

**The Truant Curriculum:  
An Investigation of the Place of Critical  
Studies in Secondary Art Education**

Nicholas John Addison

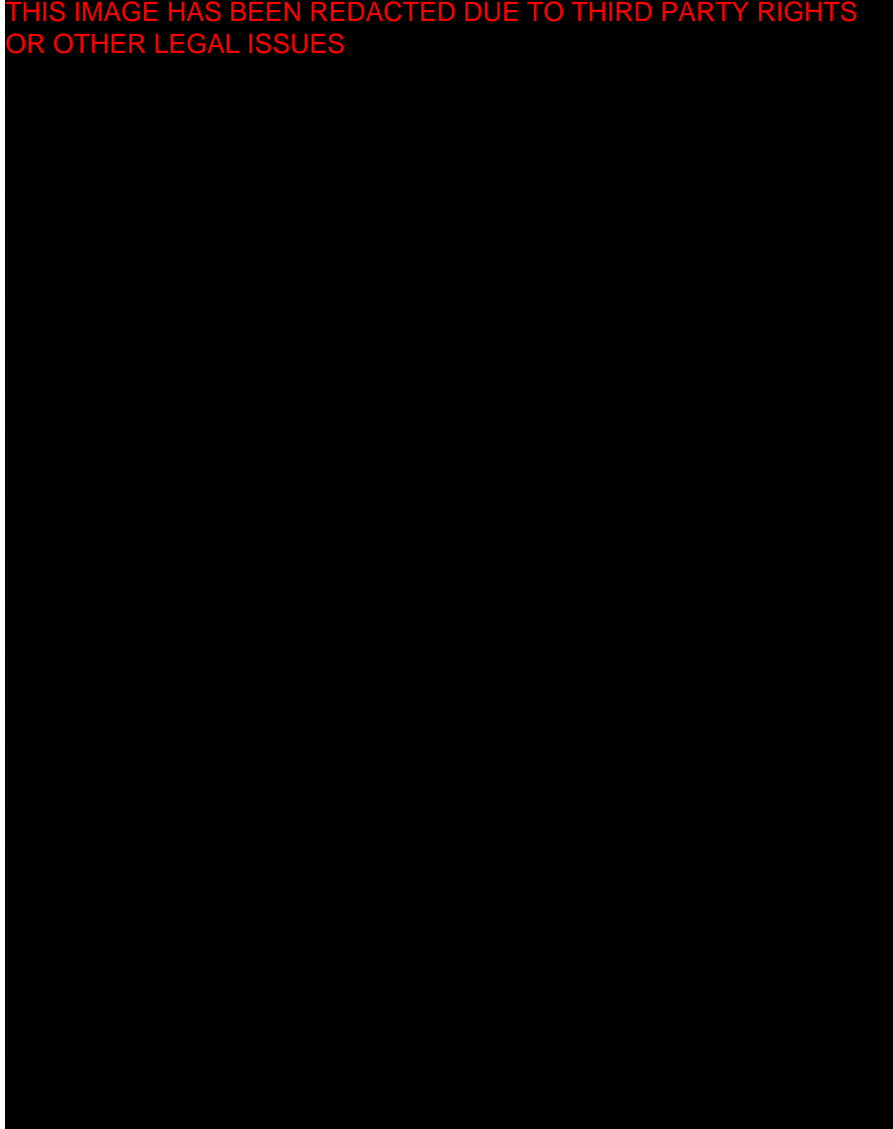
PhD thesis

2004

Supervisors: Dr Pam Meecham and Anton Franks  
Institute of Education, University of London



THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS  
OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES



ACHiS: Student Installation, De Souza's Residency

As the author of this thesis totalling 86,146 words (including footnotes) I hereby certify that it is entirely my own work.

## Abstract

This research is motivated by two central questions:

- 1) Why has the place of critical studies in secondary art and design been diagnosed as ‘fragile’?
- 2) Can practitioners from related fields inform a critical curriculum through interventionist strategies?

To place the thesis in context, the National Curriculum is examined to indicate the place of critical studies within official art educational discourse. This analysis reveals a disjunction between official rhetoric and practice, one that stimulated the interdisciplinary, action research project, *Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools*. The researchers aimed to understand, inform and change the acritical practices of school art by instigating critical residencies drawing on the investigative and interpretative methods of (new) art history and the practices of critical pedagogy. Employing Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic codes, qualitative data drawn from the project is analysed to understand the insularity of the subject and the asymmetry in power relations between art education and the other professional discourses that dominate it.

These disjunctions are the starting point for a genealogy that traces the development of modernist art education using Bourdieu’s concepts of ‘capital’, ‘habitus’ and ‘field’ to navigate its complexities. The unfolding narrative reveals the dialectical philosophies that produced modernist art education and made an acritical model in secondary education tenable, an acriticality that sits uncomfortably beside the critical discourses of modernist art. Related fields are examined to understand the social and cultural conditions that have succeeded in producing a critical education. The critical traditions for the interpretation of art (including art history and visual semiotics) are examined and assessed as potential critical resources. Evidence emerges of art teachers’ mistrust towards the role of writing in critical studies which has led to the current resistance. In response, the interventionist strategies of critical pedagogy and cultural studies are advocated as a means to overcome such resistance.

## Contents

<b>List of Plates</b>	7
<b>0. Intentions</b>	8
Iconoscepticism	9
Art in Education	10
Part One: Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools (ACHiS)	10
Part Two: The Truant Curriculum	11
Part Three: The Critical Curriculum	13
Post-intentional preamble	13
<b>1. Introduction: Art in Education</b>	15
<b>Introduction</b>	15
<b>Art in England</b>	16
<b>Art in the school curriculum</b>	18
Creative production	22
Purposes	25
<b>Conclusion</b>	26
<b>Part One: Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools (ACHiS)</b>	28
<b>2. Action Research Methodology</b>	28
<b>Introduction</b>	28
<b>Hermeneutics</b>	29
The hermeneutic tradition	30
<b>Developing research</b>	37
Reconsidering ACHiS as action research	38
<b>Methodological positioning</b>	41
The ‘posture’ of the ACHiS researchers	43
<b>Critical practice and collaboration</b>	44
An assumption	44
ACHiS and power relations	44
Emerging relationships within action research	45
<b>Interventions</b>	47
The diagnostic period	47
Situated variables	48
Interventionist knowledge and collaboration	49
<b>ACHiS as a prototype</b>	50
<b>Evaluation</b>	52
<b>3. Contested Discourses: Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools</b>	56
<b>Introduction</b>	56
<b>Classification</b>	57
Singularities	57
Recontextualisation	58
Art and design in the school curriculum	59
Art History	60
<b>Framing</b>	62
Residencies: specificities and generalisations	63

Regulative and instructional discourse	65
The 'look' of school art and language	66
<b>Findings: first year</b>	68
Critical studies profile	69
Alternative profile	72
<b>4. Pedagogic Devices and Interpretation</b>	75
<b>Introduction</b>	75
<b>Distributive rules</b>	75
Discursivity	76
The iconosceptic environment	77
Art and design teachers' use of art	78
<b>Recontextualising rules</b>	81
Context	82
Museum: visit	82
Classroom: review	84
Classroom: spatial organisation	85
<b>Evaluative rules</b>	86
Questions and answers: expectations and understanding	87
Interpretative work	90
<b>Conclusion</b>	93
<b>Part Two: The Truant Curriculum</b>	98
<b>5. Modernism and English Art Education: borrowings and resistances</b>	98
<b>Introduction</b>	98
<b>I. Art and the education of the child</b>	100
From instrumental to creative pedagogies	100
Art education in England	104
<b>II. The dominant modernist traditions in the field of art production</b>	109
Official discourses	109
Universalism and Art for Art's Sake	109
The resurgence of moral imperatives	111
Art discourses and colonial hierarchies	113
Universalism, Primitivism and the child	114
The ideal of childhood	116
<b>A peculiarly English habitus: no-nonsense common sense</b>	118
<b>Intermediate conclusions</b>	120
<b>III. The relationship between the fields of art and art education</b>	122
Formalism and the restricted field of production	122
Formalism and the meeting of fields	122
Basic Design: from the restricted field to the field of mass production	124
<b>IV. Counter culture and critical studies</b>	125
Critical studies in art and design	129
<b>6. The Interpretation of Art: practices for and against</b>	131
<b>Introduction</b>	131
A climate of suspicion and resistance	132
<b>I. Traditions against interpretation and their popular descendants</b>	133
The mirror of nature, surrogate to texts, equivalence for feelings	133
Imitation: mimesis	135

Illustration and language	137
Equivalents: mirror of the soul	139
Therapy	141
Emotion and didacticism: feeling as a mark of distinction	141
Against content	142
<b>II. Enculturation and acculturation</b>	144
The formation, reproduction and transformation of taste	144
Internal reflexivity within the field: the avant-garde	146
Expression and understanding: learning the codes	148
Tradition	150
Transgressive acts and hybrid traditions	150
<b>III. Traditions for interpretation</b>	152
Art History as an interpretative enterprise	152
Production/economic, political, ideological structures	154
Signification/structures of viewing	156
Resources/representational structures	158
Visual and multimodal semiotics	163
<b>7. Summary</b>	167
<b>Introduction</b>	167
<b>Summary</b>	167
<b>Part Three: The Critical Curriculum</b>	172
<b>8. Critical Pedagogy</b>	172
<b>Introduction</b>	172
<b>Education for democracy</b>	173
A culture of consumption	175
Interpretation and emancipation	177
Crossing borders	178
The agenda of cultural studies	180
Key skills and performativity	182
The critical curriculum and oppositional pedagogy	183
Engaged pedagogy	184
<b>Dialogue</b>	186
<b>Closing thoughts</b>	189
<b>Bibliography</b>	193
<b>Appendices</b>	211
Appendix 1: A Working Definition of Art	212
Appendix 2: Backgrounds of Researchers, Teachers and Types of Schools	213
Appendix 3: ACHiS Proposal for the AHRB (extract)	215
Appendix 4: ACHiS Teacher Questionnaire	219
Appendix 5: Teachers' Responses to Reference Sources (sample)	223
Appendix 6: ACHiS Recommendations	228

## List of Plates

Frontispiece:	Student Installation, De Souza's Residency (2000)	2
Plate 1:	Art and design National Curriculum KS1-3, pages 14-15	24
Plate 2:	English National Curriculum KS1-3, page 14	25
Plate 3:	Design and technology National Curriculum KS1-3, page 14	25
Plate 4:	Art room resources	84
Plate 5:	Art room layout	84
Plate 6:	Germaine Richier, 'The Shepherd of Landes' (1951)	87

## 0. Intentions

1. This thesis is an examination of the place of critical studies in the secondary art and design curriculum, a place predicated on almost half a century of advocacy, debate and legislation (Coldstream 1960; Field 1970; Allison 1972; Eisner 1972; Taylor 1986; Thistlewood 1989; DfE 1991; Giroux 1992; DfE 1995; Dawtrey et al 1996; Hughes 1999; Swift and Steers 1999; Dalton 2001). That this place has been diagnosed as a 'fragile' one (Davies 1995) may therefore come as something of a surprise. In 1998 I initiated a two-year action research project, Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools (ACHiS) in order to understand not only this fragility but also the reasons for a certain resistance to critical study. The aims of the project centred on the possibility that the changes to the investigative and interpretative methods of the developing discipline of art history (sometimes called the 'New Art History': Rees and Borzello 1986; Harris 2001) might inform critical studies in secondary art and design. The model developed was adapted from the familiar artists' residency (Burgess 1995) and was thus interventionist and short term; but, in place of artists, art critics and art historians were invited to apply for the position of participant researcher. Despite their interventionist status, each critic/historian planned a residency in collaboration with an art teacher, each of whom (with one exception) was at the time working in PGCE partnership with the Institute of Education, University of London (IoE). The collaborative orientation of the partnership was seen as crucial to its success and therefore the teachers took on the status of co-researchers. The ten ACHiS residencies took place in London and Bristol secondary schools between 1999-2001 and were recorded and evaluated in ways that provided quantitative and qualitative data for analysis. An examination and evaluation of ACHiS forms the principle section of Part One of my thesis.

2. ACHiS provides evidence for making recommendations to consolidate the place of critical studies as a significant component of secondary art and design, but these recommendations are framed by a knowledge of the distrust felt by art teachers and students about the role of language, and, more specifically, writing within critical studies. In Part Two, in order to understand this resistance to writing, I consider the philosophical positions that underpin the development of modernist, mass art education in secondary schooling, positions that can be designated expressionist/creative and perceptualist. These traditions helped to forge an insular, if popular, school subject situated somewhere off-centre within the logocentrism of the English secondary school curriculum (Addison 2003). Critical studies emerged after World War II in response to the failure of a liberal, laissez-faire art curriculum to recognise the vitality and complexity of the visual culture that was developing outside and around it. This emerging visual culture is not however the focus of Part Two, rather I concentrate on



the trajectory of twentieth century art education focusing on what was *said and done* and what was *not said and done* in secondary art departments about a particular and privileged type of cultural production known as art. I do so because, during the twentieth century, art educationalists manufactured a secondary curriculum based on fine-art practices rather than those of craft or design.<sup>1</sup> Today, art, as the privileged signifier, is still the preferred locus of investigation in secondary schools. But art today is manifest in forms and through technologies and practices that would baffle the founders of secondary art education in the Victorian era. The increasing ambiguity and undecidability of art (Elkins 2000) invites not only aesthetic apprehension, (a phenomenon called ‘appreciation’ within traditional, reproductive pedagogies, Osborne 1972) but linguistic exploration. As such art has the potential to become a potent source for critical interpretation in schools, just as it has within the academic disciplines of art history and visual studies. However, this potential is at odds with the way in which art tends to be referenced in school art departments where, in the form of reproductions, it is deployed as a source for mechanical transcription and acritical pastiche, a dominant orthodoxy much criticised in recent years (Hughes 1989; Steers 2003: 24). The critical turn in the developing field of visual studies, acknowledged in the National Curriculum (DFE 1991; 1995; DfEE 1999) and examination syllabuses, is largely absent in the ways the school subject is taught, an absence that gives rise to the title of this inquiry.

### *Iconoscepticism*

3. It is my contention that some of the reasons for the antipathy held by art teachers and students to a critical model have long historical sources that precede the introduction of art education to the secondary curriculum (Addison 2003). Within the history of education the visual, and the image in particular, has been subject to criticism and/or neglect. For example, within the seven, Roman, liberal arts, supposedly the foundation of the western curriculum, the image (other than in the abstractions of geometry) is nowhere to be found. This is not surprising given that Judaic, Platonic, Christian and Islamic iconophobia has cumulatively produced a legacy of proscription and scepticism that, in combination with the more recent critique of western ocularcentric science (Kuhn 1977; Jay 1993), resurfaces throughout the education system to problematise the status of the visual arts within the curriculum. The conceptual assumptions that underpin iconoscepticism return throughout the inquiry, particularly the notion that the image and, through extension, art, bypass the intellect by materialising belief (Eliot in Eagleton 1983: 23). To the iconosceptic the image is perceived as an attractive medium by which to manipulate others; a major tool for dissembling (Barthes 1957). I do not prescribe to this belief, rather I view the image, and by extension art, from a position in which it is theorised as one type of representational object

---

<sup>1</sup> Art is the generic term that many staff, students and parents continue to use when designating the subject art and design.

among many; the image, in the form of art, is a conventional and institutional ‘constellation’ of practices *produced* within and for different social contexts, and may, like language, be used within these, or applied to others, in either ethical or manipulative ways. For me, this understanding developed following my induction into semiotic theory, particularly social semiotics (Hodge and Kress 1988) in which the making of meaning, its articulation and communication, is a form of social and cultural production capable of both positive and negative effects, but neither intrinsically one or the other. To put it differently, the signs that the meaning maker produces may be interpreted (made to carry meaning) in ways that depend on who the interpreter is and in what context the communication takes place (Halliday 1978). This theory might be seen to contest a crude Marxist model, one that presupposes good (revolutionary) and bad (bourgeois) practices (e.g. Klingender 1947). However, a primary educational aim of social semioticians<sup>2</sup> is to formulate analytical systems that enable people to see through attempts to deceive them and thus ‘empower’ them to contribute, in this instance, to visual and material culture. In this sense a critical art curriculum in schools (secured, or not, through the pedagogic device [Bernstein 2000: 28] of critical studies) serves neither the interests of a subject centred on creative and instrumental philosophies nor an iconoclastic field of education that doubts the value of the visual, and specifically images.

#### *Art in Education*

4. In the introductory chapter ‘Art in Education’, I take as given that art educationalists have supported the move towards critical models of art education in secondary schools since the 1960s. Rather than retread familiar ground I look at the National Curriculum to investigate whether a critical approach to the art curriculum is signalled as a potential pedagogic route within legislation and therefore the degree to which art teachers are encouraged to adopt critical strategies in their teaching. Although the National Curriculum Order referred to here (DfEE 1999) predates the design of ACHiS, it was in place during the period of the residencies themselves, so it provides a sense of the type of pedagogic culture to which ACHiS was responding.

#### *Part One: Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools (ACHiS)*

5. The secondary art and design classroom in England is a site where institutional and demotic values meet, values that are played out within the parallel and intertwined fields and discourses discussed in Part Two. This analysis of discourses is complemented in Part One by discussion of applied research in the form of ACHiS, a project designed from within the

---

<sup>2</sup> The term social has been dropped by some of the founders of this tendency since semiotics, always interactive, must always be social.

field of art education to explore and intervene in these discourses.<sup>3</sup> Chapters 3 and 4 are dedicated to an analysis and evaluation of the project in practice, however, to do justice to the action research methodology I have also found it necessary to examine the interpretative processes that informed both the ACHiS project at its inception and the development of this thesis as a whole. The first section of Chapter 2 ‘Hermeneutics’, is a reflection on the philosophical ‘position’, phenomenological hermeneutics, I took up at the beginning of ACHiS but by and large abandoned towards its end. In effect, this section charts the reasons for my disenchantment with an approach that nonetheless informed the applied research and is thus a necessary prelude to the rest of the chapter where I examine the action research project, as a process and event, for its methodological felicities and insecurities.

6. Chapters 3 and 4 draw on the research emanating from the ACHiS project and are primarily an analysis of art educational discourse and its relationship to those other professional discourses by which it is dominated. Such an analysis has inevitably to contend with power relations in the sense that schools are arenas in which different discourses, professional and popular, institutional and demotic, are contested. I use Basil Bernstein’s theory of pedagogic codes and their modalities of practice (2000) to examine the relationships between these discourses.<sup>4</sup> The secondary school is also a site where, for a variety of purposes, art is produced and the art of others referenced. These purposes are one of the objects of this inquiry, but they are often unspoken and untheorised in action (despite the plethora of legislative and advisory texts that provide an official rationale). In these chapters reference is therefore made to data gleaned from a survey of art departments in partnership with the Institute of Education’s PGCE art and design course in an attempt both to identify and quantify practice and to invite teachers to voice purpose; ‘purpose in practice’ that may be at odds with an official ‘rhetoric of purpose’, the modalities of elaborated codes (Bernstein 2000: 15-16).

### *Part Two: The Truant Curriculum*

7. ACHiS, like much educational research, provides more questions than resolutions, so in the Part Two, I turn my attention to the past in order to understand why these questions remain unanswered. Because the secondary subject art and design is practised in relation to wider cultural fields, I examine the way art is produced and received in contexts outside of schooling and the interrelationships between the institutions and agents whose practices produce the interpretative communities within which art circulates. It should be taken into consideration, however, that the secondary school is perceived by many higher education

---

<sup>3</sup> ACHiS was a three year research project (1999-2001) funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board, (£53,612) with support from the Association of Art Historians (£5,000). In 2002, the AHRB ‘assessment of end of award reports’ gave the project a ‘satisfactory’ rating out of the possible trio: satisfactory, unsatisfactory, problematic.

<sup>4</sup> Bernstein would call this a pedagogic practice, although, for me, the distinction between discourse and practice is a blurred one.

institutions as entirely 'other', therefore the ways in which institutional discourses permeate and position art education in secondary schools are of equal significance for my inquiry. In this partly historical exercise I have drawn on the example of Michel Foucault (1972) and his method of genealogy, not in any programmatic way but in so much as I have attempted 'to document the contingency of historical constructions of truth and identity through the construction of alternative truths and the explication of "subjugated knowledges"' (Bailey 1993: 103). It remains un-Foucauldian in the sense that I attempt to offer solutions to a perceived problem; I do this by proposing particular pedagogic strategies with which to counter acritical art practice in secondary schools. I also make reference to Pierre Bourdieu's critique of Emmanuel Kant and his theory of the social and historical construction of taste in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984), a book that I ultimately found dispiriting for its cynicism. More recently I have had recourse to other structural concepts established by Bourdieu (1993), specifically his use of the terms 'field' and 'habitus'; the former, because it asks the analyst to consider cultural production as a system in which competitive agents struggle for positions within a hierarchy, and the latter, because it encapsulates my developing understanding of the way individual agents are both limited and empowered by their social and historical specificity. Additionally, Bourdieu's extended notion of 'capital', beyond the economic towards cultural and symbolic forms, provides a framework through which to understand pedagogic social reproduction and exchange, 'cultural' and 'symbolic' being terms that are entirely appropriate for the practices of art in secondary schools today where the subject no longer serves the instrumental and vocational functions that it held in the nineteenth century (MacDonald 1970; Dalton 2001).

8. In Chapter 5, I look back in an attempt to map the trajectory of English art education in relation to modernism. I look at this relationship by paying particular attention to the ways art education was forged through different and, at times, dialectical philosophies to create both tension and some surprising alliances. I argue that the critical turn characteristic of the avant-garde (supposedly the originating force of modernism, see Foster 1996) is absent in school art education (itself a product of modernism, Dalton 2001) and that the development of cultural studies, and, more recently, visual culture open up possibilities for which the secondary school subject art and design, in its present state, is ill-prepared. In Chapter 6, 'On interpretation' I explore the critical traditions and resources used in practice, uncovering traditions that question the role of interpretation in schooling despite the fact that interpretation is probably a less threatening concept for the secondary art teacher than the overtly political procedures of much of cultural studies. In Chapter 7, I summarise the ways in which each strand in this history affects and is in turn affected by pedagogy in art education. Throughout Part Two I outline and analyse a succession of historical constructions that continue to condition the ways in which art is defined and thus contribute

to professional and popular discourses on art and their respective claims to truth. These chapters are in effect a series of *biopsies* extracted from a range of fields and discourses, focusing on the apparatus by and through which institutions produce and organise values, what Bourdieu refers to as ‘beliefs’ (1993e).

