riegl and David Castriota, *Problems of style: Foundations for a history of ornament* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

<sup>48</sup> Suzan Gablik, 1984, *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Suzan Gablik, 1984, *ibid.*

Habermas supports this claim,

The gap between “highbrow” and “lowbrow” cultures, between the fine art defined by aestheticians, art historians, and critics, and the mass arts preferred by popular culture, broadened and was seen as representing a lack of standards and as an unbridgeable gap between elitism associated with modernism and the growing prominence of mass culture.<sup>50</sup>

Hamblen highlights modernism’s air of perfection and how it repudiated change of any kind.<sup>51</sup> Since modern art was considered to be self-sufficient (art-for-art’s-sake), endless jabber about there being no new artistic frontiers to explore dominated the art scene. But modernists did not expect to see any new frontiers to move towards. Modernism touted itself as the greatest and most progressive change in the history of art; it fought the traditional rules and regulations defining artistic language, but it became a rule-regimented and crystallized institution similar to what it fought to free itself from. The progressive nature of change became modernism’s only important feature in the art world. However, modern artistic rules began to take the place of the previous rules.

Gablik reminds us of art history’s constant need for change, where change was equated with progress and improvement.<sup>52</sup> Hamblen states,

The underlying morality of a seeming endless frenzy of change is that of an implicit belief that improvement is being accomplished. Change gives a sense that something is happening, irrespective of what the something might be or its value. Much as the Victorians had a horror of empty space in their architectural interiors,

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<sup>50</sup> Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity versus postmodernity," in *Postmodernism perspectives: Issues in contemporary art*, ed. H. Risatti (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1990), 3.

<sup>51</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, "Art education changes and continuities: Value orientations of modernity and postmodernity," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

<sup>52</sup> Suzan Gablik, *Progress in art* (New York: Rizzoli, 1977).

modernists abhor a sameness of events. Change can come to be valued for its own sake. At its extreme, modernity fosters change without a morality.<sup>53</sup>

Modern art is ultimately based on the “belief that change can be institutionalized and that rational change constitutes an improvement in the human condition.”<sup>54</sup> Educational institutions still dwell in that frame of mind, though our paradigm of reference to change has focused more on a social change agenda.

In the late 1970s and early 80s, some art critics began to question modernism’s rigid assumptions. Absolute truth and the promotion of originality and genius were questioned. Levin pointed out that it was the end of an era.<sup>55</sup> No longer could originality dictate change. Modernity had used up the last of its nine lives; shockingly, it had even gone out of fad in the artistic community.<sup>56</sup> According to Gablik, massive confusion arose when no new purpose to visual art appeared on the horizon:

The overwhelming spectacle of current art is at this point, confusing not only to the public, but even to professionals and students, for whom the lack of any clear or validating consensus, established on the basis of common practice, has ushered in an impenetrable pluralism of competing approaches.<sup>57</sup>

The new era of pluralism was labeled postmodernism. While the theory behind modern art based a single piece of artwork on the interpretation of artistic experts, now with the vast plurality of styles of art, there are also a vast number of interpretations that

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<sup>53</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*, 47.

<sup>54</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*, 45.

<sup>55</sup> Amy K. Levin, "Farewell to modernism," in *Theories of contemporary art*, ed. R. Hertz (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985).

<sup>56</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Suzan Gablik, 1984, *ibid.*, 14.

viewers bring to each art piece.<sup>58</sup> Gablik states, “postmodernism is much more eclectic, able to assimilate, and even plunder all forms of style and conflicting values.”<sup>59</sup> Hamblen points out that while modernism based itself on formalist and expressionist traditions, postmodernism grounded itself on the sociology of change in art and the world.<sup>60</sup>

Neperud discusses the divergence between modernism and postmodernism in terms of preserving traditions or seeking change.<sup>61</sup> Without an understanding of these two ways of knowing the history of art education, no new purpose to art education can be proposed. This divergence of perspectives in the promotion of traditional/conforming technical (professional) instruction versus social change-based (personal) instruction in art education has led to a divergence in curriculum foundations. Either a discipline-based curriculum founded on preserving traditional knowledge is favored or one founded on theoretical initiatives within socio-cultural change. However, either way, instructors teach according to their political ideology; consequently, education is political and does have a social context. To Hutcheon, “postmodernism is a phenomenon whose mode is resolutely contradictory as well as unavoidably political.”<sup>62</sup> Thus, as Neperud emphasizes, those who focus strictly on formalist/modernist traditions of art have made an ideological

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<sup>58</sup> Arthur D. Efland, *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Suzan Gablik, 1984, *ibid.*, 73.

<sup>60</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, "Transitions in art education: A search for meaning," in *Context, content, and community in art education*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

<sup>62</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *The politics of postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 1.

choice in which art becomes inherently based in a social context – one founded on social conformity.<sup>63</sup>

To Neperud,<sup>64</sup> postmodernism can only be understood within the context of modernism, because it came about in reaction to the militance of modernism. Those who have tried to ascertain postmodernism's origin have not been able to do so. Even those who try to define postmodernism have only been able to formulate divergent and conflicting views. Thus, confusion from pseudo-intellectual jargon follows the term wherever it goes. According to Peter Smith, the postmodern movement has focused everyone's attention on social issues irrespective of art's own history and methods.<sup>65</sup> Postmodern art has become a tool for social change. Yet, inside current academic institutions, it is more than a tool, it is now a weapon created to force social change.

However, postmodernism has served to draw attention to multicultural issues within its plurality of accepted artistic styles. Issues such as ethnicity, class, and gender have taken over what is taught in art education for adults. Hamblen points out what some people hope to do through a postmodern ideology, but whether it is actually practiced or is merely idealistic rhetoric is another matter:

At this time in the history of art education, the value systems of modernity and post modernity influence theory and practice as well as give shape to many of the issues that are now being debated. Modernity and post modernity pervade a variety of institutions of society and have great explanatory power for a range of social phenomena. Postmodernity embodies the values of social pluralism, ethnic diversity, tradition, and contextualism. Local knowledge and the input of nonexperts are valued [at least rhetorically], in contrast to the rationalism and

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<sup>63</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*

technological expertise valued by the modernist. Concrete experience, folk wisdom, and tradition play a role in the postmodernist's world and his or her decision making. Reality to the postmodernist is composed of many different social, historical, and personal worlds, with the meaning and significance of these worlds contextually relevant and variable.<sup>66</sup>

Neperud reveals that postmodernism seeks to deconstruct (dismantle) the modernist assumption that art has no socio-cultural/political context.<sup>67</sup> Issues of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and overarching values of multiculturalism and feminism have become postmodernism's central nervous system. Deconstruction, critical analysis, and semiotics (the intellectualization of art as a visual language) are the tools primarily used to break down the false modernist assumptions, and semiotics is perhaps the defining feature of visual art education in the universities today. A postmodernist semiotics approach to visual art education says that, because art is full of visual symbols, it is a language which relates social discourse to a visual/cultural language of its own. As Marshall states,

Postmodernism is about language. About how it controls, how it determines meaning, and how we try to exert control through language. About how language restricts, closes down, insists that it stands for something. Postmodernism is about how "we" are defined within that language, and within specific historical, social, cultural matrices. It's about race, class, gender, erotic identity and practice, nationality, age, ethnicity. It's about difference. It's about power and powerlessness, about empowerment, and about all the stages in between and beyond and unthought of.<sup>68</sup>

However, this postmodern visual language deconstruction is in itself framed within an art world theory. Because theory is the defining force behind art education,

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<sup>66</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*, 43.

<sup>67</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Brenda Marshall, *Teaching the postmodern: Fiction and theory* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 4.

Danton further points out that there can be no art education for adults without an art theory lens through which the viewer removes an object from daily life and wraps it inside of an art world's interpretations.<sup>69</sup> There is a relationship between what is designated as art inside an art theory and its subsequent interpretations and values in artistic language and focus. Objects are only art if read inside an art theory that inherently includes some while excluding others. Neperud points out that postmodern art theory forces the creator and the viewer to become involved in the process of verbalizing and interpreting the social and political language surrounding the "art" object.<sup>70</sup> However, according to Hill and Johnston,<sup>71</sup> the concern today inside postmodernism is the prevention of the militarization of social change initiatives through adult education in the university art world. Isolationism within the university art world because of this separate art language still exists and can exclude the visually illiterate viewer. The challenge here is to keep postmodernism from isolating itself inside the castle of higher institutions in order to protect itself from change. So, though postmodernism is based on precepts of social and political contexts for promoting social change, the balance of maintaining approved traditions versus changing the current system of education delineated by

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<sup>69</sup> Arthur C. Danton, *The transfiguration of the commonplace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

<sup>70</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Lilian H. Hill and Julie D. Johnston, "Adult education and humanity's relationship with nature reflected in language, metaphor, and spirituality: A call to action," in *New directions for adult and continuing education*, eds. L. Hill and D. Clover (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003).



postmodern art theory is the same challenge that runs through the history of adult art education.<sup>72</sup>

According to Hall, this oscillation of change versus traditionalism also points to values placed on other art theory-based dichotomies: academic versus local knowledge, industrialized versus non-industrialized economies, and rational-based context versus vernacular-based theory context.<sup>73</sup> However, Lanier states that the irony of the struggles between the overall dichotomy of traditionalism and change-based art practice is that the more art education critics try to change the prevailing art theory, the more art theory remains the same in defining and creating languages for artistic interpretation inside a socially defined art world ideology.<sup>74</sup> Our system of art education is merely a legacy of the past artistic ideological dichotomy: tradition versus change. For example, Lanier pointed to present-day art education's defensive adherence to studio art study without consideration of interdisciplinary modes of learning in such areas as art history, art aesthetics, or art criticism. Yet, Walter Smith had the same adherence to studio art instruction with little if any importance placed on other areas of art as a foundation for learning; though Smith did see a necessity for art to be interdisciplinary for professional use in higher education especially in the area of art history.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> Edward T. Hall, *Beyond culture* (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1977).

<sup>74</sup> Vincent Lanier, "Objectives of art education: The impact of time," *Peabody Journal of Education* 52, no. 3 (1975): 180-186.

<sup>75</sup> Walter Smith, *Teachers' manual for freehand drawing in intermediate schools* (Boston: L. Prang & Company, 1879).

Habermas emphasizes that this dichotomy is a vestige of the Enlightenment era of the 1700s which promoted three separate spheres of expert-oriented control of learning: science, morality, and art. Art became a litmus test for changes in political and social issues.<sup>76</sup> Neperud states,

Art during the mid-nineteenth century became a critical mirror .... Art, representing one of the domains, changed; the others [science and morality] did not, leaving the irreconcilable differences. This meant that the layperson could either educate himself/herself in order to become an expert, or, as a consumer, one could use art and aesthetic experience in one's life. Applied to contemporary life, we find that neither solution has completely dominated, although these are the very goals that art education experts have often advocated and that are sources of tensions and debates among them.<sup>77</sup>

Hamblen points out that extensions can be found between past and present foci of adult art education.<sup>78</sup> Smith was hired by the Massachusetts Board of Education to bolster commercial industrial design capabilities in order to promote American competition with foreign goods. Today, economic competition with China and Japan has promoted a reviewing of the practicality of current forms of education in America. Now the time has come again for art education to defend itself with designations of interdisciplinary benefits and defined and testable agendas and objectives. Rachal states,

By 1945, American manufacturing output was nearly half of the world total, but as other countries have become more productive, the United States has become relatively less productive.<sup>79</sup> During the 1980s, the United States became a net importer of goods rather than a net exporter, and another equivocal milestone was reached in the early 1980s when the majority of American jobs shifted from

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<sup>76</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*, 3.

<sup>78</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Paul M. Kennedy, "The (Relative) Decline of America," *The Atlantic* (August 1987): 29-38.

manufacturing to services, many of which are low-paying, low skill jobs.... Even so, there is an ominous knowledge gap between changing technological labor needs and the workers with lower-demand, specialized skills – or worse, workers with limited literacy and inadequate numerical skills.<sup>80</sup>

This job market focus, part of a legacy of Walter Smith's desire to educate American workers to free America from foreign imports, is still an issue today. Yet, it is obvious that Smith's efforts could not compete with the ineffectual dichotomy controlling the institutionalization of educational reform to benefit society. Even when change is embraced publicly or by the art theory in control, there is no real change; it is merely a reinterpretation of past methods and ideologies of art education which have controlled the art world from the beginning.<sup>81</sup>

#### Summary

According to Efland, in current university practices of adult art education, the modern and postmodern art theories still dictate art instruction.<sup>82</sup> While modernism found its identity in fine art, postmodern art isolates itself from designations of fine arts, but in the process becomes what it fought against: high art. Yet, postmodern high art simultaneously claims to be separate from the elite premodern and modern fine art. Because of this divergence in theoretical control of the art world, there will always be strains of tradition-based art instruction crystallizing inside educational institutions in order to compete with strains of change. Any program or theory which does not

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<sup>80</sup> John R. Rachal, "The social context of adult and continuing education," in *Handbook of adult and continuing education*, ed. S. B. Merriam & P. M. Cunningham (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 8.

<sup>81</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Arthur D. Efland, "Arts education, the aesthetic and cultural studies," in *International handbook of research in arts education*, ed. L. Bresler (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer, 2007).

acknowledge the dichotomy has no foundation for defining art education for adult learners caught in the middle of the struggle.<sup>83</sup>

We are still looking for that justifiable definition for art education's existence. Walter Smith found the reasoning for public art education in the idea that art could provide financial prosperity and thus social mobility for the lower classes of adult learners. However, this economic foundation for art education was not as conducive to social reform as Smith would have hoped. Peter Smith points out,

Studying drawing had a definite social and cash value. That is something that has rarely been claimed for art in American schools; yet supporters of American schools have frequently justified the schools on the basis of economic benefit.... Romantics may see the divorce of art and money-making as the badge of spirituality, but others see it as the proof of unimportance.<sup>84</sup>

Smith continues,

A hundred years after the Smith era, ideas have changed, but no one theory has attained an unquestioned ascendancy.... Closer to our time Morris Weitz declared that art was an open ended concept.<sup>85</sup> It could not be defined. That is, what constitutes art is always in flux. In a time dominated by multicultural rhetoric we believe that art is a socially constructed concept and that fine art in particular is more or less a Western European derived notion.<sup>86</sup>

University art education is now firmly situated in intellectualized agendas for social change. Ralph Smith warns that there is a danger, as seen in art history, of over-intellectualizing art to fit inside intellectual and academic institutions which still ignite

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<sup>83</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*, 40.

<sup>85</sup> Morris Weitz, "The role of theory in aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 15 (1956): 27-35.

<sup>86</sup> Peter J. Smith, *ibid.*, 36.

the association of genius with art practice.<sup>87</sup> Though postmodernism constantly fights what it considers to be politically and socially status quo, is it merely a manipulative rhetoric or does it actively focus on liberating the adult learner? There is coming a boiling point which will either cook the inhabitants of the institutions into conformity or it will awaken them to realize the two-facedness of postmodern rhetoric because a social change ideology without true action is a manipulative idealism.<sup>88</sup>

Perhaps what the art world needs is not a controlling paradigm defining what art is or is not, but a comprehensive understanding of the social context of art theories and a socially reconstructive framework on which to base art education; this framework should encourage critically conscious dialogue between different art theory agendas and their human counterparts while acknowledging the importance of art itself as a discipline for individual use. The traditional (an action-based technical focus) versus social change (a reflective-based philosophical focus) foundations in art education would no longer strive to rule each other through political and economic power struggles over educational institutions but seek to meet on common ground in order to save the one caught in the middle: the adult learner.

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<sup>87</sup> Ralph A. Smith, "Building a sense of art in today's world," *Studies in Art Education* 33, no. 2 (Winter 1992): 71-85.

<sup>88</sup> Jeffrey W. Elias and Sharan B. Merriam, *Philosophical foundations of adult education* (Melbourne, FL: Kreiger, 1980).

## CHAPTER IV

## PRESENT: THE ART THAT COULD NOT BE TAUGHT

The sad truth about current art education for adults was foretold by John Dewey in the 1930s:

Valuing the intrinsic connections between art and daily life underpins a democratic framework for art education because it requires recognizing a variety of art practices, such as gardening, embroidery, decorative painting, or pottery, and the diverse people who make them. . . . The hostility to association of fine art with normal processes of living is a pathetic, even tragic commentary on life as it is ordinarily lived.<sup>1</sup>

Dewey, a major theorist in art education, rightly saw what was happening to art as a whole. The separation into social class distinctions (high art versus low art) made art an exclusive subject.

Similarly, McFee points out that there is a hierarchy in art forms; it is primarily segregated into high art (in such mediums as drawing, painting, and sculpture) as contrasted with functional low art (such as furniture manufacture, ceramics, and embroidery).<sup>2</sup> However, industrial art (artistic design for professional purposes) is also included in this low art category which can be any area, even those of drawing, painting, and sculpture, or any art related to an illustrative skill attainment. The designations of craftsman (artisan) and artist refer to a hierarchy of values for the creator. Louis Nizer spelled out this difference:

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<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Art as experience* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1934), 27.

<sup>2</sup> June K. McFee, "Art education progress: A field of dichotomies or a network of mutual support," *Studies in Art Education* 32, no. 2 (1991).

A man who works with his hands is a laborer; a man who works with his hands and his brain is a craftsman [artisan]; but a man who works with his hands and his brain and his heart is an artist.<sup>3</sup>

In the segregation of art, there is also a segregation of society into the haves and the have-nots. The use made of art should be to economically benefit the artists, not segregate them from society and usefulness. Walter Smith, though long dead, described the current state of American adult art education:

*The great lesson of history is that all the fine arts hitherto having been supported by the selfish power of the noblesse, and never having extended their range to the comfort or the relief of the mass of the people, the arts, I say, thus practiced and thus matured, have only accelerated the ruin of the states they adorned.*<sup>4</sup>

Within this hierarchy of art, adult learners who start their art education later in life are neglected. This is especially true in institutions of higher learning such as universities. The postmodern framework inside art departments, though espousing acceptance of folk art and crafts, only encourages those that are able to fit into the intellectually and philosophically-focused art based on social change. What must be made clear today is that diverse adult learners learn differently and desire different foci of art instruction. Some may want to use what they learn for self-expression, others may want to funnel their art education into a profitable occupation. Neither art focus should be shunned or discouraged; both should influence each other in order to benefit the adult learner. If an adult desires to create art with an illustrative or craftsmanship focus, there should only be encouragement. However, in order to truly understand where contemporary art education stands, it is necessary to define the current adult learner, their learning motivations and

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<sup>3</sup> Louis Nizer, [http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Louis\\_Nizer](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Louis_Nizer).

<sup>4</sup> Walter Smith, *Art education: Scholastic and industrial* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1873), 319.

barriers, and analyze adult education from reports of some current practices in art education for adult learners.

### Defining an Adult

America is encountering the age-old problem of Walter Smith. The social segregation of art forms for adult learners begs the following question: what are the motivations and practices of art in adult education? Smith did not have information on how best to reach adult learners, but he did recognize that adult education was different than child education: "*the different ages and attainments of the scholars ... must necessarily require some change in the arrangement of the work.*"<sup>5</sup> During Smith's time period, by the age of 15 individuals would have reached adulthood. This number was correlated to the responsibilities and roles individuals retained by that age. However, Jerry James,<sup>6</sup> a current adult educator, defines adulthood around the age of 24. Today the age for adulthood is less specific but often relates to the attainment of an undergraduate education. The contemporary classification of an age delineating adulthood is not an exact number because of differing opinions: an adult today can legally consume alcohol at the age of 21, but adults can legally vote, legally serve their country, and legally marry by the age of 18.

Adult education during Smith's time promoted the manual training of adults but promoted no self-direction in the focus of the learning process for adult learners. Smith

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<sup>5</sup> Walter Smith, *Industrial drawing in public schools: A course of three lectures addressed to the principals and teachers of the primary, grammar, and high schools of the city of Boston* (Boston: L. Prang & Company, 1875d), 37.

<sup>6</sup> Jerry James, "Learning to paint as adult transformation" (EdD diss., Columbia University), 2007.



encouraged self-expression only after technical training. Also, he encouraged learners to associate what they learned to their favorite subjects, but there was no encouragement for adult learner interaction or redefinition of the learning methods or materials. Walter Smith spent his career in America going between child education in the primary, grammar, and high school industrial art programs and adult education in the Massachusetts Normal Art School and Evening Drawing Schools (there were six evening schools in Boston alone).

Child education and adult education differ vastly according to Knowles.<sup>7</sup> Some of Knowles' central tenets of adult education include 1) adult education should be voluntary, 2) it should allow adults to use their experiences in the learning process, 3) adults should be able to apply what they learn towards their professional use or needs, and 4) adult education should promote self-directed and self-motivated learning. Smith understood that adult art education should be voluntary, especially for teachers at the Massachusetts Normal Art School:

*By the clearly defined action of the Drawing Committee, attendance at the Normal classes has always been voluntary on the part of the teachers; and even the keeping a record of individual or numerical attendance was forbidden....The fact is incidental to their freedom of choice in the matter of instruction.*<sup>8</sup>

For Smith's Evening Drawing School adult learners, education was contractual. The learners signed contracts agreeing to be in class three days a week. Smith states,

*It is suggested that the evening classes be held from 7 ½ to 9 ½, P.M., on three alternate evenings per week, instead of from 7 to 9, on two or four evenings per*

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<sup>7</sup> Malcolm S. Knowles, *The adult learner: A neglected species* (rev. ed.) (Houston: Gulf Publishing, 1990).

<sup>8</sup> Walter Smith, *Report on drawing: Addressed to School Committee, February 10, 1880* (Boston: Rockwell & Churchill, City Printers, 1880b), 11.

*week.... This change is intended to cure the unpunctuality and irregularity of the attendance.... Many of the most deserving students work up to 6 P.M. and cannot get home to meals and thence to class by 7 P.M. and so come strolling in at 7 ¼, 7 ½, and sometimes 8 o'clock.... As it has been found that two evenings per week are not enough for progress, and that four evenings per week are too many for the students to attend without irregularity, three evenings are suggested for trial without irregularity, three evenings are suggested for trial as a judicious compromise.... The system of class instruction by lectures, which it is proposed to introduce into the evening schools, has, in a modified form, been tried in one evening school during the present year, and was successful, both in partially curing irregular attendance and infusing new life and interest into the pupils and their work.*<sup>9</sup>

Thus, according to various periods in American history, age defines the adult learner according to different social roles and responsibilities. Merriam and Brockett sum up the nature of current concepts of adult education as “activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception define them as adults.”<sup>10</sup>

#### Adult Education in Art

According to Knox and Shields,<sup>11</sup> adult art education is the child of art education and adult education and shares characteristics of both parents. Adult art education exists on a continuum between individual creativity promoting social change and traditional technical conforming art practice. Individual orientation to social and personal change based on the concepts of freedom and social change, individuality, and originality is on one extreme of the scale while at the other end of the continuum, adults focus on

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<sup>9</sup> Walter Smith, *ibid.*, 31.

<sup>10</sup> Sharan B. Merriam and Ralph G. Brockett, *The profession and practice of adult education: An introduction* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 8.

