

ABSTRACT

The study sets out to examine notions of 'art', 'culture' and 'ideology' and their determined and determining relationships within the field of art educational research, and (here) within a specific form of cultural production: cartoons and caricatures. These related explorations of a common field include work which is predominantly critical and theoretical and some (like the case study) more substantive. An analysis of the areas indicated by the concepts 'art', 'culture' and 'ideology' is offered in order to locate problems of definition alongside particular developments in the fields of art history, semiotics, sociology and cultural studies and to broaden the theoretical basis for art education. The analysis also moves across disciplines - such as 'literature', 'education', 'art history' etc. - working to connect crucial theoretical issues (eg. the literary and visual discourse in satire or the concept of modernism) while trying to avoid interdisciplinary rivalries.

Cultural products and cultural production, including the writing of this study, are seen in terms of their material conditions of existence and their work as representations which produce and reproduce meanings. Inshort, the concern is both with modes of production and modes of signification. An outline of some of the type of work that can be done, in art education, under the rubric of 'cultural studies' emerges from a discussion of the central organising concept of art as cultural production; and a critique of existing theories of cultural production, operating within the art subject, which fail to ask how (visual) meanings/ideologies are made while remaining committed to disabling notions of 'personal' creativity often entailing aesthetic mysticism or a 'psychologised' version of style criticism.

A model of analysis based upon the methodology of Williams in cultural studies; of Frederick Antal and Tim Clark in art history; and of Roland Barthes and Victor Burgin in semiotics, is constructed (in a field that is largely unmapped) in order to provide some notes towards an argument in theory about the possibility of a sociology of art and culture and to analyse historically the sign-systems, codes and styles which are available for authorial and audience groups to make meanings with. In this case the work done in making cartoons meaningful and the work of their 'publication' and 'exchange'.

This is the spine of the study. In pursuit of these aims the study makes a contribution in a number of other areas. In exploring the cultural production of cartoons - which to a large degree has been rejected by the

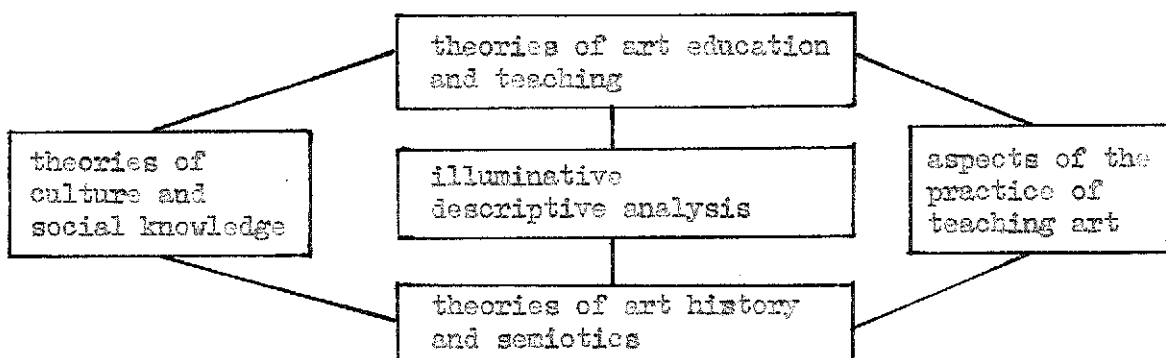
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academic establishment or like pulp-fiction, pop-music, photography etc. has been defined as 'sub-cultural' or ephemeral - a suggestion is made that cultural forms are not static but are 'read' and given meanings within the dynamic tensions of domination/subordination,^{i.e.} within the defining concept of cultural hegemony. The struggle to mean in cartoons signals the working of these power/knowledge relations. An intervention is made into the orthodoxy of 'style criticism' in order to direct the discussion towards the development of a more useful theoretical concept of 'visual ideology' - which, it is suggested, allows a better grasp of the particularities of the production of pictures, their ideological components and their history. In a field where there are but a few studies of the ideological components of paintings and no substantial semiological analyses outside of photography, a semiological analysis of cartoons is constructed through a detailed examination of the techniques and mechanism of visual/literary satire together with an account of stereotyping as a method operating within the iconography of cartoons. An analysis of the stereotyping function is linked to wider theories of representation.

The latter part of this study analyses the different levels along which the cartoon signifies, or communicates meaning. It is hoped that the analysis will have some applicability and relevance to teaching, though the very nature of research means that its outcomes are the result of special circumstances and therefore cannot simply be reproduced in other situations. The study ends with an appendix which includes a translation (from ACTES, No.1, Paris 1975) and published articles by the author.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT:

The study is in the form of a circulating argument:



The empirical work based on the collection of cartoons and caricatures included as the fifth and sixth chapters is part of:

- 1) a growing interest in a theory of illuminative descriptive analysis
- 2) an attempt to illustrate key ideas and concepts contained in the main body of the text
- 3) an attempt to consider the responses to this teaching in one area of the curriculum.