### *Part Three: The Critical Curriculum*

9. In Part Three, I move towards a model of art education that draws on the example of critical pedagogy. The critical turn in art education is intimately bound to the development of this field, one that in the 1960s found an early home in departments of complementary study within art colleges. In the last chapter, I undertake what I believe to be a necessary exploration of the immediate and historical contexts in which interpretation as a radical enterprise might take place. I unapologetically foreground the term ‘critical pedagogy’ as the most likely pedagogic position from which, within the context of a democratic society, the interpretative enterprise is at all feasible. This position is undoubtedly a contested one (Ellsworth 1997) but in Chapters 5 and 6 the rationale for it is already made.

### *Post-intentional preamble*

10. If I have offered interpretation within the framework of a ‘critical pedagogy’ as a viable solution to an acritical subject area in secondary schools the accusation of ‘vested interests’ might seem a legitimate one for it is within a critical tradition that I would loosely place my own recent art critical, historical and education teaching. It has not, however, greatly influenced my own practice as a painter, rather, in the past, critique inhibited it by exposing both its pretensions and limitations. Within this inquiry, phenomenological hermeneutics was, at first, a questioning guide assisting me to avoid the temptations and satisfactions of seeking right and absolute solutions, a sceptical approach somewhat different to the strategies of looking ‘at your sources with fresh eyes’ and ‘modesty’ employed in discourse analysis (Rose 2001: 158).

11. If the application of discourse analysis has been mostly retrospective in respect to ACHiS, I do not wish to propose a retrospective critical interpretation as the ideal method for changing pedagogy; this can be an inhibitor to creative action. Rather I wish to propose critical interpretation *for* and *in* practice. Thus, in the field of educational research, I conclude my preference for spanning the boundaries between historical, social and theoretical investigation and philosophical speculation. As David Smith asserts: ‘the mark of good interpretative research is not in the degree to which it follows a specified methodological agenda, but in the degree to which it can show understanding of what it is that is being investigated’ (1999: 41). However, my pragmatism, an approach gained from my experience of teaching in schools, leads me to suppose that some solutions are right for a

given moment, this history, a specific context, a particular person, and that solutions can only be sought through a process of critical reflection and can only be practised reflexively.

12. A large part of my thesis is historical in orientation and there are some who would assert that anything that happened prior to the 1970s is a form of antiquity and that scrabbling around in the past is a way to stop anything happening in the present. But, as Terry Eagleton (1990) claims:

This leap from history to modernity has a long history. The discourses of reason, truth, freedom and subjectivity, as we have inherited them, indeed require profound transformation; but it is unlikely that a politics which does not take these traditional topics with full seriousness will prove resourceful and resilient enough to oppose the arrogance of power.

(p. 415)

This research makes a particular contribution to an understanding of critical pedagogy and to the debate about the status and function of art in society, specifically within the 'truth' of the education system of contemporary England which may be characterised as part of a post-industrial, post-colonial (intercultural), 'mature'-capitalist democracy. This context will prescribe some of the emphases, the political trajectory of my choices, but always within the further holding form of education at secondary level where it might be supposed that art, and by extension the image, holds a privileged status.

# 1. Introduction: Art in Education

## Introduction

i) This chapter is an investigation into the situated role of secondary art and design within an English education system that is profoundly logocentric (Addison 2003). Through an analysis of key documents I look at the way the authors of the various curricula for art and design advise a critical engagement with art, a task I undertake in relation to the avowed turn toward critical models that has been pursued by art educationalists over a number of years.<sup>1</sup> By examining sections of the current National Curriculum Order for Art and design (DfEE 1999) I intend to determine the 'pedigree' of the model promoted by legislation. Because the subject in secondary schools has at least a nominal relationship to art and design in wider fields I also consider the ways in which art practices have coalesced into a particular form of institutional discourse in contemporary society and the way this discourse enters into and circulates around other discourses, demotic, educational and political.

ii) Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Passeron (1970) believe that education serves the modern nation state as a means to reproduce the values of the dominant order. It does so by means of a bureaucratic and disciplinary apparatus that administers normative standards and homogenising proscriptions; in this way the state does 'symbolic violence' to an otherwise heterogeneous population. In later work, Bourdieu (1984) suggests that it is within the field of culture that the values of the dominant order are most fiercely defended, and for him it is the 'aesthetic disposition' that is 'the most rigorously demanded of all the terms of entry which the world of legitimate culture (always tacitly) imposes' (p. 28). This aesthetic

---

<sup>1</sup> This legislation has been informed by years of advice starting with Coldstream (1960) who promoted art history as an academic complement to studio practice; his report began the move to accredit post-school art and design qualifications with degree status; Field (1970) attacked the expressivist, laissez-faire attitudes embedded in the secondary art curriculum advising moves toward more cognitive modes of learning in art; Allison (1972) advocated the need for school students to develop a specialist art language and discussed the need for multicultural education; Eisner (1972), in the USA, helped to define Discipline Based Art Education in which studio practice formed just one part of a quartet of studies the others being aesthetics, criticism and history; Berger (1972) extolled Marxist analysis and an exposition of art as a social and hierarchical practice; Taylor (1986) shifted attention away from critical studies as an academic complement towards a model in which it was integral to studio practice and informed by artists working in schools and galleries; Thistlewood (1989) suggested the heresy that critical studies would never be taken seriously until it was a separate subject standing to practical work in the way that literature stands alongside language in the English curriculum; the first National Curriculum (DfE 1991) picked up on the term 'visual literacy' acknowledging the historical and contemporary function of art as a form of communication equivalent to the word; Giroux (1992) argued that art could only be studied critically (a necessity in a democracy) if it was placed in the context of visual culture (particularly popular forms of culture) and, drawing on the Frankfurt school, provided critical studies with theoretical credibility; Dawtre et al (1996) provided a round up of developing thinking including feminist and multicultural perspectives; Hughes (1999) pointed out that the moribund, acritical art curriculum was unlikely to survive the new century unless it was radically reformed and Swift and Steers (1999) recognised that the pluralist and inclusive discourses of postmodern theory should inform such change. Dalton (2001) recounts the patriarchal bias of art education in schools and, quoting Julia Kristeva, asks for attention to be given to the 'unsatisfied, repressed, new, eccentric, incomprehensible, disturbing to the status quo' (p.153).

disposition presupposes an engagement with form and thus a denial of the discursive potential of art beyond its 'internal logic' (Marcuse 1978). In schools, any critical dimension for art functions from within the criteria established for and by the field (here the curriculum subject art and design) and is thus non-threatening and self-sustaining; as Bourdieu asserts: 'This structural inertia, deriving from [education's] function of cultural conservation, is pushed to the limit by the logic which allows it to wield a monopoly over its own reproduction' (1993c: 123). Within education, cultural reproduction is practised as 'inculcation' (ibid) a process that makes visible for the population at large the values of the dominant class. The canon, as the consecrated body of exemplars, is an all-pervasive measure by which these values are made concrete and through which, in the form of taste, the dominant class parades its superiority and sustains its hold on power (Bourdieu 1984; Gretton 2003). Because works of art are the locus around which an aesthetic disposition can be performed, the significance of art within the English system of schooling is largely reproductive and celebratory. Indeed, the critical potential of art<sup>2</sup> is antithetical to its canonical function, where, through the acquired competency of appreciation, it is celebrated as all that is 'best' in a culture. As will be seen, the National Curriculum does pursue a critical component, but it is framed in such a way that certain dominant, modernist beliefs can be reproduced and reinforced (the aesthetic disposition) so as to undermine the criticality it has elsewhere applauded.

## **Art in England**

1. In England it is the 'fine' or 'high' (brow) arts that tend to constitute most people's definition of Art with a capital 'A' (Bourdieu's 'field of restricted production' 1993). Raymond Williams (1988: 41) argues that this usage was not general until the nineteenth-century although it had already been established institutionally with the foundation of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768. What differentiated the fine artist from the skilled artisan was the ability of the former to work with imagination and from within a tradition of representation that was afforded intellectual credibility. Together these faculties came to constitute 'creative' work which, in the proselytising hands of the Romantic poets (Williams 1965: 27-29) was extended to include literary and musical as well as visual work; thus the concept of the arts. Although similar distinctions between the 'ars mechanica' and the 'ars intellectualis' had been formulated since the Middle Ages and from the sixteenth century had been institutionalised in Renaissance Italy (Pevsner 1940), Williams (1988) associates the distinction in England with the process of industrialisation in the eighteenth and nineteenth-

---

<sup>2</sup> For example, where art is explored as a form of representation through which a school student might come to understand social history and the formation of modern identities; Hall (1997).



centuries. In the context of 'capitalist commodity production' the hierarchical necessity to redefine the 'purposes of the exercise of skill' (p. 42) was a prerequisite for the maintenance of developing power relations between the bourgeoisie (owners) and the aristocracy, and the bourgeoisie (professionals) and the emergent urban working class. Williams argues that because capitalism reduces 'use values to exchange values':

There was a consequent defensive specialization of certain skills and purposes to the arts or the *humanities* where forms of general use and intention which were not determined by immediate exchange could be at least conceptually abstracted. This is the formal basis of the distinction between art and *industry*, and between fine arts and useful arts (the latter eventually acquiring a new specialized term, in Technology (q.v.).

(ibid)

2. Williams draws on the definition of aesthetic practice provided by Karl Marx (1818-1883) in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844) where a rationale for the separation of art from the utilitarian can be found. Marx suggests that a satisfying and complete life can only be achieved through the cultivation of the aesthetic faculties:

For not only the five senses, but also the so-called spiritual senses, the practical senses (will, love, etc.), in a word the *human* sense, the humanity of senses – all these come into being only through the existence of *their* objects, through *humanised* nature. The *cultivation* of the five senses is the work of all previous history. *Sense* which is a prisoner of crude practical need has only a *restricted* sense.

(1975: 353)

The uses and intentions that Williams identifies remain current. Therefore, objects whose primary function is representational and/or symbolic (e.g. traditional painting, sculpture: in utilitarian terms those objects that are 'useless') and other objects produced by a group of professionals calling themselves artists, are contrasted with two other classes of objects. First, objects manufactured for utility purposes; those produced by a) designers (mass-produced and dependent on industrial technologies) and b) craftspeople (dependent on pre- and post-industrial technologies) and second, those produced within the mass multimedia tradition: advertising, cinema, television, Internet, (of which the visual component is often dependent on photographic imagery). Given that these uses gained common currency in the nineteenth-century, it is not surprising that today traditional forms of fine art are set in opposition to the work of contemporary artists. Much contemporary practice takes the form of explicitly multimodal texts (it is frequently lens- or screen-based and often produced and disseminated in relation to the mass media tradition e.g. employing its technologies, Pijnappel 1994). Additionally, many contemporary artists question the hierarchical structures on which the mythology of traditional art and artists is maintained (in particular the western, bourgeois notion of individual and originary creativity embodied in the self-expressive realisations of male genius, Parker and Pollock 1981: 1-14) but whose work still

signifies as different because it has symbolic, discursive and reflexive rather than explicitly utilitarian functions (Hapgood 1994; Weintraub 1996; Jones 2003). The perpetual challenge to traditional modes, conventions and institutions that these practices signal sits uncomfortably in an education system that aims to acculturate young people within dominant social and cultural practices where art tends to serve celebratory and/or recreational functions.

### **Art in the school curriculum**

3. Despite the fact that the National Curriculum Order for Art and design (DfEE 1999) includes 'design' and 'craft' it is the traditional forms of fine art that dominate historical and professional exemplars in secondary art and design and help to determine the types of activity practised by students (QCA 1998). Nonetheless, multimedia digital technology is gradually insinuating a place in the curriculum through the government drive for computer literacy (DfEE 1997) as downloading from the Internet becomes a ubiquitous means of 'research'. In terms of 'making', digital technologies are mostly used to replicate existing practices so that efficiency or the acquisition of transferable skills is the only notable addition (National Council for Educational Technology 1998; Meecham 2000: 224-225).<sup>3</sup> Designed and crafted objects may be introduced as objects of study: perceptual, as in the still life, historical, as in a critical studies diary (e.g. investigating the architecture of Antonio Gaudi) and such examples are often resourced to provide a 'multicultural gloss' to the proceedings. However, the designed product is felt more properly to be the property of design and technology where making for a utility purpose is the legitimate and valorised function of the curriculum: pupils 'must look for needs, wants and opportunities and respond to them by developing a range of ideas and making products and systems... all pupils can become discriminating users of products' (DfEE 1999a). The place of the craft object is less certain. Since the 1980s the demise of specialist rooms, e.g. for ceramics, the reduction in staff and budgets (due to the local management of schools, LMS) and the notional critical dimension of the curriculum, have reduced the place of traditional craft making. Not only have the expertise and facilities gone but the desire to teach it has also dissipated, largely because craft's status as 'unthinking' is seen to add credibility to the popular notion of art and design as a recreational and/or feminine subject (see respectively Greenhalgh 1997; Dalton 2001: 49-52).<sup>4</sup> With the emphasis on traditional fine art practice, assessment criteria tend to be based loosely on the ability of students to 'record' from observation and

---

<sup>3</sup> Photography is not widely available and where it is, tends to be limited to sixth form use. It could be argued that with the arrival of digital technologies traditional darkroom practice becomes something of a craft activity.

<sup>4</sup> Specialist teachers and provision do exist in pockets and at 'A' Level there are specialist endorsed options that include, ceramics, graphics, textiles etc.

experience through the supposedly objective criterion of accuracy (Atkinson 2002: 102-103, 130) and the subjective notion of aesthetic 'quality' (although the latter is no longer acknowledged in the four GCSE assessment objectives, for example see the specification for the examination board Edexcel 2000). In summarising current practice in art and design to establish a generic profile, Hughes' NSEAD Presidential Address from 1997 can stand as a condensed, representative summary of the critical positions of many art educationalists:

We are still delivering art curricula in our schools predicated largely upon procedures and practices which reach back to the nineteenth century – procedures and practices which cling to a comfortable and uncontentious view of art and its purposes. As a result, secondary art and design education in England and Wales is, in general, static, safe and predictable... It is a curriculum developed in almost total isolation from thinking on art and design in other parts of our educational system, let alone current professional practice. A hybrid, divorced from contemporary ideas in the spheres of art practice, critical theory, art history or museology.

(1998: 41)

4. If then, notions of art and the practice of art, craft and design in schools are predicated on outmoded paradigms, paradigms that do not fit squarely into people's experience of the dominant visual culture, why is art given a place in the curriculum? In many traditional cultures<sup>5</sup> art is a differentiated practice, just as it is in contemporary England and other industrial societies although, unlike its status in the 'museum world,'<sup>6</sup> it may be a more integrated component of social exchange.<sup>7</sup> Walter Benjamin (1892 1940) supposed that before the modern period art was intimately related to the sacred: 'We know that the earliest art works originated in the service of ritual – first magical, then the religious kind. It is significant that the existence of the work of art with reference to its aura is never entirely separated from its ritual function' (1936: 301). For Benjamin this association provided the work of art with an 'aura', a mystical essence that was transmuted into the 'cult of beauty' from the Renaissance onwards and even in the age of mechanical/electronic reproduction the aura has been a (fictive?) phenomenon that modernists have been loathe to relinquish.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> I use the term 'traditional' to signal a status unaffected by, or in opposition to, the hegemonic imperatives of western modernity, and 'culture' to indicate the practices of groups of people who identify *themselves* as different to others but who are not synonymous with the nation state itself. In conjunction the terms signal peoples/practices who live within and may move between modern nation states and who may be appropriated by a state as a trace of its own ancestry, a living archaeology. The Kenyan government's appropriation of the Massai is a case in point.

<sup>6</sup> I use the term 'museum world' because it identifies the cultural apparatus, the conceptual and physical space of the museum, used by industrial/post-industrial societies to indicate their modernity. This is achieved by the perpetual juxtaposition of past with present in some progressive continuum. Art in these societies is hardly ever of the present because, once it is perceived significant, it enters the discourse of cultural representation (identity) in the museum/gallery and becomes a sign of that culture, a process that is the primary function of art for the modern nation state (see Preziosi 1998: 513-515).

<sup>7</sup> For many anthropologists/ethnographers this integration within the social has led western commentators to suppose that traditional peoples have no concept of art, so that, although they make it, they never talk about it. But as Geertz (2000) corrects: 'What is meant is that they don't talk about it the way the observer talks about it – or would like them to – in terms of its formal properties, its symbolic content, its affective values, or its stylistic features... (p. 97). Yet even in this context art is usually marked off from the mundane, it is *making special* (Dissanayake 1992).

<sup>8</sup> With 'honourable' exceptions such as Duchamp, Broodthaers etc. see Meecham and Sheldon 2000: 3 and 205).

Therefore, not only does art signal a 'spiritual' and 'creative' dimension within the curriculum, a prerequisite for the development of 'cultured' and 'rounded' citizens, it also serves to reproduce tradition by preserving what is 'best' in a culture; the Victorian ideal is reproduced in perpetuum:

This is the *social idea*; and the men [sic] of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have laboured to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive, to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and the thought of the time, and a true source therefore, of sweetness and light.

(Arnold 1869; reproduced in Golby 1986: 210)

5. In 1997 Nicholas Tate, then Head of SCAA (now QCA), the government agency responsible for the school curriculum in England and Wales, argued for a secure position for the arts in schools as a means for the reproduction of the dominant culture (although he didn't use these precise words preferring a more Arnoldian rhetoric). Within his definition of culture he recognised the multicultural context of schooling and the need to acknowledge cultural diversity, but deemed that such recognition should only be valued within a hierarchical framework privileging an 'English' identity: 'because identities are multiple, this [national identity] involves a sense of how they [students] locate themselves within a variety of cultural traditions: above all those of England, Britain and Europe, but also the traditions of those parts of the world with which this country has close and long-established links' (Tate 1997: 13). In an article for the Times Educational Supplement (1997a) Tate made it clear just what he considered best in the English tradition and surprisingly extolled the virtues of classicism epitomised by Frederick Leighton, the epicentre of high art for late Victorian England (a year after the centenary of Leighton's death). In the earlier paper, Tate made evident his distaste for, indeed his fear of, contemporary critical forces and the undermining effect they could wreck on national unity; he warned against:

a pervasive cultural egalitarianism which refuses to recognise that cultures (especially majority ones) are very special to those who belong to them and need to be nurtured and transmitted through careful attention and special treatment. It is in part a result of the prevailing postmodernist intellectual climate with its emphasis on fictions and constructions and its sense that nothing is sufficiently substantial or objective for it to be worth passing on.

(1997: 12)

6. What is worth passing on has been subject to a series of changes as the first and second National Curriculum 'Art Orders' (DfE 1991; 1995) have given way to the revised curriculum 2000 enshrined as the 'Order for Art and design' (DfEE 1999). In it teachers are provided with a generalised programme of study through which 'pupils' develop the ability to practice a range of practical and conceptual skills, for example at Key Stage 3, including

the ability to: 'record and analyse first-hand observation, to select from experience and imagination... discuss and question critically ...develop ideas for independent work... investigate, combine and manipulate materials and images, taking account of purpose and audience... analyse and evaluate their own and others' work...' (p. 20). In the section devoted to the critical and contextual, the verb employed elsewhere to indicate the active participation of students, 'pupils should be taught *to*' (my italics) shifts into passive mode 'pupils should be taught *about*:' (ibid). There follows a list (much revised after earlier criticism of the Eurocentrism of the 1995 version when Tate was the directing force)<sup>9</sup> that guides teachers to the historical periods and cultures that might form the basis of what pupils should be taught *about*: 'differences in the roles and functions of art in contemporary life, medieval, Renaissance and post-Renaissance periods in Western Europe, and in different cultures such as Aboriginal, African, Islamic and Native American' (ibid). Having first acknowledged 'contemporary' culture as outside history but a part of 'life' notice how QCA represents 'Western Europe' on the one hand, as an ordered succession of periods/styles with the Renaissance as the pivot (antiquity is no longer represented as it was under Tate) and, on the other, how it represents 'different cultures' from the 'wider world' by identifying a quartet of terms, listed in alphabetical order, in which the two framing labels just happen to denote the historically and culturally diverse cultures of indigenous peoples from two of Britain's former colonies (outside the contemporary but historical in as much as they relate to Britain's own history). The central duo comprise cultures equally under the purview of British colonial rule, one, an entire continent, indicating that great homogenised 'other', 'African culture' and the second, a faith, that great historical and contemporary 'terror', 'Islamic culture'. Western Europe has history, the rest of the world only homogenised difference, whether determined by ethnicity, geography or faith. In the context of an intercultural, post-colonial society these choices are disingenuous at best, but whatever the motivation, their effects are insidious and possibly malicious. Rather than enable knowledge of 'ethnic' diversity (the ambition of tolerant liberals) what these examples do is to identify cultures that can be put in historical opposition to western and specifically British culture, in other words they identify specific ethnic and religious groups that constitute the minority cultures of Britain's diasporic communities. An indigenous 'ethnic' people become a minority culture through colonial or internecine acts of violence, dispersal and assimilation, a process by which a people are positioned in a subservient relationship to a dominant culture. Within their supposed celebration of difference the examples from the National Curriculum hide a history of violation and even genocide and in their ahistoricism perpetuate stereotypical notions of difference (elsewhere I have discussed the necessity of developing

---

<sup>9</sup> This list provides the sort of examples that had proliferated in the 1991 version (in this first incarnation including contemporary female and diasporic artists). However, after much debate, they were excised from the second for being too prescriptive, but possibly too radical.

an intercultural curriculum and acknowledging anti-racist strategies for art and design in secondary schools: Addison with Dash 2000; Addison 1999; Addison 2001).

7. If SCAA/QCA was the result of the restructuring of secondary education during the Thatcher years such constraints on democratic thinking were not peculiar to England (and Wales). In conversation with David Trend (an editor and critic) Henry Giroux (1992) recounts a similar retrenchment in the USA:

G. But the conservative argument goes even further and says that probably the place in which traditions are most dangerously undermined is within the discourse of democracy.

