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A Study of the Role of Art Education in Secondary General Education

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A STUDY OF THE ROLE OF ART EDUCATION IN SECONDARY GENERAL EDUCATION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

I. PURPOSE

Since the threat to our national security seems to be embodied in a sputnik or an ICBM, our national response has been to reply in kind, with matching satellites and missiles. Although this should not be our only response, it seems a bitter irony that we feel our salvation lies in advanced technology and weaponry when the threat is largely one of ideology. This reaction to the threat of an enemy technology has had a significant effect on our schools and as a result has prompted an increase in emphasis in the areas of science and academics. The purpose here is not to suggest a retraction of this new urgency, but to point out that an unbalance of emphasis leaves a disparity that is difficult to justify. Critics have been quick to point out that students in America need more knowledge and must improve their intellect for the times ahead, and the way to do that is to give them more academic subject matter.

The truth of that statement is certainly open to question and it will be dealt with in due time. However, the point is that the curriculum of the secondary school has been somewhat for a long time and this recent emphasis only serves to illuminate the disparity involved. That education is more than the accumalation of facts is a point that prompts

little argument, but whatever else it is, has not been well defined or practiced.

It shall be the purpose of this paper to investigate the role of art education in terms of what it can contribute to the education of all youth of the secondary school. Recognized authorities in the fields of general education, philosophy and art education will be cited to show what the informed teaching of the visual arts can contribute to the growth of each individual and his total character. It is a further purpose of this paper to point out the obstacles that stand in the way of the realization of these objectives and to make appropriate recommendations that may be of value in terms of overcoming them.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Art Education. The education of the visual arts.

Visual Arts. The creative use of plastic elements in two and three dimensions which is primarily perceived by the act of seeing.

Note. The use of the terms "art education" and "visual arts" shall be used somewhat interchangably in the paper.

CHAPTER II

THE STATUS OF ART EDUCATION

Although there seems to be an increase in the appreciation of and curiosity about the arts in terms of listening to good music, attending the theatre and the attendance of museums of art, this type of activity is far too passive to be significant. These activities should not be discounted, but it is easy to see that this does not make better music, more moving dramas or more outstanding paintings.

John E. Burchard, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, speaks directly to the issue.

> If we are prepared to admit that there is more general curiosity about the arts, and I would agree that this, at least, is so, we may say the first step has been taken. For without curiosity there can be no interest, no sophistication, no taste. To waken curiosity is an important first step. It is hardly an adequate total step. It is not enough for example to say of some one that he is a good teacher. It does matter after all whether what he teaches is worth teaching. Curiosity about the arts is not in itself a plus of a minus. It depends upon the nature of the satisfactions that are offered to that curiosity (5:4).

One may not have to resort to comments by emminent statesmen when the level of out visual sensitivity and concern for all the visual things about us so glaringly testify to our values. The approaches to almost any American city will answer the question quickly and clearly. When we litter the roadside and mask the countryside with advertizing boards, surely our level of esthetic taste leaves much to be desired. Ivan T.

Sanderson, internationally known zoologist observes in his book, "The Continent We Live On," that America is fast becoming one vast junkpile (7:31).

These statements are intended only to indicate that our national level of taste and sensitivity to the visual things around us is in a less than desirable state. It is easy enough to point out that we have a problem and that some action should be taken to modify the situation, the next point should suggest some plan of action that would bring a corrective force to play. The logical conclusion would indicate that education is the key to the situation. Again, John Burchard comments directly to the point.

> I have said that American knowledge of and taste in the arts, perhaps even American curiosity about the arts, is at best more restrained than we would like to see it. How is this situation to be altered favorably if there are not more dedicated and first class teachers of the arts? How is our America to be a happy visual place it needs to be without precisely such teaching? I have said that we need more fine arts in public places; how will this ever come about until the influence and the example of the schools affect the judgment of men in positions of decision (5:6)?

This personal experience of Russell Day, Chairman of the Division of Creative Arts at Everett Junior College, is also noteworthy.

> The highway between the cities of Seattle and Everett, typical of the many highways throughout the United States and Canada which pass through what was once virgin beauty, is now 30 miles of man made ugliness. These are indeed malignant cankers of visual inelegance which could be avoided through education and development of aesthetic sensibilities (:17).