<sup>11</sup> Though art and adult education were thoroughly researched in 1965, Knox's focus changed primarily to adult education after this article was written. Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, "Emerging directions in adult art education," *Art Education* 18, no. 9 (December 1965).

traditionally conforming technical emphasis based on art's relevance to a professional focus to popular societal art practice. However, this polar use of art education is unnecessary. If art history has shown that art at one time or the other has focused on thinking in art, feeling through art, or just doing art, why must this extreme isolation between the functions of art exist? What if these concepts are not mutually exclusive for adult learners? What if a framework for adult art education exists which endorses thinking, feeling, and action? Knox and Shields point out that this is the type of curriculum needed for adult learners. Intellectual art education (thinking) should not be isolated from the artistic expressionism (feeling) or the technical skill (doing) in art. Schaeffer-Simmern has promoted this more fully developed art framework for adult learners.<sup>12</sup>

The contemporary adult art learner is one who either needs art education for vocational and technical advancement or for structured time for leisure learning. Adults are now working longer and continued education is becoming part of professional requirements for being employed. Adults need to be able to use what they learn towards professional or life problems. Adult art education should be based on the experiences and the experiential learning process of the adult. Kauppinen asserts that older adult learners have more of an ability and insight into life through reminiscence which hopefully leads to integration of life experiences and resolved conflict.<sup>13</sup> If the older adults have the ability to integrate understanding in relation to their lived experiences, they are better

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<sup>12</sup> Henry Schaeffer-Simmern, *The unfolding of artistic activity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948).

<sup>13</sup> Heta Kauppinen, "Discussing art with older adults," *Art Education* 41, no. 6 (1988).

able to perceive iconographical meanings in symbolic and metaphorical art and relate it to their lives and to others.

As a fledgling field, art education for adults must redefine the adult learner, ascertain new objectives for adults, and provide more appropriate learning environments.<sup>14</sup> According to Eisner, an overall framework for teachers to be able to facilitate adult art learning needs to be created.<sup>15</sup> Defining the adult learner and their learning needs should be at the top of the list in art education practice. Adults differ from children in the increasing variability of learning experiences and outside influences, creating great variability in individual preferences and producing developmental changes according to the increasing age of the learner. Thus, there are two traits that can help adult educators understand the learning needs of adults: adult abilities and adult development. Adult abilities include visual acuity, manual dexterousness, and learning aptitude. Visual acuity decreases after the age range of the 20s. Thus, adult art education needs to take into account decreasing eyesight and provide well-lit learning environments. Manual dexterity does not decrease unless a debilitating disease is present. However, adults as they age begin to choose accuracy over speed of production. Thus, there is a delay in response time. Adult educators need to allow adult learners to continue at their speed of work while at the same time presenting sequential challenging techniques to adult learners to increase their dexterity in the art process. Adult learning ability does not decrease, but there are learning blocks because of previously learned

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<sup>14</sup> Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Elliot W. Eisner, "Towards a new era in art education," *Studies in Art Education* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1965): 55.

information which may have to be reassessed with adult learners. Therefore, more research on adult art learning should be done.<sup>16</sup>

Understanding adult development is essential for adult art educators. Havighurst and Orr asserted that adults must increasingly learn to adapt to changes in their life situations by using past experiences in addressing their present problems.<sup>17</sup> Neugarten describes the age of 40 as the point where adult personalities are fully developed and past which environmental mastery shifts to one of more passive environmental participation with a possible increase in empathy for others.<sup>18</sup> Thus, with increasing age, adults move from the vocational mastery role to one of leisure learning and increased introspection.

Knox and Shields point out that most adult art learning and development in colleges and universities takes place in a non-sequential and eclectic way which isolates adult learners. Many art educators in the institutional atmosphere have also had extreme flexibility to teach whatever they desire to teach with little framework or teacher accountability in the art learning process. Whipple has ascertained that adult learners must learn in a way which allows them to use previous experiences, but these experiences can block or encumber new art instruction.<sup>19</sup> Bloom has shown that emotional ties to previous adult experiences and adult formal education and professional prestige

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<sup>16</sup> Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Robert J. Havighurst and Betty Orr, *Adult education and adult needs* (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1956).

<sup>18</sup> Bernice L. Neugarten, "Personality changes during the adult years," in *Psychological backgrounds of adult education*, ed. R. Kuhlen (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1963).

<sup>19</sup> James Whipple, *Especially for adults* (Chicago: Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, 1963).

determine either openness or inhibition to new art learning.<sup>20</sup> Griner has found that adult aesthetic art predilection is correlated to an increase in social class.<sup>21</sup> Also, most art education in universities occurs as teacher-centered preference on one particular style and ideology of art. According to Kuhlen,<sup>22</sup> this is not good for adult learners who are forced into a rigid system of biased art instruction which will handicap adults' ability to understand different learning methods and foci in order to be able to adapt to changes and new problems in their lives. The university art world's current ideological dogmatism and art expectations of genius only influence adults by crippling their ability to desire lifelong learning; thus, they are inhibited from art world consciousness and informed participation in social change and lured into societal conformity. Thus, according to Knox and Shields, adults need a curriculum framework where previous experiences are used in the art process but which are tempered by a sequential and discipline-based format which allows adults time and understanding of the art world through dialogue and class discussion. This promotes new learning in relation to old realities and understandings.<sup>23</sup>

Another aspect for adult educators to be informed in is defining the learning objectives that meet adult needs. A needs assessment of learner skill, art theory understanding, individual self-directedness, and personal art ideals and goals should be

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<sup>20</sup> Benjamin S. Bloom, *Stability and change in human characteristics* (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1964).

<sup>21</sup> Ned H. Griner, "Implications for art education of socioeconomic factors influencing personal preferences in respect to utilitarian objects" (PhD diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1963).

<sup>22</sup> Ramond G. Kuhlen, *Aging and life adjustment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

<sup>23</sup> Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, *ibid.*

done. A knowledge of historical and contemporary ideologies of the art world and its focus should be introduced to adults so that they have a grasp of where art's focus has been and where it is now without claiming one concept's dominion over the other. A pluralistic approach to art styles and techniques is required by adult art educators for adult learners to be able to participate in the learning process and use what they want in their particular art focus.<sup>24</sup>

Knox and Shields point out that the adult learning environment in university art instruction should address learner motivations, reflection and practice of what is learned, guidance and facilitation in the learning experience, and more encouraging forms of evaluation rather than public criticism through typical subjective art course critiques. Learners participate in the subject matter choice through their awareness of visual art symbols and language. Learning through interaction with community artists, art galleries, workshops, and professional art associations or commercial practice informs their art learning for their particular need. Their breadth and depth of visual experience informs their judgments and choices in the art education practice. Adult art educators must also assess adult learner motivations. Adult art education should be a voluntary learning environment where self-directed learning and experimental art practice should be promoted. Otherwise, adult learners will feel anxious to fit the teacher's expectations of artistic aptitude and mold themselves to the teacher's "genius." According to Schaeffer-Simmern,<sup>25</sup> adults are motivated by personal, social-centered, and aesthetic technical aims which should simultaneously be available in an adult art education environment;

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<sup>24</sup> Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Henry Schaeffer-Simmern, *ibid.*

none of these components should be taught to adults in isolation of each other, else learning becomes one-dimensional and biased. Adults must be allowed to practice what they have learned. When action and reflection exist side by side, adult learners are able to fully participate in the learning process – not be automatons of the teacher’s personal art ideology. Learners should be allowed to determine their own learning experience. Thus, the teacher is a reference or a facilitator available for adult learners. Art educators typically convey to students through their praise or lack thereof if their work fits the standards of the particular teacher’s ideology of art. This should not be occurring in adult art education in the higher institutional setting.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, a discussion-based or dialogue-based learning environment would be more conducive to adult art learning than a lecture format. Also, teacher’s praise of particular students’ artwork in front of the whole class can determine students’ desire to conform to the instructor’s ideology in order to succeed in the course. Thomas has shown that it is possible to encourage all adult learners with praise while simultaneously encouraging them to struggle with their work; this prevents individual smugness which tends to block the desire to continue learning and engenders fear of change.<sup>27</sup> Here also, adults benefit from the art world outside the institutional learning environment. Community influences, local artists’ involvement, inter-agency collaboration can all be beneficial units for adult art education which the higher institution cannot provide itself. Finally, typical art education evaluation in a university environment uses the public teacher and students’

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<sup>26</sup> Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> R. Murray Thomas, "Art education," *Review of Educational Research* 34, no. 2 (April 1964): 237.



open critique to designate grades and show the class what is good and bad art. The critique uses public censure to secure one art ideology's control of the learning environment. This creates teacher's pets who are encouraged to use the teacher's art ideology to get ahead in the class. Adults should be able to set the standard for what they want to use their art learning for and not be derided from a hierarchical standard of art ideologies. Adults need feedback from the instructor, but in accordance with the learner's artistic intentions of individual usefulness.<sup>28</sup>

According to Knox and Shields, a new adult art education focus is needed which addresses the plurality of art within the structure of social influences while addressing the individual expressive and technical needs of adult learners. Another focus of adult art education should be research defining its empirical impact on adult education. Right now, adult art education is an ambiguous field with little scientific research to back it up as a discipline. Johnstone and Rivera point out that in 1965 there were 1,660,000 American adult participants in art education programs.<sup>29</sup> Thirty-three percent of the adult art learners took formal instruction in painting and drawing courses, 50 percent took leisure learning handicraft, and 17 percent of adults took art appreciation courses. Of the total adult participants, 40 percent were male, 43 percent of the participants were under age 35 and 13 percent were over age 54. Only five percent had not completed high school while 43 percent had some college education. Of the nearly twenty million participants in Johnstone's survey, the smallest percent of adults who did not finish high school was in

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<sup>28</sup> There appears to be no current assessments of adult art education as done by Knox and Shields in 1965. Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, *ibid*.

<sup>29</sup> John W. C. Johnstone and Ramon J. Rivera, *Volunteers for learning: A study of the pursuits of American adults* (Chicago: Aldine Publishers, 1965).

adult art education. Most of the participants in adult art education are older middle-class females. Thus, much needs to be done to encourage all social class participation in art education – otherwise, adult art education will always be elitist and segregational in the institutions for higher learning.<sup>30</sup>

Additionally, it is important to define the contemporary adult learner's reasoning behind continued education. Johnstone and Rivera found that a vast majority of adult learners participated in practical learning for technical skill attainment rather than academically-focused education.<sup>31</sup> Merriam and Brockett state:

In the most recent surveys, participation rates for males and females are equal [vastly different from Walter Smith's time]. Individuals with children under the age of sixteen reported higher rates of participation than those with no children under this age. According to Kopka and Peng,<sup>32</sup> different participation rates were found among respondents who are white (33 percent), black (23 percent), and Hispanic (29 percent). By far the greatest discrepancies in participation are correlated with prior education attainment. Rates of participation ranged from 16 percent for those with less than a high school diploma to 58 percent for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>33</sup> Of the 40 percent of respondents who reported participating, the most common activities were work-related courses only (14 percent of adults) and personal development courses only (12 percent).<sup>34</sup>

With increasing plurality of voices in America, art education programs must reach out to local communities and disenfranchised adults through local and informal outreaches where hopefully universities could bridge the gap of intellectual elitism in art

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<sup>30</sup> Alan B. Knox and Roscoe L. Shields, *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> John W. C. Johnstone and Ramon J. Rivera, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Teresita Kopka and Samuel Peng, *Adult education: Main reasons for participating* (Washington: U.S. Department of Education, 1993).

<sup>33</sup> Kwang Kim et al., *Forty percent of adults participate in adult education activities, 1994-95* (Washington: National Center for Educational Statistics, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

<sup>34</sup> Sharan B. Merriam and Ralph G. Brockett, *ibid.*, 131.

education and social class inequality. Knox and Shields point out that art education's importance and agency inter-relationships for art education purposes follow the track of world wars and times of negligence during periods of peace. During the 1930s, the government promoted art work for those out of work, and the increasing stability after World War II lessened the importance of art education. Thus, little research has been done in adult education in visual art (a much less important aspect of adult education within academia). Much more attention and research should be conducted about the field of adult art education led by adult education specialists as the umbrella for field research.

#### Adult Barriers and Motivations to Learning

There are several barriers and motivations to adult learning needs in university art courses today. Davidson warns about the barriers: some adults encounter financial barriers; some do not see how art in the university can help them with jobs skills; some see it as too technically focused and not for those who want self-expression; some lack access to information about university art classes; and some adults believe that the university is not for them.<sup>35</sup> Eschedor points out the lack of programs and research done in the area of adult and older adult art education.<sup>36</sup> Research that is available points to the need for self-directedness in art education for adults. The lack of research and programming for older adults has partially been because of a negative stereotype of the aging process. Thus, as Kauppinen states, art education is not seeing the change in the

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<sup>35</sup> Margaret Davidson, "Ethnic minority participation in access to higher education arts courses," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).

<sup>36</sup> Jennifer H. Eschedor, "The memory collage project: Art education with older adults" (master's thesis, University of Arizona), 2000.

learning needs of adults. She points out that as people get older, their educational needs change.<sup>37</sup> However, university art courses are not taking the adult learner's changing needs into consideration.

According to McClusky,<sup>38</sup> there are five changes in learning needs that occur as adults get older: coping needs, contributory needs, influence needs, expressive needs, and transcendental needs. Coping needs involve the provision of functional societal skills in learning to use computers, reading, writing, taking care of one's health, finances, and preparing for a new vocation. Contributory needs involve preparing adults to contribute to the larger community and interact with others. Influence needs involve being informed about social action participation and political involvement. Expressive needs provide meaningful and personally expressive learning activities. Transcendence needs involve conflict resolution which helps the adult to overcome previous realities and to be open to new understandings of one's position and to have serenity about their life as a whole.

Moody points out that the transcendence learning need is perhaps the most important as adults get older and the one most associated to the change in their learning needs which should be addressed by the learning process.<sup>39</sup> Art is beneficial to the older adult because it addresses the five learning needs. It can be a way for individuals to learn

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<sup>37</sup> Heta Kauppinen, "Changing perspectives on older adults' mental abilities and educational needs: Implications for art education," *Studies in Art Education* 31, no. 2 (Winter 1990).

<sup>38</sup> Howard Y. McClusky, "Education for aging: The scope of the field and perspectives for the future," in *Learning for aging*, eds. S. M. Grabowski and W. D. Mason (Washington: Adult Education Association, 1974).

<sup>39</sup> Harry R. Moody, "Education and life cycle: A philosophy of aging," in *Introduction to educational gerontology*, eds. R. H. Sherron and D. B. Lumsden (New York: Hemisphere Publishing, 1985).

new vocational skills and also be a way for them to contribute to their community of influences. Art is inherently an expressive medium which allows individuals to open up in the activity and allows adults to convey whatever political or social change initiatives they desire to learn about and portray in their artwork. And if art has a social backbone based on transformational and liberatory learning, it can be a strong advocate in adult transcendence needs. Art can meet all of the learning needs of adults depending on the teacher's understanding of the importance of all of these aspects of the adult learner's needs.<sup>40</sup> However, McWhinney and Markos point out that university art departments tend to bypass transformative learning or the necessity of transformational education through diminishing its value by stereotyping it as any random evocative learning.<sup>41</sup> McWhinney and Markos question transformational education's designation as spiritualism and religiosity which is subtly deemed inappropriate for secular university learning environments.

According to Esposito,<sup>42</sup> there are also several motivations for most adult learners in art education which parallel McClusky's adult learning needs: to meet professional standards for job maintenance, to learn to serve others better, to meet professional external expectations, to stimulate and challenge themselves, to satisfy their interests about materials, and/or to create or promote social interactions. In essence educators

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<sup>40</sup> Heta Kauppinen, 1990, *ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> Will McWhinney and Laura Markos, "Transformative education: Across the threshold," *Journal of Transformative Education* 1, no. 1 (January 2003): 4-46.

<sup>42</sup> Mark Esposito, "Emotional intelligence and andragogy: The adult learner," in *Learning organization in a learning world: The 19th International Conference at King Mongkut's University of Technology held in Thonburi Thailand, 2005*.

should assess learner motivations in order to shape their mode of instruction and materials involved. Some aspects of these learner-centered precepts should include: learning does not take place in isolation and, thus, it is essential for learners to construct their interpretations of what is learned around their and others' personal experiences, thoughts, beliefs, and feelings and learning should not be based on quantity because it is the quality of what is learned which makes material intrinsically pertinent to adults. Interdisciplinarity is important to emphasize within newly learned material in order for what is learned to become a pertinent motivator in the learner's life; there are different grades of learner self-confidence, individual objectives, and expectations for either success or failure in the learning environment.<sup>43</sup>

Art education for adults is inherently based on the experiences of individuals and driven by their motivations to learn. However, like Smith's practice of art education for adult workers in the late 1800s, most art studio courses in practice today rely heavily on traditional instructor-directed teaching.<sup>44</sup> The traditional pedagogical model of education applied to studio work in adult art education is necessary for initial introduction into art. Adults should be motivated in their own self-direction:

One would expect that in traditional art instruction students are gradually weaned away from exclusive reliance upon teachers who help them to both internalize and develop artistic standards that harmonizes established canons and rigor with the students' own needs for self-expression and creativity. The reality is that within a fragmented and episodic curriculum, students acquire a diversity of experiences, and move through coursework in haphazard personal ways (I am not speaking here of specialized art schools with more formalized structures, but of collegiate programs erected upon an elective system within university settings). The

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<sup>43</sup> Mark Esposito, *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Paul J. Edelson, *ibid.*

situation is even more complicated for adult students who may only sample a course or two. . . .<sup>45</sup>

According to Edelson, current university art education formats exclude adult learners because of the lack of art department accountability for adult learner needs and motivations. Little attention is given to providing a discipline-based framework which simultaneously encourages expressive dialogue while also providing knowledge of the practices and skills required for artistic expression and as a profession. Walter Smith corroborates Edelson's statement with a comment about the lawless nature of art education which is still present in art education for adults in the university environment:

All education is a process of reducing things to law and order; and even that most delicate operation of disciplining that hand and eye, training the understanding, and developing the powers of the imagination, must be conducted with due regard to subordination of the immature to the mature mind, or art study will become lawless and experimental.<sup>46</sup>

This is the conflict inside the liberal arts focus of current universities' visual art department settings. It is a lawless and undisciplined subject ruled by ideologies of postmodernism with a controlling deconstructionist and nihilistic art framework in university education courses. This ideological framework is philosophically and theoretically placed at variance to promoting professional skills which should also be provided to adult learners. Edelson believes that most adult students in art studio courses are not heading towards becoming professional artists and, thus, require more positive encouragement for self-directed and intrinsically motivated learning.<sup>47</sup> For those adults

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<sup>45</sup> Paul J. Edelson, *ibid.*, 81.

<sup>46</sup> Walter Smith, 1873, *ibid.*, 158.

<sup>47</sup> Paul J. Edelson, *ibid.*

seeking to use what they learn for professional use, there is not much of a foundation for the adults' advantage inside the liberal arts curriculum for visual art education.

Edelson warns that adults are extraneous to typical university notions of art education; there is now a non-reflective attitude to instruction of adults in the university towards art education and academia's endorsement of university credentials is not a sure sign that artistic accomplishment has been obtained.<sup>48</sup> According to Nolan,<sup>49</sup> art has become centered in intelligentsia in the university and isolated from popular culture and from the adult learner. In fact, it is now isolated from usefulness. Art and adult education must have a practical and emancipatory focus to be of use to adult learners. Adult art education in the university environment is currently framed within a subjective system directed towards making genius art superstars. Technical proficiency does not mean the adult learner will be rewarded in the fickle system which now promotes selfish ambition and motivation towards genius-ness. Simply doing the right thing according to what the teacher tells you will not assure success in the class. It is a subjective field where teachers harbor pet students who follow the teacher's style of painting. University art instructors say one thing but advocate another. They must at once teach art as a subject to learn but simultaneously promote individual genius and talent. Thus, it is bias camouflaged as impartiality. The teacher is the one in control of the learner.<sup>50</sup>

There are possible methods of addressing the above barriers to adult art learning

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<sup>48</sup> Paul J. Edelson, "Self-direction in adult art education," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).

<sup>49</sup> Paul Nolan, "Movements in the undergrowth," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife: UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).

<sup>50</sup> Paul J. Edelson, *ibid.*



needs and motivations which address changing the university visual art environment. Edelson, MacPhee, and Hoffman point out certain art instruction methods which encourage the adult art learner. Edelson claims that there needs to be a new model for adult art education. Teachers as art masters need to be aware of adult learners' experiences and honestly tell students when they cannot provide them with all they need to know. It is essential to inform adult learners about places to find information about what they are interested in through the use of community art centers, local artists and art guilds, and commercial apprenticeships; this is especially important to emphasize to adult learners in order to give them access to art which can be used to support themselves – not just as a hobby. There must be a redefinition of university art education curricula for adult learners by: using adult experiences, bringing in guest artists and museum visits, and through exploring learner differences, interconnectedness, and motivations such as gender, ethnicity, etc. which seek to encourage their particular way of learning.<sup>51</sup>

Edelson points out that the concept of artistic genius is a block to adult learners. Teachers need to encourage in-class group work because artists should feed off of each other in small group sessions; it should not be a comparison of talent or artistic genius that seeks to make adults competitive with each other. The way students are evaluated is through an open critique where instructors tend to embarrass students. Teachers should hold critiques in a more casual way through small groups where the teacher's artistic and technical vocabulary will not scare the learners. The adult learner should be encouraged to discuss the intentions for their work without fear of being judged by the postmodern art world in their classroom.

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<sup>51</sup> Paul J. Edelson, *ibid.*

Edelson offers that true art production in art education requires a process of experimentation which is outside of productivity's success or failure. Experimentation and hands-on learning should be the foundation of adult art education practices. A positive instruction method inside adult art education includes providing learners with information about sources of art learning in the community centers, art clubs, and also commercial art (industrial art, craft art, community art, etc.) apprenticeships. It is important to encourage adult learners to find books, videos, magazine articles, art museums, and libraries, as well as ways to integrate art into every discipline and experience in their life. There should be a firm curriculum in adult art education instruction which is garnished with art's relationship to adult professional use and self-directed personal expression.

MacPhee, like Edelson, emphasizes that small learner groups allow for students to provide their own evaluative observations, experiences, and visual language.<sup>52</sup> Students are also encouraged to be constructively critical of their own and others' work, asking some basic questions about the art work: what do you observe, who is the audience that the art is geared towards, what is the societal or chronological framework of the art, to whose advantage is it that the art is exhibited where it is? Frequently in art education, more attention is given to creativity, uniqueness, innovation and artistic genius in art production (focusing on creating innovators of postmodernist fine art) than to the importance of self-directed exploration for the sake of the process of experiential learning and, thus, being able to use what one learns for professional skills. Art is a subjective

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<sup>52</sup> Anne MacPhee, "A singular collaboration. Adult education and the national collection of modern art at the Tate Gallery Liverpool: A study in practice and effect," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).

process of learning and its value is in the eye of the beholder or the creator. Yet, it is important for the adult learner and art teacher to be in agreement on what art's emphasis should be in their lives (whether avocational or professional). It should be easy for teachers to rearrange instruction and assessment according to the learning needs of adults because of the open-ended and subjective nature of artistic creativity. Instructors themselves learn from experiences along with the students which is a basic tenet of adult education in any area of learning.<sup>53</sup>

Hoffman asserts that adults who decide to take art classes usually have the drawing ability of an adolescent if they have not practiced much with art in their lifetime.<sup>54</sup> Thus, many adults feel embarrassed to show their artwork because they inherently compare it to what children create. Insensitive art teachers can damage an adult learner's confidence if they run over the learner with their own artistic "genius" and do not discern the needs of the learner. Hoffman points out that adults need self-directed art instruction with professional and technical help on the side. The typical teacher-centered approach to art education is not the right framework for adult learning. Many adults taking art education classes come to it with little art experience and, thus, they are uncomfortable with more abstract styles of work. Hoffman even states that most adults do not have the artistic skills and aesthetic understanding to move from one art style to another and become intimidated and apprehensive of the art process.