T. Turning democracy on its head.

G. Yes, invoking the famous Trilateral Commission Study of 1965, the one that said we should limit the excesses of democracy, control social criticism, and police the universities. Bloom [a Right wing commentator] offers no apology at all. He argues that the nation is engaged in a cultural politics in which democracy becomes subversive, criticism becomes dangerous, and intellectuals who do not take up the mantle of tradition should not teach in the university... What Bloom [et al] did was really help us rethink schooling as a form of cultural politics – as opposed to simply thinking schooling as a form of cultural domination.

(p. 153)

During the Thatcher/Reagan era the rekindling of the trans-Atlantic ‘special relationship’ was double-edged as Right and Left engaged in conversation. However, Giroux acknowledges few fellow travellers in Britain citing Basil Bernstein, Geoff Whitty and Paul Willis as the only contributors to the debate in pedagogy and it is notable that of the three only Willis is concerned with cultural production in the sense that art might be seen as a site of political resistance. Willis’s *Common Culture* (1990a) provides an alternative spin on the notion of ‘majority culture’ as he extols the virtues of a working class, grass roots tradition. However, if the ‘best’ of the ‘majority culture’ is at the core of the reproductive curriculum, art and design, as already mentioned, also finds a place in the school timetable because it signals production, production of a highly valorised kind.

### **Creative production**

8. In its liberal and open way, the Order for Art and design (DfEE 1999) does posit the possibility of a critical approach (as do the examination syllabuses at GCSE, AS and A2 and AVCE) but it also signals acritical approaches. Each subject order contains a ‘statement of importance’ outlining the particular contributions of each subject to the curriculum as a whole. For Art and design the statement begins: ‘Art and design stimulates creativity and imagination. It provides visual, tactile and sensory experiences and a unique way of understanding and responding to the world’ (DfEE 1999: 14). The hierarchy is evident, generative processes before sensory understanding (or at a pinch it could be read, generation by means of sensory understanding). However there follows a list of the formal elements which are seen to underpin the communicative potential of art, a phenomenon assessed

through the critical processes of ‘informed value judgements and aesthetic and practical decisions’ (ibid). The inclusion of ‘communication’ and a little later ‘becoming actively involved in shaping environments’ suggests a social role in which the student is given agency through the subject. There is thus a recognition that the practice of art, craft and design not only produces the world people inhabit, but that it also shapes knowledge about that world and needs to be investigated alongside other more educationally privileged epistemological modes such as texts and, more recently, documentary film. However, the short statement ends: ‘understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts have the power to enrich our personal and public lives’. Therefore, despite the critical and transformative role attributed to art and design, a role through which ‘pupils’ may also come to ‘understand’ the world, this central section is framed in terms that signal art’s mythological status. ‘Creativity’ and ‘imagination’ lead as the symbolic sentinels of a distinctiveness rooted in Romantic and modernist claims to cultural separation (Williams 1965). The central sentences do little to explain explicitly what these opening phenomena might be. The final sentence, by placing the subject in the domain of ‘enrichment’, diminishes all that has gone before designating the subject as an additional but not an essential practice within the curriculum.

9. The opening sentiments of the statement of importance for ‘Art and design’ are a rehearsal of an official document (quoted below) produced by the then Ministry of Education, Pamphlet No 6 *Art Education* (1944) the year in which the Education Act established mandatory education for all between the ages of 6 and 14:

Art has ceased to be simply a frill, and holds its place as an essential element, in some form or other, in a sound general education. The art and craft subjects provide an outlet for *creative* ability, stimulate the *imagination*, develop discrimination in design and the sense of craftsmanship... [The report goes on] It is probable, however, that special methods will have to be adopted in order to help the pupil relate the experiences gained in his [sic] art and craft lessons to his environment. (my italics)  
(in Field 1970: 56)

Although it is true that the centrality of craft in this document is different to the three National Curriculum Orders, where its status is peripheral, it would seem, as the cautionary comment at the close of the extract identifies, that the kinds of knowledge acquired through the practice of art were even then perceived as difficult to reconcile with the world outside the art room. This separation between expression (an ‘outlet’) and critical processes (‘discrimination’ and relating to the environment) has been achieved by the privileging of psychologically inflected terms such as ‘creativity’ and ‘imagination’ which valorise processes that tend to be interpreted as personal and internal, in other words processes that are deemed asocial. I would contend that notwithstanding the government report on creativity *All Our Futures* (NACCCE 1999) which discusses notions of social purpose, this

privileging has still to be resolved in the contemporary context. Critical studies is the avowed vehicle for the inculcation of analytical and investigative processes but it is at odds with the reproductive and 'creative' approaches that remain the dominant forces in the subject.

10. The statement of importance from the current National Curriculum (DfEE 1999: 14) does not however produce its messages through linguistic means alone and I intend to apply types of semiotic analysis to uncover further layers of meaning. This will demonstrate the way in which discourses are produced using a range of modalities that work together to produce meaning; a multimodal process (Kress and Leeuwen 2001). Here my focus is on the way that linguistic meaning may be reinforced by spatial context: layout, scale, relation to other juxtaposed texts and images, or vice versa, for in this type of analysis (one indebted to the work of Kress and Leeuwen 1996) the significance of a document can be assessed beyond the solely lexical.

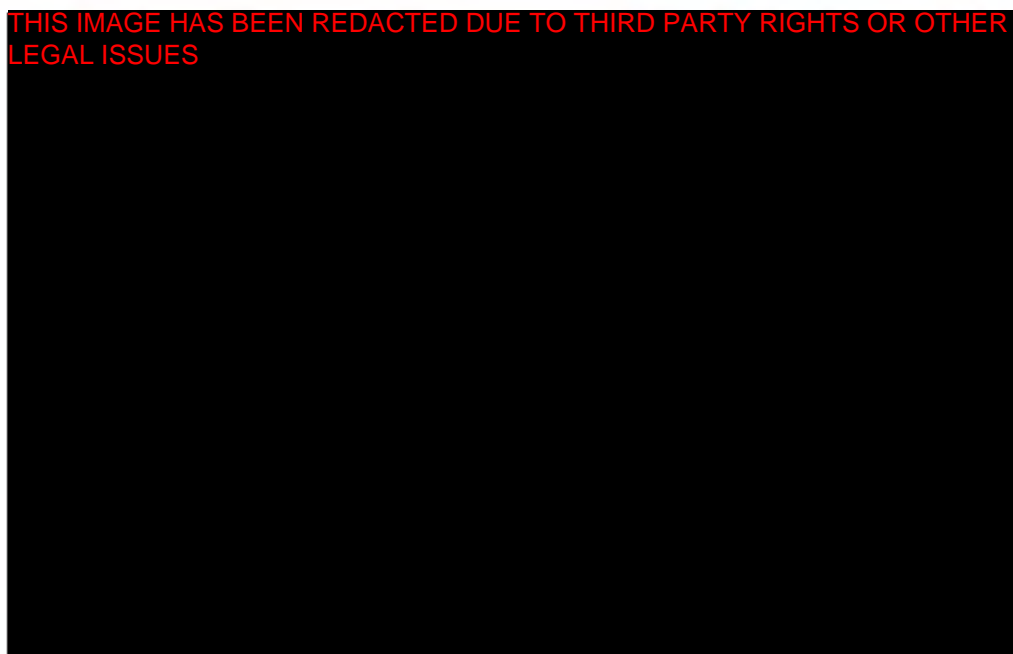


Plate 1: NC Art and design

11. The statement of importance is printed small (approximately font 10) at the bottom right hand corner of the left hand page in the double spread. Above it are four statements by 'notables' in the art world, printed in a much larger font (c.18). The first is worth quoting in full: 'Art and design is the freedom of the individual, the freedom of expression and the freedom to fail without retort (Simon Waterfall, Creative Director, Deepend)'. Freedom and self-expression may not appear in the statement of importance, but the latter could easily be overlooked, a mere footnote to the exhortations above. Admittedly, the fonts and the layout belong to a house style, Art and design is not peculiar in this sense, and in all subjects the page of quotations is juxtaposed with a page of images. These images are photographs of



students engaged in the types of activity indicative of the discipline, although in many instances there is text as well. It could be said, however, that in these instances the texts are 'images' because the photographs are mostly of students' handwriting, they are visual evidence of student production: see below).

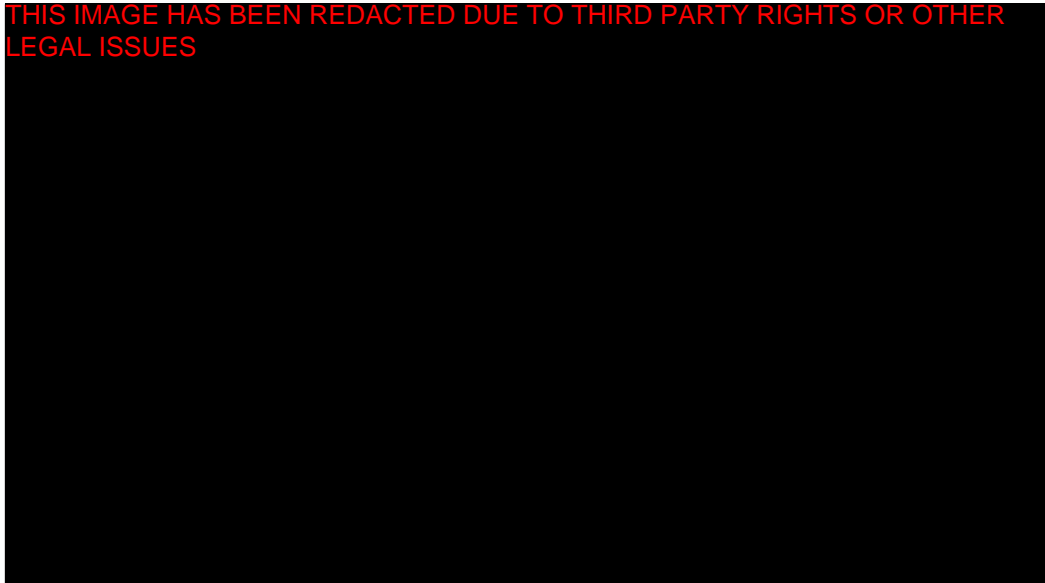


Plate 2: NC English

Plate 3: NC Design and technology

In the Art and design Order, the right hand page presents two student 'outcomes', two pieces of school art (Plate 1); there is no representation of students engaged in production. The top and most prominent photograph shows a cupboard that students have customised through the dual process of painting and 'appropriation', the former in the form of an eclectic mix of colourful pattern, the latter by pasting an array of memorabilia all over its surfaces. They have also negated the utility of the cupboard (possibly designating it sculpture) by suspending natural forms from its internal spaces in such a way that each locker functions as a unit of display rather than as a place for storage. The lower reproduction presents a detail from a gestural and richly layered 'abstract' painting. I imagine the locker is a collaborative although highly directed piece by a group of KS3 students and that the painting is the work of a KS1 child, but neither is credited. Evidently authorship is not important, together they signal school art (which is not characterised by the process of production but by outcome) and in their singularity each piece speaks for itself, exemplifications of 'the freedom of expression'.

### **Purposes**

12. In legislative advice then, art and design serves different instrumental purposes: to reproduce a high definition of Art, to ensure cultured citizens (Arnold in Golby 1986 and Tate 1997) (or an abasement to those who are cultured, Bourdieu 1984) and to produce a skilled population ensuring creative competence for a competitive, technological, global

market (Blair in DfEE 1997). But the legislators also hold on to non-instrumental tenets, they retain the ambition that the subject can enrich each individual, can provide a place for the imagination and thus a complement to the mechanistic and instrumental dangers of an information-led curriculum; what could be termed intrinsic purposes. As the influential Gulbenkian Report of 1982 puts it:

Society needs and values more than academic abilities. Children and young people have much more to offer. The arts exemplify some of these other capacities – intuition, creativity, sensibility, and practical skills. We maintain that an education in these is quite as important for *all* children as an education of the more academic kind and that *not* to have this is to stunt and distort their growth as intelligent, feeling and capable individuals.

(Robinson 1989: 5)

This well-meaning statement rehearses the fictional binary between the academic and creative fields. Here, in essence, art and design helps each student to become a fully ‘rounded human being’. In the introduction to the later edition (1989) Ken Robinson retrospectively asserts: ‘some arts practice in schools was locked into a limited conception of individual development through creative self-expression that ignored or marginalised the equal importance of developing critical and technical skills in the arts and a growing understanding of other people’s work’ (ibid: xiii); in this way, for Robinson, the liberal humanist, school students can become appreciative consumers of art as well as creative producers.

## Conclusion

13. For Bourdieu (1984) art is the ultimate instrument of distinction, a key tool in the ‘symbolic violence’ meted out by the modern nation state on its citizens/subjects. In his interpretation, art becomes one key hegemonic tool by which the bourgeois state reinforces the hierarchical structures required in the maintenance of the status quo; schooling participates in this ‘violence’ through a process of cultural reproduction. Knowledge of the field of art is particularly desirable in order to obtain the cultural capital required to succeed in dominant social circles because its discourses, aesthetics, criticism, history, are particularly exclusive and provide evidence of a sensibility that transcends utility and the ‘necessary choices’ of the masses. Bourdieu therefore realises that, ‘the work of art considered as a symbolic good... only exists as such for a person who has the means to appropriate it, or in other words, to decipher it’ (1993a: 220). The school subject art and design does little in practice to enable such interpretation, indeed in valorising a creative and/or perceptualist tradition it disables the critical skills necessary for decipherment. Dalton (2001) adds to the litany of sins that art education has perpetuated by locating its

dominant pedagogies within forcefully patriarchal discourses and I have already demonstrated the continuing Eurocentrism of the curriculum. However, Dalton also acknowledges that:

Discourses are not in themselves inherently liberating or essentially oppressive. Some, like the paternal discourses of the law, responsibility, repression and rationality, are more powerful, but they are not necessarily pernicious: they can be borrowed, recombined and redeployed to support and legitimate any emergent new strategic aims, including those of feminism or education.

(p. 22)

As this thesis develops I intend to draw on this hopeful claim so that the pessimism I deduce from Bourdieu's analysis does not completely overwhelm the potential of art and design in schools to contribute to a critically engaged curriculum, one that can resist the world of snobbery that Bourdieu transcribes. By exposing the mythologies of art, visual practice in schools might move beyond the reproductive towards a model in which students really can become 'actively involved in shaping environments' (DfEE 1999: 14). In this way, school art, whether symbolic or utilitarian, would be able to function at the local level in the way that critical artists do in wider society.

# Part One: Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools

## 2. Action Research Methodology

### Introduction

i) The three parts of this thesis are intimately connected yet methodologically different. If Part One is an analysis of the research project Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools (ACHiS) then Part Two is an analysis of the discourses and practices within the field of art and art in education that have brought the secondary school subject art and design to its present position. In Part Three, I engage with critical pedagogy, a current educational tradition, in order to consider a possible set of practices by which secondary art teachers might develop the sort of critical, discursive environment that ACHiS intimated, but that remains elusive in the broader field; this final part is methodologically evaluative.

ii) I recognise that all parts of this thesis are hermeneutic in orientation in the sense that my search for meaning within the practice of secondary art education is an interpretative act determined by my own situated history within and without this sector. The collection and choice of data are themselves interpretive acts that condition the way ‘as an investigator, I am always in what I am investigating, just as what I am investigating is somehow already in me even before I begin’ (Smith 1999: 46). I am also aware that each part has informed the others and that, as the research has progressed, the historical inquiry has been changed as a result of ACHiS and vice versa and that critical pedagogy undoubtedly informed ACHiS in practice. This recognition acknowledges a phenomenological approach which ‘views events as mutually shaped. Multidirectional relationships can be discovered within situations. Causes are not a prime focus’ (Maykut and Morehouse 1994: 13). However, it must be said that the whole thesis is something of a hybrid, that some of my approaches correspond more readily to a positivist paradigm in the sense that in order to change a phenomenon, here a problematic aspect of art education, I, along with others, have deduced various events and practices that can be interpreted as causes. It follows (adopting this model’s linearity of thought) that changing behaviours and evaluating the effects of such change can rectify the ‘problem’. ACHiS was developed in the belief that certain forms of critical intervention can inform the art curriculum and challenge its insularity. This is evident in the aims as they were initially outlined in the research proposal:

- a) to test and evaluate the significance of art critical/historical methods to:
  - inform modes of investigation in art and design, and history [later omitted]

- provide reflective tools for the evaluation and contextualisation of student practice in studio-based art and design education
  - demonstrate vehicles for the critical examination of student misconceptions
  - develop interdisciplinary, cross-curricular initiatives
  - contribute to intercultural and pluralist syllabuses (this aim addresses the relationship of art history to critical, historical and contextual studies)
- b) to question perceived divisions between theory and practice, understanding and making, consumption and production...
- c) to encourage professionals in the field to engage with education at Secondary level (this aim addresses the issue of continuity and progression through partnership).

(Addison 1998)

Whether these aims were realised is the concern of the research team in the *Synoptic Report* (Addison et al 2003). Here it is more important to ask the question ‘what sort of research was ACHiS?’

iii) The first sections of this chapter, ‘Developing research’, ‘Methodological positioning’, ‘Critical practice and collaboration’ and ‘Interventions’ provide an extended definition of ACHiS (partly descriptive of events, partly reflective and evaluative and partly an attempt to position the project in relation to other models of action research). In the closing sections ‘ACHiS as a prototype’ and ‘Evaluation’, I consider whether the methodology of ACHiS, as it unfolded, took the forms it did in response to the situations outlined in Part Two, situations within which the ACHiS research team was deeply immersed. Before considering the modes of action research employed to carry the project through I look at the hermeneutic tradition as it pertains to educational research. I do so because the use of methodologies derived from phenomenological hermeneutics informed the initial stages of ACHiS.

## Hermeneutics

1. The hermeneutic object/subject of this inquiry is acts of semiosis, the making-sense of experience through the creative act of sign production and sign reception (both interpretative processes of meaning making). The fundamental position of interpretation given here rests on the idea that the making of signs is a process in which the sign-maker selects, or indeed creates, from available cultural resources,<sup>10</sup> metaphors/analogies that most forcibly (not necessarily most clearly)<sup>11</sup> represent/embody experience (Kress and Leeuwen 1996). The selective process of production is, in effect, an interpretative act and, following the theories

<sup>10</sup> Natural phenomenon become cultural once they signify on the level of language/symbol – a tree bearing fruit may be independent of culture but when it is husbanded to the economy or when it is used to signify bountifulness it is appropriated by that culture and joins its conception of the real.

<sup>11</sup> These metaphors reference the affective as a way of understanding the world, a way that does not pretend to the ‘objectivity’ of rational/logical modes of representation.

of Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), the reception of the produced sign is also an act of interpretation (1966). The form this interpretation takes is a further sign (for Peirce the interpretant) which is the recipient's response (whether that response takes the form of a thought or an action). The evidence for critical agency lies in the actions of students themselves, whether these actions are the making of utterances, images, gestures or the use of any other semiotic modes. However, because such phenomena, historical acts of consciousness, are immeasurably complex constellations of desires, reasonings, determinants and so on, no scientific method could conceivably pin them down. Thus my rationale for taking into consideration hermeneutic phenomenology, which, despite its theological pedigree, has become an attempt to strip present consciousness of accumulated misinterpretations, a culturally and historically conscious way to get at possibilities (Hans-Georg Gadamer 1977). In the dialogic paradigm of phenomenological hermeneutics the continuous to and fro of sign-making (the circularity of hermeneutics) constitutes a continuous process of becoming (Heidegger in Gadamer 1977) a process of possibility that for many poststructuralists (for example see Derrida 1976) signals the elusiveness or perhaps promiscuity of meaning; not a 'becoming' rather a never getting there. The production and reception of art are just such processes, the one an interpretative act representing/embodying experience, the other an interpretative act that aims at understanding (itself a representation). Such understanding may in turn lead to a further embodiment, even if this embodiment has no pretence to permanence (for example a gesture)<sup>12</sup> and so round again. Throughout this thesis I am concerned with processes of reception and understanding, processes that tend to be mediated through language. But, through ACHiS, I shall also consider the extent to which systematic, linguistic interpretation might better encourage critically informed acts of making/selecting objects/events, multimodal constructions ('texts') in which the visual, material and symbolic are foregrounded, in other words how language might lubricate rather than clog the cyclic process.<sup>13</sup>

### **The hermeneutic tradition**

2. The subjective/objective, qualitative/quantitative dichotomy of research methodologies bears similarities to the image/word, appearance/reality oppositions discussed in 'Iconoscepticism' (Addison 2003). But, just as words mediate understandings of the imaged/artefactual world so they mediate understandings of lived experience (in one form or another, a key function of research within the social sciences, although its purpose may also be to propose alternative ways in which life *might be* experienced). In the earliest

---

<sup>12</sup> However, it could be argued that any sign has an in built permanence if one agrees that a definition of the sign is when a signifier/signified attains a repeatable relationship to a referent (object).

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix 1 for a working definition of art (from a chapter since abandoned) that I formulated to assist me in defining this elusive and contested category which is, nonetheless, central to the concerns of this thesis.

formulations of this inquiry my emphasis on epistemological questions such as, 'what methods of interpretation have efficacy?' is evidence of my traditional pedagogic training. This is indicative of a desire for 'right' solutions ('albeit they' democratically distributed) a desire to look, judge and control. David Smith (1999) calls this the 'tradition of consciousness' one that 'shapes curriculum decision-making as fundamentally a form of arbitration over the correctness or appropriateness of ideas, that is a judgement of the degree to which they "re-present" reality' (p. 36). The agreed truthfulness of these representations, their authority, depends on their conformity to various norms; Smith suggests that the most pervasive representations today are science and common sense. The hermeneutic tradition questions any such authority and by so doing immediately raises questions about relative positions, multiple answers, of the 'plurilog' (Shohat and Stam 1995). Calling on Gadamer, Richard Rorty (1980) makes clear the distinction between hermeneutics and epistemology:

'the hermeneutic phenomenon is basically not a problem of method at all' rather, Gadamer is asking, roughly, [*Truth and Method* (1975)] what conclusions might be drawn from the fact that we *have* to practise hermeneutics - from the 'hermeneutic phenomenon' as a *fact* about people which the epistemological tradition has tried to shunt aside. 'The hermeneutics developed here' he says, 'is not ... a methodology of the human sciences but an attempt to understand what the human sciences truly are, beyond their methodological self-consciousness, and what connects them with the totality of our experience of the world'. (my italics)

(pp. 357-358)

Rorty precedes this commentary by stating:

In the interpretation I shall be offering, 'hermeneutics' is not the name for a discipline, nor for a method of achieving the sort of results which epistemology failed to achieve, nor for a programme of research. On the contrary, hermeneutics is an expression of hope that the cultural space left by the demise of epistemology will not be filled - that our culture should become one in which the demand for constraint and confrontation is no longer felt.