According to a study performed by Richard Reinholtz in 1955 (30:1-10), no secondary school in the State of Washington

provides a visual art experience for all pupils. On an elective basis, art classes are available, but at most, ten percent have the opportunity or go to the effort to enroll. If the school assumes the responsibility for verbal and physical education on the secondary level, it does not seem too unreasonable to expect the school to be concerned with visual education as well.

Art educators have long advocated that the visual arts be a part of the experience of all students and this has been realized in part. Both the elementary and the junior high schools have made these activities a part of every pupils education. However, little progress has been made in the secondary schools. Edwin Ziegfeld, Head of the Department of Fine and Industrial Arts, Teachers College, Columbia University made this statement in 1952.

> There is a great disparity in our secondary schools between the assertians of art educators about the pervasiveness of art and the extent to which art operates within the school program. There is also a disparity between the recommendations--and occasional insistence--of most general educators that art be made a part of the educational experience at all levels and the actual availability of art to most secondary students (42:19).

This statement was made ten years ago and from current information there is little, if any, evidence to suspect a change in the status of the visual arts in the secondary schools.

The intent of this introduction is to establish the present state of the art program in the high schools and not to justify any additions. The main body of this paper will be devoted to an explanation of the role that the visual arts can play in the education of our youth and hopefully the evidence will speak for itself as far as a persuasive case for

the inclusion of such activites is concerned.

In an attempt to discover the extent of its influence, limited investigations into the areas of the intellect, the creative act and esthetics will be made. In addition, the realm of personality will be treated. Within the fields of visual perception, recreation and the role of the individual as a consumer, attention will be given to discovering the needs and pointing out how art education can make a worthy contribution. Since the visual arts are in themselves a body of knowledge, appropriate attention will be given to discovering the importance of an understanding of its history. It should be pointed out that due to the brevity of this paper and the broadness of the subject, the investigations will not be of great depth.

CHAPTER III

Areas of Investigation

The Intellect. Assuming that one of the significant roles of education is the development of the intellect for the purpose of analytical and abstract thinking, the objective of this first investigation is to determine the nature of the intellect, find out how it is developed and discover how the visual arts can contribute to this faculty.

The intellect is often defined as the faculty of the mind that deals with reason and knowledge. This is a rather limited concept in light of modern psychology and a broader definition may be more realistic. Harold Taylor, internationally known educator, teacher and lecturer, speaks of the intellect in this manner.

> The intellect is not a separate faculty. It is an activity of the whole organism, an activity which begins in the senses with the direct experience of facts, events and ideas, and it involves the emotions (35:12).

If the intellect can be thought of in these terms, it takes on a more living as compared to the mechanistic view implied by the former definition. With this understanding in mind, the next problem would logically be, how can the intellect be developed? A clue can be derived from the definition which suggests a wide variety of activities involving the whole organism.

It has long been assumed that the academic disciplines, with their organization of information and ideas into bodies of knowledge, have been the rather exclusive agents for the

development of the intellect. True, the academics do carry out this function, but their exclusivity deserves to be challenged. Dr. Taylor again is apt to the point.

> It is assumed that learning to think is a matter of learning to recognize and understand these (academic) concepts. Education programs in school and college are therefore arranged with this idea in mind, and when demands for the improvement on education are made, they usually consist in demands for more academic material to be covered and more academic discipline of this kind to be imposed. It is a call for more organization, not for more learning.
>
> One of the most unfortunate results of this misunderstanding of the nature of the intellect is that the practice of the arts and the creative arts themselves are too often excluded from the regular curiculum of school and college or given such a minor role in the educational process that they are unable to make the intellectual contribution of which they are supremely capable.(35:10-11).

Robert J. Pfister, Instructor in the Department of Art at the University of Georgia speaks of mental ability and how it can be developed.

> It is the function of education to develop mental ability along with the natural abilities of each individual. Mental ability includes:
>
> 1. Absorptive power--the ability to observe and to apply attention.
> 2. Retentive power--the ability to memorize and to recall.
> 3. Reasoning power--the ability to analyze and to judge.
> 4. Creative power--the ability to visualize and to generate ideas.
>
> We can readily see that the visual arts, with their special emphasis upon all of these powers in an individual make a contribution to adolescent needs.
>
> Many art classrooms throughout the country emphasize daily the development within an individual of the ability to see and to perceive, and after seeing to react with thought and feeling. The intellectual growth derived through the communication of individual ideas evolving from aesthetic experience and characterized by one's own concepts and needs is the unique contribution of art to the adolescent (14:49).

These statements do not deny that the academics play an

important role in teaching the student to use his intellect, but they do say that the visual arts are capable of adding considerably to the same development.