According to Hoffman, adults are primarily familiar with trying to make

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<sup>53</sup> Anne MacPhee, *ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Donald H. Hoffman, "A new beginning: Adults as artists," *Art Education* 41, no. 1 (January 1988): 54-59.

something look like an object – representational realism – and are scared of doing something wrong. Thus, the teachers need to promote an atmosphere of non-comparative and free experimentation and dialogue in the learning process. It is especially necessary to have art teachers who know all the styles of art and their interpretations. A broader scope of teacher understanding in art history trends in styles, aesthetic interpretations of each style, and how to talk about the art style allow learners to understand and be a part of the art world and choose the art style which they enjoy working with most. It should be the adult's choice, not the instructor's. It is also essential that adult personal experiences become vital to the art learning process early if adults are to feel that their work is important.

The Hoffman scale of visual art is an available learning tool to help inexperienced adult art learners who are dissatisfied with their lack of artistic realism to understand that there are other styles of learning that do not require realism; the scale shows the difference in realism and abstraction, but it is the adult's choice regarding what they desire to learn. Teachers should be encouraging whether adults desire a better understanding of realistic or more abstract styles of art. The Hoffman scale starts with degrees of realism in photographic realism and increases with degrees of abstraction to become less and less recognizable as representational art and becomes fully abstract art. The scale includes all the American art styles and those of different ancient and tribal art styles through world history. Teachers should give examples of all types of art styles and techniques so that the adult learners do not consider one style as the teacher preference for them. Also, encouraging dialogue between students with different art ideologies helps adult learners understanding different art styles and art ideologies without promoting one

over the other.<sup>55</sup>

Watson reports that non-traditional adult students attend universities for professional and practical knowledge because they have careers and families to support while traditional learners desire a more social and intellectual focus.<sup>56</sup> Thus, with the increasing number of nontraditional adult learners, different types of art instruction need to be provided to meet adult learners' needs in the university art department. There are differences in adult learning styles and styles of art which university art teachers should take into consideration when they are teaching in an academic institution.

#### Current Art Instruction in Adult Education

There are different practices involved in current university foundations for teaching adult art education. The problem is that adult learners who desire to use their education vocationally have very few options in the elective courses available to gain a solid base of understanding in the elements of art education. This leaves them in a vague area of learning; adults can have a passion for learning but be given no focus for using it as a way to provide for themselves in this world. However, some authors from the past and present discuss this increasing gap through which many adult learners are falling.

According to Goldman,<sup>57</sup> though university art departments tout multiculturalism in art center activities, the art courses available in these universities do not reflect an adult learner consideration. Because art education is a small fingerling underneath the umbrella

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<sup>55</sup> Donald H. Hoffman, *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Stephanie A. Watson, "Learning style preferences: A comparison of traditional and nontraditional interior design students" (EdD diss., University of Arkansas), 1997.

<sup>57</sup> Freda H. Goldman, "Higher education: Its involvement in adult art education," *Art Education* 18, no. 9 (December 1965): 21-23.

field of adult education and because universities give such a small berth to adult education, adult art education itself does not receive much emphasis or practice within most state/private universities or private colleges. Not only are adults considered unimportant in the university art department environment, but the university has also determined that its essential focus in art education should be towards social change initiatives in America's increasingly pluralistic society. Towards this end, Goldman states that art departments rhetorically promote the nontraditional adult learner and pacify them with one or two university elements dealing with adult art education but direct their main focus towards traditional undergraduate learners. The majority of courses available for adult learners in the universities focus on art history or one or two amateur art appreciation courses in painting and drawing.

Goldman points out that there is a small group of people who are introducing art education into broader programs within the field of adult education. Some university programs reach out to the community such as in the course of Landscape Design available at the University of Oregon. There are also art courses inside of an adult degree program focus such as at the New York University Associate in Arts Degree Program. Some universities reach out to adult learners by providing technical professional help for local artists and community art groups, and by helping adults to sell their artwork through such institutions as the University of Washington Arts and Crafts Guild, the University of Michigan Art News-letter and the University of Wisconsin.

Goldman points out that adult education can be geared towards professional and non-professional art instruction. However, both require acknowledgment of three foundational art instruction purposes: a production-orientation for teaching technical art

skills and tool proficiency; an art history appreciation, art criticism, and an aesthetic knowledge which encourages interest and experiential learning in the arts; and supportive and professional commercial understanding for artists who desire to market their art skills. However, this conglomerate of purposes rarely is ever promoted together and is expensive to design in universities geared towards more remunerative disciplines. Few university administrators back such a triad of art education purposes towards adult art education and thus, the quest to make art education more available for adult learners must continue.<sup>58</sup>

Schwalbach points out that universities are seen as the educational ivory tower of a community which rarely reaches out to understand the nature and desires of the surrounding community of adult learners.<sup>59</sup> When universities reach out to create art programs through extension programs in local communities, they tend to propagate the university norms for art instruction rather than listening to the adult learners themselves within their community of life experiences. The initiatives of university policy-makers rarely match the needs of the community. Yet, if universities realize that they must help local art programs without taking control of the programs, adult learners will be able to participate in fulfilling their own art education needs. However, currently the university art department courses and community art extension programs for adult learners only manage to convey elitist and academic snobbishness by ignoring the aesthetic focus of the community of nontraditional adult learners they supposedly reach out to help.

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<sup>58</sup> Freda H. Goldman, *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> James A. Schwalbach, "The demise of the tower," *Art Education* 18, no. 9 (December 1965): 23.

However, one university that has managed to reach out to its community but not trample individual learners is the University of Wisconsin Extension Division. It creates a magazine and art programs directed towards helping local adult artists design and sell their artwork. This work is geared towards helping local and ethnic artisans gain respect and identity in their own community of influences.<sup>60</sup>

Singerman discusses the struggle in university art departments in terms of vision and language where language wins the field of influence.<sup>61</sup> He points out the historicity of this same struggle in university art practice and further affirms that early art education such as during Walter Smith's time was founded on objective notions of art instruction while intellectual jargon subjectively controls the language of the entire field of current university art practice available for nontraditional learners. Thus, art amateurs and outsiders are not welcome into the university art world.

Singerman acidly assesses the irrelevancy of a professional university M.F.A. degree (Master of Fine Arts) in relation to the fact that it does not mean skill attainment for professional work outside the university. It does, however, mean students are trained to be pedagogues in order to fit back into the system of university art practice. Thus, isolationism produces an inbreeding of university concepts of art instruction. Singerman states, "artists are the subject of graduate school; they are both who and what is taught."<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> James A. Schwalbach, *ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Howard Singerman, *Art subjects: Making artists in the American University* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999).

<sup>62</sup> Howard Singerman, *ibid.*, 3.



Today, university art education's primary focus is on theory rather than art skill attainment and practice. We are, in essence, where Walter Smith describes German education over a century ago:

*The German States, towards the end of the last century and the first part of the present one, fully perceived the necessity of educating their population; and schools were liberally spread over the country, both for the poor and for the middle classes. Classical education, which operates on the truth that man's moral nature is always the same, and that therefore, the human passions may be governed by a knowledge of past experiences, was made the groundwork upon which the German schools were taught. The schools succeeded admirably; and their pupils were worthy of the excellent instruction they received. But, after being educated, they naturally looked for employment in the direction of their education. They said to the Government which had established those schools, 'You have taught us how to understand the nature of our fellow-men by the experience of the past; we can now aid you to govern them: give us employment.' It was in vain for the Government to say, 'We have given you a good education: go and work for yourselves.' The natural answer was, 'The sort of education you have given does not at all adapt us for an industrial life. We know much about history, logic, and philosophy, but nothing about manufacturers and commerce.' Accordingly, the Government had gradually to enlarge their bureau for the reception of their well-educated men, until, finally, one in sixty of the population entered into State employment. At that time Germany, though a classically-educated country, was neither rich nor strong. Then the trade or industrial schools were opened, which, giving an education in the direction of production, drew off men's minds from looking to the State as the only source of respectable employment; relieving the old pressure, while it increased the resources of the country.<sup>63</sup>*

This is now the same point where adult visual art graduates find themselves. There are no clear professional art standards to use commercially after university graduation, thus, forcing students to return to the university. Singerman points out that this university professionalism creates a vacuousness in the contemporary art world which appears to be destroying itself for intellectual novelty.

Singerman states that theoretical progress is the driving force behind university

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<sup>63</sup> Walter Smith, 1873, *ibid.*, 4-5.

art departments. Yet rhetoric about art and about being an artist does not assure a progressive education that will affix knowledge for the learners to use towards their life experiences and needs. Singerman pinpoints the entrance of art into the university at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century where it became a distinct discipline in a well-educated individual's repertoire of knowledge. While originally geared towards educating school teachers in the normal schools, by 1912, the university acknowledged art's existence in the creation of the College Art Association. However, it was also at this point that university art professors realized that they must define themselves in university philosophical academicism in order to stay a member of the elite cast on the university stage. So, university art departments sought to separate themselves from traditional art academy instruction (ironically considered distasteful elitist fine art). This resulted in a superiority complex in university art schools which claimed to be the only place to create liberal humanists who just incidentally obtained knowledge about art while creating an inferiority complex in art academy commerciality. Thus, inside the university, art is justified according to its cognitive powers for helping other disciplines.

University art departments see students as already knowledgeable philosophical peers where the language used to analyze art and the discussion of theoretical art concepts rule all. The art school academies, on the other hand, teach with an experiential learning focus towards art techniques and skill attainment. So, according to Singerman, intellectual language rules over a visual/technical education focus in academia.

Singerman concludes that it is the university discipline of visual art which must be "talked into existence."<sup>64</sup> Instead of creating art work, university art professionals

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<sup>64</sup> Howard Singerman, *ibid.*, 165.

assign a theoretical position to art defined within a socio-cultural context. This learning habitat descends from the university focus on a scientific laboratory research hierarchy for defining art world views (of what is and is not art). Intellectualism and individualism present in the constant espousal of new socially progressive views rule the university visual art department focus; this bias towards progressivism defines its desperate need to be defined inside the elite university institution.

Bailey warns that there is very little connection between academic art standards and vocational art standards today.<sup>65</sup> University art academic standards profess to define what all educated citizens need to know while vocational art standards represent the standards required for professional work outside of academia. According to Bailey, academia has denied access of professional art education for fear that industries will deny the need for their type of art. However, there is a cry for better cooperation between the two environments for the adult learner. One should not coerce or control the other, but they should both work together for the good of the individual. The isolation of the two environments produces negative social and pedagogic results.

Raizen<sup>66</sup> and Resnick's<sup>67</sup> research found that vocational emphasis can deepen academic learning and make information more understandable for the learner. The purpose of the cooperation between the two environments is not to prepare individuals

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<sup>65</sup> Thomas R. Bailey, "Integrating academic and industrial skill standards." (Columbia University), 1998. (ED 417335)

<sup>66</sup> Senta A. Raizen, "Learning and work: The research base," in *Vocational education and training for youth: Towards coherent policy and practice*, eds. L. McFarland and M. Vickers (Paris: OECD, 1994).

<sup>67</sup> Lauren B. Resnick, "Learning in school and out," *Educational Researcher* 16, no. 9 (1987): 13-20.

for a specific job but to use industry as a way to deepen academic understanding and skills such as problem-solving. It allows them to see how the things they are learning translate into valued professional art skills. According to Bailey,<sup>68</sup> this is especially helpful to adult learners who are in an academic area concerning a subjective and abstract subject with a non-specific purpose such as visual art education. However, a few people have reached across the table to address the growing chasm between the two environments. In 1997, the National Skill Standards Board, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, and the School-to-Work Office of the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education initiated Building Linkages, a project created to link academia and industry together for the aid of the adult learner.

Pierce, Harper, Hull, Grubb, and Hemby point out that, with an increasingly competitive commercial market, there has not been the necessary focus on educational development's collaboration with work force initiatives.<sup>69</sup> Today, art education in the academic setting only teaches adults to become pedagogues themselves. This is similar to what Peter Smith claimed occurred in Walter Smith's art education standardization.<sup>70</sup> However, Bailey states that academic art standards should be integrated with industry art standards so that those who do not desire to be a part of the academic institution can know the value and worth of their skills in industry.<sup>71</sup> Bailey points out that there is no

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<sup>68</sup> Thomas R. Bailey, *ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> W. Lee Pierce, et al., "Public knowledge and awareness of adult illiteracy and adult basic education programs," (July 1993). (ED 363752)

<sup>70</sup> Peter J. Smith, *The history of American art education: Learning about art in American schools* (London: Greenwood Press, 1996).

<sup>71</sup> Thomas R. Bailey, *ibid.*

way of knowing how the rift between university and industry affects what worth academic learning has for the adult learner who must work to take care of themselves and their families. Bailey asserts that a process-oriented (instead of product-oriented) approach to integrating standards between the two environments can benefit the adult learner. Through the thoughtful collaboration of academic instructors, vocational/technical teachers, and industry participants, the level of on-the-job training can include higher standards of academic skills in relation to the job requirements.

However, Elias and Merriam warn that “Theory without practice leads to an empty idealism, and [production focused] action without philosophical reflection leads to mindless activism.”<sup>72</sup> Neither of these areas of focus can benefit the adult learner unless they exist in relation to each other. This is the state of affairs when commercial standards and community involvement are excluded from the university art department adult art education and, likewise, when industry excludes theoretical standards in the professional training of art designers. However, it is the adult learner who suffers from the growing division between the two areas of art instruction.

#### Current Research

There are a few quantitative studies which provide helpful information about the field of adult art education. According to Dobbs,<sup>73</sup> visual art’s inability to prove that it is a worthwhile discipline in the global marketplace causes it to be neglected and excluded from serious education disciplines. In 1949 Lissim sought to determine how art was

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<sup>72</sup> Jeffrey W. Elias and Sharan Merriam, *Philosophical foundations of adult education* (Melbourne, FL: Kreigger, 1980), 4.

<sup>73</sup> Stephen M. Dobbs, "Research and reason: Recent literature and ideas in American art education," *Curriculum Theory Network* 4 (1974): 169-191.

taught in the universities, colleges, museums, art schools and libraries for adult students interested in understanding more about high art and applied art (low art), finding that the formless nature of the terms *adult education* and *art education* allows many institutions to differ in their praxis of how to institute adult education practices in art.<sup>74</sup> Lissim sent out questionnaires to universities and colleges, art museums, art schools and libraries to find out how they put adult education into praxis inside the art education environment. The findings showed that of the total, only a few gave art education classes to adults without entrance requirements or fees. The study found that a third of the courses were specifically focused on visual art. Of these art courses, most dealt with studio art classes; there was little focus on art history, art aesthetics, or art criticism which are all essential components of the discipline-based art education model. The survey revealed that it is essential to provide a variety of art courses that apply to the practical needs of adults.

Lissim saw a great necessity for making art studio courses applicable to novice students as well as experienced students who needed more in-depth training from experienced art specialists. The need for expertise in art production is an essential component for training and can take many shapes, forms, and materials. Art production deals with two-dimensional drawings or paintings, three-dimensional works in sculpture or ceramics, and works installed in a specific setting, conceptual works of art which require viewer participation, and performance art.<sup>75</sup> The survey found that of the students from the ages of 18 to 75 who took art courses, 50% participated for vocational reasons,

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<sup>74</sup> Simon Lissim, "Art education for adults," *College Art Journal* 8 (1949): 288-292.

<sup>75</sup> Yvonne Gaudelius and Peg Spiers, eds., *Contemporary issues in art education*, with an introduction by Y. Gaudelius and P. Spiers (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc., 2002).

30% took courses as an avocation, while the remaining 20% took the courses to improve their professional status.

Jones (1993) points out in her research that age is an essential factor for university art educators.<sup>76</sup> Adults have different learning needs than younger and more traditional university art students because adults are more self-directed. Kasworm, in 1992, points out that older adult university students tend to be self-directed whether or not the teacher promotes that form of learning.<sup>77</sup> Kasworm defines self-directed learning as an interactive form of knowledge, individual mind-sets and actions in relation to making learning pertain to life experiences and environmental adaptations. Of the 110 university art majors surveyed, most of them were beginning their art degree with only 34% of them having advanced art knowledge (defined as at least 12 art courses). The average age of the participants was 25.6 years old. Data analysis revealed that self-directed learning increased with age where age was associated with an increase in adult responsibility. Also, adult university art students tended to have a higher socio-economic status and approach university art education for psycho-social reasons. Cervero and Kirkpatrick point out that an adult's education level is an indicator of self-directed learning.<sup>78</sup> Self-direction is an essential component to adult education and art education. Thus, university

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<sup>76</sup> Jean E. Jones, "The influence of age on self-directed learning in university and community adult art students," *Studies in Art Education* 34 (1993): 158-166.

<sup>77</sup> Carol E. Kasworm, "Adult learners in academic setting: Self-directed learning within the formal learning context," in *Self-directed learning: Application and research*, eds. H. B. Long and Associates (Norman, OK: Oklahoma Research Center for Continuing Professional and Higher Education of the University of Oklahoma, 1992).

<sup>78</sup> Ronald M. Cervero and Thomas E. Kirkpatrick, "The enduring effects of family role and schooling on participation in adult education," *American Journal of Education* 99 (1990): 77-94.

curriculums and instructors based on a teacher-centric agenda are antithesis to adult learner needs.

In 2004 Scott reports that older adults are more educated now than they have ever been.<sup>79</sup> A 2007 report pinpoints that 76.1% of the older American population have their high school degree and the number is growing.<sup>80</sup> With the increase in the adult lifespan, more adults are looking for opportunities to use their skills and continue learning later in life. It should be the intention of university art education to address this influx of new students. However, current art education is not geared towards the nontraditional adult art learner. Most of those trained as art educators are pointed towards a K-12 curriculum format. The field of art education has, on the whole, been slow to address the increase in the older adult art learner needs. Even the application of the Lifelong Learning Special Interest Group applying for admission in 1989 into the National Art Education Association did not receive admittance until 2004. There is also a void in adult art education research and information on how art educators can reach out to adult learners and what institutions should include in their art curriculums that address the older learner. Research needs to be conducted that will address what universities are currently doing to reach out to older adult art learners and what can be changed in the university curriculums for the benefit of the adult learner that is not being done now.

Scott set out to assess university art educators' attitudes about older adult learners

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<sup>79</sup> Kathy L. Scott, "A descriptive study of the status of art education for older adults in higher education: An examination of attitudes and coursework" (MA thesis, University of Arizona), 2004.

<sup>80</sup> U.S. Administration on Aging, "The Older Population," *A Profile of Older Americans: 2009*, 2009, [http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Aging\\_Statistics/index.aspx/](http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Aging_Statistics/index.aspx/) (accessed August 21, 2009).



in a survey asking them about older adult art education and the university curriculums available to teach art educators.<sup>81</sup> The survey was given to 889 university art educators. Of the 256 educators (out of 889) who responded to the surveys, there were 71.9% of the university art educators who believed that art education should address the needs of the older adult population. Roughly 20% were not sure whether adult art focus would be helpful in a university atmosphere. Also, 71.5% agreed that university art educators should be taught how to instruct older adult learners. Also, though art education in higher institutions of learning is an elite subject in which most adult learners from lower class status do not participate, a resounding 95.7% thought that art should be available for everyone and 96.1% pointed out that older adults desire art education. An ironic point in the assessment showed that only 84% believed that art should be applied to all ages of learners; thus, there were some adult educators who said art should be for everyone, but not for all ages of learners. Of those surveyed, 81.6% agreed that most art education is geared to students who desire to teach in K-12; so, a promotion on K-12 artistic curriculum training and policy focus denies adult learner importance in university art teacher education. And, a majority of art educators were unsure whether their students were interested in teaching adults rather than in the K-12 setting. Another survey question probed the point by asking whether they agreed that teaching adults was the same as teaching children; there were 88.7% of the respondents who disagreed. However, many of the respondents were unsure why adult art education was excluded from the university art education curriculum and the majority of art educators asserted that university art education should focus on K-12 instruction. Seventy percent of the art educators reported

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<sup>81</sup> Kathy L. Scott, *ibid.*

that their university art courses had nothing to do with older adults. Of the art educators surveyed, over 90% thought that they were qualified to teach older adults. However, only 31% worked with adult art education and only 10% had any training with older adults in art education. Overall, this represents a vast ignorance of the adult learner in university art education courses which should be the focus of current art education research.<sup>82</sup>

Simultaneously, of the 544 university art programs surveyed, less than one percent thought that service-learning in communities with older adults should be essential to art education practice. Of the art education courses provided in these art programs, only one made mention of older adult learning within the course itself. And, though there were four programs which had courses directed to older adult art education, they have been cancelled due to the retirement of the instructors. According to Scott, the study shows how current university art programs are dependent on popular and political direction of funds, and adult education in art is considered too minor a spotlight for any particular university art program focus.

#### Summary

Reviewing the current adult visual art education status leaves much opportunity for improvements. Adult education is at the center of university visual art reformation. According to Edelson, the typical pedagogic model inside the university art classroom is not the most effective method of instruction for adult learners.<sup>83</sup> However, the emphasis of art education with adult learners should be to focus on encouraging learner control of the art medium and elemental artistic function both for artistic avocational and

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<sup>82</sup> Kathy L. Scott, *ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> Paul J. Edelson, *ibid.*

professional use. The aim of art education should be to take greater recognition of the fact that most learning that occurs in art takes place outside the formal learning environment in one's community of influences. All too often, many of the studio courses are taught in the traditional teacher-centered (pedagogic) model of education which works inside the subjective concept of a predetermined ideological art curriculum created from previous experiences and instructions provided to the teacher. There is little emphasis on encouraging learners to be independently enthusiastic and self-directed outside of the course for their personal and professional needs.

According to Edelson, most studio production inside an art education environment exists as a form of personal self-education and subjective learning. Yet, adult learners are encouraged to mold themselves in the image of professional artists and those considered by society to claim the high ground of the deconstructionist artistic genre. They perceive these master artists as the epitome of what is demanded inside art courses which primarily use pedagogical methods of instruction not geared towards adult learner participation and application. Edelson states

The chance factor of fame and the consequent illusiveness of permanent greatness must be seen as seriously undercutting the presumed validity of disciplined art instruction which posits the existence of "objective standards" or fixed points from which to instruct and judge the often unacknowledged conflict between subjectivity/creativity on the one hand, and formalized/rationalized instruction on the other making evaluation and judgment of art problematic and highly circumscribed. The premium in art on "newness" – breaking through to novel ways of seeing and visually describing experiences – reinforces the view of the artist as an "original" to be discovered [high art], not simply an aspiring stylist or technician to be trained [low art].<sup>84</sup>

Katz and O'Leary define the seeming innocuousness in university art social

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<sup>84</sup> Paul J. Edelson, *ibid.*, 80.

change progressivism as a facade which hides interest group initiative control.<sup>85</sup> Platt similarly refers to a multicultural progressivism which hides the root foundational and institutional instability from the segregation of class and cultures.<sup>86</sup> Platt begs an answer for why multiculturalism within the university art department focus seems a broken record of apologies but no real action towards inequality and inter-cultural understanding through relational and social reconstructivist methods. If the university art departments deconstruct society, how can society have any sense of community to connect with the individual? Who will try to help turn theory into effective action? The social change initiative endorsed in university art department progressivism appears to be throwing the focus off the larger problem of actually picking apart and exchanging inequalities for an egalitarian society by helping individuals connect to their culture and society.