(p. 315)

This hope is a necessary one for the project of empowerment, for the practice of pluralism: 'Hermeneutics sees the relations between various discourses as those of strands in a possible conversation, a conversation which presupposes no disciplinary matrix which unites the speakers, but where the hope of agreement is never lost so long as the conversation lasts' (ibid: 318). In Chapter 8, on critical pedagogy, I shall return to this position and discuss the assumed neutrality of conversational procedures and the potential asymmetry of its power relations. But I intend to neglect this assumption for the moment so that this 'hope' can be viewed from the hermeneutic position.

3. Conversation is entirely at odds with the tradition of consciousness for which disciplinary argument is a primary, methodological tool. Across disciplines, validity is determined in

terms of objectivity (empirical data) and or abstraction (number). Once an argument is won the 'truth' can be agreed. In this tradition, pedagogy takes on the role of transmission and cultural reproduction. For Welsch (1998), a critic of Rorty, conversational enquiry appears to be an abnegation of responsibility; argument has been central to the philosophical tradition although, as Welsch concedes, Rorty does not abandon argument he merely points out that it should not take place across different 'types': argument across paradigms that share a common basis is, on the contrary, desirable. So, for example, it is fruitless to argue positions of truthfulness between a way of life based on revelation and one based on empiricism. However, different 'types' may coexist, even within the same person. Therefore, although these 'types' may be mutually contradictory they indicate something of the way a person's identity can be split conceptually so that their sense of their own historicity is severely skewed; the way a person lives rarely conforms to logical constraints. Although Rorty's caution serves as a continuous reminder, in his rejoinder Welsch proposes that different 'types' have points of intersection and that these do not preclude argument: 'Interconceptual detail—arguments however – arguments relating to singular assumptions or constituents of a conception - are most certainly possible' (section 5a).

4. For Gadamer the hermeneutic tradition is based on an ontological condition; the need to 'understand'. This ontological condition could be caricatured as 'to be is to interpret'.<sup>14</sup> His teacher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) expressed this as fundamental: 'The phenomenology of Being (Dasein) is a hermeneutic in the primordial signification of this word, where it designates this business of interpreting' (in Smith 1999: 32). The very practices of the arts, both productive and receptive, could be argued as products of this condition. As such the laws that govern and limit these practices are historically and culturally specific.<sup>15</sup> However, comfortingly, Rorty (1980) claims: 'From the educational, as opposed to the epistemological or the technological, point of view, the way things are said is more important than the possession of truths' (p. 359). Much of this inquiry is concerned with what is said in striving for, rather than arriving at, truth.

5. Gadamer insists that knowledge is not the goal of thinking, rather it is *Bildung* (education, self-formation). This is evidently a never-ending process, the hermeneutic condition, from which there is no escape, especially in the epistemological chimera of fixed truths. Rorty suggests that Gadamer's terminology is not helpful to an English speaking audience:

Since 'education' sounds a bit too flat, and *Bildung* a bit too foreign, I shall use 'edification' to stand for this project of finding new, better, more interesting, more

---

<sup>14</sup> This notion has much in common with the post-structuralist idea that nothing exists outside of language or discourse.

<sup>15</sup> My attempt to assess the educational efficacy of current practice and make recommendations as to its methodological validity, is just that, culturally and historically specific.



fruitful ways of speaking. The attempt to edify (ourselves or others) may consist in the hermeneutic activity of making connections between our own culture and some *exotic* culture [sic] or historical period, or between our own discipline and *another* discipline which seems to pursue incommensurable aims in an incommensurable vocabulary. (my italics)

(ibid: 360)

Rorty identifies the two educational approaches that I feel are necessary for this historical moment, intercultural and interdisciplinary investigation.<sup>16</sup>

6. Smith too identifies attributes of the hermeneutic tradition that appeal because they offer an antidote to the deeply earnest rhetoric of educational writing. He reminds readers that Hermes (etymologically the root of hermeneutic) was not only the messenger of the Greek gods but was in addition:

known for a number of other qualities such as eternal youthfulness, friendliness, prophetic power and fertility... There is one further aspect of Hermes that may be worth noting, namely his impudence... Modern students of hermeneutics should be mindful that their interpretations could lead them into trouble with 'authorities'.

(1999: 27)

One implication of this reminder is that interpretation may question, indeed confound, naturalised understandings and thus the authority of those who would repeat, reinforce and make others rehearse them. There is for Smith a sense that acts of interpretation may be playful, possibly disrespectful; those deploying tried and tested methods had better be wary. If the tradition of consciousness desires stability, hermeneutics is its enemy; if the critical tradition desires change, it only does so to establish a new order and thus a new stability; hermeneutics, once the new order is won, is not its friend. Such an admission is both delightful and worrying. Supposing, through this inquiry, that I wished to inform interpretative practice in the art classroom, not by evaluating different methodological approaches through critique, but by getting inside the thought processes of one student in the act of 'impudent' interpretation, impudence founded on a mistrust of systematic method. In this instance my hermeneutic task would be worrying, for it would be impossible to probe the intricacies of the student's interpretative act so that its full paradigmatic significance, its relation to their lived experience and possible futures would be given justice. And yet the description of one such act, one particular way of speaking, so insignificant to the makers of policy (the assessed scheme of things), would be a task to relish, a creative and playful (if intrusive) act of interpretation in itself. I leave such delights to the more adventurous.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Rorty's language suggests very real gulfs in the cultural field ('exotic' is hardly equivalent to, for example, Raymond Williams's use of 'other' (1965) see chapter 8: note 78.

<sup>17</sup> Since writing this chapter I have attempted something like this see Addison (2003a).

7. The breadth of the task I have set myself is both more limiting and crude because survey and generalisation (the literature search and critique of current practice) do violence to the particular, to the ways people actually live. The neatness of generalisation, the absolute metanarratives of the traditions of consciousness and critique: theological, dialectical, spiritual or material, this tidying-up of loose ends militates against a truly hermeneutic enquiry which has the potential to reinvest educational research with the detail and messiness of experience. It appears then that I am addressing the processes of phenomenological hermeneutics as a check against the tendency of positivist research to select the evidence to fit the theory, it has for me the function of an ethical restraint, of keeping doubt alive. Simultaneously it enables me to be honest about the sequential point in time that a particular view is formed and then expressed; it enables me to say: 'I think this now even though I did not think this before': 'any study carried on in the name of hermeneutics should provide a report of the researcher's own transformations undergone in the process of inquiry' (Smith 1999: 38).

8. At one point in his brief survey of the western hermeneutic tradition Smith proffers two alternatives of validity, he asks:

whether the authority for the meaning of a given text resides within a traditional interpretative community such as the Church (or now the State), or whether a text has its own internal meaning and integrity which can be recovered by any well-intended individual possessed of the right skills.

(1999: 29)

In this statement Smith retains the notion (hope?) that there might be a definite, originating message, and therefore that a 'faithful' interpreter must develop 'creative' skills of translation. If Smith's model is not exactly one of transmission, for the message may be received and its meaning for a particular recipient 'negotiated', then it still privileges intentionality; any agency is in the hands of the 'originator' rather than the interpreter or recipient. Indeed Smith invokes the spirit of Scheiermacher to talk of divination (p. 30). For Smith, the argument seems to be one of possession: who owns the authority to interpret? Implicit in such an argument is the notion that the second of his interpreters, the well-intentioned one, must keep some critical distance from the object of interpretation. This interpreter must possess both the requisite skills and, through merit rather than authority and a recognition of potential audiences, must possess integrity themselves if the integrity of the original is to be represented in translation. Questions that arise from his proposition are: can the interpreter rid their interpretation of traces of self? Can the individual rid themselves of the prejudices that Smith infers of the institution? These questions are often avoided in acts of interpretation (Elkins 2000). However, within the critical tradition, the act of self-positioning whereby a writer states her/his 'ideological position' at least foregrounds the

perspective from which the writer understands the object/subject of study, encouraging the reader to assess the author's 'critical distance' for themselves (see Gramsci 1971; Said 1980).

9. The emphasis here on personal traces is intimately linked with the notion of historical traces. 'According to Heidegger, human experience of the world takes place within a horizon of past, present and future' (Smith 1999: 33). Therefore any new thing is initially interpreted in relation to the structures and patterns of past experience even if, as a result, those structures and patterns are subsequently altered. But this indicates that the now is experienced both as a part of a continuum and a potential, thus interpretation can be both historically informed and creatively transformative, contingent on past and future. However, this is not to suggest some priority for innocent (read uninformed) reception. Rorty reminds the hermeneut that:

Education has to start from acculturation... We must see ourselves as en-soi – as described by those statements which are objectively true in the judgement of our peers – before there is any point in seeing ourselves pour-soi. Similarly, we cannot be educated without finding out a lot about descriptions of the world offered by our culture (e.g. by learning the results of the natural sciences). Later perhaps we may put less value on 'being in touch with reality' but we can afford that only after having passed through stages of implicit, and then explicit and self-conscious, conformity to the norms of the discourses going on around us

(1980: 365)

10. For Smith (1999) a prerequisite of hermeneutics is attentiveness to language: 'Every hermeneutic scholar should have a good etymological dictionary at her or his side... It is important to gain a sense of the etymological traces carried in words to see what they point to historically... [language] is reflective of our desires, our regrets and our dreams; in its silences it even tells us of what we would forget' (p. 39): just so in the case of art. For example, if the codes and conventions of a work of art fall outside the common knowledge of an interpretative community, its common history, any interpretation would only project the community's own values unless historical and contextual information were provided or sought. But the current habit of some art historians to assert context as something that can determine interpretation is questioned in the habits of semiotics:

The idea of 'context' as that which will, in a legislative sense, determine the contours of the work in question is therefore different from the 'context' that semiotics proposes: what the latter points to is, on the one hand, the unarrestable mobility of the signifier, and on the other, the construction of the work of art within always specific contexts of viewing.

(Bal and Bryson 1991: 246)

11. These contexts of viewing not only include the artwork's often decontextualised site but the expectations, assumptions and insights of the viewer. For the educator this poses

problems because if they admit only 'knowledgeable' responses they inhibit the student interpreter in their attempt to relate the work to their own past, their lived experience. But without knowledge misunderstanding is the result. The point at which interpretation takes place is in the intersections, the places where histories meet; this means that teachers need to be aware of the histories of their students as well as their 'subject' of study. Gadamer (1977) states:

According to its original definition, hermeneutics is the art of clarifying and mediating by our own effort of interpretation what is said by persons we encounter in tradition. Hermeneutics operates wherever what is said is not immediately intelligible... since the time of this original definition, the growing historical consciousness has made us aware of the misunderstanding and the possible unintelligibility of all tradition... since the time of the German romantics, therefore, the task of hermeneutics has been defined as *avoiding misunderstanding*. With this definition, hermeneutics acquires a domain that in principle reaches as far as the expression of meaning as such.  
(my italics)

(p. 98)

The avoidance of misunderstanding is a cry familiar to critical pedagogues, although the avoidance of misunderstanding, as engineered by those who would have you misunderstand, better summarises their position. Terry Eagleton (1983) is wary and suspicious of the claim of hermeneutics to develop understanding. He points out that 'tradition' for Gadamer, as for T.S. Eliot, is quite specific; respectively German classicism and the Great European Tradition. Only certain understandings are worth having and only certain people are worth engaging in dialogue. The prejudices that a person from tradition brings to bear on a cultural phenomenon are not negative because they are 'pre-understandings' flowing from the tradition itself. Eagleton interprets Gadamer's method:

Creative prejudices, as against ephemeral and distorting ones, are those which arise from the tradition and bring us into contact with it. The authority of the tradition itself, linked with our own strenuous self-reflection, will sort out which of our preconceptions are legitimate and which are not – just as historical distance between ourselves and a work of the past, far from creating an obstacle to true understanding, actually aids such recognition by stripping the work of all that was of merely passing significance about it.

(1983: 72)

With this Gadamer takes the hermeneut right back to transcendental essences, to the sense of right which underpins the policy statements of officials such as Nicholas Tate (see Chapter 1: 5).

12. Although the hermeneutic check has been a part of the process of developing my research (and I shall have recourse to it again in those chapters that describe and evaluate its applied aspects) given Eagleton's interpretation, the exclusivity of Gadamer's hermeneutics clearly cannot be part of the answer in the specific context of art education in secondary

schools at the beginning of the twenty first century. Rather than ally myself to a tradition that hierarchises difference I nonetheless wish to stress the hermeneutic endeavour at the centre of this thesis and of my developing hermeneutic interest in the visual and multimodal productions of students following courses in art and design.<sup>18</sup>

## Developing research

Instead of being encouraged to use language to form and communicate sensitive and revealing observations which have grown out of real experience, there is a tendency to 'reduce knowledge to a set of principles which allow no escape' and which appear to have little relevance to personal viewpoint.

(Swift and Steers 1999: 282)

13. Initially, ACHiS was designed as a training rather than a research programme and its aims were therefore far from hermeneutic. In its incipient incarnation ACHiS was an intervention within the Artists in Schools course (AiS), a cross arts training programme run by the London Arts Board and validated by the Institute of Education, University of London (IoE) which trained artists, dancers, musicians, poets etc, to plan, carry out and evaluate residencies in primary and secondary schools. In 1997, through an advertisement in the Association of Art Historians' newsletter 'Bulletin', art critics and art historians were invited to apply for a place on the AiS course and an art historian was accepted. Her residency and report were to act retrospectively as a pilot (ACHiS archive, IoE) and in this way the ACHiS research project was designed by appropriating the model of the artists' residency. This model has often been used since the 1970s as an interventionist strategy through which the subject knowledge of teachers and students alike is developed and enriched but which has been subsequently assessed as pandering to a deficit model where teachers' professionalism is questioned (Burgess 1995). Despite this negative interpretation, it was during the art historian's school placement that I began to formulate a research programme that utilised the residency model. This was partly in response to the way the art historian brought different agencies together to produce cross-disciplinary partnerships; here she organised a triangular partnership between a school (a co-educational comprehensive), a gallery (Tate Britain, then the Tate Gallery) and a university. After the pilot, and before enlarging ACHiS to run as a parallel training programme alongside the AiS, it was important to canvas the secondary

---

<sup>18</sup> Since embarking on this thesis I have increasingly gravitated to a form of educational research that starts with the actions of students and teachers rather than one that attempts to illustrate a theoretical or political position by exemplifying it in terms of particular instances of action (choosing an action to fit the theory) (see Addison and Burgess 2003; Addison 2003a). In this move I have been profoundly influenced by the interpretative practices of the London Semiotic Circle which met to debate the work that Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen were generating in the field of education and visual education in particular (1996). It is also important to recognise art educationalists producing critical work that acknowledges semiotics as a necessary analytical method for the interpretation of student production and agency and I am thinking specifically of the work of Dennis Atkinson (2002) who identifies his work as a hermeneutic process.

schools in partnership with the art and design PGCE at the IoE for their interest, and a majority declared a desire to participate. Despite this positive result there was nothing similar from art critics and historians who, by and large, imagined work in schools as a kind of last, desperate resort.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, in agreement with colleagues at the IoE, I persisted in my belief that the critical residency might be a way to effect change in the art curriculum and therefore had to reconsider the means by which to gain support. As the training programme had not gained the anticipated interest it became clear that my developing research proposal would be a more attractive vehicle for art critics and art historians and a timely one because of the paucity of school-based research in this area. In shifting from a training- to a research-based activity the methodological principles of the project required fundamental review, although training was to remain a key component.

### **Reconsidering ACHiS as action research**

14. This shift in intentions initially seemed more like a shift in emphasis. As the research proposer, I began modifying the specifications for the training programme in an attempt to conjure a research proposal. Because the residency model was already set up and was attractive to schools, the only type of educational research that could be readily and appropriately grafted onto it was action research. Action research is a methodology often called upon when there is a perceived 'problem', a lack or a need, but in those instances where the causes of the 'problem' are not known or where the ways in which it can be met are unclear.<sup>20</sup> It is thought that through careful participant observation a 'problem' can be identified and, subsequently, strategies for its amelioration formulated. These are then applied and evaluated. Adams et al (1997) suggest four characteristic elements of action research:

a strong interest...in helping practitioners deal with problems of practice; a broad methodological interest in interpretative methods; a growth of collaborative work in curriculum development and evaluation; an explicit ideological commitment to addressing social and political problems of education through participatory research carried out by practitioners.

(p. 89)

---

<sup>19</sup> Opinions based on responses to advertising placed in the AAH newsletter Bulletin, the AAH website and conversations with the AAH Student Subcommittee Chair.

<sup>20</sup> The origins and history of action research are variously presented. Kemmis (1988) amongst others, proposes its origin in a theory formulated in the 1940s by the American psychologist Kurt Lewin who, inspired by the American philosopher John Dewey, defined action research as 'proceeding in a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of planning, action and the evaluation of the result of action' (p.8). McKernan (1991) would go back further insisting on the positivist genealogy of action research by claiming that it developed from the late nineteenth century Science in Education movement (p.8). A history of its origins is also explained differently depending on the cultural and geographical location of the historian, for example McTaggart (1991: 2) cites Moreno's research on Viennese prostitutes in 1913. Whatever the origin, all these examples share emancipatory goals and participatory methodologies. It is therefore not surprising to realise that the forms of action research employed in UK education today have specific and transparently political origins.

Elliot would concur:

What distinguishes action research from other forms of educational enquiry are its transformative intentions and the methodological principles (not methods) such intentions imply. The methodology of educational action research might be briefly summarized as follows:

- 1 it is directed towards the realization of an educational ideal, e.g. as represented by a pedagogical aim;
- 2 it focuses on changing practice to make it more consistent with the ideal;
- 3 it gathers evidence of the extent to which the practice is consistent/inconsistent with the ideal and seeks explanations for inconsistencies by gathering evidence about the operation of contextual factors;
- 4 it problematizes some of the tacit theories which underpin and shape practice, i.e., taken-for-granted beliefs and norms;
- 5 it involves practitioners in generating and testing action hypotheses about how to effect worthwhile educational change.

(1997: 25)

15. Action research has tended to suggest research involving insider rather than outsider observers/participants, i.e. practising teachers (ibid: 23-24); ACHiS, in attracting practising critics/historians as 'interventionists' (albeit in partnership with teachers), can be seen as something of a hybrid. Nonetheless, the diverse activities of the ACHiS research team correspond very closely to Elliot's methodology in the following ways: the educational ideal of ACHiS is the development of a critical and socially engaged curriculum in art and design and current practice has been identified as falling short of this ideal (Davies 1995), in other words practice can be characterised as acritical, formalist/expressive and hermetic. During the planning stage, the action researchers were to spend time in conversation with their teacher/collaborator observing learning and teaching in the context of their host department. It must be remembered that specialist subject classrooms develop very particular cultures presenting a ritualised space that needs to be 'navigated' by students who are themselves socially situated in different ways, never mind the interventionist researcher. ACHiS, as a critical and discursive intervention, questioned the emphasis on *making* in a non-discursive art, craft and design environment and therefore challenged particular theories of expressivism in which talking is a hindrance to free expression (see Chapter 6: 1.10). But because ACHiS was conceived as a collaborative intervention (planned and implemented in partnership with art teachers) it also questions the logocentric tradition, a tradition that invites teachers in secondary schools to privilege language as a means to report and explain phenomenon rather than as a means to support visual and somatic processes (Addison 2003). Finally, the planning and evaluative procedures for ACHiS involved all participants (although to different degrees, degrees that at times proved asymmetrical). There are further dimensions to the ACHiS project that have much to do with the different subject positions of the various participants. It is worth examining briefly the historical trajectory of action research as it will illuminate some of the motivations of the key participants.

16. During the 1960s staff from innovative secondary modern schools, frustrated, indeed exasperated by the structure of failure inherent in the 11-plus system, were motivated to reconceptualise the curriculum to meet the needs of their students (Holt 1984):

These schools attempted to change the curriculum to make it more relevant to the experience of everyday living in contemporary society. Such attempts involved:

- restructuring the content of the curriculum around life themes rather than subjects;
- representing content as resources for thinking about the problems and issues of everyday living rather than simply information to be learned;
- transforming the teaching-learning process from the systematic transmission of information to a discussion-based inquiry;
- collaboration between teachers across subject specialisms.

(Elliot 1997: 18)

The motivations of those academics who instigated and or encouraged the ACHiS research, (including myself and at least two of the action researchers) were related to these strategies, strategies that go some way to fulfil the principles of an education for social equity (Trowell 2001). ACHiS was therefore rooted in a project seeking interdisciplinary collaboration, ongoing, if interrupted, from the 1960s. In relation to these strategies the ACHiS team correspondingly assumed that the skills and knowledge required to implement the ‘critical’ dimensions of the National Curriculum and examination syllabuses were not necessarily possessed by all who teach at secondary level. There was already convincing advocacy to suggest that critical and historical skills and knowledge are empowering for teachers and students helping them to develop visual literacy to inform both academic and social practice (Raney 1997). If visual literacy was to be a key aim for art and design (DfE 1995) an emphasis on methods of inquiry rather than content would challenge subject-specific assumptions and orthodoxies, particularly the culture of ‘making’ that can militate against inquiry and discursive practices. The research team also believed in the reciprocity of interdisciplinary collaboration, in this instance, recognising that teachers’ knowledge of studio practice could inform critical and historical practice. This last point is particularly significant as the expertise of teachers is often overlooked in collaborative work between universities and schools.<sup>21</sup> In the case of art and design the practical orientation of teachers’ knowledge is twofold, in other words both their pedagogy and subject knowledge within the field are ‘practical’ and thus within a logocentric culture, suspect. Art historians and critics, however, come with all the baggage of the logocentric; it was therefore always a danger within ACHiS that the hierarchised status of the interventionist action researchers might skew the equitable power-relations needed for the collaborative dimension of the project to succeed. At a point in March 2000, just before the ACHiS research reports were due, I

---

<sup>21</sup> The skewed power relations in this relationship replicates the way in which a pioneering research project of the 1960s/70s, The Humanities and Research Project, was heavily criticised (Kemmis 1989).



decided to return to methodological considerations and examine in more detail where ACHiS could be positioned in relation to a typology of research. I thought that such investigation would better enable the team to evaluate findings and would enable me to consider their significance for this thesis.