Another question still remains; how do the visual arts carry out the role? What is the nature of the activities that will fill this need? The intellect is used and thinking is done when the individual becomes involved in the activity itself. When the student is confronted with the materials, wood, metal, paint or clay, he is touched with problems and possibilities that will require his full range of intellectual abilities. The discipline is a natural one, emanating from the material itself, and only through the understanding of the discipline, the material, will he find his unique solution. Fred Strickler of the Teachers College, Columbia University, explains how the intellect is involved.

> The starting point in thinking is a problem, a perplexity, a hitch or failure of things to work out properly. The regular unfolding of behavior is interrupted and one must come to some conclusion or decision which is somehow different. Data are required. What will be the consequences of mixing these glazes, spreading this paint, combining certain metals, and telling our superior what we think of him? Probable outcomes are the steadying and guiding factors in the process of arriving at proper decisions (34:34).

In many respects the visual arts are unique in their contribution to the development of the thinking powers. They involve creative activity and as such require the student to call upon his total abilities to solve problems, create forms, and make judgments that may well have no precedent. That such activities can make significant contributions to the intellectual training of youth, is a point that has too long been overlooked.

The Creative Act. When speaking of the visual arts, art education and the intellect, the three cannot be discussed before creativity and the creative act enter the scene. What is creativity and to what extent is it related to the intellect? Wherein lies its value for the educational experience of youth? Can it be developed? Supposing their positive answers to the foregoing questions, what role can art education expect to perform?

Educators are becoming more concerned about creativity and the degree to which it is promoted or discouraged in the secondary schools. Harold Anderson, Research Professor of Psychology at Michigan State University views educational systems in terms relative to creativity.

> The Open System. The Open System is a stimulating system of relationships which accepts uniqueness in perception and in thinking. Familar examples of the Open System in education are found in the seminar, the class discussion, the term paper, the original experiment of student project. The open system permits originality, experimentation, initiative, and invention; it consitutes the propitious environment for creativity.
>
> The Impersonal Closed System. In education the Closed System is concerned very little with originality or invention by the student. It is concerned mainly with acquiring a body of knowledge, memorizing of facts, and finding answers to problems--all of which are already known to someone else (1:1).

There is no intent to characterize the nature of current educational systems for that is not the purpose of this study. Suffice it to say, however, that although some of the qualities of the Open System do exist, there is perhaps too great an emphasis on the Closed System. The critics of education often call for a return to "solid" subject matter, and in essence a

Closed System, are at the same time asking for more creative people to solve the problems that plague mankind. How to educate people to be creative by subjecting them to a restrictive Closed System of learning is a contradiction of means that requires no further comment.

Creativity does not lend itself to easy clarification because it is a complex activity. Even artists or inventors that are constantly making use of this ability find it difficult to describe fully. Carl Reed, Associate Art Supervisor of the New York State Department of Education gives a clue in regard to what is involved in the creative process.

> A student ingaged in the creative process is working at the highest level--intellectually, emotionally, and physically. All pertinent knowledge, experiences, and skills have to be selected and organized by the creator and funneled into the activity of the creation. The emotions have to be brought into play before and during the creative process. A complete coordination of the technical skills and physical abilities of the creator is demanded (27:61).

James A. Schinneller, Associate Professor of Art Education Extension of the University of Wisconsin speaks in similar terms when describing the creative act.

> Creative action, which makes up a work of art, is dependant upon an active involvement of the individual during the working process. Thrugh manipulation and constant choice, the idea to be expressed, material, and process comnine in a fluid action rather than a rigid sequence. Flexibility is essential to take advantage of newly discovered relationships which may determine new responses; for change in the initial visualization. Thus art cannot be predetermined; the final result evolves through discriminative and constant choices while actively engaged (33:3).

Creativity is, at best, a very complex activity and the need to completely understand it may be a point not worth belaboring, for inspite of its apparant complexity, young children indulge

in such activity as a normal part of their play. And, whether engaged in by a mature artist or a child, the process is very much alike, although the resulting products are obviously different in quality.

As to the intellect and how creativity is related, the poet is to be found in the above descriptions of the creative act. As mentioned, the intellect is one of the integral parts of the creative process. At this point it should be emphasized the intelligence, as measured by standard IQ test instruments, and creativity should not be thought of as being equivalent. J. W. Getzel and P. W. Jackson of the University of Chicago measured both creative ability and intelligence of a large group of adolescents (10:28). The results indicated that children with rather unimpressive IQ scores may rate high on the creative scale and that a high IQ scores may do poorly in terms of creativity. This does not imply that high intelligence may not exist together in a child, but that one is not a necessary condition for the other.