Eugene E. Garcia and Julie Figueroa point to this split between conforming social change rhetoric and transformational action as the cause of the social divide inside academic intellectualization of progressive initiatives.<sup>87</sup> They refer to the decidedly underrepresented artistic values from all cultures supported in the art department multiculturalism agenda. Artwork of folk and ethnic crafts and artisanry are dismally small in relation to the academic intellectual and philosophical agenda. Local community artists and art learning is run over by the intellectual snobbery running rampant in university art

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<sup>85</sup> Susan R. Katz and Cecilia E. O'Leary, "Overview of new pedagogies for social change," *Social Justice* 29, no. 4 (2002): 1-7.

<sup>86</sup> Anthony M. Platt, *Entitled: The rise and fall of equality in higher education*, Unpublished manuscript (National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), 1999).

<sup>87</sup> Eugene E. Garcia and Julie Figueroa, "Access and participation of Latinos in the University of California," *Social Justice* 29, no. 4 (2002): 47-59.

departments' race for progress. Katz and O'Leary state that the growing social division is a cry for interdisciplinary alliances and inter-cultural dialogue to bridge the gap.<sup>88</sup> This relational and interconnected action will not seek to destroy past learning techniques and history but use it to encourage new modes of teaching and instruction which reach out to connect the adult with society.

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<sup>88</sup> Susan R. Katz and Cecilia E. O'Leary, *ibid.*

## CHAPTER V

## FUTURE: RECONSTRUCTION WITH A SOCIAL BACKBONE

Clover found seven basic characteristics of art learning based on its dialectic and relational nature: versatility and diversity within art education allow changes in the material/student interactions and elevation of different approaches to adult art focus; art's connective imagination and creativity are factors which connect imagination in art with the adult's world of influences, interests, and experiences; nonverbal communication through art symbols and visual metaphors trigger relational understanding and community dialogue about art meanings; art is an agent which is able to simultaneously promote visibility, anonymity, autonomous-ness, and a community collectivity which are all parts of inter-cultural relationships; the longer the duration and the reflection of art education learning, the more involved art discussion and dialogue in the process of inter-cultural understanding; also, art instruction must promote adult learner risks and challenges in order for the learner to relate to their community and society at large.<sup>1</sup> Thus, art instruction plays a large part in dialogue and understanding between various cultures and backgrounds.

Kathy James points out that by the year 2030, 20% of Americans will be over 65 years old.<sup>2</sup> Art is currently on a pedestal where adult learners are not encouraged to reach. And if they do participate in academic art instruction, it is done in a way which promotes

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<sup>1</sup> Darlene E. Clover, "Culture and antiracism in Adult Education: An exploration of the contributions of arts-based learning," *Adult Education Quarterly* 57, no. 1 (November 2006): 46-61.

<sup>2</sup> Kathy L. James, "Rethinking art education for older adults: An ethnographic study of the University of the Third Age" (PhD diss., Pennsylvania State University), 2008.

artistic genius. In current adult art education there is a disconnect between art focused on individual attainment of skill or expression and a focus of social issues and contexts. Perhaps there should be a dialectic between this dualism in art instruction which connects the individual to their society. And this dialectic can be placed as a backbone to adult art education through Freire's concept of emancipatory education. The community of influences surrounding adult art education could provide part of the transformational bridge between an individual and a social issues focus in art education.

#### A Social Theory Backbone

According to Newville, current adult educators who decide to participate in liberation and social change pedagogy retain aspects of feminist ideology and post-structuralist theories.<sup>3</sup> However, Imel warns that an art education foundation based on these theories does not always engender an emancipatory art education.<sup>4</sup> Brookfield,<sup>5</sup> Loughlin,<sup>6</sup> Greene,<sup>7</sup> and Marcuse made the connection that art can be emancipatory.<sup>8</sup> However, there is a great deal of leeway between its theory and practice.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Sandra Newville, "Intersection of art and emancipation: The road to rebellious subjectivity" (EdD diss., North Carolina State University), 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Susan Imel, "How emancipatory is adult learning?" *ERIC Publications* 071, 1999.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen D. Brookfield, "Reassessing subjectivity, criticality, and inclusivity: Marcuse's challenge to adult education," *Adult Education Quarterly* 52, no. 4 (2002): 265-280.

<sup>6</sup> Kathleen A. Loughlin, "Emancipatory learning of change agents: Context and description," *ERIC Report* 26, 1992.

<sup>7</sup> Maxine Greene, *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *The aesthetic dimension: Toward a critique of Marxist aesthetics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).

<sup>9</sup> Sandra Newville, *ibid.*

Some adult education researchers find that the transformational nature of art which explores individual emotions, creativities, imagination and personal input is the essence of emancipatory education.<sup>10</sup> Loughlin further points out that practical and personalized interaction and self-directedness are part of diverse knowledge and imagination exploration in emancipatory education of which art can be a catalyst for interpersonal and inter-cultural understanding.<sup>11</sup> Both art education and adult education claim that they are inherently part of the emancipatory process. However, university art practice based on assumptions of art's subjectivity and the designation of creative genius in a few individuals appears to contradict goals of an emancipatory education. Likewise,

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<sup>10</sup> Katherine S. Childs, "Dancing in front of the blue screen: Just where do you think you're going?," in *Fifth International Conference on Transformative learning held in New York*, (New York: Columbia University Teachers College, 2003).

Janice E. Clark, "Imagining otherwise: A consideration of Imagination in transformative learning," in *Third International Conference on Transformative Learning held in New York*,(New York: Columbia University Teachers College, 2000).

Elliot Eisner, "Artistry in education," *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 47, no. 3 (2003): 373-384.

Daniele D. Flannery and Janet C. Widoff, "Sharing women's experience of violence: A journey," in *Fifth International Conference on Transformative Learning held in New York*, (New York: Columbia University Teachers College, 2003).

John Heron, *Feeling and personhood* (London: Sage Publications, 1992).

Randee L. Lawrence, "Knowledge construction as contested terrain: Adult learning through artistic expression," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 107 (Fall 2005): 3-11.

Colleen A. Wiessner and Sandra Newville, "Critical creativity: A collage of knowing regarding transformation through the arts," in *Sixth International Conference on Transformative Learning held in East Lansing*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005).

<sup>11</sup> Kathleen A. Loughlin, "Imagination and transformative learning," *ERIC Report* 13, 1994.

Sandra Newville, *ibid.*



though adult education espoused emancipatory education, it has now been divided between divergent philosophies defining the context of learning. Here is where institutional assumptions inhibit true social change through education.<sup>12</sup> Horton and Freire point out the disparity between what is sought and what actually happens in this kind of intellectually academic learning environment.<sup>13</sup> They state that unless there is a breaking with old assumptions through conflict resolution, institutional promotion of social change will only propagate the norms of the institution – not emancipatory learning.

Tisdell points out that the personal ideology of the learner and the teachers determine whether emancipatory learning can occur.<sup>14</sup> The power discrepancy between most teacher-learner situations makes a large difference in whether social change rhetoric leads to emancipation through art education or merely the propagation of more rhetoric. Durie posits that this power struggle between individual positionalities affects who is heard in the learning environment and who is excluded and fear to speak.<sup>15</sup>

Also in the mix of art education and adult education practices is the divergent instruction of more traditional/technical practice defined by a set of principles irrespective of learner context as compared to the more socially contextual and reflective

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<sup>12</sup> Sandra Newville, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, *We make the road by walking: Conversations on education and social change* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1990).

<sup>14</sup> Elizabeth J. Tisdell, "Poststructural feminist pedagogies: The possibilities and limitations of feminist emancipatory adult learning theory and practice," *Adult Education Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (1998): 139-156.

<sup>15</sup> Jane Durie, "Emancipatory education and classroom practice: A feminist poststructuralist perspective," *Studies in Continuing Education* 18, no. 2 (1996): 135-146.

approach usually associated with what defines emancipatory education.<sup>16</sup> Both perspectives are valuable but require more research in order to link them together through connections between the individual learner's needs and the larger social structure of influences.<sup>17</sup>

Lindeman referred to this dichotomy as the rationalist/mechanistic and organic/artistic approach to adult learning.<sup>18</sup> The mechanistic perspective focuses on quantitative conforming knowledge while the organic perspective delineates a new qualitative and open creativity in learning which cannot be found in a technical rational focus. Lindeman observed that adult education "is a social process... not...a simple device whereby knowledge is transferred from one mind to another."<sup>19</sup> It is "not merely...a means for increasing the efficiency or the smartness of a few selected individuals," but it should be "an instrument for social change."<sup>20</sup> "Its aim is not to teach people how to make a living but rather how to live."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Rosemary S. Caffarella and Sharan B. Merriam, "Perspectives on adult learning: Framing our research," in *40th Annual Adult Education Research Conference held in Dekalb, IL* (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> Sandra Newville, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman, "Preparing leadership in adult education," in *Learning democracy: Eduard Lindeman on adult education and social change*, ed. S. D. Brookfield (London: Croom Helm, 1938).

<sup>19</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman, "The place of discussion in the learning process," in *Learning democracy: Eduard Lindeman on adult education and social change*, ed. S. D. Brookfield (London: Croom Helm, 1935), 45.

<sup>20</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman, 1938, *ibid.*, 51.

<sup>21</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman, "Characteristics of adult education," in *Learning democracy: Eduard Lindeman on adult education and social change*, ed. S. D. Brookfield (London: Croom Helm, 1929), 37.

Within this dichotomy of focus, there is a divergence in perspectives of art education intention: one view,<sup>22</sup> seen as traditionally conforming, sees art as a discipline to be studied while the other perspective, seen as the conduit for social change, views art as an existential pathway.<sup>23</sup> Individual learning occurs in relation to the way an individual relates to themselves and others; it is automatically connected to the process of learning. However, as Lindeman points out, the integration of emotion with reason does not negate knowledge attainment, but democratizes it so that it can function more fully in relation to individual understanding.<sup>24</sup> This reason is not necessarily intellectualized, but it is involved in learner experiences and knowledge. However it is the context of the adult learner which ultimately determines the usefulness of the knowledge acquired. It is the relation of the student's social context which makes learning relational and freeing. However, freedom is not dormant; its *raison d'être* is to create. According to Newville,<sup>25</sup> the content of art knowledge should be directed towards learner experience and art instruction should apply to engaging democratic practice for all learners which goes beyond the superficial rhetoric to the deft use of emotion inside the subject matter of what is taught. Lindeman defines this emotional intelligence according to individual and

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<sup>22</sup> Richard Lachapelle, Deborah Murray, and Sandy Neim, "Aesthetic understanding as informed experience: The role of knowledge in our art viewing experiences," *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 37, no. 3 (2003): 78-98.

<sup>23</sup> Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi and Rick E. Robinson, *The art of seeing: An interpretation of the aesthetic encounter* (Malibu, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum and the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, 1990).

<sup>24</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman, *The meaning of adult education* (Norman, OK: Oklahoma Research Center for Continuing Professional and Higher Education, 1926/1961).

<sup>25</sup> Sandra Newville, *ibid.*

societal connections and understanding.<sup>26</sup> Learning in adulthood should be to make learning adapt towards individual life experiences and needs.

Brookfield describes this life application of emotional intelligence as a form of consciousness which should be the focus of “systematic enquiry.”<sup>27</sup> Rather than promoting the superficial notion of social change, true conscious application of emotion to what is learned requires thorough analysis through thinking, feeling, and acting in direct individual experience. Brookfield defined this type of emancipatory education as critical pragmatism. Dewey related this pragmatism to art and life.<sup>28</sup> He pointed out that art, like emancipation, must be experienced and not just talked about. Both involve the integration and connection of the individual with their society. It must involve community and the desire to redesign the creativity of the individual and society. This recreation engages the notion that race, class, and gender do not define nor do they limit individual freedom to experiment in the recreation of their world. Brookfield points out that this is one of the greatest academic challenges we face today. Its exclusion from institutional practice means that education will never allow both the teacher and the adult learner to participate in emancipation.<sup>29</sup>

Brookfield states,

If we take seriously Marcuse’s argument that aesthetic immersion has the power to trigger a revolutionary estrangement from everyday existence, then we need to

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<sup>26</sup> Eduard C. Lindeman, 1926/1961, *ibid*.

<sup>27</sup> Stephen D. Brookfield, *Becoming a critically reflective teacher* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995).

<sup>28</sup> John Dewey, *Art as experience* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1934).

<sup>29</sup> Stephen D. Brookfield, 1995, *ibid*.

acknowledge the possibility that adult education that concerns itself with liberating the senses through creative, artistic expression is potentially revolutionary. This is a switch for many critical adult educators who may be tempted to regard this kind of adult education as elitist dilettantism.<sup>30</sup>

The position of art in adult education is gradually being regarded as an essential element in emancipatory education for teachers and students. However, in the university art departments a tendency towards intellectual art superiority which controls learner consciousness deters adult learner participation.<sup>31</sup> However, art cannot always be monopolized behind the castle walls of university art department control.<sup>32</sup>

### *Freire's Critical Social Theory*

Chalmers points out Walter Smith's socially-conscious efforts in adult art education and female education in particular when he states, "if Smith were alive today he probably would have served on the Board of the National Art Education Association and been a member of the Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education."<sup>33</sup> Smith believed that social reform through art education required the creation of a completely new frame of reference in hierarchical standards:

*It is a change that has taken place in almost everything else as well. In proportion as we increase the power of many men politically, we decrease the power of some.*

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<sup>30</sup> Stephen D. Brookfield, 2002, *ibid.*, 268.

<sup>31</sup> John Heron, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> John Dewey, 1934, *ibid.*

Maxine Greene, *ibid.*

John Heron, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> F. Graeme Chalmers, *A 19th century government drawing master: The Walter Smith reader* (Reston, VA: NAEA, 2000), 9.

*The tendency now is towards diffusion of everything, power, land, money, government, art; and new phases will be assumed in all, not of necessity either better or worse than what is displaced, but having original features.*<sup>34</sup>

Smith continues by stating that, “*that is the only consistent basis upon which education can be faithfully carried on, the principle of treating all alike, and leaving to individual circumstances the use to which its developments may be applied.*”<sup>35</sup> Smith believed that it is in equality of access to art education that adults can be transformed through professional and personal use of artistic knowledge.

Walter Smith’s desire for educational social reform is linked through history to the present. His acknowledgment that educational reform must exist in a social context still reverberates in today’s deconstructionist mandate for social change in America. However, this social change is split into two elements: the individual and society. Paulo Freire, an essential social theorist in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, heard this resounding crack in American culture and called for a new concept of social change. According to Barbosa,<sup>36</sup> the awareness of a country, as defined by Freire’s adult education theory of social transformation, promoted reflection and expression in art which inspires social change not as a rhetoric, but as a lifestyle. Freire pointed out that personal and societal consciousness can lead to liberation in those classes of individuals held in bondage to another group of people.

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<sup>34</sup> Walter Smith, *Art education: Scholastic and industrial* (Boston: James R. Osgood, 1873), 302.

<sup>35</sup> Walter Smith, 1873, *ibid.*, 309.

<sup>36</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, "American influence on Brazilian art education: Analysis of two moments (Walter Smith and John Dewey)" (PhD diss., Boston University), 1979.

Lawrence points out art's characteristic nature of social change and stated that Freire's concept of social transformation and critical consciousness through open dialogue about oneself and one's social and political environments can be the most beneficial part of artistic understanding and expression.<sup>37</sup> According to Grace and Wells, the struggle for critical consciousness through artistic expression can promote self-directed learning and eventual emancipation through adult art education.<sup>38</sup> This desire for social change is mirrored in discussions of university visual art practice by Peter Smith: "The . . . art world has become much more concerned with social change. . . . This attitude makes it possible to clearly identify with vitally important and socially visible areas of human activity."<sup>39</sup>

Paulo Freire's theory of social transformation is based firmly on his passion for critical consciousness as a precursor to societal liberation from all types of domination (both of the oppressed and oppressors). It is Freire's belief that all education has political ties and it could either reinforce the status quo through the banking system of education where adult learners have no say in their education and there is social control of one's conscious reality, or it could be a form of liberation through critical reflection and, thus, critical consciousness of adults' positions in society. This critical consciousness or self

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<sup>37</sup> Randee L. Lawrence, *ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> André P. Grace and Kristopher Wells, "Using Freirean pedagogy of just ire to inform critical social learning in arts-informed community education for sexual minorities," *Adult Education Quarterly* 57 (2007): 95-114.

<sup>39</sup> Peter J. Smith, *The history of American art education: Learning about art in American Schools* (London: Greenwood Press, 1996), 42.

awareness by learning through dialogue (between the oppressed and the oppressor) is the trigger for social transformation of the oppressed and the oppressor.

Asserting that men and women are part of the world and do not live in a vacuum, Freire found that from the start, individuals are taught to survive through learning how to “read” the world around them.<sup>40</sup> He states that humans are the only organisms “able to achieve the complex operation of simultaneously transforming the world by their action and grasping and expressing the world’s reality in their own creative language.”<sup>41</sup> Jacquie Johnson states that Government is not funding the arts as much anymore.<sup>42</sup> Especially during war periods, art is called upon to justify its worth in academia. Art is inherently based in a social ideology, without which there would be no value to it. However, current museums and university departments have taken on an elitist stance to defining art for everyone. Johnson promotes the Freirean concept of the “culture circle” to advance critical consciousness and reconstruction of an individual’s reality through art creation.<sup>43</sup> Cultural isolationism is growing stronger in the US. Thus, an art teacher should also be a facilitator of conflict resolution dialogue. Freire points out that culture circles promote

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<sup>40</sup> Paulo Freire and Donaldo P. Macedo, *Literacy: Reading the word and the world* (South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 1987).

<sup>41</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970/1995), 68.

<sup>42</sup> Jacquie Johnson, "Visual realities: The creation and transformation of meaning through visual arts," in *One world, many cultures*, ed. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: FIFE Regional Council, 1996).

<sup>43</sup> Freire’s culture circles consisted of learning which occurred outside the classroom between individuals who were able to use their language and knowledge to understand and relate the learning to life change. Here all individuals are part of the dialogue between educator and the educated. Paulo Freire, *Education for critical consciousness* (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1989).



personal identity in illiterate individuals.<sup>44</sup> They are allowed to be a participant in the creation and recreation of their world. No longer is the art of the individuals to be seen as less than master sculptors and painters. Thus, all human creation is essential human culture whether considered so by the art world.

According to Bastos,<sup>45</sup> Freire lends a unique viewpoint to the concept of interpreting art as a visual creative language. Critical assessment of art as a creative language reveals the hidden context for art in the life experiences of the creator and the viewers. It is in Freire's notion of literacy where an adult's awareness of their situation, history, and the resulting social implications can affect a form of social change:

Through visual codification participants could achieve some distance from their world and they began to recognize it. Recognition when defined in this way is an act of active critical consciousness, yielding new meanings to familiar phenomena. For we never simply see; we see as, in terms of, with respect to, in the light of (relational).<sup>46</sup>

Barbosa sees visual literacy in a similar way as Freire.<sup>47</sup> She points out that literacy in a visual language could engender socio-cultural awareness and dialogue. The related nature of reading creative images allows individuals to assess and become aware of their own position and role in society. The awareness of different art traditions, methods, and symbols from diverse communities permits learners to understand the context of art

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<sup>44</sup> Paulo Freire, *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Flavia M. Bastos, "Making the familiar strange: A community-based art education framework," in *Contemporary issues in art education*, ed. Y. Gaudelius & P. Speirs (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc, 2002).

<sup>46</sup> Flavia M. Bastos, *ibid.*, 73.

<sup>47</sup> Ana M. Barbosa, "The role of art education in the cultural and artistic development of the individual: Developing artistic and creative skills" (Geneva, Switzerland: UNESCO International Conference on Education, August 1992).

forms and their divergence in societal values.

Freire comprehended adults' roles in society through their coded art which promotes self-awareness and critical consciousness.<sup>48</sup> He believed everyday objects (in the home or community) to be points of interest which could trigger learners' critical reflection and encourage a dialogue about their life experiences. Kuhne points out that Freire's concept of critical social theory can aid in the development of a more practical and transformational art practice.<sup>49</sup> In Freire's theory,<sup>50</sup> he refers to a liberation pedagogy through critical consciousness and awareness through dialogue as essential to informing adult education.

As in America, modern-day Brazil, an artistically undemocratic and hierarchical society, has art that reflects a class conflict on a broader scale. In order to bridge the gap between the art of the elite and the disenfranchised native Brazilians, there must be an understanding or dialogue between the two divisions of society in asking why the art forms are segregated and of unequal values. The different values placed on the segregated art forms must be questioned in order to promote a democratic society. Likewise, Walter Smith's effort in defining art education in America prompted the same need for understanding why there was a hierarchy in the values of different forms of art. Smith's struggle to gain a listening ear in elite society through his academic writings, conferences, in all of his speeches to different powerful organizations, and the creation of

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<sup>48</sup> Paulo Freire and Donaldo P. Macedo, *ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Michael C. Kuhne, "A community pedagogy of critical hope: Paulo Freire, liberation pedagogy, and liberation theology" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota), 1998.

<sup>50</sup> Paulo Freire, 1995, *ibid.*

normal art schools and night classes for underrepresented adult workers needing art skills for vocations was an outreach to engender understanding and equality of access to learning for all. However, his dream for social reform for the lower classes through art education would not happen and it is our current struggle.

Lynch points out that social and educational inequalities are on the rise.<sup>51</sup> The nature of adult education should be to enable adults to liberate themselves and take over their own lives and thus create social change – though it must necessarily be based on personal transformation. Thus, if individuals feel that they have no control over the relationships in their lives, there is oppression on an individual basis which prevents them from reaching out to engage with the needs of their larger community. A concept of adult learning within an internal locus based on awareness of individual responsibility for personal choices needs to be used so that adult learners are independent of institutional control and are taught to be independent thinkers and self-directed learners. Adult learners need to be able to work with incongruities and unanswerable questions to be better able to see beyond personal and institutional bias. Most community adult art education reaches out to adults with hobby or craft work directed with no professional or transformational focus. The focus of adult art education is the questioning of established truths. The problem-solving nature of art within an adult education framework inspires critical consciousness.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Kaye Lynch, "Adult participation in the visual arts - conservation or change?" in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).

<sup>52</sup> Kaye Lynch, *ibid.*

*Deconstruction or Social Reconstruction*

Wolff uses sociology to destroy the myth of artistic genius by accentuating the social context in which artists are educated and the social context in which their styles of art become accepted within the art world.<sup>53</sup> This ideological selection and education of artistic genius is especially present inside the walls of higher learning institutions. But in this socially-founded ideology of acceptable art, there must be standardizations and gatekeepers to keep in what is art and keep out what is not art. These protectors of the realm are academicians, curators, art administrators, and art critics. By viewing art through the lens of sociology, art connects current postmodern artist and art selections to European notions of Renaissance-based high art. This high art foundation seeks to dispose of the previous idea of the artisan or craftsman and elevates the idea of art as the genius of individual personalities. Thus, viewing art through a lens based on social history allows art to be seen in a hierarchy of ideological values. Wolff illustrates the socio-cultural foundations for the value system within the hierarchy of art today:

Lawrence Levine's book on the development of cultural hierarchies in the United States is an example of this work, which helps us to realize that what became "high art" in the late nineteenth century (before which time the category did not exist) was largely a product of the formation of social groups and the exclusionary practices that they came to operate.<sup>54</sup> Paul DiMaggio's work on Boston more explicitly identifies the class basis of these social and cultural processes.<sup>55</sup> He shows that the development of high cultural forms and the increasing separation

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<sup>53</sup> Janet Wolff, "Against sociological imperialism: The limits of sociology in the aesthetic sphere," in *Context, content and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

<sup>54</sup> Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/lowbrow: The emergence of cultural hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

<sup>55</sup> Paul J. DiMaggio, "Cultural entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston: The creation of an organizational base for high culture in America," *Media, Culture & Society* 4, no. 1 (1982): 33-50.

of high culture from popular culture in the second half of the nineteenth century were closely bound up with the social and economic consolidation of the Boston Brahmins. The “sacralization” of art was the product of a social process, through which a particular urban elite achieved a cultural identity and a clear axis of distinction and superiority in relation to the lower social classes.<sup>56</sup>

Walter Smith was up against this same issue in social reform through adult art education in Boston during the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And this is what adult art education now faces in the crystallization of postmodern practices of deconstructionist high art inside the university art education framework.