### **Methodological positioning**

17. It is generally accepted that positivism, the dominant twentieth century epistemological paradigm, and the favoured tool of positivists, quantitative research, is an inadequate mode of inquiry for understanding plurality; the diversity of subject positions and contexts and the role of agency within a project of empowerment: ‘The speech patterns and behavior [sic] of actors or agents and the specific context in which these behaviors occur are what the qualitative researcher is trying to understand. The purpose of qualitative research is to get at the world of the agent or subject’ (Maykut and Morehouse 1994: 20). This reorientation has produced qualitative paradigms that explicitly critique the aims of positivist research, both established and emerging alternatives, especially phenomenological (ibid) and feminist (Reinharz 1992). Robert Stake, a pioneer of qualitative research in the social sciences, identifies the positivist model by a different term: ‘Many evaluation plans are more “preordinate”, emphasising (1) statement of goals (2) use of objective tests, (3) standards held by program personnel, and (4) research type reports” (in Shadish et al 1991: 275). He contrasts ‘preordinate’ to ‘responsive evaluation’, one that performs a service. ACHiS conforms to his ‘preordinate’ typology except in respect of (2) ‘use of objective tests’ (this would be a major flaw in the eyes of a positivist evaluator even though the director’s and the research reports draw on quantitative data gleaned from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, see Addison et al 2002). However, if the aims of ACHiS are related to Jurgen Habermas’ epistemological paradigms (1973) they have a further dimension. He proposes: 1) the *Empirical-Analytic* (identified above as positivist) 2) the *Interpretive-Hermeneutic* (above as phenomenological) and 3) the *Critical-Theoretic*. At its most ambitious level, ACHiS relates to this third paradigm for the ACHiS team hoped to inform critical practice in secondary art education so that it could (however modestly) contribute to a transformative education (see Chapter 8, Critical Pedagogy). I say, ‘at its most ambitious’ because ACHiS can in no way be said to possess purist pretensions, it is no more a solely critical-theoretic study than it is a phenomenological-hermeneutic one. ACHiS was a pragmatic alliance between different methods that are often perceived as conflicting and I intend to explain my choices briefly and suggest that perceived contradictions are more like paradoxes, an essential ingredient of the dialectical process.

18. For Stake (in Shadish et al 1991: 270-314) those researchers who take on an attitude or posture of judgement, those who critique existing practice and offer well-intentioned recommendations for change, are deeply suspect. Such an attitude smacks of paternalism and is unlikely to recognise or accommodate others' values. For Stake description as opposed to judgement allows readers to decide for themselves. This descriptive, non-judgemental approach has its disciples in art education, for example it is proudly employed in Angela Rogers and Dave Allen's 'What's Happening to Photography?' (1997). But such choices are sometimes as much strategic as philosophical, intended to counter hierarchically-based recommendations in the belief that intended audiences will be more receptive to an egalitarian, open mode, one grounded in developments in ethnography (Hammersley 1992: 43-56). The qualitative approaches adopted by myself and the ACHiS team rejected a purely descriptive function, recognising a basic premise of hermeneutics, namely that meaning is something produced through an act of interpretation, it is not something that can be reported because it does not pre-exist the act:

This distinguishes the hermeneutic effort from, say, ethnographic and grounded theory formulations wherein the task is to try to give an account of people's thoughts and actions strictly from their own point of view. Hermeneutically we understand how impossible such a task is, given that I always interpret others from within the frame of our common language and experience so that whatever I say about you is also a saying about myself.

(Smith 1999: 42)

This latter observation requires of the researcher a self-consciousness, in which, paradoxically, they achieve a certain critical distance from themselves. Therefore, in understanding how their actions, interventions and conversations informed the developing action research, the ACHiS team acknowledged that:

Knowing is critical knowing which aims to render transparent tacit and hidden assumptions by initiating a process of transformation designed to liberate and, to use a favourite term of this paradigm, *empower* people. Since people act upon their world in order to transform it, a central notion is that of *praxis*, the reciprocity of thought and action.

(Pearse 1992: 244-252)

Feminist researchers have much to say on issues of empowerment and the ethics of scrutiny, (for example on the closeness/distance dichotomy, Reinharz 1992: 69-71) especially when research aims to liberate marginal and oppressed groups of people. The ACHiS team, in being wholeheartedly participatory (in some instances close to the point of immersion), anticipated that if the action researchers hoped to attain a degree of objectivity (distance) (without which research is unlikely to have any impact save for the participants) then the main 'object' of study would have to be the researchers themselves and their *relationship* with others. However, because in its first year ACHiS had been designed by a director,

modified by a research team, implemented in schools as a directed but collaborative intervention, and only evaluated by all participants once the residencies were over, it portrays only trace elements of the fluid, organic models of action research favoured by many feminists (Smail et al quoted in Reinhartz 1992: 180; Lather 1988: 43-48).

19. Researchers who identify with one or more of these alternative paradigms favour qualitative approaches largely because they avoid the fixed postulates of positivism, its *a priori* assumptions voiced as hypotheses, tested (and 'proved') through scientific experiment and deductive processes. Qualitative methods invite the researcher to form hypothesis only after observation and or engagement, a process of discovery akin to induction. However, the emphasis here is on immersion rather than distance, 'perspectival'ism not objectivity (Maykut and Morehouse 1994: 16) 'groundedness' not abstraction, empathy not sympathy, concepts that have deep cultural and gendered resonances in addition to their academic and professional oppositions. The degree to which ACHiS can be identified with any one side of these oppositions will be discussed.

#### **The 'posture' of the ACHiS researchers**

20. The 'posture' (Maykut and Morehouse 1994: 25-40) of the ACHiS researchers in the complex phenomenon of a school and classroom environment was multiple: collaborator, interventionist, participant observer and evaluator. Such complexities and multiple roles correspond to what Maykut and Morehouse describe as 'indwelling' (a term appropriated from Polanyi through Heidegger): 'A qualitative researcher learns about significant aspects of reality by indwelling in these complexities. These complexities ... cannot be understood by one-dimensional reductionist approaches; they demand the human-as-instrument; they demand indwelling' (ibid: 27). Of significance here is the issue of time. It is notable that 'indwelling' can only be said to have characterised the approach, attitudes and evaluative procedures of the two researchers who already had experience of teaching in secondary schools (they both had an art and design PGCE); it was only they who were able to acclimatise themselves to the specific culture of their respective schools because they were already acclimatised to the culture of schooling (see Finnan and Levin 2000). One flaw of the research was therefore the limited amount of time allocated to planning and diagnosis, the period in which researchers and teachers had an opportunity to build professional and potentially empathetic relationships. Although there were very real instances of professional conduct, mutual respect and cooperation, out of a total of ten researcher/teacher partnerships, four relationships were profoundly antagonistic (two in each year). Limited time, therefore, problematised the collaborative dimension of the project and determined its interventionist emphasis. (The various professional backgrounds and research interests of the researchers

and teachers and the types of school in which the residencies were placed are outlined in the Synoptic Report; Addison et al 2003, and are reproduced in Appendix 2.)

## **Critical practice and collaboration**

### **An assumption**

21. Many art educators believe that knowledge of art history and its practices are a necessary part of a critical art education. As director of ACHiS, I assumed, perhaps unwisely, that art critics and art historians would believe the inverse of this equation. One aim of ACHiS was to elaborate a model of practice in which critical thinking and making are interdependent, indivisible parts of studio practice. But this aim was not necessarily pursued by all researchers (although it was discussed on numerous occasions with both researchers and teachers). At least one residency in the first year might be characterised as a discipline-based, art historical project running parallel to studio practice. In another, the discursive environment encouraged by the researcher was one in which the art teacher refused to participate, in effect rejecting the model in a very public and divisive way and thus militating against the principle of collaboration. During the first year, the degree to which the researchers managed to build a collaborative model was in any case limited due to a range of contextual factors. Nonetheless, the following generalisations can be deduced:

- 1) teachers need to be involved in most if not all the planning sessions, not two half days as arranged;
- 2) teachers should attend all teaching sessions in school (in one instance a teacher was having to teach two classes simultaneously; in other instances the teacher was rarely present);
- 3) teachers should negotiate clear classroom roles with researchers to lessen the possibility of duplication and/or contradiction.

### **ACHiS and power relations**

22. After the experience of the first year, and with the second fast approaching, money was vired from project expenses that had been overestimated (travel) to support the collaborative element of the research (particularly at the planning stage). What occurred was a substantial shift in power relations which meant that the critical/historical intervention was, in the case of four of the five residencies, secondary and subservient to the existing schemes of work already planned by the collaborating teachers. As a precursor to ACHiS, The Humanities Curriculum Project, instigated under the auspices of Stenhouse (1975) was university-led

and thus structurally different from early action research in schools. However, Stenhouse and his teacher/researchers held a common belief that:

The subject matter of the humanities was not to be regarded as a source of objective knowledge accessed by learners on the basis of an authority relation with experts through a process of instruction. Regarding it as a resource for reflecting about their experience rather than be questioned about it, and to have opportunities for free and open discussion about the issues they raise. Such a learning process implied giving learners space in which to express the individuality and creativity of their thinking.  
(Elliot 1997: 21)

One result of the project was to involve classroom teachers in the implementation of new curriculum materials and pedagogic methods (although the majority believed that such prescription of pedagogic method infringed their autonomy). However, as some of the project was devised in collaboration with university academics (who had access to recent theoretical models and the legitimation to give credibility to findings) the more 'critical and sceptical' teachers participated (Elliot 1997: 22). ACHiS too was a partnership between school teachers and university researchers. These participants held in common a sense that a critical and discursive environment could help students develop their making. However, the weighting of this dimension and the role of writing within the process remained contentious to the end.

### **Emerging relationships within action research**

23. The question of definition, what type of research was ACHiS?, can be more appropriately answered by shifting from historical relationships to emerging ones. The overarching definition provided by Cohen and Manion (1994) (the text used by the team during the planning sessions) more readily accommodates ACHiS as it unfolded. For them action research is:

situational - it is concerned with diagnosing a problem in a specific context and attempting to solve it in that context; it is usually (though not inevitably) collaborative - teams of researchers and practitioners work together on a project; it is participatory - team members themselves take part directly or indirectly in implementing research; and it is self-evaluative - modifications are continuously evaluated within the ongoing situation, the ultimate objective being to improve practice in some way or other.  
(p. 186)

When examining this definition in an attempt to tighten the aims and trajectory of the project the team discussed the following.

1) The ontological question: what is or can be known? (director's notes, IoE 1999)

The situation:

A 'problem' had been identified as a necessary condition for research prior to the team meeting and as an integral part of the project proposal; namely:

Rapid social and technological change suggests that the ability to understand and communicate visually will be an increasingly important element of secondary education (Kress & Leeuwen, 1996: 15-16). It is through the agency of visual literacy (Raney, 1997) a term coined to complement the “core skills” of literacy, numeracy and communication, that this objective can be most effectively realised. The research team believes that the methods of art history and criticism offer particularly significant tools for its development (Fernie, 1995). The radical and positive changes within the discipline over recent years have largely bypassed schools; this project will enable teachers to observe the new and interdisciplinary approaches of art history in action, in the classroom. . .

The need for a sustained contribution by art critics/historians in the classroom has emerged because of rapid changes in the National Curriculum, in particular the development of critical and contextual studies as a core component in all Key Stages in art and design and as a significant objective in GCSE, GNVQ and A level syllabuses. Currently not all teachers possess the requisite skills an art critic/historian can bring to help integrate the practical with the theoretical... This action research project will provide the opportunity to investigate and evaluate how their particular skills can help teachers develop aspects of the curriculum they sometimes find problematic.

(Addison 1998: 1)

It has been recognised that:

Many teachers are finding it difficult to manage Attainment Target 2 of the NC art Order [DFE 1995], (Knowledge and Understanding), interpreting its recommendations as a form of prescriptive art historical instruction for which they feel ill-prepared both in terms of resources and, in many instances, their own training. Similarly, provision for the teaching of critical and contextual studies after KS3 is variable and in many schools is all too often: ‘an extremely fragile dimension of the art and design curriculum, largely underdeveloped and predominantly poorly resourced’ (Davies, 1995: 8).

(ibid: 2)

In addition to Davies’ ‘fragile dimension’, other critics including Abbs (1987), Hughes (1989), Willis (1990), Binch and Robertson (1994), Dawtrey et al (1996) and Dalton (2001) have noted the unwillingness of secondary art and design teachers to engage with a critical and investigative curriculum. The QCA survey of the historical resources used in art and design (1998) identified a limited ‘modernist’ canon dominating reference materials at nearly all levels of primary and secondary art education. The ACHiS teacher questionnaire, sent out before the residencies began to collect data on current practice (ACHiS archive, IoE) suggests a predominantly laissez-faire and/or untheorised and apedagogical approach to critical, historical and contextual resources and teaching (see Chapter 4: 5, Table 1).

24. Would the team’s initial findings support the literature? (see Chapter 3: 15, Findings: first year). Four of the five participating schools in the first year were selected because the named teacher had shown sustained commitment to partnership through membership of the art and design PGCE working party. They were also ready to admit that they would appreciate assistance in developing a critical curriculum. This appeared to be a very positive

beginning for ACHiS. But because the degree of collaboration was limited in the first year partnership teachers were left with the sense that their opinions were little valued and that the university researchers considered teachers' time to be indefinitely open to plunder (although I believe this was due to a lack of foresight on my part rather than indicative of the researchers' actions). This was therefore a problem intrinsic to the internal structure of the ACHiS project. However, the 'problem' in the classroom was going to be difficult to assess without the input of teachers, or rather, such assessment was going to depend on the observational and evaluative skills of the researcher.

## **Interventions**

### **The diagnostic period**

25. At an early point in the project the research team (without teachers) discussed how the action researchers might diagnose the 'problem' by noting the uses and role of critical studies in the specific context of their host department. I suggested that they adopt/adapt the following observation tasks: 'In the context of studio-based art and design education in schools and in relation to both the reception and production of art, craft and design, consider the role of the critical/historical methods ('traditional' & 'interdisciplinary) used for the investigation, interpretation and presentation of art and the mediation of language (written and oral) for the description, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and making of art' (ACHiS archive, IoE). As has been mentioned, time militated against a rigorous diagnostic period so that the researchers' assessments of practice in their host department were episodic, impressionistic and partial. Epistemological doubts therefore surfaced: *how* is the team to know *what* learning takes place and *how* it takes place? At a meeting in December 1999 before the first year residencies had taken place I suggested that after initial contact with the partnership teacher/school the team reconsider *why* we were embarking on this research by revisiting and perhaps modifying the aims of the project to take cognisance of the different contexts/situations in which they were to be applied.

26. In addition to the research aims reproduced at the beginning of this chapter the proposal went on to claim that ACHiS would:

enable the research team to question orthodoxies, broaden the curriculum, underline its cross-curricular links and examine the complementary possibilities of new and old methods. In order to explore the value of these aims we propose to establish a series of professional residencies by art critics/historians in the form of action research. Art historical methods will be used and evaluated with pupils, initially in two areas, art and design, and History, subjects chosen both because of their immediate links with the discipline and the mutual benefits to be gained from collaborating in methodological experiment. The project aims to determine the contribution of art

criticism and history for developing visual literacy and will recommend critical methods, teaching strategies and resources for use by teachers. The research team anticipate that in the future such residencies could contribute to other areas of the curriculum.

(Addison 1998)

By the time ACHiS was in place it had already been decided by the coordinators that it would be over ambitious in the first instance to attempt the project in more than one subject area, the expertise of the participants suggested art and design alone. During the planning phase the term 'visual literacy' was contested by researchers (specifically because as a metaphor it foregrounds the way in which an understanding of the visual is predicated on linguistic models) and by the time they had visited schools and identified specific needs, the idealistic and somewhat abstract aims of the proposal were being modified to take specific needs into account.

### **Situated variables**

27. In addition to the school-based observation tasks researchers had been asked to:

- 1) Examine the aims of the courses taken by the students you will be working with; these will be one of the following: National Curriculum KS3, GCSE Textiles EDEXCEL, AS art and design OCR (pilot), 'A' Level art and design EDEXCEL.
- 2) Look for differences and commonalities between the course aims and those of ACHiS.
- 3) Negotiate these sets of aims so that points of convergence appear: alternatively, at points of opposition, contradiction or tangency, argue a case for the inclusion of the ACHiS aims.
- 4) Consider any convergent/oppositional aims and their possible contribution to the curriculum in relation to both content and method.
- 5) Consider the relationship between the content and method of your prospective residency and the extent to which they are complementary and/or compatible?

With these situated questions in mind the team would be better able to re-examine the ACHiS aims and defend the role of critical practice to meet the educational and the political 'needs' of students. The educational needs were divided into two types, the extrinsic: e.g. National Curriculum, public examinations, critical literacy for participation in democracy (i.e. the context of State education in the UK) (see also Gretton 2003: 186, for cognitive skills and art history) and the intrinsic: e.g. interpersonal skills (communication) and intrapersonal skills (self-reflection). The political aims included: critical skills as a prerequisite of empowerment (Freire 1990; hooks 1994; Giroux 1992; Trowell 2001) and critical skills (particularly historical) as a route to the visibility and the understanding of



others, towards social and cultural justice. The extent to which the researchers took these needs into consideration depended on the symmetry between the needs as stated above and their own political convictions and experience of secondary education. For example, two researchers had found that in their own schooling a traditional academic education had served their aspirations; for one, upward class mobility, for the other, a refuge for a shy adolescent. As such they were very suspicious of progressive, student-centred pedagogy (although they thought it appropriate to the context of a post-colonial Britain).

### **Interventionist knowledge and collaboration**

28. The team agreed that there was an abundance of evidence to support the fundamental need for the development of critical studies in secondary art and design, professing their respect for the validity of the surveys and critiques cited at the opening of this thesis (Intentions, paragraph 1).<sup>22</sup> In this way the ACHiS team can be seen to have accepted the acritical dimension of secondary art and design as a given rather than as a perception to be questioned (indeed the aims too are evidence of this assumption, albeit that they were written in response to research; Davies 1995, QCA 1998). The researchers also agreed that a more critical, critical studies could only be achieved by intervening in the curriculum as it stood (ACHiS would be just one part of a wider set of interventions, see Meecham and Carnell 2002 and Robins and Woollard 2001). However, few of the earlier surveys had included teachers' perceptions or asked them to reflect on the situation in any way; none appear to have asked how and why the need had arisen, or what teachers felt about it. It was hoped that ACHiS, in working in partnership with teachers, would address this lack, albeit within the limitations of a maximum of ten residencies over two academic years. The team recapped on the methods and processes to be employed:

- The researchers would diagnose a specific 'problem' in a specific situation. The diagnosis would be supported by student/teacher dialogue as well as observation.
- The researchers would attempt to 'solve' the problem in partnership with a teacher through the process of planning and implementing a critical/historical residency.
- The researchers would encourage full collaboration (participation) by involving students in the development of the project through reciprocal evaluation: enabling the possibility for continuous modification of practice.

---

<sup>22</sup> These critiques correspond strongly to the historical and social evidence that I have since collated in Part Two, in particular, from amongst the citations, the critique of practice written by Pam Meecham (in Dawtrey et al 1996) a paper that I re-read towards the close of writing this thesis, only to realise that Parts Two and Three of my thesis are in effect an elaboration of many of the points she raises.

29. An often-cited aim of action research is 'improving practice'. If this was an implicit aim of ACHiS it is important to outline the specific interventionist practices the team was hoping to introduce. They can be identified as follows:

- *historical and cultural awareness*: making visible [once] marginalised and repressed histories/traditions e.g. women artists in modernist Russia (yr 1), design history (yrs. 1 & 2), contemporary art, (yrs. 1 & 2), French art post-1945 (yr. 2);
- *critical awareness*: challenging the beliefs and values inherent in art and design by looking at historical instances in relation to the naturalised codes employed in the art classroom; asking whether beliefs and values can be considered natural in an a priori sense or as cultural constructs;
- *critical skills*: teaching and demonstrating methods for the description, analysis and interpretation of art, craft and design;
- *communication skills*: developing oral, written, visual and multimodal presentational skills;
- *transferable skills*: applying the above 'critical' skills within socially engaged contexts.

As will be seen, one of these 'necessary' skills, the proposition to challenge 'the beliefs and values inherent in art and design', led some teachers to take up defensive positions. In a few instances their initial enthusiasm was dissipated; an honest declaration of a defensible aim became a fraught and, in retrospect, possibly disingenuous way to build a collaborative partnership within the power structures of the ACHiS matrix.

### **ACHiS as a prototype**

30. Although the collaborative dimension of ACHiS was riddled with structural and interpersonal difficulties and the interventionist dimension was characterised by diverging subject positions and political affiliations. Nonetheless, the residencies were perceived to be a worthwhile experience by most of the participants: action researchers, external observers, funding bodies, students and teachers. Stenhouse's definition of Action Research (1975) proposes a diagnostic stage, as recounted above, to be followed by an analysis of the 'problems'. From this analysis a hypothesis is developed and a 'consciously directed change experiment' devised to test it. In the second year all but one of the residencies were pre-planned and adapted to fit an existing, teacher-determined situation rather than formulated in partnership as a response to the situation as experienced. By shifting attention toward the readymade of the school art curriculum, the interventionist presence of the researchers was

diluted and with it the strong sense of difference and or innovation that had characterised the first year residencies. In relation to the second part of Stenhouse's methodology none of the researchers were prepared or able to set up a pseudo-scientific, experimental model using control groups or the like. The team took on board that if they were to contribute to practice and a theory of education accessible to others the general applicability of their findings would likely be contested. Applied research rather than action research is seen as a more viable method for generalisation. Criticism of action research can be found in Travers (1969) from whose litany of failings Cohen and Manion (1994) extract the following non-scientific credentials: 'the aims of action research are situational and specific; its sample is restricted and unrepresentative; there is little or no control over independent variables; findings are not generalizable' (p. 193). It was agreed that the project director should investigate the possibility of the generalisation of findings and leave the individual researchers to concentrate on the specificities of their situation.