After all, the attention paid to creativity, to what extent is this quality desirable or required? In the light of the world today, unique problems are arising almost daily and they require solutions that cannot be found in terms of precidents. They require new thinking, fresh ideas, and unique solutions, in short creative people are needed to attack and solve these dilemmas. Science too is realizing the value and need for such abilities.

In addition to the values of creativity for the nation

and the world at large, there are certain values to be gained in terms of the individual and his personality. In his address to the 12th Annual Conference of the National Committee on Art Education, Harold Taylor commented on the value of creative activities as related to personality.

> We know a great deal more than we used to know about the relation of the creative arts to the emotional development of children, and we know enough to say that creative work in the arts has a generous contribution to make to the full measuring of the free personality. By this I mean a personality which capable of reacting spontaneously, freshly, and independently to a new situation as it emerges in experience (35:55).

Art and Youth, the art curriculum guide of the State of Virginia adds this statement.

> Creativity should produce within an individual a kind of mental elasticity and emotional balance which enables a person to adapt quickly to changing conditions. . . . Creativeness, functioning at its best in the life of an individual, tends to serve as a revelation of one's potentialities. It develops within some kind of super sight or vision which makes them forerunners of the age in which they live and, sometimes, prophetic of things to come (2:5).

As one of man's unique qualities, creativeness testifies to his strength and when he fails to develop this quality or in some manner discourages it, it may well be that he loses some of his uniqueness and significance. Obviously, creativity is a value that must be nurtured and developed to its highest peak, for as this quality is encouraged and increased, so will the value of man as a problem solver and a creator be increased.

Can this quality, desirable as it is, be developed? That is can this ability be increased through an educative process or is it a matter of using this ability as it comes.

There is strong evidence to support the belief that creative growth can be accomplished, and this done by education. It should be stated that the educative process is not a didactic one, but one which has the element of freedom in the most responsible sense of the word. The late Victor Lowenfeld, Art Educator and Psychologist, pointed out what was necessary for creative growth to take place.

> In child art, creative growth manifests itself in the independent and original approach the child shows in his work. A child does not need to be skillful in order to be creative. Yet, for any form of creation, a certain degree of emotional freedom is necessary because creativity without freedom is unthinkable. Experimental attitudes are evidences of creative-mindedness. Children who have been inhibited in their creativity by dogma, rules, and forces, resort to copying or tracing methods. They easily adapt styles of others as a sign of lost confidence in their own power to create (23:59).

Lowenfeld, at once, points out that a free atmosphere is needed for creative growth and what results when a directive climate prevails. What is stated by Lowenfeld would seem to apply with equal validity to the adolescent in secondary school. The creative growth of a secondary school student would closely correspond to the opportunity to be creative. Creativity cannot be taught as a subject, but it can be developed, with opportunity and guidance, by becoming involved in activities that exercise creative activity. In this sense, development means to render usefull the full native ability of the individual not to increase his endowed capacity.

With these understandings regarding the nature, status and growth potential of creative behavior, what contributions can art education of creativity in general for all students?

It should be understood that whatever art education can do to foster this ability, it is not for the exclusive purpose of ". . . the development of people in and through their esthetic and productive visual experience" (19:21). It is also necessary to mention that the visual arts are not the exclusive domain of creativity. This behavior can be exercised in science, music, business and elsewhere. The National Art Education Association conference on Art for the Academical Talented Student in the Secondary School, indicates to what degree the visual arts are adapted to contribute to creativity on this level.

> Creativity, which is the increasing concern of education, is possible in the visual arts for any person, no matter how young, who draws directly on his experience, Creativity is not possible in the sciences, however, until one has mastered the basic knowledge of the particular field on which he is working (35:21).

Harold Taylor warns against assuming that the mere exposure to the visual arts will carry out this role.

> We need to face the fact that there is a great deal of romantic nonsense talked about what the practice of the creative arts does and can do for humanity and the country at large. We need to be clear about the way in which the discipline of the visual arts can become a means of learning how to think, how to see, and how to understand, at a higher level of understanding, many things other than art. Science, for example (33:36).

This does not negate the value of art education, but it does point out that it must be a good "solid" experience and not become a "soft subject" (5:7). The report, Art Education for the Scientist and Engineer, states the value of an art experience in terms of its benefits beyond the realm of art itself.