According to Neperud, the crystallizing standardizations of modernism infiltrated the university environment from the 1950s to the 60s and its promotion of formalism dominated adult art education.<sup>57</sup> This same dominance of ideological practice is still present in today’s praise of postmodern progress for social change. The gatekeepers inflexibly protect their turf from invaders. This is especially true for the texts produced by art academicians in adherence with postmodern rules and regulations. Subsequently, new regimes come into power with their own deconstructionist agenda and forms of manipulation and control no matter what the rhetoric espouses. Even when cultural diversity is promoted, deconstructionist ideology dictates modes of educational instruction.<sup>58</sup>

Though postmodernism has deconstructed modernism’s rigid system of rules within the university, it has now become what it fought against. It is the same cycle

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<sup>56</sup> Janet Wolff, *ibid.*, 131.

<sup>57</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, "Transitions in art education: A search for meaning," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

<sup>58</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

described by Paulo Freire: the oppressed becomes the oppressor. Because there is no awakening of critical consciousness between the two groups, it is still an us-versus-them atmosphere.<sup>59</sup> Though postmodernism bases its importance on multiculturalism, exploring diverse beliefs and opinions, and questioning the status quo, Hicks explained that “we can only empower a student relative to particular communities of power.”<sup>60</sup>

Postmodernism, a response to the militance of modernist laws, has engendered societal activism for freedom from gender, racial, cultural, sexual, and social class inequalities in America. It has been the framework used to reveal and deconstruct many biased societal modernist “Truths.” The use of critical analysis and semiotics through a deconstructionist lens sought to make education more equitable and attainable to all. However, as Neperud points out, “after our biased assumptions and practices have been deconstructed, then what?”<sup>61</sup> There are a growing number of individuals who perceive the inevitable demise of this deconstructionist practice. No longer will an us-versus-them militaristic ideology help adult learners in their personal or professional choices for education. A position beyond the cynicism of deconstruction needs to be advocated for the learners caught in the middle of the educational power struggle.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Paulo Freire, 1995, *ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Laurie E. Hicks, "A feminist analysis of empowerment and community in art education," *Studies in Art Education* 32, no. 1 (1990): 43.

<sup>61</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*, 13.

<sup>62</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

Gablik explains that there are two strains of postmodernism, just as there are harmful and beneficial strains of bacteria.<sup>63</sup> One is deconstruction and the other is social reconstruction. According to Gablik, these two strains of postmodernism inhabit divergent philosophical foundations. Most postmodern art is founded on the cynical and suspicious deconstructive viewpoint. On the other hand, the social reconstruction ideology seeks to move the power struggle from between the dominant European power of patriarchal elitism and those aggressively attacking white-Anglo-Saxon protestant males' power to one of societal interrelationships across socio-cultural barriers (a framework without a battering-ram to bolster its position). Gablik seeks to take art education beyond the archetypal deconstructionist vacuousness. Neperud encourages this new perspective in art education:

Giroux has recognized that radical theorists have made important contributions to "unraveling the relations between schools and the dominant society." But they have "failed to escape from a crushing pessimism or from the inability to link in a dialectical fashion the issue of agency and structure."<sup>64</sup> There is an optimism inherent in both Gablik's view of art and Giroux's pedagogical approach that is echoed among a growing number of art educators. Pearse indicated that we are in a post paradigmatic world, beyond the dualistic modern, postmodern dichotomous categories.<sup>65</sup> He suggests, "The postmodern view has features which evoke both optimistic and pessimistic responses. As we approach the twenty-first century, optimists would envision an art education in which local cultural practices are valued....Pessimists would see an aimless, fragmented, relativist art education, cut off from standards of excellence."<sup>66</sup> Sullivan also moves beyond pessimism in suggesting, "But if a critical posture is to be empowering it has to be enacted in

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<sup>63</sup> Suzan Gablik, *The reenchantment of art* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1991).

<sup>64</sup> Henry A. Giroux, *The hidden curriculum and moral education: Deception or discovery?* (Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishers, 1983), 235.

<sup>65</sup> Harold Pearse, "Beyond paradigms: Art education theory and practice in a postparadigmatic world," *Studies in Art Education* 33, no. 4 (1992): 244-252.

<sup>66</sup> Harold Pearse, *ibid.*, 251.

some way.”<sup>67</sup> I sense a growing optimism that an art education reawakening to the interconnectedness of art and life will result in changes that matter.<sup>68</sup>

Stuhr proposes that multicultural education founded on social reconstruction is simultaneously “a concept, educational reform movement, and a process.”<sup>69</sup> There should be several parts to a reconstruction-based education: an active practice of democratic principles; a promotion of student analysis of their life experiences and circumstances; a promotion of social skills to be better able to connect with themselves and relate to other learners; and as Stuhr points out, a “coalescing or getting everyone to work together for the common good of society. The coalescing of groups across the lines of race, class, gender, and exceptionality is important because it can energize and strengthen the fight against oppression.”<sup>70</sup>

Social reconstruction promotes the various perspectives of the learner, teacher, and community beliefs with all having their say and without one having power over the others. Social reconstruction is thus, an extension of Paulo Freire’s critical social theory, where an individual is encouraged to make a comparison between “previous perspective(s) and knowledge of the aesthetic/art form and the new sociocultural ways of viewing art.”<sup>71</sup> The emphasis on dialogue between different perspectives of religious,

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<sup>67</sup> George Sullivan, "Art-based art education: Learning that is meaningful, authentic, critical and pluralist," *Studies in Art Education* 32, no. 1 (1993): 14.

<sup>68</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*, 13-14.

<sup>69</sup> Patricia L. Stuhr, "Social reconstructionist multicultural art curriculum design: Using the powwow as an example," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995), 194.

<sup>70</sup> Patricia L. Stuhr, *ibid.*, 194.

<sup>71</sup> Patricia L. Stuhr, *ibid.*, 215.



cultural, class, gender, age, and physical handicap issues can encourage resolution of ideological disagreements between individuals and in society on a larger scale.<sup>72</sup>

According to Hutzell, the social reconstruction movement has been an essential component in the background of democracy.<sup>73</sup> The movement began in the 1930s as a means of gathering educational support for a democratic means of economically reaching all social classes.<sup>74</sup> It has become the point of connection between the individual and society where democracy has remained its foundation. Education has been the mode of transport for the movement between creative opportunities and inspiring critical consciousness of social ills. Michael James comments on the nature of social reconstruction:

Schools and teachers... would participate equally in a cultural redefinition of America: a collective society dependent less on the wealth of the few and more on the planning of the many.... The social reconstructionist agenda cut at the very nature of how America thinks about culture and order, and threatened the very definition of power and who governs.<sup>75</sup>

Michael James points out social reconstructions' characteristic trait of questioning the status quo in power and empowerment.<sup>76</sup> Freire states that this freedom from status quo does not reinforce American norms within the concept of social reconstruction.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Patricia L. Stuhr, *ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> Karen Hutzell, "Learning from community: A participatory action research study of community art for social reconstruction" (PhD diss., Florida State University), 2005.

<sup>74</sup> Michael E. James, *Social Reconstruction through education: The philosophy, history, and curricula of a radical ideal* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp, 1995).

<sup>75</sup> Michael E. James, *ibid.*, 114.

<sup>76</sup> Michael E. James, *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Paulo Freire, 1995, *ibid.*

Benne describes social reconstructionism in educational reform as away of “deepening an extension of democratic values into the economic and social (ethnic, racial, and social class) relationships through participative planning”<sup>78</sup> while also providing individuals tools to recreate their society for their needs. Seaton refers to a social transformational approach to art which is called *Artlife* that approaches art with a social reconstructionist approach to connect art to life practices.<sup>79</sup> Seaton claims that art is inherently tied to lived experiences and that art disconnected from people is the antithesis of art. Likewise, Stepniak corroborates Maxine Green’s, an essential art transformation theorist, claim that art is inherently socially transformative and reconstructive. This places art as an element in the heart of true social reformation envisioned by Freire and other transformationists but is lost inside the rhetoric of postmodern deconstructionist ideals.<sup>80</sup>

#### *Discipline-Based Art Education*

Efland proposes that a postmodern art framework of instruction should not exclude an understanding of modern or previous art ideologies.<sup>81</sup> In fact, the mimetic, pragmatic, expressive, and formalist ideologies of art should be explored and taught in relation to how society values art today and what it valued as art in the past. Also, it

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<sup>78</sup> Kenneth D. Benne, "Preface," in *Social reconstruction through education: The philosophy, history, and curricula of a radical ideal*, ed. M. James (Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp, 1995), xxiii.

<sup>79</sup> Jane Seaton, "Artlife: Reclaiming the union of art and life" (PhD diss., The Union Institute), 2001.

<sup>80</sup> Michael Stepniak, "Artful transformation: Considering Maxine Greene's art encounters as examples of transformative learning" (EdD diss., Harvard University), 2006.

<sup>81</sup> Arthur D. Efland, "The introduction of music and drawing in the Boston schools: Two studies of educational reform," in *The history of art education: Proceedings from the Penn State Conference*, ed. B. Wilson and H. Hoffa (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1985).

should not only explore American art ideologies, but international conceptions of art values. No ideology should be higher than the other; these aesthetic ideologies are simply different lenses through which to look at something as art. However, a postmodern art framework should encase learning with a question about the social context surrounding what each aesthetic ideology values. Thus, Efland promotes an eclectic framework for art education within university art courses which invites dialogue around the divergence in various artistic ideologies. If only one ideology of art is promoted as the best or most progressive at promoting social change in art instruction, then art education for adult learners becomes rigid and inflexible; this goes against the postmodern rhetoric of embracing a pluralism of artistic styles and ideological art values. Here social change is not allowed to be the ultimate purpose of adult art instruction, but merely one among many art ideologies which have driven and are still driving art world policies and academic instruction. However, to make sure that no individual ideology is excluded from the learning environment, social dialogue should be the backbone to adult art instruction

While art education may at once be contradictory in its exploration of divergent aesthetic ideologies, it should, however, be framed within a historicity of the art world.<sup>82</sup> History can act as a checks-and-balances system to prevent too much deference to one or the other aesthetic ideology in an art classroom. Through learning to deal with the plethora of art ideologies, the adult learner has the knowledge-base from which to choose their personal or professional path of artistic focus. This should be the adult learners'

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<sup>82</sup> Arthur D. Efland, "Change in the conceptions of art teaching," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

rights. It will also better prepare them to understand what ideology is in power today and how to use that for their benefit both personally and professionally:

It is clear that a postmodern art curriculum – even one dedicated to serious studio practice – will require a fuller understanding of critical and historical studies than may have been true in the past, because they are inextricably interwoven into the practices of postmodern artists. Without aesthetic inquiry, history, and criticism, both modern and postmodern art will remain a closed book to future students.<sup>83</sup>

Neperud and Krug point out, “In the United States, distinctions between self-taught and ‘authentic’ institutionally trained artistic practices are well-entrenched in society’s notion of ‘what art is’.”<sup>84</sup> However, this exclusivity given to institutional training can be an isolationist and segregational tool for high art foundation adherence to the ideology of social change espoused by the university art world. According to Neperud and Krug, a new artist is on the horizon and is being promoted by internationally renowned art aficionados such as Roger Manley, John Maizel, Phyllis Kind, Roger Ricco, and Frank Maresca. They have noticed how art collectors have begun to desire art that is not focused on the intellectual and academic deconstruction of society promoted within mainstream postmodern ideology.<sup>85</sup>

Art collectors have become interested in the “outsider” artist; this art explores folk art, art from working laborers, and self-taught craftsmen. The name “outsider” was given to this area of artwork by the gatekeepers of the contemporary high art world to prevent interest and put it lower on the hierarchy of artistic values. Thus, the very naming of this

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<sup>83</sup> Arthur D. Efland, 1995, *ibid.*, 39.

<sup>84</sup> Ronald W. Neperud and Don H. Krug, "People who make things: Aesthetics from the ground up," in *Context, content, and community in art education*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995) 143.

<sup>85</sup> Ronald W. Neperud and Don H. Krug, *ibid.*

culture of art must be seen within a semiotics of a language used to control. Neperud and Krug convey a warning to adult art educators:

It is critical to participate in the social struggle over how things people make and the makers themselves are named and ascribed with meaning. "Unless art educators recognize the importance of understanding the cultural and political dimensions of visual arts education, classroom instruction will do nothing more than promote traditional conceptions of art and the technology of artistic practices"<sup>86</sup>.... We cannot simply add "outsider art," non-Western art, folk art, indigenous art, or the diverse forms created by the "other" to the bottom of a pedagogical hierarchy.... Rather, the field of art from which teachers may choose has been leveled, thus reflecting their multicultural teaching situations.<sup>87</sup>

There are still two divergent views of art curriculum focus in adult art education practice today: multicultural (social change) advocated for adult learners and discipline-based (traditional conformity) art instruction advocated for child learners. Multicultural art instruction was influenced by the civil rights movement and awareness and appreciation for other cultures and their art. Discipline-based art instruction originated from the educational need for control over the flux in artistic norms. In 1965, Manuel Barkan devised a framework which would filter the art world norms through other disciplines such as art history, philosophically-grounded art theory, and art criticism.<sup>88</sup> The two seemingly divergent practices are emblematic of the broader historical trend in promoting either social change or conformity to societal norms.<sup>89</sup>

Barkan's creation of a discipline-based art education (DBAE) in primary and

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<sup>86</sup> Laurie E. Hicks, "Cultural literacy as social empowerment," *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* 9 (1989): 57.

<sup>87</sup> Ronald W. Neperud and Don H. Krug, *ibid.*, 144-145, 166.

<sup>88</sup> Manuel Barkan, *Viktor Lowenfeld: His impact on art education* (Washington, DC: NAEA, 1966).

<sup>89</sup> Ronald W. Neperud and Don H. Krug, *ibid.*

secondary education funded by the J. Paul Getty Trust in 1985 inspired much publicity and discussion among art educators.<sup>90</sup> DBAE, designed initially for K-12 art education, contains at least four parts applicable to a formal curriculum design in adult art education classrooms: art studio (creating art), art history (studying art's past and essential artists), art criticism (the formal elements of art construction; defining how art should be made, talking about art), and art aesthetics (philosophical, emotional, social, and political meanings/ideologies of art and their practical application to life).

Clark, Day, and Greer argue that development of a broad adult art curriculum requires the involvement of the learner's needs and learning styles, the social ills and inequalities of society, the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge, the continuum between theory and action, understanding of the function of both a general and specific instruction, and, above all, it requires community involvement not intellectual and institutional control.<sup>91</sup> They point out the elements of a DBAE program which matches these elements of involvement:

A. Rationale

1. The goal of discipline-based art education is to develop students' abilities to understand and appreciate art. This involves a knowledge of the theories and contexts of art and abilities to respond to as well as to create art.
2. Art is taught as an essential component of general education and as a foundation for specialized art study.

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<sup>90</sup> Manuel Barkan, *ibid.*

Karen A. Hamblen, "Art education changes and continuities: Value orientations of modernity and postmodernity," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

<sup>91</sup> Gilbert A. Clark, Michael D. Day, and W. Dwaine Greer, "Discipline-based art education: Becoming students of art," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 21, no. 2 (1987): 129-193.

### B. Content

3. Content for instruction is derived primarily from the disciplines of aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production. These disciplines deal with: 1) conceptions of the nature of art, 2) bases for valuing and judging art, 3) contexts in which art has been created, and 4) processes and techniques for creating art.
4. Content for study is derived from a broad range of the visual arts, including folk, applied, and fine arts from Western and non-Western cultures and from ancient to contemporary times.

### C. Curricula

5. Curricula are written with sequentially organized and articulated content at all grade levels.
6. Works of art are central to the organization of curricula and to integration of content from the disciplines.
7. Curricula are structured to reflect comparable concern and respect for each of the four art disciplines.
8. Curricula are organized to increase student learning and understanding. This involves a recognition of appropriate developmental levels.

### D. Context

9. Full implementation is marked by systematic, regular art instruction on a district-wide basis, art education expertise, administrative support, and adequate resources.
10. Student achievement and program effectiveness are confirmed by appropriate evaluation criteria and procedures.<sup>92</sup>

However, there have been some qualms with the discipline-based format.

Deconstruction art theorists decry DBAE's foundation on the grounds of Eurocentrism and lack of socio-cultural exploration of other societies besides America. Some critics point out that this curriculum framework pushed art studio into the least important of the four categories. Yet, DBAE brought some stability into the ideologically ridden art instruction environment by taking an active role in creating a rational and relational environment for different art education perspectives and it advanced institutional accountability for student instruction. Many art teachers fought against this

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<sup>92</sup> Gilbert A. Clark, Michael D. Day, and W. Dwaine Greer, *ibid.*, 135.

standardization of educational accountability just as the art specialists did during Walter Smith's creation of an accountable framework for art instruction; artists complained that studio art within the DBAE curriculum was not allowed to stand alone, but must be defined within other disciplines. Hamblen asserts that DBAE must listen to constructive criticism especially because DBAE has made its way into the hierarchy of institutional power.<sup>93</sup>

Von Gent states that University art education needs some structural framework within adult art education so that art is not merely the teaching of subjective ideology by university art teachers.<sup>94</sup> University art education is currently based on social initiatives with no thought for art mastery itself. Adult learners are left out in the cold in this subjective and ideological subject. Postmodern art perspectives make art a means to a social change end, but this has been the case for social reform in art education reform before without true transformational (a positively new creation) results. Museum associations with elitist foundations (university art associations) have sought to insulate themselves from the populace because it does not receive the public's sponsorships.

Donahue states that art education should not dismiss instruction associated with discipline-based pedagogy because it has a bad reputation for promoting societal conformity.<sup>95</sup> Education without a disciplinary framework cannot exist in anything but

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<sup>93</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, 1995, *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Baastian Von Gent, "Dutch andragogy and museum education," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).

<sup>95</sup> Patricia L. Donahue, "Review: Pedagogy lost and regained," *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition, and Culture* 3, no. 1 (2003): 127-134.



chaos as Walter Smith discovered when seeking to bring order to art education in the 1870s. This is where art education in the university art departments exists today. Hoffman, Greenberg, and Fitzner point out that adult art education has taken place for a long time as a community pastime, but little curriculum framework or encouragement of transformational learning has been promoted.<sup>96</sup> Barret warns that with little curriculum accountability, adults are left to appreciate art but not be a part of the art world.<sup>97</sup> A new framework of adult art education is needed through the use of DBAE for increasing accountability to the adult learner and provision of in-depth art world involvement. DBAE is a solid foundation for adult learning, but more research needs to be done in adult art education today and how art education can best meet the adult learners' needs.<sup>98</sup>

DBAE advocates now agree that multicultural aspects were missing in the details of what was taught, although, the broad framework for DBAE allows a constant redefinition of instruction without destroying its characteristic link between the trend in art based on social change and historically traditional artistic norms.<sup>99</sup> However, deconstructivists have devised another portal for espousing popular culture. They claim that visual culture is the most progressive multicultural realm of current artistic plurality.

Herman points out that the social change agenda of deconstructionism promotes endorsement of a VCAE, Visual Culture Art Education, format for university art

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<sup>96</sup> Donald H. Hoffman, P. Greenberg, and D. H. Fitzner, *Lifelong learning in the visual arts* (Reston, VA: NAEA, 1980).

<sup>97</sup> Dianne B. Barret, "Art programming for older adults: What's out there?" *Studies in Art Education* 34, no. 3 (1993): 133-140.

<sup>98</sup> Dianne B. Barret, *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, *ibid.*

education instead of DBAE. VCAE proponents state that all objects in the media are part of the learner's art culture which must semiotically be deconstructed. They believe that art education's primary purpose should be to help people fight the status quo in the media and in their society; this is because of the importance placed on individual awareness of social and commercial biases ruling the art educational discipline.<sup>100</sup> While it is essential to view art as a cultural language, the baby should not be thrown out with the bath water. Multicultural DBAE takes into account several of the aspects of art, its history, controlling ideologies, and techniques which have been a defining feature to art as a discipline. However, according to Herman, current university art education is rooted in institutional intellectualism which affords a type of elitist snobbery. The discipline-based format has been ditched in order to create a dogma of "liberation." Peter Smith points out that this doctrine embraces nothing, questions everything, and ridicules any concept of excellence in art while at the same time promoting cronyism among the deconstructionist elite and designations of genius in socially relevant artwork.<sup>101</sup> There is only one among many art ideologies which have had control of art education practice. Adult learners should have a choice in what they desire to do with their art education. As Richmond states,

Without standards of truth, reason, and value; without believable conceptions of intentionality and selfhood; without subscription to possibilities of creative thought and action beyond those reduced to textual and social determinants; without continued reference to an external reality, responsible, civilized life would be impossible. No one lives on deconstruction, not even deconstructionists

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<sup>100</sup> Arthur Herman, *The idea of decline in western history* (New York: Free Press, 1997).

<sup>101</sup> Peter J. Smith, "Visual culture studies versus art education," *Arts Education Policy Review* 104, no. 4 (March/April 2003): 3-8.

who, like other people, presumably plan careers, defend points of view, claim authorship, raise children, and manage daily life in all its contingent aspects.<sup>102</sup>

Peter Smith believes that the VCAE basis for most adult art education university practice available for adult learners today is embedded in a vernacular elitist culture which is not founded on any discipline-based framework for teaching art aesthetics; it bends art around its desire for liberation according to its definition of the term.<sup>103</sup> Smith states that it is in the deconstructionist confiscation of VCAE principles where intellectual jargon excludes participants and continues the “WASPish” clamor that has had control of educational reform via art instruction throughout history. Deconstructionists merely guise their social control in rhetoric for social change. Smith promotes the idea that this elitist notion of art education is a symptom of the “infantilization” of American art education as a culture and the subsequent brainwashing of art teachers for their purpose. Peter Smith points out that this agenda denies lifelong learning in art education for adult learners because there is no aesthetic foundation or framework on which to continue learning. It is a postmodern ideology in conforming clothes masquerading as social change.

According to Ralph Smith, pluralism and deconstruction control current institutional art education.<sup>104</sup> It has pushed the focus so much on social concerns that art’s history and art’s relevance are hidden. There must be a way to consider art’s traditional

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<sup>102</sup> Stuart Richmond, "In praise of practice: A defense of art making in education," *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 32, no. 2 (1998): 12.

<sup>103</sup> Peter J. Smith, 2003, *ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Ralph A. Smith, "Reflections about policy during troubled times," *Art Education Policy Review* 103, no. 3 (January/February 2002): 29-34.

history and makeup along with societal concerns for social change and multiculturalism.