31. In recapping on the purposes of action research as proposed by Cohen and Manion (1994) further possibilities (my italics) were suggested. Action research:

1. is a means of remedying problems diagnosed in specific situations, or of improving in some way a given set of circumstances

*is a means of in-service training, thereby equipping teachers with new skills and methods, sharpening their analytical powers and heightening their self-awareness of their relationship to the curriculum;*

2. is a means of injecting additional or innovatory approaches to teaching and learning into an ongoing system which normally inhibits innovation and change

*is a means of improving the normally poor communications between the practising teacher and the academic researcher, and of remedying the failure of traditional research to give clear prescriptions;*

3. although lacking the rigour of true scientific research, it is a means of providing a preferable alternative to the more subjective, impressionistic approach to problem solving in the classroom.

(pp. 188-189)

32. Research on action research suggests that 'success' is only possible when there is co-operation; when the process is transparent and symmetrical. The team therefore agreed that there was a need to:

- identify and describe the specific situation (researchers);
- make some claims to generalisation taking into account the context-bound processes and outcomes of each residency (i.e. inner-city comprehensive, inner-city selective; KS3, 'A' Level etc) (director);

- realise that if they chose to follow an engaged residency then the situated variables (e.g. students' gender, social and ethnic origins, or special educational needs) would become central to their programme and would need to be dialogical (researchers);
- argue that each residency is a test case whose processes/outcomes would need to be interpreted/transformed to other (comparable) situations, i.e. for students working within the syllabuses and criteria of 'standardised' courses (director);
- situate/position themselves - own interests, motivation, background (researchers).

The ACHiS team considered that the validity of the project could also be supported by relating it to Cohen and Manion's five functions of action research as well as their 'purposes':

1. teaching methods - replacing a traditional method by a discovery method;
2. learning strategies - adopting an integrated approach to learning in preference to a single-subject style of teaching and learning;
3. evaluative procedures - improving one's methods of continuous assessment;
4. attitudes and values - encouraging more positive attitudes to work, or modifying pupils' value systems with regard to some aspect of life;
5. in-service development of teachers - improving teaching skills, developing new methods of learning, increasing powers of analysis, of heightening self-awareness.

(1994: 194)

Many of the researchers' individual reports (Addison et al 2002) engage with points 1, 2 and 4 of these functions. As a way of concluding this methodological chapter I address point 3, evaluative procedures, before turning my attention to an analysis of some of the data collected during the ACHiS project.

## Evaluation

33. In terms of evaluative procedures the ACHiS team aligned itself to the 'new evaluation' which:

rejected what became known as the 'agricultural botany' paradigm (Parlett and Hamilton: 1981) in which the gross yields of a programme were determined by comparing measurements of students' performance before and after the implementation of the curriculum. The latter assumed that a curriculum innovation operated in the same way regardless of the context of its implementation, and therefore that the aggregated scores measured the effectiveness of the programme generally. The 'new evaluators' on the other hand observed that innovations shaped

up differently in practice, and that their effects varied according to context. Hence, evaluators needed to study cases in order to understand the complex transactions which constituted the innovation in process.

(Elliot 1997: 23)

Unlike a positivist or behaviourist piece of research in which findings are validated using controlled experiments and other forms of testing (see Simons 1987) ACHiS was partly a 'naturalistic inquiry'. Much naturalistic or ethnographic inquiry purports to be descriptive, its concerns are more like portrayal than evaluation, although researchers do 'not see it as their responsibility to judge the merits of an innovation but to portray it in a form which enabled a variety of "stakeholders" to judge it for themselves in the light of their interests and evaluative strands' (ibid: 23). Recording was quite central to the ACHiS project (see Miles and Huberman 1984). The ACHiS team kept continuous written records of the planning process, ongoing perceptions, teaching materials, project outcomes and evaluations; including: contextual diagnosis (students and school, generic and specific/individual educational needs); aims and the relationship between ACHiS and course aims; activities and their relationship to learning objectives (conceptual, critical, productive, social); time-table; changes in activity (temporal/simultaneous); sequence and continuity; differentiation; assessment (informal/formal: formative, summative, ipsative). They also kept records in the form of audio and video recordings, especially of discussions and presentations. These records have been collated as a data bank (the ACHiS archive, IoE) an identifiable resource which is already being used to provide research evidence for students on PGCE and MA courses. It could well prove an accessible source of information to enable others to instigate curriculum change as it provides step-by-step guides. Nonetheless, the ACHiS team were wary of exemplification and its tendency to inhibit critical approaches.

34. The evaluative procedures of ACHiS were, however, still like the old evaluation in that judgement characterised one strand in its methods. MacDonald suggests a tripartite typology for evaluation: autocratic, bureaucratic, democratic (in Elliot 1997: 23).

Both paradigms [democratic evaluation and action research] have employed qualitative case study methods to meet the information needs of stakeholders and practitioners respectively, e.g., methods such as unstructured and semi-structured interviewing, participant observation, the use of logs, journals, diaries, audio/video recordings and photography, to record situations and events, the gathering of biographical data from key participants, and the depiction of events and situations from a number of different perspectives (triangulation).

(ibid: 24)

The ACHiS project increased the number of types of participant and thus the number of evaluative perspectives: external observers, researchers, students, teachers. Because ACHiS was evaluated by all participants it corresponds to a democratic model. The researchers agreed to make transparent the positions from which they were evaluating practice in schools

by providing biographical information; thus their evaluation was framed by self-positioning. Although the criteria for evaluation were negotiated by the team (researchers, director and teachers) the researchers also attempted to involve students in developing the terms of their evaluation, although, again for reasons of time, student perceptions and evaluations were not systematically analysed by the research team and do not appear in any of the published documentation.

35. The following list identifies the agreed criteria for action researcher, external observer, teacher reports (2000 residencies) (in alphabetical order):

- addressing external criteria, e.g. National Curriculum, examination syllabuses;
- continuity and coherence;
- enabling critical/historical inquiry;
- engagement and ownership - students, teachers, researchers;
- interdisciplinary value;
- recording and evaluating - self and others;
- communication, interactions, relationships - self and others;
- resources;
- additional areas/criteria peculiar to the residency;
- please comment on the research question(s).

In the event, collaborating teachers looked mainly for positive features, neglecting or disavowing difficulties. Constructive, positive criticism is ingrained in the new approach to assessment in schools, an approach that foregrounds strengths and setting targets rather than exposing weaknesses (Spours and Hodgson 1999) (a practice that unfortunately falls outside the formal tests and examinations that dominate government thinking, the only outcomes that employers, press and public appear to take seriously). It had been intended that each collaborating teacher would take on the role of participant observer, a person who, in a very profound sense, was embedded (whether consensually or complicitly) in a specific educational culture. Indeed, because teachers' experience and knowledge of schools is deep, their evaluations have been likened to a form of connoisseurial evaluation ('expertise-oriented' evaluation, Worthen and White 1987: 106). However, in contradistinction I felt that because most of the teachers involved in ACHiS had taught in only one or two schools, their experience was limited and thus lacked the breadth of experience necessary for 'connoisseurship'. The connoisseur has an awareness 'of the complexities in educational settings and possesses refined perceptual capabilities that makes the appreciation of such complexity possible' (Eisner 1976: 135-150). However, although collaborating teachers participated in the writing of the evaluation criteria, I felt it unlikely that they could avoid

evaluating the residencies in relation to standard expectations, norms of behaviour and outcome, because they were conditioned by the normative standards expected for external examination, standards that would also have been drilled into their students and were thus all pervasive. The quality of connoisseurship, analogous for Eisner not to the scientist but the art critic, was in the ACHiS project more the role of the *external observer*. Each residency was allocated an experienced observer who advised the researcher and collaborating teacher in the planning stage, observed the residency on two occasions and provided a written evaluation, a role as much formative as summative.<sup>23</sup> The external observers' and collaborating teachers' evaluative reports therefore exist as independent entities and were available as evidence during the writing of the researchers' residency reports (they are housed in the ACHiS archive, IoE). Unfortunately, the researchers' criteria-led evaluations were not produced as discrete documents as I had intended, rather they were incorporated into each residency report and in my estimation are situated somewhere on a continuum between the honest and the defensive. I made the director's report available to each of the researchers for comment and one contested my interpretation of events. After a meeting with this researcher I radically modified those parts that referred to her residency; I believe her criticisms were valid in each instance and I became very aware of the inadequacies of using written reports alone as data to evaluate complex activities. In the form of a compendium (Addison et al 2002) the complexity and density of the reports constitutes a document far too large for any but the most dedicated reader.<sup>24</sup> It was therefore my responsibility in the final report for the Arts and Humanities Research Board to generalise the team's findings for wider dissemination; but the allocated space was so minimal that the results were dangerously reductive. The research team therefore agreed to commission a further researcher to produce a synoptic report by drawing on and interpreting the findings as outlined in the compendium. In retrospect it would have been far better to have involved this person from the outset, as the agenda they pursued was not entirely in sympathy with all members of the team and required further interventions from myself as someone with a participant's overview. The result is now published (Addison et al 2003).

---

<sup>23</sup> In the context of action research the role of the external observer might be seen as a signal of mistrust by the planners for participant observation, indeed it was essentially a legacy of the origins of the project in the Artists in Schools course which was a training rather than research programme and thus partly competency based.

<sup>24</sup> The first year reports were written in relation to research questions formed by the researchers only after observation of the art curriculum in practice in each partnership school. As such the first year reports were context-specific in a way that the second year reports were not. The research team decided to employ a common research question in the second year phrased in direct relation to the project aims and therefore providing a focus that would potentially make comparison and generalisation more plausible.

### 3. Contested Discourses: Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools

#### Introduction

To help me analyse the ways in which the Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools research project (ACHiS) worked as an intervention within the secondary art curriculum I have deployed the conceptual frameworks formulated by Basil Bernstein in his last book *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity* (2000). I have chosen his model rather than one based on the work of Foucault or Bourdieu (both of whom might seem appropriate sources) because as Bernstein points out:

The major theories of cultural reproduction which we have, essentially of the Parisian version, are limited by their assumptions and focus, and so are unable to provide strong principles of description of pedagogic agencies, of their discourses, of their pedagogic practices. This, I suggest, is because theories of cultural reproduction view education as a carrier of power relations external to education... It is a matter of great interest that the actual structure which enables power to be relayed, power to be carried, is itself not subject to analysis.

(p. 4)

Bernstein's theory of classification and framing allows the analyst to consider an elusive but highly generative site of cultural reproduction, those uncertain *spaces in between* the varying discourses and practices. These spaces fluctuate over time as they are defined by shifting boundaries, boundaries that are being continuously eroded, shored up and reconstituted. Such movement destabilises the means of control whereby power is maintained, in this case the power invested in curriculum subjects. In analysing these spaces it becomes apparent that the 'in between' is a place where the relationship between control and power, the dependence of the latter on the former, is most vulnerable. It might be said that the school is a notable instance of social and cultural in betweenness, a peculiar microcosm in which the in between of discourses is regulated and maintained. What became evident as ACHiS developed was that art and design is a subject where very different discourses meet, confront one another and are contested. Inevitably these discourses are multiple and each is layered by interdependencies and contradictions, but three discourses (which here includes practices) dominated the ACHiS dynamic: two professional; art criticism/history and secondary art and design education, the third demotic, popular assumptions about the nature of art and art education. As will be seen none of these three has absolute boundaries but the second, that is pedagogical practice in the subject art and design, sits uneasily between the extremes of the first and last and is thus a fascinating site for the analysis of the production and reproduction of cultural consciousness.



## **Classification**

### **Singularities**

1. Art and art history self-evidently have a strong symbiotic relationship. In Europe since the late Renaissance that relationship, or particularly that between fine art and art history, has been one of sibling dependency: both have relied on the other for their favoured status in the eyes of their Humanitas parent and only hand-in-hand have they secured a place in the academy. Today, in higher education institutions teaching art and design, the fine art and art history departments are often inextricably related, art history staff teaching on the practical art and design courses. Although design history is emerging as a parallel discipline the relationship of craft to art history is somewhat different and one of the ACHiS researchers made this problematic relationship the focus of her report (Georgaki in Addison et al 2002). In order to stay relevant, art history, or history of art, has rapidly formed alliances with alternative disciplinary positions and/or invaded their territories, an interdisciplinarity that has become increasingly theoretical in orientation. Art history's expansion towards, or subsumation within, cultural studies, rather than within say history or philosophy, is partly determined by its geographical location within the art college, the theoretical wing of the theory/practice continuum that characterises the academic profile of these institutions. Almost everywhere and at all levels, legislative and institutional, the filial pact between theory and practice is assumed (Peters 2001).

2. In secondary schools the history of art appears as an autonomous subject only at 'A' Level (AS/A2) where it is taken almost exclusively by students from the independent sector; it has always been and remains a minority subject. However, all practical courses in art and design have a contextual, critical and historical dimension (critical studies) written into their syllabuses. How this is to be managed has been a topic of heated debate particularly since the advent of the National Curriculum (the first for 'Art' in 1991 [DFE]) (Hulks 1996; Meecham 1996). Some have argued for a parallel, complementary course (Thistlewood 1989) others for an integrated model, but, whatever way the pact is delivered, research has shown that such study is a fragile dimension of the curriculum (Davies 1995). This fragility (with isolated exceptions) is determined by a sense that such study sits uncomfortably alongside the production of art, craft and design, and, from the point of view of the participants, such study seems entirely other. Why should this be so?

3. Art and design in schools is what Bernstein (2000) would call a 'singular', that is:

a discourse which has appropriated a space to give itself a unique name. So for example physics, chemistry, sociology, psychology are, for me, singulars. And the structure of knowledge in the nineteenth century was, in fact, the birth and

development of singulars. These singulars produced a discourse that was about themselves.

(p. 9)

The traditional subjects of the school curriculum are a typical example of such 'singularity'. It must be remembered that despite calls to reconceptualise the school curriculum throughout the second half of the twentieth century, but especially during the development of the National Curriculum, the resulting cluster of subjects was largely predicated on a nineteenth century model, although technology took the place of the gendered crafts: i.e. cookery, wood and metal work became home economics and design and technology. During this time each singular was constructed by developing a set of principles and practices made peculiar to itself by a process of negative differentiation.

4. For Bernstein a central concept for the understanding of pedagogic practice is the principle of classification, a principle that enables the analyst to focus on the spaces between categories (ibid: 5-11). It is this space, a space Bernstein calls a 'region of silence', that preserves the 'insulation' and 'dislocations' that determine a singular's particular rules and specialised voice. So, for example, art and design is regulated by a regime of 'making', thus art-specific discussion is usually front- and or end-loaded leaving as much time within the limited time available for what is deemed 'productive' work (Addison et al 2002). It is not that student discussion does not take place within the classroom, only that it tends to be characterised by anything other than the external content (the contexts) that relate to the subject art and design (there have been notable exceptions, see Taylor 1986: 2-8). At those points where the teacher is in contact with the students, one-to-one or in small groups, attention, of course, is given to the internal content, to the matter in hand, but the students can be very protective of the socialising 'chatter' which the 'liberal' environment of the art room makes available. Quite when this habit was established is uncertain but it was probably a product of the 1950s' and 60s' self-expressive school (Field 1970) which encouraged behaviour as unfettered as possible from 'petty school rules'. The tradition of talking about art is the tradition of art history; within a culture of exemplification and instruction, discussion of art is singularly what art and design is not.

### **Recontextualisation**

5. The second half of the twentieth century was a time of paradigmatic change which, for the purposes of neatness, is often mapped out as a shift from modernism to postmodernism; metanarratives of progress to 'plurilogos' of difference (Foster 1983; Shohat and Stam 1995; Harris 2001). In relation to the construction of knowledge within this same time frame, Bernstein notices cracks and fissures appearing in the boundaries of singulars which, he suggests, were produced by new alliances formed to answer developing social needs:

what we now have, I may suggest, is a regionalisation of knowledge. By that I mean the following: a region is created by a recontextualising of singulars. So, for example, in medicine, architecture, engineering, information science, we can see the development of the regionalisation of knowledge...  
Singulars are intrinsic to the production of knowledge in the intellectual field.  
Regions are the interface between the field of production of knowledge and any field of practice...

(2000: 9)

### *Art and design in the school curriculum*

6. The National Curriculum subject name, 'Art and design', is in itself indicative of one such recontextualisation. In the past the singular 'Art' subsumed art, craft and design as tacit components of its remit, a remit that was nearly always interpreted as a visual education based on fine art practices so that craft and design were in any case notably absent (an exception would be the Basic Design movement of the 1960s, Thistlewood: 1992). The way that the term, 'Art and design' could be understood today can be formulated in the following equation: Art = product, design = process (the lower-case making this reading quite feasible). In this way the subject's singularity is maintained in practice. Yet, despite the nineteenth century foundation of subjects, the school has not been totally immune to regionalisations. Art and design has now to contend with design and technology from Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 and media studies at KS4. At best, both subjects are characterised by their 'interface', the former meeting changing social and environmental needs, the latter focusing on mass communications and thus explicitly the relationship between power and control in contemporary society. If the first subject is 'productive', the latter is 'critical'. Art and design, however, must preserve its singularity if it is to maintain its power: quite where that power is located is a question for which the ACHiS project was able to provide some pointers. Nonetheless, the basis of its power is elusive and it is easier to define what is other to its cultural practices and remit. For example, any incursion of commercial interests would be condemned as market-led and prescriptive, a contamination of the 'freedom' of art. Likewise, the new communication technologies so favoured by government, could be critiqued as determinist and contingent, of global but not 'universal' significance. Moreover, in sharp contrast to media studies, art and design is not in thrall to the popular culture prescribed by the mass media. However, as will become clear, popularity is the key to the power of art and design, to its insularity, for a strong principle of classification ensures that its boundaries are not breached. As Bernstein insists:

If that insulation is broken, then a category is in danger of losing its identity...  
Whatever maintains the strengths of the insulation, maintains the relations between the categories and their distinct voices. Thus, the principles of the relations between categories, discourses – that is, the principles of their social division of labour – is a function of the degree of insulation between the categories of the set we are considering. If this insulation changes its strength, then the principles of the social division of labour – that is, its classification – changes.

(2000: 6)

What ACHiS has indicated is that the existing power of art and design does not reside in talk of art and certainly not talk of craft and design. Art and design teachers, by retaining the singularity of the subject, indeed by defending its singularity in classroom practice if not in public discourse, have ensured the subject a profile that retains its purity perhaps at its peril. I say at its peril because this is an age when the interface between pedagogic and wider social and cultural institutions is determining government policy. In 1998 the BBC reported on the introduction of the new education zones by the then Education Secretary, David Blunkett, who said: 'the business community will be represented in all of the zones, taking the lead in some places, such as the Halifax bank in the Halifax action zone, and acting as a joint partner in others, such as Kellogg's in Salford and American Express in Brighton,' (news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/ 1998) what might be termed a 'regionalisation of knowledge through partnership'.

### *Art History*

7. If the regionalisation of art and design is meeting resistance, the same cannot be said of the regionalisation of art history, or rather, as has already been indicated in the mention of interdisciplinarity, any such resistance is largely a matter for history (Harris 2001; see Chapter 4). As suggested the singularity of the discipline was forged by means of an academic alliance between theory and practice during the early modern period resulting in a canon of exemplars, a theory of practice and thus a notion of quality. Such regulation resulted in a set of 'objective' criteria (underpinned by the principles of Enlightenment classification) by which the quality of an artwork might be assessed but which served the hegemonic needs of the patriarchal state (Chadwick 1989). The development of a fine art market served only to reinforce the centrality of the academic canon by perpetuating a hierarchy in which genre, the most abundant and popular form of painting (the dominant medium), was positioned below portraiture and way below History. The development of philosophical aesthetics in the eighteenth century questioned the authority of the academy by positing subjective criteria for the judgement of taste. However, despite the implications of these theories, 'good' taste was highly retrospective and remained firmly rooted in the classical, academic tradition (see Bourdieu 1984; Kant/Hegel in Eagleton 1990 and Preziosi 1998). However, artists themselves began to produce work that threatened the stability of these criteria and which responded to the massive political, social and demographic changes taking place as a result of urbanisation, industrialisation, and colonialism (Hauser 1951). Already in the eighteenth century art criticism had developed as the voice of an emerging and victorious bourgeoisie whose contemporaneous image was not reflected in the academic canon (Crow 1985). Art history, as distinct from art criticism, re-emerged as a major discourse under the wing of Hegelian idealism where historians such as Jacob Burckhardt (1818-97) developed a form of cultural history, a metanarrative in which art and

architecture became the most telling signifiers of human (“man’s”) consciousness and, after Charles Darwin (1809–1882), a sign of a culture’s position on an evolutionary scale of development (see Chapter 5: 2.7). Soon after, a positivist alternative provided art history with more empirical methods, although, because it was allied to a gentlemanly tradition of connoisseurship, it retained a language at odds with its scientific credentials. As Fernie (1995) argues these two approaches dominated art historical practice in Britain throughout the twentieth century until, rather belatedly, the discipline was jolted into ‘regionalisation’ by a new alliance in the 1970s, that between Marxism and feminism, and, subsequently, other liberatory positions: post-colonialism, queer theory and so on. The principle of classification, the strength of the disciplinary boundaries, was clearly under threat.

Where we have strong classification the rule is: things must be kept apart. Where we have weak classification, the rule is: things must be brought together. But we have to ask, in whose interest is the apartness of things, and in whose interest is the new togetherness and the new integration?

(Bernstein 2000: 11)

Marxist historians have inevitably focused on art as an ideological construct, a privileged discourse that has historically supported the hegemonic control of the aristocratic and subsequently bourgeois state; for feminists both products of patriarchy, for post-colonialists both products of western imperialism (Owens 1992). Feminism has been characterised by its methodological openness, its willingness to cross the boundaries established by patriarchal institutions, and by an openness that is qualitative in orientation (Reinharz 1992; Deepwell 1995). Therefore, echoing De Beauvoir (1949), feminist historians frequently reject positivist methodologies because they are based on the ‘disinterested’ ruminations of a highly specific subject position, that of the white, heterosexual, middle-class male (Pollock 1988).<sup>25</sup> The significance of this somewhat reductive genealogy is not only to point out that the classificatory principle of art history was regionalised in the 1970s but also that this regionalisation was posited on critique. If the metanarratives of classical art history, despite the universalist rhetoric, are predicated on the assumption of cultural superiority and thus exclusionary celebration, the revisions of the new art history are predicated on critique and deconstruction. However, in those instances where revision expands the field, visibility might be argued as a type of inclusionary celebration (see Chapter 8: 14). Nevertheless, such inclusion is accompanied by a condemnation of classical metanarratives and the exposure of their normative rather than universal criteria, their strategies of ‘othering’ (Pinder 2002).