> . . . if a more practical example is needed to show how an artistic experience works in behalf of education, one might indicate that civilized accomplishment is normally the result of alert, sensitive and inventive personalities, and suggest that the power which art exercises over the imagination can only add to the accumen of the person who can make use of it (3:10).

That art education can successfully nurture and rewaken the creative powers of the youth in the secondary schools appears to be a distinct possibility. That is, if there are enough dedicated and capable teachers available, not to mention the time and facilities needed. If as a result of this evidence the visual arts were to become available to all students, the effects may well spread into areas outside of the learning institutions themselves and begin to permeate throughout our society.

Personality. Without delving into the depth and details of the subject, a safe generalization may be made to the effect that there are very many people suffering from some sort of personality disorder. The cry that someone should do something about it is rather futile and is usually quieted by the reply, "what?" To the extent the schools are trying to deal with this situation among adolescents, it is largely a corrective action, enlisting counselors, test instruments and school psychologists. This may be the most difficult end of the problem to attack, and although the proverb "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," may sound a little trite for this sophisticated age, it may be elementary enough to work.

In what manner can art education address itself to some degree of personality development? Can it function as

an ounce of prevention and thereby contribute to the wholesome development of personality? That art education can perform this task is one of the underlying theses that permits its whole philosophy. It should be understood, however, that it does not carry out this responsibility by addressing its efforts to the individual personality as such. That is, art education does not seek to perform a guidance function directly by conducting a lesson in "Personality Development." It does seek to carry out this responsibility through the process of the individual becoming involved in creative artistic activity.

To support this claim and to describe how this function is carried on a reference may provide some insight. The National Education Association sponsored study, Art Education for the Secondary School make this rather significant statement.

> The greatest contribution art makes to the individual is in the role it plays in his development as a person. Because of its highly individualized nature, it fosters uniqueness, originality, and inventiveness in the expanding personality. Child development has contributed data on the growth patterns of children and youth which art educators and school administrators have utilized in planning significant art programs. They have supplemented this knowledge with psychological studies and inventories of life activities in an attempt to make art education meaningful (16:4).

The fact that art education and visual art experience can contribute a great deal to the wholesome development of the individual is a point that should recommend it highly as a part of every student's education. For through this process of individual activity, the expression of one's innermost self and the discovery of his relationship to the social and natural environment, the student will become aware of himself

and be better able to identify how he fits into the total scheme of things. It is through these insights that an individual can come to resolve his anxieties and problems and put them in a proper relationship to the whole.

The remaining investigations pertain more to the role art education can play in terms of the visual arts themselves and what they can contribute to the society at large. James A Schinneller of the University of Wisconsin comments persuadingly.

> . . . for it (art) can provide enrichment to all students no matter what their future vocations. It should aid those confronted with problems of building, selecting, enjoying, and evaluating. Knowledge of art should develop an awareness and appreciation on both nature and well-designed man-made objects that range from paintings and houses to kitchen utensils. Art should aid in developing a belief in oneself and a desire for creating a more beautiful and meaningful world in which to live.
>
> An intriguing quality exists in art, for while it can assist a lone individual by adding new dimensions to his life, it can also serve to enrich an entire society (31:3).

The intent of the following sections shall be to investigate the following areas and determine how the visual arts contribute to their realization: (1) visual perception, (2) esthetic sensibility, (3) the consumer, (4) recreation, and (5) art heritage.

Visual Perception. Vision is a sense and seeing is an activity that suffers from being taken for granted. So much of existance is directly related to vision and every one acknowledges this fact, but it is almost notorious how blind sighted people can be. Henri Matisse points out that many of his visitors fail to see the thistles by the sight of the road due to the memory of an acanthus leaf seen on a

Corinthian capital (43:21). John E. Burchard says that many of our college graduates are visually "illiterate" and he wonders how art and architecture will flourish in such a blind culture (3:2)? The visual arts have the ability and art educators welcome the opportunity to open the eyes of youth so that they will be able to "see" in the fullest sense of that word. June McFee of Stanford University states:

> We insist that our students be verbally literate. We have too long assumed that responding to visual symbols and the visual world only requires us to open our eyes. If this were true, we could as easily say that all we need for verbal literacy was to open our mouths and the words and meanings would come pouring out (8:19).