DBAE can be a connecting link between the two art concerns because it acts as a mediator between the individual and society. It is a method compatible with the humanities inside academically focused universities. Hamblen states,

Ironically, (just as modernism began as change) it is now postmodernity that represents change and requires a rethinking and readjustment of the entrenched value system of modernity; modernity, while thriving on and embodying change, has itself become a taken-for-granted and predictable tradition. Modernity, which in the past thrived on throwing off the mantle of tradition, has created its own continuities of change, individualism, and rationalization. Today, attempts to substitute modernity with the stability and traditionalism of post modernity are seen as revolutionary. To paraphrase Lanier,<sup>105</sup> change is tempered by tradition, and tradition is modified by change. Hausman believes that DBAE theory, although possibly signaling major changes for the field, was formulated as a conservative response to major social changes.<sup>106</sup> Change itself is relative in magnitude.<sup>107</sup>

Freedman likewise acknowledges the historical vestige of institutional ossification within educational reform movements.<sup>108</sup> She proposes that educational reform framed within a social context will eventually become stagnant through instructional dictations of what is and is not art. The gatekeepers such as artists, art critics, art historians, and aesthetic theorists isolate themselves within the art world; there is no interdisciplinary relationship between these professions in the university art departments. The isolation within subjects creates inbreeding and subsequent mutations of foci provided to adult

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<sup>105</sup> Vincent Lanier, "Objectives of art education: The impact of time," *Peabody Journal of Education* 52, no. 3 (1975): 180-186.

<sup>106</sup> Jerome J. Hausman, "Another view of discipline-based art education," *Art Education* 40, no. 1 (1987): 56-60.

<sup>107</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, 1995, *ibid.*, 50.

<sup>108</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, "Educational change within structures of history, culture, and discourse," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).

learners lost in the maze of turf wars. Thus, art is a closed circuit to adult learners who seek to use what they learn in an interrelated way personally or professionally.<sup>109</sup>

Elevation of the postmodern concept of social change has frozen within the current university art education environment. DBAE, though founded as a measure to maintain tradition in a time of great social change, can be used as a link between change and tradition for the adult learner. Without excluding any art practices from study, learners are allowed to explore all of the aesthetic art theories without being forced into one ideological perspective of art value. It is a framework which opens the art world up within a historical spectrum of social and political influences and allows adult learners to assess art within their personal context and within broader societal values.<sup>110</sup> Hamblen states,

In theory, DBAE has characteristics highly similar to subjects taught in general education and is legitimized on the basis of its modernity values of change, standardization, predictability, and quantifiable outcome.<sup>111</sup> Conversely, DBAE is being reinterpreted and resisted on the basis of post modernity values of tradition, local control, and cultural pluralism. It does not signal a paradigm shift in the sense of providing a totally new way of thinking about art instruction. Rather, DBAE represents a dialectic between change and continuity, between modernity and post modernity. Furthermore, DBAE is not unusual in its dialectic nature. Relationships between change and continuity and between overall composition and detail afford a means of dialectic analysis for all art education theory and practice. The practicalities of putting theory into practice and the embeddedness of change in past assumptions result in there being no complete, pure paradigm shifts. Which part of the dialectic might predominate in any given instance is

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<sup>109</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, *ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Arthur D. Efland, 1995, *ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, "An art education chronology: A process of selection and interpretation," *Studies in Art Education* 26, no. 2 (1985): 111-120.

Karen A. Hamblen, "An examination of discipline-based art education issues," *Studies in Art Education* 28, no. 2 (1987): 68-78.

dependent on whether change or continuity is relegated to the details – and the particular world view lens one uses for analysis.<sup>112</sup>

The DBAE curriculum model can be a more optimistic framework for the foundation of art education in current university provision of adult education. Lawrence analyzed this connection between art and social change, and he emphasized that Freire's model of social transformation in adult education through art promoted increased problem solving skills.<sup>113</sup> The DBAE model incorporates Freirean problem-solving skills through artistic dialogue inside of the dialectic exploration between tradition and social change and seeks to encourage critical consciousness within a historical assessment of social and political contexts. Levi and Smith state,

It has not always been clear that in teaching the arts whether to appeal to merely formal values is enough. But when we perceive the arts as humanities, it is crucial that we interpret them as a demand that we pause and, in their light, reexamine our own realities, values, and dedications. For the arts not only present art concretely, stimulate the imagination, and integrate the cultural elements of a society or of an epoch; they also present models for our imitation or rejection, visions and aspirations that mutely solicit our critical response. . . . These aims are also embraced by discipline-based art education.<sup>114</sup>

There are several authors who discuss the practical nature of DBAE for adult art education. Lafferty points out that most art education policy has been adopted for K-12, but not for adult art education.<sup>115</sup> The increasing number of adult learners who decide to go back to school for a continued degree or second profession begs the question why

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<sup>112</sup> Karen A. Hamblen, 1995, *ibid.*, 50-51.

<sup>113</sup> Randee L. Lawrence, *ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Albert W. Levi and Ralph A. Smith, *Art education: A critical necessity* (Chicago: Chicago University of Illinois Press, 1991) 181.

<sup>115</sup> Sue A. Lafferty, "Adults arts education: A Delphi study forecasting the role of the arts in a lifelong learning society" (PhD diss., Ohio State University), 2002.

adults are left out of art education policy today. Campbell states that DBAE is a curriculum foundation for older adult learning which promotes self-reflective participation while learning different techniques and aspects of art which enable them to be a part of the art community.<sup>116</sup> Art in the DBAE method promotes the adult learner needs assessed by McClusky but also encourages deeper emotional stimulation, physical activity, intellectual discussion and dialogue, social action and interaction, creative expression in older adult learners and even offers a feeling of transcendence and joy in the process.<sup>117</sup> Campbell found that many small community college art teachers are using the community as a source of positive interaction and influence in art education courses focused around adult non-traditional education. Perhaps universities would do well to acknowledge this practice. According to Hunter, DBAE is an aesthetic model for a general curriculum with the specific input of teachers and learners.<sup>118</sup> In the model, the teacher is the facilitator of the learning activities, but not the focus. Adult learners would benefit from the institution of the framework into current adult art education environments. Thus, art in the DBAE model can be action and reflection in praxis for a purpose – an individually useful purpose.

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<sup>116</sup> Charlynn W. Campbell, "The experiential art and crafts preferences of senior adults: A preparatory assessment for the implementation of the Project Senior Art Model" (M.A.L.S. thesis, East Tennessee State University), 2005.

<sup>117</sup> Howard Y. McClusky, "Education for aging: The scope of the field and perspectives for the future," in *Learning for aging*, eds. S. M. Grabowski and W. D. Mason (Washington, DC: Adult Education Association, 1974).

<sup>118</sup> Terry K. Hunter, "The development of a process model to include elements of a discipline-based art education approach at selected senior citizen centers" (PhD diss., Florida State University), 1988.

### *Community-Based Art Education*

According to Bastos, a comprehensive definition of true art is not possible because the visual art world incessantly tries to categorize good art and bad art.<sup>119</sup> Also, societal designations of good and bad in visual art change like a fad every generation; this leaves a blurry line separating high art and low art for the adult learner. Low art can include folk art, industrial art, and popular art; however, even these designations of what art is are no longer valid. Bastos suggests that using a community-based system of visual art study draws on a community's talents and creativity.

Jongeward found that promotion of art genius bars adult participation in the art learning process, and creates adults who do not consider themselves to be artists – they feel outside the art world loop.<sup>120</sup> Adult learners must be encouraged inside the university art atmosphere to be free to explore their experiences and relate them to the art learning. An atmosphere of trust, mutual respect and creativity not competition, criticism, and promotion of genius, is needed through small group inter-relationships which are supportive small communities for the intrinsically revealing nature of art creation. Martin warns of a cultural erosion through lack of cultural and community values and beliefs (lack of community cohesion) and points to empowerment through social reconstruction of community arts involvement and valuing community art as the way out.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Flavia M. Bastos, *ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> Carolyn Jongeward, "Significant connections: How a supportive group fosters adult creative experience," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).

<sup>121</sup> Kate Martin, "Cultural erosion or empowerment: Arts development in the Highlands and Island of Scotland?," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).



Campbell defines community-based education as

the integration of community involvement and hands-on research into traditional classroom curriculum. This service type learning provides students the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to develop research projects, gather and analyze data, and communicate their findings with the community organizations and agencies that would benefit from the information.<sup>122</sup>

A community-based art program would positively promote each community's perspective of what good art should be and how to make it applicable to each person's desires of what to learn and how to practice it professionally and as a hobby. It would allow students to explore folk art (such as quilting and wood carvings), community crafts (something a community is known for making: sewing, needlework, etc.), vernacular art (art created by people who do not think of themselves as artists; outsider art), and popular arts (such as cartoon-making and illustrations) as essential pieces in a community's traditions. Inside each of these specifications of community art are concepts of industrial design and craftsmanship in art because art can be created for an aesthetic and practical purpose.<sup>123</sup> Webb states that current University and institutions of higher learning do not know what to do with illustration; is it a lower class design element or is it an element that must be allowed into high art?<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Charlynn W. Campbell, *ibid.*, 14.

<sup>123</sup> Flavia M. Bastos, *ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Keith R. Webb, "A new approach to illustration curriculum design: Using Bloom's taxonomy as the framework for cognitive and psychomotor illustrative studio objectives" (M.F.A. thesis, University of Central Oklahoma), 2007.

According to Tucker, the line drawn between high and low art is likewise drawn to stratify a society.<sup>125</sup> Bastos points out:

An art education that is based on encompassing a variety of art frameworks challenges narrowly defined categorizations, inspiring participatory visions of art and society. The importance of studying art in local communities lies in the possibilities for students and teachers to gain insights into multiple aspects of life surrounding them, including economics, politics, education, and culture. Education, and art education in particular, would be at fault if it overlooked the importance of both (a) preparing teachers to identify, examine, and critically teach locally produced art and (b) educating students to interpret and appreciate it. Furthermore, locally-produced art interpretation can inform participation in the local community and society at large, and perhaps fulfill Paulo Freire's educational utopia of affecting social change.<sup>126</sup>

The recognition of a community-based relationship between art in profession and practice suggests that community-based art education (CBAE) could be one part of the movement for true social change.<sup>127</sup> Examination of community-based art education environments promotes the study of students' cultures and this can intrinsically motivate lifelong learning and artistic study; this might allow individuals to understand and develop a critical consciousness of their own community locality and help them critically assess their cultural understanding and position through art, thus gaining an appreciation for their own artistic skill and use of it personally and professionally. She states,

It can yield critical consciousness not only about art itself, but also about the context of art production and the value systems reflected in it. Such interpretations are most needed in community contexts perceived as disenfranchised because they alter perceptions and generate recognition and ownership.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Marc S. Tucker, *A labor of love* (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1996).

<sup>126</sup> Flavia M. Bastos, *ibid.*, 71

<sup>127</sup> Flavia M. Bastos, *ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Flavia M. Bastos, *ibid.*, 73-74.

Neperud refers to a community-based approach in art education as an essential element in cultural responsiveness to the increasing diversity of nontraditional learners in society.<sup>129</sup> These nontraditional adult learners' personal identities are based on various life experiences which can generate common interests and values within a community-based learning environment. Within this community of nontraditional learners, a culturally responsive approach would be founded not only on the artistic product, art process, or artist, but also on the interconnection between these parts. Thus, community-based art education must be founded on a dialogic model of instruction which relates to individuals as artists, viewers, and as adventurers within their historical, social, and political context and content. Neperud states,

Art education should be open to emerging forms of visual communication circulating in the day-to-day lives of people in the lived culture. This means that an art teacher's curricular practices cannot begin and end with predetermined means and ends. Rather, there needs to be ongoing dialogue with students in which they reveal the visual culture that has meaning for them, so that they do not become disaffected. Initiation of dialogue through questioning strategies or provocative images may elicit reactions from students; without dialogic inquiry and action research, education reverts to monologic didacticism. Local cultural art forms are readily available in community contexts for this initial interactive process to begin in which one seeks to know more about aesthetics from the ground up. Perhaps it is time for inquiry in art education to begin with people who make things in their own community and from the details of their everyday lived experiences and personal environment.<sup>130</sup>

According to Sleeter and Grant, it is the fragile societal connection in education with the individual learner through the pathway of community which leads to structures

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<sup>129</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Ronald W. Neperud, *ibid.*, 166.

of oppression.<sup>131</sup> Hutzal points to this as the reason for the disintegration of community in America.<sup>132</sup> However, some educators have responded to this crumbling foundation with efforts to reconstruct the individual and society through seeking to build community relationships.<sup>133</sup> Hutzal frames the new focus within a reassessment of the values and interests of community inhabitants.<sup>134</sup> Paulo Freire also pointed out the necessity of connecting people through the community.<sup>135</sup> Community involvement was directed towards change for the integration of individuals into society as creative and independent beings. Hutzal states,

I found that the methods of community development, community psychology, community art, art education, and education for liberation have yet to extensively inform or build upon one another either theoretically or pragmatically, in the sense that agendas for social reconstruction through art and action are not often readily informed by those who are most affected, particularly oppressed people.<sup>136</sup>

According to Hutzal, there are a few authors who have acknowledged the disconnect between increasing social mobility and a sense of community involvement.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Christine E. Sleeter and Carl A. Grant, *Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class, and gender* (Upper saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1999).

<sup>132</sup> Karen Hutzal, *ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Gary P. Green and Anna Haines, *Asset Building and Community Development* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002).

Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

<sup>134</sup> Karen Hutzal, *ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Paulo Freire, *The Paulo Freire reader* (New York: Continuum, 1970/1994).

<sup>136</sup> Karen Hutzal, *ibid.*, 3.

<sup>137</sup> Ralph Keyes, *We the lonely people: Search for community* (New York: Harper-Row, 1973).

Robert D. Putnam, *ibid.*

Neighborhoods have become devalued in the fast pace of turnover rates in community inhabitants; this negates any sense of individuals' connection with community or identity with society.<sup>138</sup>

Dewey thought that a shared imaginative experience through liberatory art community practice draws communities together. He states, "Every culture has its own collective individuality.... Like the individuality of the person from whom a work of art issues, this collective individuality leaves its indelible imprint upon the art that is produced."<sup>139</sup> Hutzel refers to this liberatory community involvement as the inherent connector between the individual and society; this helps to create identity and relationships in various cultures as well as in the American culture.<sup>140</sup>

According to Dissanayake, the current theory framing high art according to the American university art world hierarchy assigns art instruction as a socially contextual focus which is isolated from community participation.<sup>141</sup> Dissanayake states, "Art in the modern Western sense contributes to species' sociality only in the most tangential ways, having become increasingly private and elitist."<sup>142</sup> Anderson also saw this elitist control of Western theory.<sup>143</sup> A practical theory of art should be "based on the assumption that art

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<sup>138</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> John Dewey, *ibid.*, 330.

<sup>140</sup> Karen Hutzel, *ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> Ellen Dissanayake, *What is art for?* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1988).

<sup>142</sup> Ellen Dissanayake, *ibid.*, 71.

<sup>143</sup> Richard L. Anderson, *Calliope's sisters: A comparison study of philosophies of art* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990).

should do something worthwhile for the members of the community that produces the art. Specifically, art should pave the way to a world that is socially, politically, or (most frequently) spiritually better.”<sup>144</sup> However, the tendency of current institutional art departments is to relegate this involvement in community art as a subset of true art world standards. Examples of this subjugation include the areas of spiritual art and art therapy.<sup>145</sup>

Lippard points out that art should be more inclusive of different cultures.<sup>146</sup> She states that art is the most essential element in community integration and understanding. Art frames the issues of conflict resolution without destroying individuals because of their differences. However, because it is a frame which must be seen within an art theory it can be isolating as well as relating. What art educators must realize is that there are various avenues and ways of understanding and creating art which can reach out to different perspectives in the surrounding community of local artists and to marginalized individuals. Hutzel states, “The challenge is to establish more bonds radiating out from the art “community” .... finally, [becoming] part of the social multicenter rather than an elite enclave, sheltered and hidden from public view or illegibly representing privileged tastes in public view.”<sup>147</sup>

It is also important to realize, as does Dissanayake, that when art enters into

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<sup>144</sup> Richard L. Anderson, *ibid.*, 208.

<sup>145</sup> Karen Hutzel, *ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> Lucy R. Lippard, *The lure of the local: Senses of place in a multicentered society* (New York: The New Press, 1997).

<sup>147</sup> Karen Hutzel, *ibid.*, 286.

community involvement it should seek to value community knowledge and experiences while simultaneously promoting art values that uplift and integrate the individuals in the community with a societal understanding through art.<sup>148</sup> Social reconstructionists see this as the positive focus of social change for the betterment and equitability in the connection between the marginalized individual or community and society. Beardsley states, “Art fosters mutual sympathy and understanding and offers an ideal for human life.”<sup>149</sup> Dewey points out, “Esthetic experience is a manifestation, a record and celebration of the life of a civilization, a means of promoting its development, and is also the ultimate judgment upon the quality of a civilization.”<sup>150</sup> Art becomes both a tool and a pathway for appreciating the qualities of a community while encouraging them to reach for something beautiful and better than what they thought possible.

Community-based art education (CBAE) can allow access to art for local communities and allow them to connect with each other; it can also promote identity and value in who they are and who they are becoming. It is a practice which does not seek to control the art world focus, but rather connect people through art with an identity of their part in the direction of their community and society. Katter reflected on the absence of community connections in schools:

As I look back over my years of teaching and my observations of the teaching of others, I sense a neglect of really connecting with community. So often the teaching of art ignores the culture of the community, as though art existed

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<sup>148</sup> Ellen Dissanayake, 1988, *ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the philosophy of criticism* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1958/1981), 574-575.

<sup>150</sup> John Dewey, 1934, *ibid.*, 326

somewhere else, outside of the local community, or apart from the lives of the students.<sup>151</sup>

Olson-Horswill points out that service-learning should be part of community adult art education because it connects art to real life, real people, and real experiential learning.<sup>152</sup> Through this form of university art education and community interaction, art mirrors life as we live it. Art experienced within a community can lead to empathy and human understanding. Hutzel states that service learning has its ideological foundation in Dewey's concepts of experience and democracy.<sup>153</sup> Dewey more specifically links education and experience through service learning and community involvement, and an educational focus on social transformation.<sup>154</sup> Thus, the theoretical frameworks of Dewey and Freire are applicable to this community foundation of art education practice. Both theorists add much to the concept of service-learning. Dewey dealt mostly with the connection between action and reflection while Freire delved into social and cultural

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<sup>151</sup> Eldon Katter, "Community connections," *School Arts* 101, no. 7 (2002): 5.

<sup>152</sup> Laurie Olson-Horswill, "Service learning, the arts, and human rights: An extraordinary connection" (PhD diss., University of Idaho), 2005.

<sup>153</sup> Karen Hutzel, *ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> Dwight E. Giles, Jr., and Janet Elyer, "The theoretical roots of service-learning in John Dewey: Toward a theory of service," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 1 (Fall 1994): 77-85.

John A. Saltmarsh, "Education for critical citizenship: John Dewey's contribution to the pedagogy of community service learning," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 3 (Fall 1996): 13-21.



contexts for critical consciousness in issues of race, class, and gender inequalities.<sup>155</sup> Taylor claims that Freire's theory of critical social theory should be an essential component to involvement and practice of art education in community extension programs such as service-learning.<sup>156</sup>

Kerka refers to Freire's concept of critical literacy as the foundation for empowering communities to recreate and rename their world.<sup>157</sup> Art education can be a practical component of that cultural literacy process.<sup>158</sup> However, various institutions see the value and practice of art differently and these seemingly divergent methods have been at odds with each other over territory. The focuses are on personal development, traditional conforming art technique instruction, or on social change.<sup>159</sup> Community art involvement addresses all three of these issues and their tendency to try to control what is considered art. However, in institutions of higher learning, designations of high art rule over other focuses and ideologies of art. This high art focus usually resides within the

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<sup>155</sup> Thomas A. Deans, "Service-learning in two keys: Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy in relation to John Dewey's pragmatism," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 6 (Fall 1999): 15-29.

<sup>156</sup> Paul G. Taylor, "Service-learning as Postmodern Art and Pedagogy," *Studies in Art Education* 43, no. 2 (2002): 124-140.

<sup>157</sup> Sandra Kerka, "Adult learning in and through the arts," *ERIC Digest*, 1-7, 2002. (ED 467239)

<sup>158</sup> Jeffery W. Elias, David Jones, and Gerald Normie, *Truth without facts: Selected papers from the first three international conferences on adult education and the arts* (Brussels, Belgium: VUB University Press, 1995).

<sup>159</sup> Jeffery W. Elias, David Jones, and Gerald Normie, *ibid.*

university art department control.<sup>160</sup> Clover points out that adult educators are beginning to see the value of art within community involvement which opens doors to revealing new identities through valuing participant knowledge and experiences.<sup>161</sup>

Roberson points out that the educational emphasis on social change, educational democracy, and socio-economic equality have been espoused by educational reformers throughout the history of art education especially when seen in the Danish Folk School and Highlander Folk School movements.<sup>162</sup> Grundtvig was the father of the Danish Folk School in the early 1800s which espoused education for all people.<sup>163</sup> The university during Grundtvig's time was taught in Latin; Grundtvig believed that instruction should occur in the adults' native language. They should be able to participate in the learning process rather than be merely receptacles of dead book information. Grundtvig highly influenced American adult education, especially Myles Horton who modeled his Highlander Folk School after Grundtvig's example.

Horton's school was based on social consciousness and community involvement. It allowed adults to participate in their own learning process. Dancing, music and art were elements of the school's expression of social transformation. Today the school is still

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<sup>160</sup> Christine M. Lomas, "Art and the community: Breaking the aesthetic of disempowerment," in *Dance, power, and difference: Critical and feminist perspectives on dance education*, ed. S. B. Shapiro (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1998).

<sup>161</sup> Darlene E. Clover, "Community arts as environmental education and activism: A labor and environment case study," *Convergence* 33, no. 4 (2000): 19-31.

<sup>162</sup> Donald N. Roberson, Jr., "The seeds of social change from Denmark," *ERIC Digest*, 1-16, 2002. (ED 465048)

<sup>163</sup> Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig, *What constitutes authentic Christianity?* (Copenhagen: Nordisk Forlag (English translation) (Copenhagen, Denmark: Fortress Press, 1906/1985).

open and it endorses the same ideology of freedom, and it hopefully claims that the school will endeavor to promote Freire's concept of social transformation for all adult learners. According to Scher,<sup>164</sup> Myles Horton's Highlander School was an example of using social change which began one person at a time through using music to help unify the community and embrace individual and every-day knowledge and experiences in the community of creativity. Using common experiences and understanding helped increase community unification and decreased the dehumanizing element of isolation through inspiring critical consciousness like Paulo Freire's concept of social transformation. The arts, thus practiced, promote questioning of the art world status quo. Community solidification and understanding of common values and beliefs is in a battle with fast-paced media (popular culture), and adult education can be the mediator allowing cultural and community value to become visible through the visual arts.<sup>165</sup> Freire appreciated Horton's Highlander School and worked with him on a book entitled, *We Make the Road by Walking*.<sup>166</sup> The joint participation allowed Freire to explain that his ideas were for all countries, not only the Third World. Freire found in their collaboration that all people have a need to be free and self-emancipation should be valued as a pathway for democracy and freedom. Here, Horton's community involvement was the route through which this democratic and freeing education could occur.

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<sup>164</sup> Abby Scher, "Can the arts change the world? The transformative power of community arts," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 116 (Winter 2007): 3-11.