---

<sup>25</sup> Given this, it is ironic that since the 1980s Freudian psychoanalytical method has become a favoured tool although it is tempered by Kleinian and Lacanian developments.

8. The import of this genealogy for ACHiS is primarily at the level of intervention, although it also had an impact at the level of collaboration. Critique is what the researchers were concerned with, both as art critics/historians and as educational researchers. However, because the research project took the form of action research, the critique was directed as much towards the researchers' own actions as to practice in schools. Nonetheless, both the researchers and myself assumed that this critical interventionist position was likely to create some tension within the research team. Ever since the introduction of regulating bodies and their regimes of scrutiny and accountability (QCA, OFSTED) teachers have tended to take up defensive rather than reflective positions (Gewirtz 2001). There is also much evidence to suggest that schooling in the modern nation state is primarily concerned with cultural reproduction rather than cultural critique (Bourdieu and Passerson 1970). By cultural reproduction I mean, in this instance, the maintenance and replication of a dominant cultural identity predicated on the cohesive and unifying effect of a humanist, universalist, yet nationalist rhetoric, (this is evidently much closer to the aims of classical art history than to the new). Thus, practice in schools, despite the democratic aims, remains predominantly celebratory rather than critical. In this respect, art teachers neglect to examine the ways in which visual culture is itself productive of the dominant culture, the very culture that schooling reproduces. ACHiS was an attempt to find ways of integrating social and cultural critique within the art and design curriculum. It is this aim which probably constitutes the 'hidden agenda' noted by Hulks (Addison et al 2002), its political credentials stated more clearly here than in the ACHiS proposal (Appendix 3). Nonetheless, art and design in its singularity avoids overt critique other than that based on formalist criticism. Art criticism/history is not art and design education, this is a strong classificatory principle; the power of each is based on seemingly antithetical oppositions: objectivity/subjectivity, fact/feeling, structure/appearance, the list, albeit a caricature, could go on. In describing the ways in which each discipline regulates and maintains its classification it is necessary to introduce a further concept of Bernstein's that of 'framing'.

### **Framing**

The principle of classification provides us with the limits of any discourse, whereas framing provides us with the form of realisation of that discourse; that is, framing regulates the realisation rules for the production of the discourse. Classification refers to *what*, framing is concerned with *how* meanings are to be put together, the forms by which they are to be made public, and the nature of the social relationships that go with it.

(2000: 12)

9. To reiterate: ACHiS was an attempt to find ways of integrating social and cultural critique within the art and design curriculum; the interventionist critical residency was the form of its

realisation, collaboration the mode of its social relations. For at least one of the researchers, Jane Trowell, the principle of collaboration also characterised her relationship with students. Drawing on the theory of engaged pedagogy (hooks 1994) she was determined that her residency would not be a pre-formed, non-negotiated intervention. Rather she sought to develop a project in dialogue with students, albeit in relation to a perceived problem within the realisation of the 'A' Level course. I wish to refer to her report at some length in order to examine further the concept of 'framing' as it relates to the ACHiS project. In addition I shall tentatively extrapolate general principles from the specificity of her residency.

### **Residencies: specificities and generalisations**

10. The major aim of Trowell's residency was to investigate the possibilities of the 'critical studies diary', one 'realisation rule' by which students can provide evidence of critical thinking in the Edexcel 'A' Level for the year 2000. The dialogic tenor of her residency might be seen to constitute a prolongation of the diagnostic period of all the residencies, two half days in conversation with the collaborating teacher and at least one day's observation with them in the department. For various reasons, in her first year residency, Trowell was able to spend significant time alone with the students (co-educational sixth formers sited in an inner-city girls comprehensive). She believes this elicited more open responses to questions because the usual hierarchical relationships between teacher and students was less rigid. This had the effect of encouraging dialogue rather than limiting discussion to predetermined and routine exchanges. Bernstein refers to these power relations as the 'social order'; censorship is employed by the student, Bernstein's 'acquirer', because: 'an acquirer can be seen as a potential for labels. Which labels are selected is a function of framing (2000: 13). Through such interchanges and the extent to which a student can accommodate themselves to the 'regulative discourse', that is the extent to which s/he behaves appropriately within the codes of the discourse and its 'distributive rules', the student can develop an understanding of 'recognition rules' the means by which they are able to regulate their own behaviours to determine which labels a teacher chooses: 'conscientious, attentive, industrious, careful, receptive' or that s/he is seen to struggle 'to be creative, to be interactive, to attempt to make his or her mark' (ibid). Trowell made it clear to students that her research role was not judgemental and that anything students said or wrote in the formative discussions would not be subject to any formal assessment. The section quoted presents the perceptions and assumptions of students about the function of criticism and particularly the role of writing within this process. Evidently the framing of the critical studies diary is 'weak', because there was uncertainty from all involved (the exam board, the teacher and the students) about exactly what this object should be. In analysing the 'framing', attention is focused on the way the function and constitution of a realisation rule (the critical studies diary) is negotiated through pedagogic interaction. Usually realisation

rules are clearly defined as pre-determined products, for example, the concise examination essay or the still life painting accompanied by 'preparatory' studies. However, in the instance of the diary, no clear prototype is available. It might be said that from the point of view of a 'creative curriculum', as opposed to a critical or reproductive one, herein lies the potential of the diary, its strength.

Critical studies: perceived meanings

**'Critical', 'critic', 'critical studies'**

If the art theorists and art education profession are having difficulties in establishing what the parameters and theory underpinning 'Critical Studies' should be, then it is very likely that their doubts could be transmitted to students and pupils. Reflecting on the experience at the secondary girls comprehensive (co-ed in the sixth form) where my residency took place, there were two broad aspects of the 'Critical Studies Diary' that did not seem to be challenging to the students (although perhaps they should be), and two that clearly were.

Collecting material 'evidence' (photographs, postcards, reviews, programmes, etc) reassuringly seemed to follow on from experiences of the scrap-book, although this instinctive collecting needs examination in the light of 'Critical Studies'; also, the concept of a drawing as 'record' was well within their experience right across the curriculum, even if the nature of a 'critical' drawing could and should be debated and extended.

On the other hand, the word 'Diary' of course, instantly evokes a personal, even secret object, which, as shall be seen, caused some strains and stresses by contrast with the reality of it as an examinable item. Students perceived this term to contain a contradiction at the very least, and an act of pretence at its worst. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it was the nature and content of their 'critical evaluations' and 'analysis' through *verbal language* that formed the main issue for the students.

A basic exercise was to check their assumptions and understandings about meanings (all evidence from Video session 11.2.00 unless otherwise stated). It transpired that the word 'critical' and its cognates were broadly interpreted by most students as either:

- a) *negative judgement (i.e. the popular meaning of the verb 'to criticize' – 'to pass judgement on; to censure');*
- b) *judging quality - what's 'good' and 'bad'.*

When asked for their associations with the word 'critical', students brainstormed 'pessimism' (H), 'something wrong' (S), 'tell you what's bad about it' (C). Pushed further, H said 'I don't think you can be critical in a good way'. H and N expressed great discomfort about 'being critical': it's 'rude to criticize' (H - diagnostic session); 'imposing my thoughts' (N - Q2); 'it's down to my taste and their taste' (N - A1, b). Given this, it is not surprising that these students might feel resistant to behaving in a way of which they don't approve.

The noun 'critic' evoked the second meaning b) above. With reference to the 'good' (praising) review of the contemporary art exhibition at the Soane Museum that we had been studying, students came up with 'someone who's paid to criticise' (H), and 'being 'a critic' can be the opposite of what we said: saying good things' (C). The pairing 'Critical Studies' evoked 'analys[ing] things, studying something critically' (S) 'looking for things' (H), 'being objective about something...enquiring' (H). The challenge here is that the students are explaining an activity that they don't



fully understand through yet more words which equally give no clue to the potential processes and their problematics: 'analyse', 'critically', 'objective', 'evaluating'. Another observation was that despite their broader explanations of 'Critical Studies', throughout the residency this set of volunteered meanings was consistently overshadowed by instinctive reference to the more colloquial meanings a) and b) above.

It is obvious that language is important: with reference to the handout supplied by the art department, it might be deduced that the phrasing '*be critical of* what you have seen' and '*critical evaluation of* what you've seen' (my italics) plays to the students' tendency towards focusing on the term solely in the negative judgement or the quality judgement meanings, a tendency which currently limits some of them in their explorations, with or without a theoretical base.

(Trowell in Addison et al 2002)

### **Regulative and instructional discourse**

11. The discursive atmosphere evident in this extract from Trowell's first year residency, indeed the practice of prolonged discussion as a starting point for investigation, is extremely rare in art and design, even at sixth form.<sup>26</sup> Focusing such discussion on school students' beliefs is rarer still. Rather, the place of language in the art and design classroom tends to be situated in the domain of *regulative discourse* that is as a part of the social order (Franks 2003). The social organisation of complex practical activities: spatial, temporal and technical is largely responsible for this orientation, so, any lesson is liable to consist of vocal and gestural directions, timings and reminders; it is within this domain that students must be aurally attentive. The other side of the dual but embedded discourses that constitute Bernstein's concept of framing is the *instructional discourse*; this determines the discursive rules of a subject. As has already been noted, art and design teachers frequently bypass discursive instruction (in the form of language) in favour of instruction by demonstration and exemplification both of which demand visual and kinaesthetic attention before the aural. The teacher collaborating with the researcher David Hulks in the second year of ACHiS bemoaned the lack of visuality in the resources that David had prepared for working with younger students, years 7 and 9: '...children need large, colourful, dramatic images to capture their attention [not] watery photocopies with lots of writing on' (collaborating teachers' reports, ACHiS Archive: IOE). The framing of art and design's discursivity is weak, so it is no wonder that sixth form students, habituated to the recognition rules of the subject, have problems deciding how to use language in, what is for them, a dislocated context. Hulks noted, however, that with year 7, where the subject-specific recognition rules had had little time to become established, students appeared to enjoy the discursive environment despite the criticism of the collaborating teacher who saw the activity as inappropriate.

---

<sup>26</sup> This assessment is based on cumulative observations by art and design PGCE students at the Institute of Education (1995-2003).

12. Trowell categorised the student responses to the critical studies diary into types of recognition or misrecognition of purpose:

#### Critical Studies: Purpose

One way of categorising the flood of perceptions and assumptions which started this report could be as follows:

- i) Relevance: 'pointless', 'how will it help 'A' Level?'
- ii) Difficulty: 'hard to combine *personal interpretation of a piece with a critical evaluation*', 'you've got to show you can *criticize and evaluate and appreciate* all at the same time', 'I never know *what to write*'
- iii) Language: '*rude to criticize* someone's work'
- iv) Authority: '*write what they want to hear*', '*"please" other*'
- v) Personal Validity: '*if you could write just what you want*', '*you are not really saying what you think*'
- vi) Public/Private: 'because it's being exposed *you've got to show balance*', '*it might be too personal*'
- vii) Status of Art: 'good' (artwork), 'someone must think it's good [or it wouldn't be in an exhibition]', '*you're looking for the good in it*'
- viii) Associations: '[When I hear the words 'Critical Studies'] I don't think 'modern' ..., ancient art, Jesus on the cross, oil paintings'
- ix) Nature of Use: 'quick sketch, ...*write something*, ...*history from the label*, ...*why we liked it*', ...*atmosphere*'
- x) Convenience: 'time-consuming', 'heavy' (book)

It seems that for this group of students, nearly all aspects of the purpose of the 'Critical Studies Diary' project was causing confusion, and, as has been mentioned above, of the nineteen statements, twelve relate to writing. Why are there such negative responses and confusion about purpose here?

#### Critical Studies: progression

E alluded to the issue of progression, and stated that the Critical Studies Diary was a 'jump from GCSE', that they 'never did this before', and that she had thought "critically analyse" - what's that?!' (all verbatim notes, 2.2.00). One could deduce from this that if students had not previously been asked to participate in such an endeavour, or been asked to use such a term as 'critical', and yet had been 'successful' in art, that it was reasonable that the new activity of the Critical Studies Diary could seem additional, and inessential, and therefore without a central purpose.

(Trowell in Addison et al 2002)

#### The 'look' of school art and language

13. For these students the singularity of art and design is self-evidently its visuality. Up to the sixth form success has been measured entirely in relation to the look of realisations and the criteria for assessing this look are frequently mimetic and formalist despite a rhetoric of self-expressivity. Success is celebrated by the display of exemplary student work which students from year 7 onwards admire and to which they aspire; in other words students are immersed in the look of school art and it is usually at odds with the visual environments of the home, the mass media and the gallery/museum. If, for young people, the home is a mute

receptacle in which rules are clearly defined, a visual and material given rather than a site for the production of visual, material and actional meaning (with, in some instances, leeway to stake a personal claim to a bedroom) the gallery/museum is a place where the visually and materially privileged is mediated by a professional language, a language encountered mostly in the context of formal education and often perceived as alien (Robins and Woollard 2001). The mass media (particularly cinema, television, digital games and the world-wide-web) appears both more replete and protean. With its multimodalities (the key to its accessibility) it presents an easy marriage between recorded image, sound and movement. Here young people do not perceive the relationship between word and image as problematic, whether the word is in the form of speech or writing. Thus art and design is somewhat unique, for elsewhere in the curriculum the interrelatedness of different modes of learning is well established (see Kress and Leeuwen 2001). The art and design classroom is of course eminently a site of multimodal discourse (Franks 2003), but the status of the word within that mix, and particularly the status of writing, the most privileged mode in the academic curriculum, is contested. Display is the mechanism in school for signifying excellence, accompanying words are usually celebratory and or informational rather than analytical. Therefore in schools words reinforce the look, in the gallery/museum the look is mediated by academic discourses; pedagogy in both institutions might be characterised as monomodal in orientation, that is they either privilege image or word. In the former, words in the form of writing are out of place, in the latter their function, other than for naming, is perceived as alienating.

14. Later in her report Trowell included more comments on the problematic status of writing in art and design and the tensions between a rhetoric of self-expressivity assessed in the context of 'objective' criteria:

There exists a commonplace that many students who are 'good at art' are dyslexic. Whether or not this is substantiated and what it actually means about art making and verbal language is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice to say that this factor was not an issue within this group. However, other ones were: Ch, when asked to state her associations between 'art' and writing said: 'Art means to me that you do no writing. That's what you think. Art is not a writing subject. You draw or you paint or something... It's not something I thought you'd have to do.' Later, regarding critical studies and writing, Ch said, 'So with art you get away from that. It's more relaxing...' (A4, a). For Ch, there seems to have been no previous relationship between her pleasure in making art and writing, therefore it is not surprising that it was she who said, 'I never know what to write'.

E and others finds confusion between the word 'Diary' with its connotation of privacy, and the public nature of the reality: 'I find [writing] easier if its personal. The Diary is to an extent personal - it's become more personal now. But it's still not as personal as if I did my own sketchbook and wrote my own comments. I think you'd find the work, the actual style of work wouldn't be that different, but the actual words that go with it would be much different' (A4, a)

S stated, 'I don't mind writing...Sometimes I think, "Well, why should I be writing about it, and why can't I look at it, take it for how it is?"' (A4, a) Even the student most at ease with the Critical Studies Diary found the requirement to write a periodic bore.

(Trowell in Addison et al 2002)

I quote at length from this report both to indicate something of the richness of the data, the 'heteroglossia' that characterises the ACHiS archive, but also because the assumptions made by students typify the findings of the other first year researchers.

### **Findings: first year**

15. Michael Asbury, whose residency took place with art and design 'A' level students in an outer-London, co-educational comprehensive, also found students had assumed that 'academic study' would be marginalised, if not ignored, on art courses. One of the primary reasons for their selection of the subject was their motivation to pursue practical art either as a skill or a recreation (student questionnaires ACHiS archive, IoE), a motivation that provides the subject with a low status in the eyes of their academic peers and some other curriculum teachers. From the outset students were reluctant to engage with the very premise of the residency, as it demanded analytical skills that fell outside the recognition rules of their perceptualist/formalist training and, in addition, presupposed a component of out-of-school-hours, text-based research. Such training is likely to confirm student preferences which are firmly rooted in the paradigm of the 'picture' and thus dominated by mimetic criteria when assessing competence (quality): this is an area where popular taste overrides additional criteria drawn on by teachers to encourage a further imitation, that of the stylistic features of exemplary modernists. In approaching the latter, students sought representational clues which tends to suggest that they only consider the formal properties of painting when they are deployed in the service of mimetic representation. It can be stated that students who are encouraged to work in abstract ways rarely have knowledge of, or understand, the contextual, historical and philosophical discourse in which they appear to be playing a part. Here, making is one further example of imitation rather than meaning making, or rather meaning is reduced to surfaces. Asbury's residency with sixth form students from a co-educational comprehensive included a key visit to the exhibition, 'Amazons of the Avant-Garde' at the Royal Academy (Bowlit and Rutt 1999) showing the work of 'pioneering' artists from largely pre-revolutionary Russia, a group that in formal terms typifies the look most imitated in schools: fractured, largely tonal, readily extended into collage. Despite the fact that the exhibition exclusively represented the work of women artists, when discussing work in situ, a number of students continuously used male pronouns

when referring to the artists. Even after this had been pointed out to them, the habit of referring to the artist as male was so naturalised that some continued to use 'he'.

### **Critical studies profile**

16. Asbury's residency, along with the other first year residencies, confirms the singularity of art and design. Using Bernstein's concepts of classifications and framings the place of critical, contextual and historical studies within this singularity can be summarised as follows in a critical studies profile. Where a statement is drawn from the researchers' first year findings I have acknowledged the source by naming the researcher from whose residency it originates (most reports are included in the ACHIS compendium, Addison et al 2002). Those without a name are generic, although they do not apply to each and every department collaborating in ACHiS. Ways in which the ACHiS residencies questioned or extended practice are given in italics following each statement. These evaluative responses are a synthesis of the assessments made by all the participants, based on: student questionnaires, collaborative teacher and external observer reports, post-residency researcher evaluations (ACHiS archive, IoE).

### Classification

- Art and design is often a hermetically sealed practice which rarely refers to the lives of students beyond some notion of their interiority or cultural identity, nor to the wider curriculum or broader social and cultural issues. Students are encouraged to follow either a perceptualist model, recording the appearance of things, or an expressive model, finding equivalents for feelings;

*ACHiS in foregrounding the historical and contextual dimensions of art production encouraged students to consider their own practice both in relation to the past and as a mode of social practice.*

- few students realise that they can deploy skills developed elsewhere in the curriculum: without explicit guidance most are either unwilling or unable to do so; e.g. in Asbury's residency students studying literature or history (even art history) did not see the relevance of analytical methods equivalent and/or directly transferable to critical study in art and design;

*ACHiS acknowledged and utilised existing skills from other curriculum areas as well as providing new ones.*

- in current academic discourse, craft's relationship to design and to fine art is often expressed in a structurally oppositional way despite the fact that art in schools supposedly accommodates art, craft and design as some sort of creative continuum; thus the crafts are suffocating within their allocated non-space of unattainable co-existence (between fine art and design); (Georgaki)

*ACHiS developed discursive practices in which students debated the status of different forms of production including their own. Skills of critical reflection and advocacy were notably developed.*

### Framing

#### a) Instructional discourse

- the 'critical' dimension of courses tends to be based on formal and mimetic analysis and appreciation in support of practices reproduced by demonstration and exemplification;

*ACHiS provided alternative forms of investigation including semiotics and discourse analysis, foregrounding discursive analysis of actual artworks and the context of their presentation.*

- the historical and contextual dimension tends to be either didactic; taking the form of a short illustrated introduction and/or directed, taking the form of student 'research'; constituting biographical information, some formal analysis, personal preferences and copious transcriptions;

*ACHiS enabled students to form research questions pertinent to a field of study and provided the investigative means by which to answer them, both visual and verbal.*

- although art educationalists advise an integrated, investigative approach to critical studies, advisory documents, despite disclaimers, invite it to be taught on the model of transmission, i.e. information-led, supplementary to practical work (DfEE, 1999: 20-21); e.g. 'Pupils will be taught *about*'; (Papazafiriou)

*ACHiS in developing skills of reflection and investigation encouraged students to seek their own solutions.*

b) Regulative discourse

- the perceptual model, ‘the essential copy’ (Bryson 1991) (with various ‘expressive’ alternatives) privileges the mimetic paradigm of the picture; this paradigm, bolstered by popular conceptions of the ‘photographic’ function of images, produces in students an aversion to abstraction and other forms of modernist and postmodern practice;

*ACHiS challenged student preconceptions, particularly about the functions of art, their own place in the continuum of practice and the relationship between visual and material production and written discourse.*

- the hierarchical distinctions between art, craft and design are historical and social constructs which are replicated in the structures of art education and are thus invisible to its participants (both teachers and students). One of the most pernicious aspects of this hierarchy is a distinction based on gender bias; (Georgaki)

*ACHiS problematised the status of art production in society and in school by exposing its hierarchies and naturalised myths of creativity, this way students were encouraged to question their own practice in relation to broader social and cultural structures.*

- teachers are not provided with the reflective space necessary to develop pedagogic practice, that is, the opportunity, as classroom practitioners, to research and assimilate complex theory (e.g. semiotics) within their teaching so that it can be applied to learning in the classroom. (De Souza)

*ACHiS provided one such space.*

17. This profile characterises the singularity of many secondary school art and design courses at Key Stage 3 and GCSE (although by no means all of the departments in partnership with the ACHiS team).<sup>27</sup> It must be remembered that all participating schools welcomed an opportunity to develop the critical, historical and contextual dimension of the art and design curriculum. In addition, all the departments are seen as successful both in terms of Ofsted and public examinations. It can only be assumed that student perceptions about, for example, the problematic status of writing, would be magnified in departments less receptive to the notion of a critical curriculum. Sixth form courses can be more investigative and critical and, in their specialisations: e.g. ceramics, graphics, photography, textiles, there is the opportunity to move outside the school fine art model. But increasingly

---

<sup>27</sup> A conclusion confirmed in discussion with PGCE tutors at the IoE who have worked with over 100 London schools in the last five years and in discussion with other PGCE tutors at Goldsmiths, Manchester, Middlesex and Liverpool John Moores.

many schools do not include a sixth form and therefore younger students do not see this type of work. From the point of view of a critical curriculum, a discursive curriculum that would enable students to contribute to a democratic society, such singularity appears neglectful. Yet the subject retains its immense popularity and herein lies its power. Quite how that power is maintained requires an examination of the systems of control through which its singularity is communicated and naturalised. As Bernstein asserts:

The principle of classification comes to have the force of the natural order and the identities that it constructs are taken as real, as authentic as integral, as the source of integrity. Thus a change in the principle of classification here is a threat to the principle of integrity, of coherence of the individual.