Although the analogy is not precisely correct, the point made has validity. Visual perception deserves to be educated as other perceptive senses and art education in the only likely area to find such education.

Esthetic Sensibility. Esthetic feeling can be experienced in relation to a number of sensations and one has only to think of strawberry shortcake or some other favorite dish to suspect that this is true. However, it happens that in our culture that sight and hearing are most highly appealed to esthetically. As might be expected, art education is more concerned with visual esthetic sensibility. It does not seem probable that esthetic feeling can in itself, be taught. It is, on the other hand, possible to affect sensibility, that is, his ability to perceive or receive sensations. In a sense, this is little more than opening the door and hoping that some good fortune will walk in. Esthetic feeling is an emotion and as such, is not something that can be taught.

Esthetic feeling does not, in itself, serve any "practical" purpose and in this respect has little to recommend it. But yet, who would dispute the enjoyment of the sight of a sunset, yet the sunset serves no useful purpose either. James L. Jarret offers a conclusion that is appropriate.

> In short, esthetics does not require justification by its practical results any more than art itself does: the one and the other are intrincically good in their very doing.
> Esthetics is an "irresistable temptation." Why should one try to resist (16:8)?

But is this concern for the esthetic, the beautiful, be more than the satisfaction of self? Should the concern for beauty not be extended beyond the museum wall or exhibit space? The answer is obvious, but what actually occurs in our society is often in direct contradiction to these common desires. Russel Day's comment stated in the introduction on this paper illustrates the lack of esthetic values in society. He also suggests a method of solving this problem which is pertinent to the present issue. Frank Bedogone, Jr., teacher at the Fort Carson Junior High School reinforces the point.

> The more complex our society, the more essential this esthetic education becomes. The constant growth of cities, industrial centers, the cutting away of the countryside, and the great number of material objects that crowd our everyday living cry out for the esthetic touch. To select the best from the available is becoming more of a challenge. To organize esthetically is a necessity for pleasurable living. To develop as esthetic sense must be the emphatic tone of the art education program of the present and the future (13:25).

Whatever Mr. Bedogne means by esthetic education, it should be pointed out that this does not mean to teach esthetic

feeling itself, but to educate the individual in the designs and visual organization that stimulate the esthetic emotion. If art education can successfully affect the esthetic change of youth, it may modify the man-made environment for the greater enjoyment of all.

Recreation. In our modern society long life and increased leisure time present a serious problem for all. What will be done with this time? Will it be used constructively or not? Passive entertainment and physical activities do provide the individual with some enjoyment, but seldom do they provide the total kind of recreation that is needed. What is needed and what kind of activity will meet this need?

Most occupations in this modern society are not creative in nature. Either the individual is involved in a small part of the whole process or he operates a machine that carries out the process. Still more are involved in service occupations in which there is no real beginning or end to their work, but a repetition of very similar activities. The Progressive Education Association's report on The Visual Arts in General Education, points out the need for a particular type of leisure time activity.

> Leisure pursuits offer opportunity for making a better balance in life if they exercise abilities that are not otherwise employed, and so are likely to atrophy. With the overwhelming tendency to rely upon passive entertainment, there is increasing need for balance in the form of creative activity (39:143) .

When the individual involves himself in creative activity, the entire process is guided from beginning to end.

In this way the individual experiences a complete identification with all parts of the process rather that a limited part as might be experienced on the job. Ernest Ziegfeld believes that art has a special contribution to make in this matter. "Because art activities are essentially creative and demand integrated response and behavior, they can do much to compensate for the standardization and specialization of our mechanical society" (41:124).

Art education can play a significant role in the creative use of leisure time by providing students with the fundamental experiences that will allow them to carry on after formal education has been completed. Henry Schaefer-Simmern gives an apt and forceful conclusion.

> They (artistic activities) should be developed organically through adolescence up to mature stages of adulthood. In this way the creative energies of the people will ultimately become a decisive factor in counter acting dangers of modern mechanized life. Art education that recognizes artistic activity as a general attribute of human nature and that aims at the unfolding and developing of man's latent creative abilities will then contribute its share to the great task which faces all of us, the resurrection of a humanized world (33:201).

The Consumer. All people of the society play a consumer role. Adolescents and adults select, purchase, and use many materials and items. As adults, the purchase of a home, an automobile, appliances, clothes, and countless other items often represent sizable sums of money. What basis does one use to select such products? Can the individual place his entire trust on advertizing claims as a basis for decision? Obviously not. Saying "I know what I like" is not much better. A set of criteria for making such decisions would be much

wiser and no doubt yield better results. Russel Day supports the need for knowledge and understanding in making such decisions.