<sup>165</sup> Abby Scher, *ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, *ibid.*

*Technology in Adult Art Education*

In 1899, John Dewey published *The School and Society*.<sup>167</sup> In that essay, Dewey talked about new education. His predictions are extraordinary for their foresight. Dewey talked about a revolutionary change in the materials of knowledge:

There were not in existence any means by which the multitude could possibly have access to intellectual resources. These were stored up and hidden away in manuscripts. . . . A high priesthood of learning, which guarded the treasury of truth and which doled it out to the masses under severe restrictions, was the inevitable expression of these conditions.<sup>168</sup>

With the invention of printing and easy travel, Dewey continues:

The result has been an intellectual revolution. Learning has been put into circulation. While there still is, and probably always will be, a particular class having the special business of inquiry in hand, a distinctively learned class is henceforth out of the question. It is an anachronism. Knowledge is no longer an immobile solid; it has been liquefied. It is actively moving in all of the currents of society itself.<sup>169</sup>

The vast expanse of the World Wide Web plays a major part in the development of programs that promote this new fluidity of communication in education. This electronic revolution is a way to remold a democratic form of education because it provides a surplus of many rich opportunities to influence different organizations through engendering greater equality of access in education. This makes the Web a thought-provoking oasis of ideas and information. Lanham states,

The curricular historian Frederick Rudolph has some harsh words for the 1828 patriarchs. “They embraced the uses of the past, but they withdrew from the uncertainties of the future .... Their respect for equality, for standards, for certain

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<sup>167</sup> John Dewey, *The school and society* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1899).

<sup>168</sup> John Dewey, 1899, *ibid.*, 17.

<sup>169</sup> John Dewey, 1899, *ibid.*, 18.

enduring definitions of human worth, was class bound. They were blinded to much that was insistent and already out of control in American life.” Just so. But here we were debating the same issues 160 years later. Why hadn’t we found some answers? Had nothing changed in this endless debate? . . . How can we democratize the liberal arts without trivializing them? Up to now, our answer has been the 1828 Yale answer: don’t really democratize them; it can’t be done; proceed as we always have – and let all these “nontraditional” [adult learners] students learn our ways as best they can. Political and economic pressures have now become too insistent for this. We are required to find new ways to widen access to the liberal arts without trivializing them. Digital technology and rhetorical theory offer the new ways we need.<sup>170</sup>

Knowledge is more and more a necessity for daily life in modern times. This is a world with an aggressive market, especially in access to the field of professional education. Education does not end after high school but now is quickly becoming a life-long process of learning and application of knowledge for the betterment of the individual professionally and personally. According to Lanham, many universities recognize this need but there are those that have not yet apprehended this movement’s meaning and power. Lanham states,

Since government, whether federal, state, or local, pays for much of our labors and those of our students, it demands an accountability that Arnoldian sweetness and light were not formerly asked to supply. And students in the private sector have become more discriminating – or at least more price-conscious – consumers of educational services as well. We face now a genuinely new, more searching and quantitative, invigilation. We claim to teach culture, civic virtue, and advanced symbolic processing [in a liberal arts education]. When asked to prove it, we have always begged the question: of course we are vitally important, even though, since we do what we do “for its own sake,” we can’t tell you why. But the issue is now being forced.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Richard A. Lanham, *The electronic word: Democracy, technology, and the arts* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 102-103.

<sup>171</sup> Richard A. Lanham, *ibid.*, 103.

Kozma and Johnston found several ways for educational support through the new technology on the Internet.<sup>172</sup> They saw that the World Wide Web allows an active participation in and with the application of education. In this Internet learner application, students are opened to real-world situations which affect their lives. With new graphics programs, audio stimulus, technical information, and 3-D visuals, learners are able to take part in the learning process; it makes learning interactive, intrinsically motivational and personally applicable. This active participation and stimulus generate more comprehensive curiosity between interdisciplinary subjects and professions.

Bronson points out the need for more technological integration within art instruction which encourages and acts as a tool to help build communities if interaction between the adult learner, teacher, and art world.<sup>173</sup> Thomes-Cotter states that it is the fast pace of technology evolution and the increasingly new techniques available for adult learners to appropriate which makes knowing everything about the subject of art impossible.<sup>174</sup> The computer can act as a helping hand through making distance learning and art software applicable to learner needs and increase art instruction feasibility.

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<sup>172</sup> Robert B. Kozma and Jerome Johnston, "The technological revolution comes to the classrooms," in *Learning from change: Landmarks in teaching and learning in higher education from Change Magazine, 1969-1999*, ed. D. DeZure (London, England: Routledge, January/February 1991).

<sup>173</sup> Lila W. Bronson, "Technology, adult learning and the development of digital literacy skills" (PhD diss., Pepperdine University), 2001.

<sup>174</sup> Virgine Thomes-Cotter, "One school's experience moving from onground to online in an art program: A case study" (PhD diss., The Fielding Institute), 2000.

Frayer and West point out that electronic texts over the Internet allow for in-depth study of the information, thus providing more understanding of a subject.<sup>175</sup> Visual and audio media make literature more interesting and democratically more attainable. Also, music and art are now more available and able to be understood by those who have no known 'talent' or genius in them but have an interest. Examples of this are the Corel Paint Essentials and Adobe Illustrator programs designed to help people compose and paint works of art without any need for a specific medium. This addresses the costs of learning in the creative mediums such as oil, watercolor, clay, etc. which can be extremely costly to buy. Use of the computer makes visual art more accessible to those individuals with little or no talent or resources but with a passion for learning about visual art for vocational and avocational purposes.

According to Yeoh,<sup>176</sup> computers are merely tools in the educational process that allow the integration of creativity while acting as a technical and guide-oriented access for technically inexperienced learners. Through computer aid, art technique no longer becomes the focus, but the tool of creativity and transformational learning. Yeoh points out that the increasing technology and technical focus in learning forces students to need a broader and more available source providing the newest innovations to apply towards their skill repertoire.

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<sup>175</sup> Dorothy A. Frayer and L. B. West, "Creating a new world of learning possibilities through instructional technology," in *Technology tools for today's campuses: Focus on instructional technology*, ed. J. L. Morrison (Chapel Hill, NC: Horizon, 1997).

<sup>176</sup> Kok C. Yeoh, "A study on the influences of computer usage on idea formation in graphic design students" (PhD diss., Texas Tech University), 2002.

There are barriers to working with Internet and computer software, such as learning how to work the Internet and computer program. However, through class discussion and exploration of different learning mediums through new technology, ethics and evaluation of learner needs can make access to learning more collaborative and more practical. This is extremely necessary for the academic environment where theory is not always followed with action. This is the large rift that now exists between the academic and commercial spheres.<sup>177</sup>

Mike Johnson refers to computer technology's ability to be interdisciplinary, drawing math, science, illustration, design, architecture, cultural studies, and semiotics into the repertoire of the adult art learner.<sup>178</sup> This interrelated material better helps students solve problems in their daily life. It helps students keep up with the exponentially increasing plethora of information and technologies which are created today. Having all the information at their finger-tips allows students to take more risks with their creations, understandings, and in community involvement.<sup>179</sup>

According to Kwon, computer technologies allow educational ideologies such as postmodernism to realize and practice what it espouses through providing education which is relational, diverse, elastic, and in flux all at once.<sup>180</sup> Here, however, the Internet component must work in tandem with computer programs and software for adult learners

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<sup>177</sup> Kok C. Yeoh, *ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> Mike Johnson, "Portrait of the computer artists: Between worlds," *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education* 15/16 (1995): 32-45.

<sup>179</sup> Kok C. Yeoh, *ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> Eun S. Kwon, "A new constructivist learning theory for web-based design learning with its implementation and interpretation for design education" (PhD diss., Ohio State University), 2004.



in art. If the technology is only a tool, then the real focus of education should seek to connect to the adult learner's context and seek to integrate information within the learner's own system of experiences and life problems. A focus through a constructivist (social reconstruction foundation) learning design conceptualizes the learner-focus, community connection, and transformational learning theory, and assimilates the problem-solving abilities of the learner.<sup>181</sup>

If relational connections and integrative understanding are the focus of a reconstructionist model, then adult learner's experiences and life problems drive the learning experience and make the computer merely a tool for their learning needs.<sup>182</sup> Above all, it requires active collaborative learning, learning within a community of conversations, to make adult education through the computer tool more applicable and authentic to adult learners.<sup>183</sup> Jonassen, Peck, and Wilson point out that this ideology descends from Vygotsky's study of education, cognitive psychology, social reconstruction and socio-cultural studies. These subject areas point to the true role of education as a transformative and personally facilitative pathway to create identity and connect the individuals to their community and society.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Eun S. Kwon, *ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> Luis C. Moll, "Introduction," in *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*, ed. L. C. Moll (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1-30.

<sup>183</sup> David H. Jonassen, Kyle L. Peck, and Brent G. Wilson, *Learning with technology: A constructivist perspective* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999).

<sup>184</sup> David H. Jonassen, Kyle L. Peck, and Brent G. Wilson, *ibid.*

Collaborative learning through technology offers a new approach to incorporating socio-cultural, political, power issues, and life-applicable issues into art instruction. Practical application of knowledge is the ultimate gain from the aid of Internet and computer programs. Both action and theory are able to be a part of the learning process. Dialogue and conversation are important elements of collaborative and socially reconstructive art education; it allows the learners to understand the language of the subject learned and helps relate it to what is learned.<sup>185</sup>

Examples of higher education programs which use technological aid use on-line classroom aid that include easier access to course materials and articles, tests, course guides, and chat room discussions. There is now a Virtual University for international educational participation. Part of this virtual community is the United Kingdom Open University which offers such programs as the “Design and Innovation” program. Distance education provided in this online educational community has been around for about thirty years and is expanding. In the Open University, students are linked to a local center and are provided with an individual tutor who is a guide among the use of Internet and computer software as well as the provision of home or work programs. There is also on-line help in the programs which include support with the use of online conferencing and an online library. There are over 100,000 Open University students who take courses with online support and have specialized help and personal tutors ([www3.open.ac.uk](http://www3.open.ac.uk)). Some private global systems such as *Sessions.edu* offer nontraditional certification in high quality on-line design-oriented art programs.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Eun S. Kwon, *ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> Eun S. Kwon, *ibid.*

According to Lanham,<sup>187</sup> digitization of education (especially art education) through the use of Internet and computer software makes it more democratized. The individual computer science inventors who wrote the program that converts a sketch into music did so because they saw the absence of opportunities for people who had no access to education in music; this must also be the impetus for the creation of computer art programs. Digitization allows all education to be interactive and potentially opens up art education access to all individuals. The revival of an applied rather than a rigid system of education and access to knowledge, an interactive rather than a lifeless understanding, explores how far inventions for the democratization of education might enhance individual talents in adults.<sup>188</sup> The most awe-inspiring quality of the computer on modern models of educational access is not its empirical or systematic framework, but its humanizing qualities and the freeing of adults through democratizing knowledge in all present-day subject areas, especially university practices of art education.

#### Summary

There are possible additions to university adult art education curriculums which could accomplish Walter Smith's goal for social reform through adult art education. He saw benefits in art education for adult workers over the age of 15 and sought to emphasize technical and industrial art education for professional application. To Smith, drawing was as important a skill as writing. Learning to draw could open doors of

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<sup>187</sup> Richard A. Lanham, *ibid.*

<sup>188</sup> Brenda Sugrue, "Cognitive approaches to WEB-based instruction," in *Computers as cognitive tools, volume 2: No more walls. Theory change, paradigm shifts, and their influence on the use of computers for instructional purposes*, ed. S. B. Lajoie (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000).

individual freedom from ignorance just as could learning to read. However, the pedagogical materials and practices were not available for adult-focused art education. Some of the possible democratic curriculum additions to adult art education instruction in university settings which should be founded on social reform are discipline-based art education, community-based art education, and computer/digital technology-based art education. The backbone of these features should be based on an extension of Walter Smith's social reform agenda. This extension of social reform is social transformation; a critical social theory is needed as the backbone of adult art education in present-day university art education practices in order to reach out to nontraditional adult learners.

CHAPTER VI  
IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Heraclitus reasoned that the constancy of change is the only unchanging feature of life.<sup>1</sup> This change/conformity incongruity exists within people as well as society. Kahlil Gibran aptly describes this human paradox in his poem entitled, *Freedom*:

In truth that which you call freedom is the strongest of these chains [that bind], though its links glitter in the sun and dazzle the eyes ... all things move within your being in constant half embrace, the desired and the dreaded, the repugnant and the cherished, the pursued and that which you would escape. These things move within you as lights and shadows in pairs that cling. And when the shadow fades and is no more, the light that lingers becomes a shadow to another light. And thus your freedom when it loses its fetters becomes itself the fetter of a greater freedom.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps this maddening dichotomy of change-based conformity is what drives the current study. Walter Smith similarly struggled to define an education which accomplished both a traditional understanding of art with enough progressive appeal to look forward and beyond itself: “*I have failed to find, either here or in any European country, any scheme or plan of instruction in drawing applied to all educational agencies... which is both progressive and harmonious.*”<sup>3</sup> This dichotomy is omnipresent in current adult education and art education for adults. Neither field has escaped unscathed. However, both disciplines have handled the dualism in divergent ways within

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<sup>1</sup> The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather guide, (Abington: Helicon, 2009), [http://www.credoreference.com.logon.lynx.lib.usm.edu/entry/heliconhe/heraclitus\\_c\\_544\\_c\\_483\\_bc/1/](http://www.credoreference.com.logon.lynx.lib.usm.edu/entry/heliconhe/heraclitus_c_544_c_483_bc/1/) (Heraclitus (c. 544-c. 483 BC); accessed August 23, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Kahlil Gibran, *The prophet* (London: Clays, Ltd, 1996), 28-29.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Smith, *Industrial drawing in public schools: A course of three lectures addressed to the principals and teachers of the primary, grammar, and high schools of the city of Boston* (Boston: L. Prang & Company, 1875d), 52.

the university environment. This notion of social reform progress in the midst of conforming traditional art understanding defined Smith's career and is present today. The difference is that the struggle is no longer between technical art instruction versus an elite support of a university European fine arts emphasis. The university art world has now moved art to espouse social change initiatives while simultaneously rejecting technical prowess and European fine art sympathies. Yet, in both Smith's time and the present time, one art form is rejected and one is supported to fit the motive of the elite university art society.

Smith foreshadowed our present adult education conflict in university art education:

*Some people are narrow enough to believe that there is only one right and one wrong in all matters, whether of fact or of opinion; and yet we find that, except in the main lines of creation, nature is perpetually varying her productions.... It is a remarkable fact that the great men of the world seem to have become great in spite of their education; and often in precisely those departments of thought or action in which they were never instructed except by nature and observation. So it would appear that all we can really do ... is to educate his faculties, and leave the rest to nature and time; above all things to avoid teaching tricks... or the idea that any process or knowledge is complete or final, or that in the work of education there is only so much to learn, and then we must be satisfied.... Everything, from the air we breathe to the very sleep we take, is either educating or destroying us.<sup>4</sup>*

What is art education doing for the adult learners? Is it educating them by opening their eyes to relate what is learned to their life and community or destroying them by forcing them into one particular institutional ideology's dictation of what is right for every adult learner?

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Smith, *Lectures upon drawing in the three grades of primary, grammar, and high schools of the city of Boston. Addressed to the teachers of the several grades* (Boston: Rand, Avery & Company, 1882b), 47.

Stankiewicz points out that Walter Smith's arrival in Massachusetts in 1871 set in motion a dualistic nature within art education policy and institutional application that had not been present before in America.<sup>5</sup> Smith's model of educational reform based in a social context took the place of the chaos of various art practices but subsequently positioned itself within an institutional framework. Likewise, current art education reform based on a social change curriculum agenda seeks to align art education practice with institutional standards of instruction as a result of national research findings and educational policies suggested and practiced by peer institutions. Perhaps something can be learned by looking at Walter Smith's educational reform troubles in instituting socially-founded curriculum reform.

According to Stankiewicz, social class and issues of prejudice still exist in institutional settings. The fact is that controlling factions are fighting over who should teach art and towards what focus. The historical echo which still reverberates in today's practice of art education reveals itself in the same progressive educational reform anomaly which forebodes inaction and institutional ossification. But there is still time to learn from the mistakes of the past and learn to hold policy makers accountable for their actions. Stankiewicz, an art education historian, offers several warnings for today's educational reform-based policy for institutional art education by comparing current policy with policy set in the past. She draws from the reform movement during Walter Smith's time to help delimit the errors of which policy makers should be aware: though appearing impartial, all educational reform policy includes some people while excluding

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<sup>5</sup> Mary A. Stankiewicz, "Perennial promises and pitfalls in arts education reform," *Arts Education Policy Review* 99, no. 2 (1997): 8-14.

others; those instigating or creating the policies have vested interests in the social reform focus of education which may promote their desires rather than the adult learner's needs; though policy may appear to decentralize institutional power through interest group participation, the interest groups are subtly gaining more control over the institutions; teachers do not come to the practice of art education as a *tabula rasa*, and policy-makers should realize that teachers have different ideologies or positionalities which they inherently bring to the learning environment; true educational reform is based within a social context and thus, will never occur quickly, and if pushed on others without their agreement, it will negatively affect future reform.<sup>6</sup>

Haanstra discovered that there is an increasing gulf between art education focused on expressive art uniqueness and professional technical art education standards.<sup>7</sup> These standards do not mix and individuals are being caught in between the two ideologies. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, policy-makers began to warn of the impenetrable divide splitting art instruction. Kassies refers to this split in the institutions for art education stating that higher education institutions are a part of the art community which assigns an instrumental focus to art where art is not explored, but is used to explore issues of personal and societal goals.<sup>8</sup> The other professional aspect of art explores art techniques, art history and values. Kassies pointed out how art is now justified within institutions on the cognitive framework of a process-oriented instrumental art education which centers

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<sup>6</sup> Mary A. Stankiewicz, *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Folkert H. Haanstra, "The Dutch experiment in developing adult creativity," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 81 (Spring 1999): 37-45.

<sup>8</sup> Jan Kassies, "Toespraak bij het afscheid van Jan van Oosten," *VCO-Bulletin* 20 (1981): 2-4. English translation, "Speech to the departure of Jan van Oosten."



on personal development, social change imperatives, and leisure learning. Haanstra points out that on the other side of the split is an intrinsic and product-oriented value to learning art through an elemental and technique-oriented focus on art itself.<sup>9</sup>

Haanstra refers to two types of effects in a person that occur within each dichotomy of focus: instrumental learning effects (the artistic uniqueness within flux) and intrinsic learning effects (functional product orientation). The effects of process-oriented instrumental learning promote: a cognitive acuity increase in visual-perceptual skills, creativity and critical problem-solving skills; hand-eye coordination and color perception that increase an individual's perceptual motor skills; increasing an individual's self-concept, self-confidence, increased social skills through interaction with others and increasing the ability to empathize with other people; and boosting academic achievement by increasing math and literacy skills. The intrinsic effects of the product focus are knowledge and technical skill attainment, understanding of art techniques and art production proficiency, knowledge of the different cultural art styles, and informed aesthetic and philosophical perception.

According to Kassies,<sup>10</sup> too much of institutional art instruction today is grounded on a cognitive focus with little acknowledgment of professional standards or any understanding of historical and multicultural art practices. The Dutch minister of welfare, health, and culture endorsed Kassies' perspective and assessed that instituting social change through art education policy is an impossible ideal. He states, "To consider art education as an instrument for changing society or a means toward self-actualization has

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<sup>9</sup> Folkert H. Haanstra, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Jan Kassies, *ibid.*

in most instances proven to be a plea for eating soup with a fork.”<sup>11</sup> However, if policy-makers understood the differences between theory and practice, they would realize that it is the nature of art education which can work for the betterment of the individual learner through the socially cognizant function of both areas of art influence. Art can be both instrumental and intrinsic if art educators are willing to work together for the benefit of the learner and not seek to grab the top position in the art world. Art can be both a form of social interaction via multicultural awareness and respect, as well as through teaching different historical, cultural and ethnic art making techniques.<sup>12</sup>

Haanstra offers that the ideological pendulum determining art education policy swings back and forth between the traditional functionality as a product of art and the uniqueness in art process focus. However, the rhetoric that these art policies advocate may be interpreted and practiced differently in the classroom where teachers must put theory into practice. Thus, art’s transformational nature is often forgotten in the battle between the two forces. However, the dichotomy of a traditional technical focus versus a uniqueness-centered social change focus does not have to be mutually exclusive.

Jarvis points to the same dichotomy. He refers to product-oriented instruction as social control and process-oriented instruction as social change.<sup>13</sup> This dichotomy can be understood as a technical/product focus or a personal improvement/social change focus in education. Jarvis states,

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<sup>11</sup> Erwin Brinkman, "Soep met een vork," *VCO-Bulletin* 28 (1983): 3. English translation, "Soup with a fork."

<sup>12</sup> Folkert H. Haanstra, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Peter Jarvis in George E. Spear, "Sociological perspectives in adult education: An interview with Peter Jarvis," *Lifelong Learning* 9, no. 4 (January 1986): 13-15, 27.

Well, it [the issue over what education should emphasize: technical product versus creative process] raises some fundamental issues, issues that are tremendously important to adult education, such as "What is man"? If human beings are no more than the products of a system, then they may be no more than glorified automatons, magnificently programmed computers. On the other hand, if the human beings are creators, then the social order is the product of their creation. But that then raises quite phenomenal problems about how that order is maintained and issues about power. And these issues engage us because we are engaged with people in the social order.... I think that it [this dichotomy] is fundamental for education as a whole, not only for the education of adults. In the first sociology, education is one of the agencies that helps mold individuals so they conform to the order. The more education helps them conform to the order, the less it is producing individuals that are critical of that order. In the second, education may be viewed as one of the agencies that helps individuals to develop and mature, to create a critical awareness of society, so that they are able to both help create and recreate the social system and, therefore, exercise some control over it. And education's place is seen totally differently in the two different perspectives [social control versus social change].<sup>14</sup>

Thus, according to Rachal,<sup>15</sup> adult education simultaneously promotes change while helping adults react to that change.

In ideological terms, the dichotomous focus of adult education makes us aware of different theoretical agendas surrounding the entirety of the educator and learner relations and can inform us about the deeply entrenched philosophical and intellectual foundations controlling most institutions of higher learning.<sup>16</sup> However, postmodern rhetoric typically gets in the way of true social change. In other words, policy can be made to say one thing and do another. For instance, the campaign for literacy carried out in the United Kingdom and the United States sought to encourage an increase in socio-economic status through

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<sup>14</sup> Peter Jarvis in George E. Spear, *ibid.*, 14.

<sup>15</sup> John R. Rachal, "The social context of adult and continuing education," in *Handbook of adult and continuing education*, eds. S. B. Merriam and P. M. Cunningham (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

<sup>16</sup> Peter Jarvis in George E. Spear, *ibid.*

increasing literacy, and yet, where ultimately, individuals are taught to conform to societal norms. However, this illiteracy campaign, just like Walter Smith's visual illiteracy campaign for social reform, is hardly enough to change societal inequalities.

Rachal states,

Poverty, illiteracy, and crime are, individually, serious enough; but taken together they form a witches' brew of toxins. So many of our social problems seem to feed on themselves and on each other while so-called solutions tend to address only one dimension. Overcoming illiteracy, for example, is hardly a complete response to poverty in a depressed job market.<sup>17</sup>

The literacy campaign can be contrasted with Paulo Freire's writings on cultural literacy<sup>18</sup> and his actions in the promotion of social transformation<sup>19</sup> which seek to address more than the superficial points of the illiteracy crisis. This change versus inherent conformity by not addressing the real problems is present in today's university art education society. This dichotomy is inherent in the social and political change-based rhetoric which blocks the way of actual praxis of institutional social change initiatives,<sup>20</sup> this is similar to the double standards of art education policy in which Walter Smith found himself wedged.

Finger proposes that political motivations pushing for social change have run over adult learners in our present postmodern framework for adult art education.<sup>21</sup> The only

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<sup>17</sup> John R. Rachal, *ibid.*, 11.

<sup>18</sup> Paulo Freire and Donald P. Macedo, *Literacy: Reading the word and the world* (South Hadley, MA: Bergin & Garvey, 1987).