> Such aesthetic surroundings are easily within the reach of most; they need not be costly. Such creation does not necessarily come under the category of "what I like"; it is the direct result of discriminating taste, a taste which is supported by conscious knowledge of the principle of art (8:18).

His comment serves well to support the role of the visual arts in this matter. The student, with the guidance of an able and sensitive teacher, can discover the principle of art that will enable him to establish a set of criteria for making wise selections. Such criteria would not be a rigid uniform list that would result in conformity, but a series of value judgments with a flexibility that allows one to retain his individuality. It is possible, for the same investment, to surround one's self with an attractive and pleasant environment, rather than the many poorly designed and unattractive products that are available for the same investment. By so doing, pleasant esthetic surroundings are possible and perhaps indirectly more products of good design and esthetic quality will be available.

Art Heritage. Although the visual arts are capable of providing benefits beyond the limits of art itself, there is merit in a knowledge of the visual arts themselves. They have a rich history of their own and the historic products of man's creative abilities still command the respect and appreciation of the modern world. Because of the nature of art, the works of artists in history are no less valuable

or important due to their age. Also, the visual arts bear a close relationship to the culture of which they are a part and as a result, the conditions that influenced them, often bear a more than passing relationship to their age. The National Education Association study, Art Education for the Academically Talented Student in the Secondary School, makes this observation. "The art heritage, the clearest indicator of a culture and a most potent influence on the future of the culture, frequently has been by-passed or treated incidentally (40:28).

By acquiring an understanding and appreciation of the history of art, the student can see how art has been affected and to what extent has been an influence itself. Through this knowledge, one can come to realize that art is an integral part of the culture and see it as a part of his own life and the modern world. Many organizations outside the school are currently playing an important role in uniting the practice and appreciation of the visual arts with the people of our time. Reino Randall, of Central Washington State College, identifies an impressive number of organizations with the State of Washington that are functioning on regional, state, and local levels (8:43). These are encouraging signs of awareness of the visual arts, but it should not negate the need for youth to be informed about the artistic world around them by sensitive teaching in the schools. By becoming so informed, future adults will come to feel that art products and activities are normal and a part of their way of life.

CHAPTER IV

OBSTACLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of obstacles exist that prevent the visual arts from becoming a part of the educational experience of all students. As mentioned in the introduction, the evidence was to speak largely for itself as far any persuasion for the inclusion of art education in the general education program of the secondary school was concerned. Hopefully that occured. Determining the extent and nature of the obstacles preventing this realization and outlining the path of some recommendations for overcoming them will be the intent of this chapter.

The Teacher. The core of any educational venture is the teacher. At present, their is a moderate demand for art teachers and the supply is nearly adequate for the need. But if by some miracle, art was made a part of the general education curriculum tomorrow, the disparity would doom the plan to failure. This is a circular problem, for without the teachers the school cannot iniate such a program and the teacher education institutions cannot embark on the preparation of more art teachers without evidence for their demand. Necessarily, an increased liason must be made between the schools and the teacher's colleges, and in particular the art education people, before any general education art program can ever begin. Both levels will have to make advances to establish a starting point for the solution of this problem.

Teacher quality is a related factor that cannot be overlooked. In the teaching of the visual arts, with many values extending beyond art itself, teachers of high ability are required. They must have the qualities of a creative, sensitive artist combined with an understanding of children and their needs, not to mention the deep sense of dedication necessary for all teachers. There are teacher education institutions capable of preparing quality teachers and the faculities have a spirit that is contagious. Nevertheless, nothing can be accomplished without competent and sincere young people to become the teachers and fill the need for such a large task.

Administration. In many situations administrative personnel may be unaware of the role that art education can play in the education of the child. This, however, should not be too great a hardle as there has been an increased awareness of art education in the administrative journals and education associations have been sponsoring significant studies showing the need and role of art education on the schools (8,17,40).

Art Education. Art education itself has become an obstacle in some cases. In those situations where the program has degenerated to a poster making function or become a shallow ineffective part of the curriculum, it has defeated the very purpose that it was set out to achieve. Perhaps even worse than the immediate damage, is the reputation that results, making improvements and expansion even more difficult. Good programs are a must.