<sup>19</sup> Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, rev. ed. (New York: Continuum, 1995).

<sup>20</sup> Peter Jarvis in George E. Spear, *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Matthias Finger, "New social movements and their implications for adult education," *Adult Education Quarterly* 40 (Fall 1989): 15-22.

way social change will occur in society is through personal transformation. Through redefining the aim of adult art education from that focused on pushing societal change to that of engendering adult transformation, socio-cultural and political issues will inherently be changed. Adult transformation is the only place where socio-cultural transformation can begin. The adult is quantitatively the single unit per social change:

The transformation in the individual's way of living as well as in his or her thinking is the only and the ultimate criterion against which the success of adult education will be judged. Adult transformation is therefore mainly informal, local, and communitarian, based on concern, commitment, and experience, rooted in and contributing to the development of a local culture.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, Finger equates adult transformation with adult education. He illustrates this point:

Modernity in itself is an educational project. But if modernity has failed, then education has too,<sup>23</sup> because it has failed to bring about an emancipated individual, capable of developing and sustaining modern societies. Moreover, traditional education today is neither the bearer of a future project nor the way out of the present crisis. But theoretically, conceptually, and institutionally, adult education is still an integral part of this educational project of modernity. Whether in popular education, in literacy programs, in community development, or in vocational training, the primary purpose of adult education remains to enlighten the individual through knowledge, competence, and conscience, so that he or she can fully participate in developing and sustaining a modern society... this ideal is no longer appropriate and ... the educational project of modernity will lead adult education into splitting itself into technical training on the one hand and personal development on the other. . . adult transformation might offer a way out of this dilemma.<sup>24</sup>

The era of adult education based on institutional power struggles between technical and personal/social development should no longer be able to control the nontraditional adult learners caught in the middle. The back and forth sway of artistic

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<sup>22</sup> Matthias Finger, *ibid.*, 18.

<sup>23</sup> Christopher Lasch, *The minimal self: Psychic survival in troubled times* (New York: Norton, 1984).

<sup>24</sup> Matthias Finger, *ibid.*, 18.

ideologies of change versus tradition catches adult learners in the middle where they are continuously bashed by the pendulum. Finger continues,

I would argue that the adult educational reality is by now quite different; in our field, the crisis of modernity has already divided adult education into two different types of education. Vocational training on the one hand tries to give an answer to the individual's strategy of material survival, while on the other, personal development is an answer to the individual's strategy of "psychic survival."<sup>25</sup> In both cases, society as a field of collective action has vanished. This split can also be observed among adult educators. In an empirical survey I conducted in 1988 among 780 Swiss adult educators, 25% appeared to be typical technical trainers whose only aim appears to be to transmit material in order to make the individual professionally more attractive on the job market. On the other extreme, I found 20% who are "therapists" whose only educational aim seems to be to help or heal the individual on a purely psychological level. Fifty-five percent of adult educators questioned think that the aim of adult education is to promote the development of both the adult person and society. But, faced with the crisis of modernity, the assumptions with which these adult educators operate are on increasingly thin ice. In my opinion, there is a profound need for a new self-understanding with a corresponding new conceptual and theoretical framework.<sup>26</sup>

This is where both art education and adult education exist encased by the progressive rhetoric of postmodernism. Yet, adult transformation can be a way out of the dichotomy of change versus conformity. In order to piece together a praxis-based adult transformation framework, there are a few basic points which should be made to delineate adult transformation: Jungk and Mullert examine "future workshops," "social learning," and "learning communities" as environmental formats which engender individual adult transformation; and experiential learning makes what is learned pertinent to one's life.<sup>27</sup> Thus, life application of art topics aid adults in being better able to deal

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<sup>25</sup> Christopher Lasch, *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Matthias Finger, *ibid.*, 19.

<sup>27</sup> Robert Jungk and Norbert Mullert, *Future workshops: How to create desirable futures* (London: Institute for Social Inventions, 1987).

with modern ideological assumptions and further relational understanding. When learning is intrinsically based, the learning is more effective and lasting than years of education; Finger points out that social transformation can only occur when personal transformation is involved in the process, and personal transformation can only occur if social change is mixed in; there must be emotional involvement in life-applicable crises before adult transformation can occur. And this emotional involvement can stem from moral or religious perspectives, thus, delving into more sensitive issues than typical educational formats based on critical thinking skills seek to examine.

According to Finger, a framework of adult transformation is a pedagogical foundation for using learning as an escape route in the present forceful and crystallizing postmodern rhetoric of social change. It allows adults to develop in a system which does not further the split between technical education conformity (professional focus) or social change-based therapeutic initiatives (personal focus).

Finger emphasizes that adult transformation and its subsequent social transformation seek to restore a relationship between the person and society. This link had been severed early on during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (during Smith's time) and has not been addressed in postmodernism. Hopefully, new ideas based on adult transformation can reestablish this personal/societal link in future adult education and adult art education. For one thing, adult transformation focuses on experiential learning, based on the German concept of learning through experience which grounds learning in the everyday life of individuals. Secondly, adult education with a framework of adult transformation promotes learning through conflict-based problem-solving; conflicts trigger emotional responses to the learning environment and increase the probability of

significant transformational learning. Thirdly, adult transformation through holistic learning is based on learning through life experiences which addresses the daily struggles of an individual. Fourthly, programs based on a framework of adult transformation promote identity learning. Finger explains the last point,

It is simply the extension of the last two concepts and states that the elaboration of a personal identity, the ultimate goal of adult transformation, cannot be separated from a person's experienced life, nor from his or her social commitments. This identity is both individual and social.<sup>28</sup>

He continues,

All of these concepts share the core characteristic of adult transformation: adult learning has to do with the social life of the whole person and therefore with the person's life experiences. It takes its emotional energy from this life and contributes to the build-up of a person's identity. Transformation must therefore be thought and practiced from the point of view of the person....<sup>29</sup>

This has typically not been the case. For instance, Freedman explains that social transformation has been rhetorically encouraged,<sup>30</sup> but because it is founded within social structures in power at the time which encourage only certain experiential opportunities for different cultures within American society, only social conformity has been achieved across the board. She states,

It is because various groups live within the same structure that individuals within and across groups may be able to generally understand one another, but it is the different experiential opportunities that provide crises between and within groups. The perspective of change involving the stability of long-term cultural structures that maintain certain contradictions, resulting in crises and transformations of

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<sup>28</sup> Matthias Finger, *ibid.*, 20.

<sup>29</sup> Matthias Finger, *ibid.*, 20.

<sup>30</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, "Educational change within structures of history, culture, and discourse," in *Context, content, and community in art education: Beyond postmodernism*, ed. R. W. Neperud (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995).



social systems, help us understand the continuance of this dichotomy of social change versus social control.<sup>31</sup>

The connection between the individual and society has disintegrated because of the more powerful sway of society as a whole. The intrinsic incongruity in the historical promotion of social reform for ultimate social transformation maintains larger social norms at the same time. Freedman states,

Because education contains and reflects pervasive qualities of the larger social structure, it reproduced structural conditions. Education is founded on a rule-based professional discourse of administration, teaching, and learning that promotes cultural reproduction.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, educational reform generally involves a conscious and collective effort to transform an institution that will remain fundamentally the same. ... Directed by such mechanisms of cultural reproduction, school reform in the United States in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries has particularly engaged two styles of knowing: production and bureaucratization.<sup>33</sup> These styles of knowing have focused reform on tinkering with a system rather than a "major overhaul".... The styles of knowing represent a structurally shaped consciousness that responds to conflict by seeking consensus. As a result, issues of educational reform become part of public discourse to promote the approval of previous social and economic transformation.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, although individual educators may profess a desire for reform to promote leadership in cultural transformation, the system tends to follow social change promoting stability by maintaining a focus on functionalism and "agreed upon" knowledge.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, *ibid.*, 91.

<sup>32</sup> Pierre Bourdieu and Jean C. Passeron, *Reproduction in education, society, and culture* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977).

<sup>33</sup> Kerry J. Freedman and Thomas S. Popkewitz, "Art education and social interests in the development of American schooling: Ideological origins of curriculum theory," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 20, no. 5 (September/October 1988): 387-405.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas S. Popkewitz, Alan Pitman, and Arlene Barry, "Educational reform and its millennial quality: The 1980s," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 18, no. 3 (1986): 267-284.

<sup>35</sup> Kerry J. Freedman, *ibid.*, 93-94.

Appleberry points out that knowledge is exponentially increasing so that most specialized education in the institutions is being outmoded.<sup>36</sup> From 1750 to 1900 knowledge doubled, doubled again from 1900 to 1950, doubled from 1950 to 1960, and doubled again from 1960-65. We live in a world which has doubled in knowledge every five years, and by 2010, it is probable that knowledge will double in 73 day increments. In a speech to students that is still as relevant to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as it was to the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Smith acknowledged the two-facedness of progress policy for improving society. He predicted the change in ideologies towards a more fashionable adult art education and realized the good and bad that ideological changes and new technologies could have on those at the mercy of educational institutions. Smith foreshadowed contemporary university adult art education in the following:

*We live in an age of change; it is the fashion. The nineteenth century is one of scientific discovery and artistic revival, and preeminently a fast age. The one great invention of locomotion by steam has increased the speed of everything except thought, and not only the speed but the haste. Even in the earlier and later periods of my own lifetime, I see a marked difference in the way in which all kinds of work are carried on, whether manual or intellectual. The iron horse has outraced the animal of flesh and blood, and we are rapidly learning its paces. The iron has indeed entered into our very soul - whether for good or evil time alone will show. The good of it is perhaps the vanquishing of time and distance, and in other ways the general overcoming of material difficulties. The evil of it is, that though we do twice as much work as formerly in the same time, we think no more, but perhaps less, we have no time to think, but go crashing on to save ourselves from being crushed in the hurry of progress.<sup>37</sup>*

And where are the nontraditional adult learners in this hurry for progress if not

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<sup>36</sup> James B. Appleberry, "Creating learning communities," in *Teach America: Teachers preparation for the new American school*, (EDU: AASCU, 1992), 25-27.

<sup>37</sup> Walter Smith, "The greatness of great men," in *The Antefix Papers. Papers on art educational subjects read at the weekly meetings of the Massachusetts Art Teachers' Association, by members and others connected with the Massachusetts Normal Art School*, (Boston: Printed for private circulation, Alfred Mudge & Son, 1875f), 11.

consciously placed in the heart of the change. Where are the change-ridden ideologies of art education running towards and who are they running over? Perhaps the nature of art education is the only thing we can determine. We cannot dictate traditional product-oriented techniques anymore as the basis for institutional art instruction for adult learners, nor can we dictate a social change hierarchy in adult art instruction – though the pluralistic focus from deconstruction in today’s university art world presses harder and harder for it.

Lindsey asserts that art education should be tied to lived experience and individual emotional growth.<sup>38</sup> Yet, a practical and adaptable art education is not being practiced with adult learners. Knowles states that the world is changing at such a fast pace that adult learners are constantly left behind the ideologies of the current time.<sup>39</sup> Their art education is swiftly becoming obsolete because it neither teaches them artistic professional techniques nor does it manage to help the individual welcome change while being able to adapt it to their individual life needs. Adult art educators should hope that their art instruction prepares adults to be able to adapt to continuous life change. Deconstructionist dictations from postmodern ideology in art education are weapons which only inspire defensiveness and cultural isolationism; thus, there can be no intercultural dialogue within art education in this hierarchical frame of reference. According to Hill and Johnston, this militaristic focus through the visual language of art

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<sup>38</sup> Anne Lindsey, "Phenomenologically based aesthetic theory with application to teacher preparation in accordance with adult education principles" (PhD diss., Florida State University), 1982.

<sup>39</sup> Malcolm S. Knowles, *The modern practice of adult education: Andragogy versus pedagogy* (New York: Association Press, 1970).

education will not create an environment for transformative understanding and interconnectedness of individuals within communities and in broader connections with society.<sup>40</sup> Critical consciousness of societal inequalities can only occur in reconnections through dialogue before true social change in adult art education (rhetorically promoted through deconstructionist theory) can occur.

Adult art education finds itself in a quandary of ideological crystallizations formed by social change initiatives; this forces it to constantly assess its worth defined by controlling postmodern ideology in university art departments. Though art education's history in the United States descended from associations with manual labor, universities' fashionable association with postmodern ideology dictate that art should be philosophically and intellectually based, thus separating art education from its historically humble technical roots. Somewhere in the transaction, adult learners are excluded from receiving an education which fits their needs whether for personal or professional use. Similarly, according to Cervero, adult education as a profession, of which art education and many other subjects are subsets, must constantly question its motives and prove its worth in the fast pace of contemporary intellectual-oriented (also product-oriented?) standardizations in academic institutions.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Lilian H. Hill and Julie D. Johnston, "Adult education and humanity's relationship with nature reflected in language, metaphor, and spirituality: A call to action," in *New directions for adult and continuing education*, eds. L. H. Hill and D. E. Clover, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003).

<sup>41</sup> Ronald M. Cervero, "Adult education should strive for professionalization," in *New directions for adult and continuing education*, eds. M. W. Galbraith and B. Sisco (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992).

The nature of constant introspection within an individual or a field of experts is the very heart of Freire's concept of critical social theory. The fact that both art education and adult education as professions must constantly reinterpret the worth of their existence because of paradigmatic changes in socio-cultural beliefs makes them inherently based in social theory. Thus, critical consciousness should be the foundational backbone of the fledgling field of adult art education and the broader sheltering umbrella of adult education.

Inside Freire's critical social theory, the nature of adult art education would not necessarily be geared to either a product-oriented/technical art instruction based on conformity (with the same consequential error as in Walter Smith's agenda for social reform through a technical art instruction), or the more process-oriented/self-expressive social change rhetoric of contemporary deconstructionist art education. It does not have to be either/or for adult learners. It can be an understanding of both; this is the theoretical foundation for adult transformation according to Jarvis<sup>42</sup> and Finger<sup>43</sup> within the field of adult education, and hopefully the foundation for social transformation within the field of adult art education. Perhaps a new framework based on Freire's concept of liberation from oppressive social ideologies within educational institutions will allow adults to be free to choose what path to take in visual art. However, the hopeful nature of this endeavor may only propagate the same dichotomy of tradition and change even as we praise a progressive approach to instituting true social transformation. Adult education institutions must be aware of the historical pitfalls of ignoring this dichotomy and its

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<sup>42</sup> Peter Jarvis in George E. Spear, *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Matthias Finger, *ibid.*

subsequent rhetoric of change for social improvement and freedom from inequality which eventually fossilize in academic departments.

However, what if true social transformation has nothing to do with any curriculum modification, but has to do with the individual nature of the learners before they enter the educational institution? According to Maslow,<sup>44</sup> individuals whose basic needs have not been met up to a certain point are not able to fully understand altruism/empathy for others and reach out beyond themselves. Then there are those whose background of encouragement and altruism allow them to practice their desire to help others. As DiMaggio points out, the university is an inherently conforming institution which though it espouses social change within its art department, actually seeks consensus within and between other university art departments.<sup>45</sup> The bureaucratization of university education makes sure that social change (historically sought in all of the educational reform movements that place art within a social context) is constantly espoused, but only conformity is achieved across the field. DiMaggio calls this process “isomorphism.” Similarly, Freire stated that “one of the most tragic illnesses of our societies is the bureaucratization of the mind.”<sup>46</sup> It is the “isomorphism” of human behaviors which deny the credibility of individuals who reach beyond institutional norms. However, art itself is inherently creative/in flux and it does not bloom in stagnation. As

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<sup>44</sup> Abraham H. Maslow, *Motivation and personality*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper Collins, 1987).

<sup>45</sup> Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, "The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields," *American Sociological Review* 48 (April 1983): 147-160.

<sup>46</sup> Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, *We make the road by walking: Conversations on education and social change* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 37.

Freire points out, it is this “ruptura” or conflict from constant change which enables individuals to break from the old establishments and continue to be part of individually valuable, artistic, connecting, and humanizing creativity.

The change versus conformity dichotomy within the university institution, in essence, acts as a ceiling or level for learners within the institution. Thus, those individuals who have had their needs met before entering the university are more likely to break through the ceiling of the change/conformity sound barrier, while those who have not had all of their needs met before the institution never pass through the level or barrier but propagate the norms of the institution. Thus, there are those who may have altruistic moments in their life, but whose central focus is their family, their life, and their struggles. Perhaps it is those able to break through this institutional sound barrier that are capable of encountering adult transformation and promote societal transformation. It is in an individual’s level of fulfillment that altruistic desires can enable them to see beyond the inherently conforming institutional dichotomy.

Academic art departments use postmodernism as the institutional lens of conformity for all adult learners. Likewise, adult education’s umbrella of ideologies reveals areas of conformity and social change: liberal adult education (a focus on cultivation of the intellect), behaviorist adult education (a focus on organizational control in education), progressive adult education (a focus on personal and social improvement), humanistic adult education (a focus on self-actualization), and radical adult education (a focus on social transformation). These philosophies explore the same question as university art education in seeking to define what knowledge is pertinent today for the adult learner. Personal ideological beliefs direct these five philosophies just as

modernism and postmodernism have directed the art world. Adult development is subsequently viewed through an ideological lens similar to the art world lens required to consider an object contemporary art. However, none of these adult education philosophies have been able to control the others. There is no hierarchy of educational philosophies as there is in university adult art education.

Nonetheless, art is a subject which refuses to be set in quantitative standards such as science and math, but which must define itself according to its ability to help philosophically broaden math and science's technical focus. It is an individually expressive conduit through which individuals should be able to rise above cultural norms and conformity; thus, art is an elemental part of social change. This social change is a standard of art, but has been defined in adult education according to Kurt Lewin's theory of freezing, changing, and refreezing in individuals and institutions at large. However, there are other perspectives of social change in adult education such as those viewed through the lenses of the adult education philosophies, especially social transformation according to Freire.<sup>47</sup> Paprock points out that adult learning occurs in this unstable environment when individuals seek equilibrium from turbulent life situations which require problem-solving in order for conflict to be resolved.<sup>48</sup> The desire to maintain personal equilibrium drives the desire for learning in order to find a way out of disequilibrium and chaos. This constant search for conflict resolution in one's life is the standard of Freire's social transformation concept.

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<sup>47</sup> Kurt Lewin, *Field Theory in social science: Selected theoretical papers* (New York: Harper, 1951).

<sup>48</sup> Kenneth E. Paprock, "Art for adult and technology education," in *One world, many cultures*, eds. D. Jones, B. McConnell, and G. Normie (Fife, UK: Fife Regional Council, 1996).



Scher warns that there are some obstacles to art being transformative: an increasing class division between the lower and middle classes and this division is harder to bridge than divergent cultures or ethnicities;<sup>49</sup> bureaucratic hierarchies dictate the value of art in the art world and current art innovation connects to university and other academic institutions (such as art museums) which do not reach out to community arts endeavors. Cronyism and stagnant ideas firmly rooted in the ideologies of those entrenched as the heads of adult art education practices tend to dictate non-innovation towards true social change – this is especially true in community art outreaches. The arts are seen as superfluous and impractical in the current university art agenda of militaristic and deconstructionist political influence. However, this is not art's essential nature. Art is inherently based in a social and political context which means that it can be used to manipulate or benefit others. Thus, as Harper states,<sup>50</sup> the art world "culture" within an institution dictates whether learning occurs or merely institutional conformity. Artists' egos historically founded on expert genius get in the way of enabling art to cross cultural and social class divides. This is especially true in a community of adult learners with little art experience. Art has many benefits for adult learners, but inside the university institution, deconstructionist ideologies rule over adult art education. Here is where the field of adult education can change the environment for adult art learners. Through heading research in the field of adult art education, adult education researchers can create

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<sup>49</sup> Abby Scher, "Can the arts change the world? The transformative power of community arts," *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 116 (Winter 2007): 3-11.

<sup>50</sup> Lin Harper, "Circling the wagons: The pioneering experience in higher education," in *Proceedings of conference on e-learning in corporate, government, healthcare, and higher education 2003*, ed. G. Richards (Chesapeake, VA: AACE, 2003).

a way into the heart of adult learner access to the university art world. If the isolationism within the art world is exposed, the adult learner has a better chance at being able to participate in the art world without being excluded in the process. Adult education is a dynamic and responsive discipline which, as the umbrella discipline for adult art education, can succeed in socially reforming university art world agendas for the good of the adult learner.

### Implications

Art instruction within university art departments currently clings to social change without understanding the inherent dichotomy and isomorphic nature of the educational institution. Visual art departments see promotion of social change as the end product. What is lacking in university art practice for adult learners is a constant questioning of ulterior motives. University art departments are deficient in the humility required to see their flaws and seek to benefit the adult learner rather than reaffirm their position within an intellectual institution. Both art and adult education introspectively assess their worth inside the current ideological value system. However, the field of visual art instruction within the university pushes itself into the most socially progressive ideology in order to protect its position from change.

Wickiser points out that art must explain itself within the university framework. Otherwise, it is seen as an extraneous subject.<sup>51</sup> However, the over-intellectualization of art in order to fit itself inside academia is killing it just as is the indifference to art's deeper and more transformational concepts. Kuhne points to Freire as a path for art

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<sup>51</sup> Ralph L. Wickiser, "The artist and the liberal arts," *College Art Journal* 11, no. 3 (Spring 1952): 180-181.

education's escape from the university dilemma of progressive conformity.<sup>52</sup> Freire was able to weigh into the question so that it was neither either or, but the creation of a new thing.<sup>53</sup> He states that though people espouse moral imperatives for social change that are good, few people enact them in their daily lives in a detailed way; this requires a new focus for institutional art education. And that is where social transformation must begin, in the daily details of all people through experiencing and relating ordinary life situations and events to their communities and society as a whole. Institutional exclusivity through a deconstructionist art world agenda which dismantles and destroys what it considers to be wrong tends to ignore history. By annihilating past art ideologies, true social transformation is impossible. As Walter Smith predicted over a century ago,

*The cherished idols of former epochs are broken and gone; and the last leaps of the accumulating avalanche will be more rapid and destructive than its first sliding motion. Yet we should be both forgetful of history and willfully blind to that which surrounds us if we believed that transformation meant destruction, and guilty of grievous folly if we mourned uselessly over the irrevocable change.*<sup>54</sup>

Braga states that it is perhaps the tension between traditional and emancipatory instruction which provides solidarity to the field of adult education.<sup>55</sup> Adult education must at once provide adults with ways of seeing what is not right in life and seek change while helping them to adapt to changing life situations and events. It is adult education's

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<sup>52</sup> Michael C. Kuhne, "A community pedagogy of critical hope: Paulo Freire, liberation pedagogy, and liberation theology" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota), 1998.

<sup>53</sup> Paulo Freire, "Conscientizing as a way of liberating," in *Liberation theology: A documentary history*, ed. A. T. Hennelly (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992).

<sup>54</sup> Walter Smith, *Art education: Scholastic and industrial* (Boston: James R. Osgood & Company, 1873), 299.

<sup>55</sup> Reginaldo P. Braga, Jr., "Towards a pedagogy of grace: In search of transcendence and integration in Paulo Freire" (PhD diss., Columbia University), 2003.

self-awareness of the tension between militaristic rhetoric for freedom from social control and simultaneous and inherent institutional conformity to ideas of progressivism which keeps the field of adult education honest. And its honesty is the open door which allows adult education to oversee research in adult art education within the university environment. Art education is in too much ideological warfare to be able to reach out to adult learners within the university institution and adult education can be the umbrella for social reformation in academic art education for adult art learners. This reformation was needed in Walter Smith's time and it is even more essential today.

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