Curriculum. The Progressive Education Association pointed out in 1940 (39:94) that the curriculum of the high school is often determined by college requirements to the extent that the schools were not structuring the curriculum, but the colleges. To some degree, this is still true today and since the colleges do not require a visual arts course experience for entrance it may lose the opportunity to make a contribution to college bound students. A National Education Association study made this statement regarding art as part of college prep students.

> If the student is college-bound, an understanding of the arts as a visual statement of a culture is of great importance; the creative approach to problem-solving encouraged in art is an incalculable asset, the speaking acquaintance with fine arts is a source of lasting satisfaction (17:17).

This problem can be overcome, in part, only with the realization of all concerned, that the visual arts have a role to play for all students.

Scheduling. Closely related to the curriculum is the problem of scheduling. The school day is filled very near to the limit and scheduling practices are presently rather rigid and flexibility is difficult. Many secondary school schedules are so filled that there seems little chance for art to become a part of the program in the present system. J. Lloyd Trump of the Commission on the Experimental Study of the Utilization of the Staff in the Secondary School, has been carrying out a series of studies into the possibilities of redefinition and restructure of the secondary schools (37:23-71). The implications are both broad and deep involving staff utilization,

scheduling, class size, and the use of non-professional assistants. It is not altogether clear how art would fit into such a program, but since the objectives of the study were to discover how to use present staff more effectively and in general improve the curriculum and related elements, the possibilities seem to be worth the serious investigation of this plan.

Another plan that may hold some possibilities for scheduling of art will be an experiment carried on in 1962-1963 by the Bellevue High School in Bellevue, Washington. Students will register for seven classes each semester. On any given day they will attend only six of the seven and classes will be rotated in order. On Monday, for example, classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; Tuesday, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; Wednesday, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 1; and so on. The purpose is two fold. One, a student can register for one more class, seven in total. Second, each class period would be of extended length, sixty to seventy minutes. Again the details of how the curriculum will fit into this plan is not clear, but the possibility of a general education art course would seem less remote. There is no attempt to find a workable solution here as the problem is far too complex. These two plans, however, may hold within some feasable solution and those schools who want a solution may find it there.

Professional Standards. Although this next item may not be an obstacle in the same sense as the other points mentioned, it should be considered. Modern art educators realize that the product is not the all important criteria

for judging an art program. In those situations where art work is displayed for the general public and parents, there is a strong possibility that people will compare the art work to professional products and find it falling short of the standard. In this situation the art work should not be exhibited, which is not an acceptable alternative, or a certain amount of public education carried on. If the viewer is aware of the values gained in the process and study of art will not necessarily show up in the product, he may be less critical and begin to realize that professional criteria should not be applied in a rigid manner. Educating the public on this matter may seem like an impossible task; by speaking at P. T. A. and other groups, understanding and enthusiastic support may be the reward.

Public Support. If the other obstacles were somehow surmounted, there would still remain another issue to be considered. What of the tax paying public? Those that may never be in contact with the school directly. Will they be willing to support a program of the visual arts for all students? When a large number of the general public believes that art is something of a "frill" and their suspicions are supported by "authorities" such as admirals and self-appointed experts, it will be difficult to obtain their support. If art education is going to succeed in the objectives that have been suggested, a sympathetic and supporting public will be essential. To do this artists, students, art educators, and all others seriously concerned will have to demonstrate the effectiveness of the visual arts to carry out its claims

and this perhaps is the task that is before them. John E. Burchard makes a challenge that will outline the task ahead for those involved.

> So artists, humanists, and teachers of art need, I have no doubt, to take a hitch in their belts. Their dilemmas will not be solved by political infighting but only by contriving experiences in art education which go forward with a clearly understood purpose and which are so invigorating, so rigorous, and thus so rewarding that they can compete for the student's mind not as an easy way to credit, not as some sybaratic interlude in the day's real occupation, but as a part of the vital core of his life as youth and as an adult. With these fiery admonitions, I close, but add the superfluous footnote, "It won't be easy" (5:8).

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper has been to study the role of art education in the secondary school and to discover what contributions can be made. There is ample evidence to show that art education has a great deal to offer the general education student in terms of intellectual values, creative power and personality. Acknowledging the visual world and and the visual arts as a part of life, art education can give enrichment to these aspects of the individuals experience. The obstacles to realization of an art experience for every student are many, including those both inside and outside of the school. By demonstrating the value of art education with students presently taking part in this experience on an elective basis and by diligent search for the solutions to the problems, art education will someday be in a situation to make the values of the visual arts available to all students in the secondary schools of this state.

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