(2000: 7)

### **Alternative profile**

18. ACHiS, by intervening at the point of classification, the territories in between discourses, is one such threat. It comes offering solutions through participation changing the values of pedagogic practice at the level of framing (in part something it achieves), but also further problematises the situation through critique and classificatory destabilisation. After the experience of the first year, and with this in mind, the researchers decided to increase the level of collaboration in the second. Based on interim findings, the art and design profile appears overtly negative and, in relation to the place of critical studies, it is; the strength of the subject's classification is in direct relationship to the weakness of its discursive potential, an aspect of its framing. Before a more collaborative model could be developed it was necessary to reconsider the framing of art and design by establishing its strengths. These became more apparent at the beginning of the second year when, during a research meeting at which the collaborating teachers were not present, various doubts were raised concerning a basic assumption of ACHiS: namely that existing models of critical studies, largely discursive and or logocentric in orientation, are appropriate for learning in art and design. The ensuing discussion noted practices that the researchers and I had observed and evaluated positively in the participating schools. It is paraphrased by the following description offering an alternative profile:

#### **Framing**

#### **Instructional**

- isolates and develops modalities of meaning making unrecognised (if utilised) by other curriculum subjects, e.g. the: visual, haptic, spatial
- at best promotes experiential rather than information-driven learning



## Regulative

- admits that learning may be pleasurable and might possess a therapeutic component
- encourages a degree of absorption and sustained activity
- reconciles students to the agency of their bodies by foregrounding the sensory dimensions of learning

## 19. Bernstein argues:

Although classification translates power into the voice to be reproduced, we have seen that the contradictions, cleavages and dilemmas which inhere in the principle of classification are never entirely suppressed, either at the social or individual level...

I suggest the following: if a value changes from strong to weak, or vice versa, if framing changes from strong to weak or the classification changes from strong to weak, there are two basic questions we should always ask:

- which group is responsible for initiating change? Is the change initiated by a dominant group or a dominated group?
- if values are weakening, what values still remain strong?

(2000: 15)

The alternative profile is an attempt to answer the second question. In response to the first it must be acknowledged that ACHiS was initiated from an HE institution responding to the overwhelming demand from art educationalists to reconceptualise the curriculum along critical lines (educationalists who were once school teachers but, by the time of the demand, usually no longer). In this way the initiators might be seen to belong to a privileged and dominant group. The project did, however, have the blessing of participating teachers and, had funding allowed, many more schools in partnership with the IoE would have participated; approximately forty of seventy-five schools had initially shown an interest. Interest from art critics and art historians was encouraging in principle, however there was little interest from either group to participate as researchers; although it was difficult to recruit for ACHiS, those who were recruited proved to be highly motivated and committed.

20. The second profile also goes some way to acknowledge the difference in values between the participating groups. Within it there is recognition of a pedagogic code perhaps at odds with the critical model being promoted, but one that is nonetheless valid. This seemed a good starting point from which to develop the model of collaboration. When stated in this way art and design's insularity might be seen to offer an alternative to the logocentric curriculum, especially for those students unable or unwilling to assimilate its rules of recognition and its rules of distribution, recontextualisation and evaluation (see Pedagogic Devices in the following chapter). The popularity of art and design would suggest that many students find its difference empowering or find in its singularity a place of solace or sanctuary (student questionnaires: ACHiS archive, IoE).

21. Together the classificatory and framing descriptions constitute the pedagogic codes as elaborated in practice. Although the second profile relates to framing and its internal relations, at the level of classification emphasis has so far only been given to external relations; what art and design is not. Bernstein also recognises the internal relations of this principle: 'the internal classification refers to the arrangements of the space and the objects in it. In a classroom with strong classification, there is a specialisation of spaces' (Bernstein 2000: 14). It is in response to this further classification that the next chapter is dedicated.

## **4. Pedagogic Devices and Interpretation**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter I investigate two spaces for learning in art and design as they relate to the experience of ACHiS; one internal, the classroom, the other external, the gallery. However, before discussing the ways in which these pedagogic spaces recontextualise art I intend to examine the rules of distribution as they pertain to the classroom. This requires a further holding concept from Bernstein (2000) that of the pedagogic device. If the instructional and regulative discourses, aspects of the principle of framing, are the means by which a school subject's singularity, its classificatory power-base, is maintained and reproduced as a pedagogic discourse, the pedagogic devices are the means by which this discourse is put into action. Bernstein identifies three rules which constitute this apparatus: distributive, recontextualising and evaluative (ibid: 28). In turning to Bernstein's notion of the pedagogic device I aim, on the one hand, to understand how the discursive potential of art and design may be inhibited by these rules. On the other hand, I aim to understand how the lack of a certain type of knowledge in the instance I cite, specifically historical knowledge, does not necessarily inhibit interpretation of invention and insight within the rules as they are performed in art and design. However, because the boundaries set up around the discipline of history invite diachronic investigation and speculation, any synchronic potential may be overlooked by the art historian, in distinction from the art critic, particularly when it comes to the evaluation of student statements or writings. In the first section I present some of the findings from the teachers' questionnaire, specifically as they pertain to the idea of a critical curriculum, in order to provide further evidence of the culture of art and design in secondary schools.

### **Distributive rules**

1. Bernstein sees the mechanism behind the constraining thought of singulars as a 'distributive rule'; that is those rules that regulate relationships and specialised forms of knowledge. Thus these rules determine power relations and, in the field of art, who has access, and when, to privileged types of knowledge. Ownership of canonical works of art in the west is the purview of the State, Church and wealthy corporation or individual. Access is limited to those on display in public institutions and many of the works deemed significant to a western history of art are dispersed throughout the world's cosmopolitan centres. Photographic reproduction, therefore, is essential to the teaching of this canon, whether slide,

lithographic or digital image, it is the reproduction that represents the artwork under investigation, that establishes the twilight world of the lecture and the reduced world of the postcard. In terms of the material base of all but digital art works, photographic reproductions are woefully inadequate, distorting the scale, surface, colour etc., only rarely representing the immediate spatial context and, unless it is reproduced in video or film, limited to a single view-point and thus inappropriate for the representation of three-dimensional work (to varied extents this inadequacy was countered in the ACHiS residencies by means of the gallery/site visit). This inadequacy forces the viewer to base interpretation of key signifiers on different and, in a sense, degraded information, a removal from materiality that is very different to the popular reception of other arts such as literature or even music, an inadequacy that the 'international' art historian may be able to supplement with experience of the actual artwork. The student is therefore subliminally aware that the particularity of the work, its phenomenological fullness, must be communicated through words; textual description and evocation are therefore significant skills for the art historian. The inadequacy of reproductions also shifts attention from the materiality of the artwork to its potential place in history. Where a student or teacher has some historical knowledge associated with and pertinent to an artwork, the inadequacy of the reproduction also invites them to draw on this knowledge in such a way that the artwork is made to reflect an aspect of its social and cultural context, it becomes an illustration of social and cultural production rather than itself productive of society and culture (Miller 1992). To the art historian, despite professed iconophilia, the object of study is the place of the artwork within a textual history positioned within a chronological grid (Preziosi 1989). The written word is the honoured means, the stuff of the art historian's craft. The resulting text, the history, unlike the object itself, is supposedly available to all and thus the privileged world of art is democratised. For artists a place in history is no doubt desirable but the materiality of their means, and thus their practice, is different. The power of art history is linguistic and explanatory despite the professed object of its study. Although writing did have a place in all the ACHiS residencies, the evident antipathy of students and some teachers encouraged the research team to focus on classroom talk so that writing was primarily incorporated as a means to record discussion. In this way the alienating power of art history and cultural theory was dissipated.

### **Discursivity**

2. That the research team assumed a place for critical studies in some form in all schools is evidenced in the ACHiS teacher questionnaire (Appendix 4). The responses to it by art and design teachers (mostly PGCE curriculum mentors in partnership with the IoE and thus those partly responsible for the education of future teachers) enabled the team to classify available resources (references and materials) and establish when and with which students they were

to be deployed (a sample of teachers' reference sources is reproduced in Appendix 5). However, some questions invite more than an audit and the selected statements provide evidence of how art and design teachers define those subject aims that pertain to phenomenon external to the students' practical work. They are responses to the question: 'Given the requirement to address the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of students would you say there is an explicit political/ideological, religious or ethical basis to the way your department presents and investigates the art of others?' This question aims to discover the ways in which art, craft and design are referenced in a discursive context; it is couched in these terms to reflect the demand for discussion legislated in the National Curriculum and examination syllabuses. All current art and design school syllabuses imply an enquiring and discursive environment, yet, the interim findings of the team suggest that such an environment is rare. Although the singularity of the subject makes the status of writing deeply problematic, this need not necessarily preclude a dialogic model. But before presenting and analysing the teachers' statements I wish briefly to examine one of the spaces in between, the space in between what people say they do and what they do, between legislative, evaluative discourse, the official code, and discourse as practice, the elaborated code.

### **The iconosceptic environment**

3. In addition to the visuality of art and design (a visuality that at one time accommodated calligraphy, writing as look) the subject is often characterised by its concern with affectivity. I have argued that the logocentric curriculum still dominating secondary education encourages a profoundly iconosceptic pedagogic culture (Addison 2003). Although images are used extensively in teaching, the constructive part they play is only now being recognised in educational research (Kress and Leeuwen 2001). Within the iconosceptic environment the image is still assumed to possess two almost antithetical but deeply related properties: a descriptive value (documentary) and an emotional value (affective). Within the age of digital reproduction and the context of the mass circulation of images, the former is exemplified by news photography (Price 2000), and the latter by the advertisement (often also photographic) (Ramamurthy 2000). Ethically, the value of the documentary can be stated as critically honest (the purpose of the documentary photographer being 'to bring the attention of an audience to the subject of his or her work and, in many cases, to pave the way for social change' (Ohrn 1980: 36). In contradistinction, the advertisement can be seen as deceptive, photographic advertising achieving its hegemony by imbuing 'products with meanings and characteristics to which the commodity has no relationship' (Ramamurthy 2000: 170) thereby producing false desires (Barthes 1957). The iconosceptic acknowledges the veracity of the former but believes that language, in being propositional, can move beyond what is, to a consideration of what might be. For the iconosceptic however, the

emotional power of the image is such that the unwary (acritical) viewer, hypnotised by its affectivity, is liable to bypass the potentially rational processes of language (Packard 1981). In this way the iconosceptic assumes images can be used by the powerful to deceive and thus identifies the image as one of the most pernicious tools of hegemonic control. Put this way, the iconosceptic might be seen to have legitimate fears in the context of a democratic education. The iconosceptic environment of the school, where artwork is often only acknowledged outside the studio as a form of public relations (a sign of creativity in the form of spectacle) is itself productive of the insularity of the school subject art and design. However, the iconosceptic climate is tempered in relation to traditional fine art, particularly with its claims to interiority, because in wider culture the affective potential of the painted image is treasured. The mute expressivity of the picture (sculpture to a lesser extent), its ability to get directly into the nervous system, is one of the continuing myths of modernism (Foster 1985) and one which many art and design teachers are loathe to relinquish (see Hulks in Addison et al 2002). Therefore, despite the rhetoric of analysis and discursivity in curriculum documents, teachers still hold onto the practices of demonstration and student rehearsal; in this way conventional signs of expressivity can be mimicked and technical competence assured. More pragmatically, the 'knowing' art teacher hopes that through this process students will acquire a foundation of practical skills from which they can later develop personal expression. When art (rarely craft or design) is referenced in the form of reproductions it is usually to support the understanding of technical and formal properties, thus the tendency to transcription and pastiche (Hughes 1989). In the museum/gallery it is hoped the affective power of the artefact/image may induce the 'illuminating experience' (Taylor 1986) or the 'traumatic conversion' (Hargreaves 1983). But there is little evidence beyond the anecdotal to suggest that either of these non-linguistic, instantaneous processes is commonly experienced in the formal pedagogic context. The space in between discursivity and imitation is both the myth and the actuality of the affective.

#### **Art and design teachers' use of art**

4. The statements that I quote from the ACHiS teachers' questionnaire in the tables below exemplify what art and design teachers say they do when referring to art in the classroom. However, from their responses it is difficult to gauge the extent to which reference to the work of others is an integrated part of the curriculum, whether the rules of distribution rely on reproductions, visits or residencies and the degree to which the pedagogic discourse is presentation/information-driven or discursive. It is worth noting that in the pilot for the questionnaire (twenty-five schools) this question was less extensively worded, avoiding the reminder that reference to the work of others is a prerequisite; it was written: 'Do you believe the department's chosen methods [for interpreting art] have an ideological basis or

do you think they are neutral?’ (ACHiS archive: IoE). Some art teachers evidently perceived ‘ideology’ as a problematic word and some clearly perceived this question as aggressive:

- three teachers avoided it;
- one responded negatively: i.e. ‘*Long words- little meaning. Speak English*’;
- seven teachers insisted on neutrality e.g. ‘*definitely non-ideological – non-selective comp. We aim to make pupils aware and hopefully informed*’;
- six teachers provided alternatives ranging from ‘*logical*’ through ‘*critical*’ although three of them defined their practice as informed by ‘*personal preferences and individual beliefs*’;
- seven teachers gave responses acknowledging the possibility of an ideological basis, two of them from religious schools admitting that the framework of belief underpinning the delivery of the curriculum would be perceived as ideological by many outsiders, the other five provided an explanation in which their ideological position might loosely be described as critical, democratic, child-centred.

Even in the responses to the final questionnaire it is evident that for many teachers the curriculum is perceived as an apolitical phenomenon and liberal, multicultural rhetoric as non-ideological. However, the term ideology may be being interpreted in its Marxist sense, i.e. that ideology is the naturalised and thus hidden belief of the dominant class assimilated by the masses by means of the hegemonic control of the former, as is evident in the last statement quoted.

5. I have placed the statements outlining each school’s approach in what I believe is a continuum between the acritical and/or celebratory towards the explicitly critical (which I have categorised as ‘issue-based’). I have placed at the beginning the four statements by teachers who indicate that the approach of their department is prescribed by the religious denomination of the school (out of the ten schools with a religious affiliation): however, this is not to deny the critical and hermeneutic traditions of the world faiths, only to suggest that in these responses such traditions are not acknowledged and I am presuming celebration based on revelation rather than proscription and/or iconoclasm. All responses are categorised and tabulated in Table 1; the category from which I have selected the exemplary statements is identified by a corresponding letter/number.

**Table 1: Teachers' responses to question 7**

*'Given the requirement to address the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of students would you say there is an explicit political/ideological, religious or ethical basis to the way your department presents and investigates the art of others?' (tabulated along an acritical/critical continuum)*

Category	No.	Response
A	3	Yes: no details)
B	9	No, or Not relevant: no details
0	1	Formulaic, stagnant
1	4	World view prescribed by faith
1a	2	Eurocentric
2	2	Thematic variety
2-	1	As National Curriculum requires
2a	6	Liberal, multicultural, neutral
2b	1	Humanist, eclectic, democratic
2c	5	Inclusive, acknowledging diversity
3	2	Based on pupils' own cultural backgrounds
3a	2	Political when discussing meaning and purpose
3b	8	Issue-based, enabling pupil interpretation

0 *The department works together very well – However I find it monotonous when their SoW are already laid out for us (each year it's the same!) Students also have exams every term - The exam title has been the same for so many years! There is an explicit basis/way in which the department covers all areas, but its not very effective - It needs to give some freedom and exploration into cultures besides Egyptian and Aboriginal (co-ed. grant maintained).*

1 *[The] Art department presents all aspects of art in line with [the] school policy of providing awe and wonder and valuing the individual (Roman Catholic, co-ed. comprehensive).*

1a *We do try consciously to incorporate the views and needs of all the ethnic groups (including Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Jains, Buddhists as well as Christians). Largely though, it has to be said, the syllabus is based around European traditions in art and ceramics (boys' independent).*

2a *Used as a springboard for developing personal expression - students encouraged to select appropriate artists. Selection of a variety of styles, cultures to encourage respect for difference (girls' comprehensive).*

2b *Humanist - eclectic – democratic (co-ed. comprehensive)*

3 *Use of students' own background cultures and experiences in their art work (co-ed grant maintained).*

3a *Cultural - yes, occasionally religious - e.g. African/Asian. To some degree political/ideological when discussing purpose and meaning in Art (co-ed. comprehensive)*

3b *The department's philosophy involves using resource-based learning with all age groups and refers to artists of historical and contemporary traditions in all Schemes of Work. We also recognise the need to include books and artefacts in our collection which reflect the cultural identity, traditions and origins of all pupils who attend this single sex (girls') school. At KS4 and 5 pupils begin to investigate more personal issues through personal thematic enquires, where the teacher provides a wide variety of*



*resources/books to facilitate the needs of an individual artist enquiry by each pupil (girls' comprehensive, Church of England).*

- 3c *Yes - the GCSE is largely to do with introducing the students to established art works although we encourage a broader approach where possible - made increasingly easier through the Internet. At post-16 we run a series of five lectures raising the awareness of particular methodologies in approaches to looking at Art - students are given individual tutorials linked to their practical work in the upper sixth. The idea being to become familiar with the dominant culture and then gain various means of looking at it differently. Over riding ideology is theory into practice (co-ed. grant maintained).*

When discussing critical practice it is significant to find the degree to which respondents have used the rhetoric of multiculturalism and referential study. Examination of the work produced under its rubric tends, however, to display a dependence on transcription and pastiche. Hughes notably critiqued this orthodoxy as early as 1989 (in Thistlewood), before the introduction of the National Curriculum, but pastiche remains the popular visual answer to critical and contextual studies to this day.

### **Recontextualising rules**

6. In Chapter 6, I discuss how power relations are partly responsible for the way that knowledge about art is distributed in the form of reproductions and texts, both of which condition the pedagogic discourses around art history. Alternatively, when working in a museum or gallery material artefacts, not reproductions, are the focus of attention. But these are always supported by texts, written or spoken and, within this dialogue, the degree to which texts or artefacts are primary will depend on both the teaching and the students' preferred ways of learning. The investigative role that touch has to play in learning is usually disallowed, although some museums do have limited handling collections; therefore visual and aural modes are privileged (for a discussion of handling as a mode of learning see Georgaki's reports years 1 and 2 in Addison et al 2002). The historical object, encased in glass or raised on a plinth, is removed from the world of artefacts and becomes the object of aesthetic contemplation and or analysis; it becomes art or specimen. The recontextualising processes of display are receiving increasing attention (Elsner and Cardinal 1994; Pearce 1998) but there is less attention paid to the way in which pedagogic discourses in the art classroom recontextualise such knowledge, the way one discourse is transformed into another.

7. For Bernstein the professional subject discourses that provide 'unmediated' knowledge for distribution (e.g. those of physics or art history, often referred to as subject knowledge or fields) are often perceived as separate from the social and cultural values that schooling is supposed to reproduce. Bernstein uses the term pedagogic discourse to separate schooling

from the professional discourses to which it is related. He further divides pedagogic discourse into two interdependent discourses, the instructional and the regulative. Yet, despite their interdependence, their relationship is far from equal; in schools the regulative discourse is always dominant. In this way the professional discourse is selectively transformed into a pedagogic one:

Every time a discourse moves from one position to another, there is a space in which ideology can play... As pedagogic discourse appropriates various discourses, unmediated discourses are transformed into mediated, virtual or imaginary discourses. From this point of view, pedagogic discourse selectively creates *imaginary subjects*.

(Bernstein 2000: 32-33)

I wish to examine the way in which year 8 students negotiate the differences between two pedagogic sites, the art classroom and the museum, and how each site produces a different pedagogised (imaginary) subject.

### **Context**

8. In the first year of ACHiS, Grigorios Papazafiriou's residency took place in an inner-city, co-educational comprehensive where he worked with students from year 8 (12-13 years of age), the second year of secondary education. Characteristically students are from working class or social exclusion backgrounds and the majority are from immigrant communities, whether, first, second or third generation (see Gilroy 2000 for a discussion of the problematics of this designation). The school provides above the national average free school-meals, a key indicator of poverty. In addition, for a high proportion of students English is an additional language with all the complexities this places on learning and the ability of teachers to help students attain normative standards in the context of a logocentric curriculum. In many ways this school is the most representative inner-London comprehensive with which the ACHiS team worked. The status of art and design is high in the school despite the fact that, on occasions, tensions have arisen between students who adhere strongly to Islamic proscriptions against image making. However, most students accommodate themselves to the culture of representation although for some refugees, graphic representation has in the past been limited to writing. By the time ACHiS was underway, Papazafiriou had also been employed by this school on a part-time basis. This insider status may well have conditioned his motivation to examine the orthodoxy of transcription and pastiche to discover whether the induction into the western canon that this process enables, can be considered critical.

### **Museum: visit**

9. The visit to the British Museum was an opportunity for the year 8 students to view, draw and investigate historical, transcultural artefacts. Visits of this sort are viewed as a necessary

induction to 'high' culture by government agencies; indeed educational visits are a legislated component within the National Curriculum and it is often within an art and design lesson that young people are first exposed to the nation's art collections. In terms of the educational purpose of these visits it is assumed that familiarisation with such privileged artefacts can provide the populace with material evidence of the nation's cultural, moral, social and spiritual values; an embodiment of its 'normative order' (Foucault 1977). With this in mind galleries and museums are increasingly promoted as key educational resources (Anderson 1997; DCMS 2001; Dodd and Sandell 2001; Doherty and Harland 2001; Re:source 2001). As repositories of culture it is hoped that students might be inspired by an encounter with the material evidence of past civilisations, in the case of the British Museum, to establish a continuum (progression) and to mark a difference (values). However, the status of this particular collection as evidence of Britain's colonial past is rarely foregrounded. Although this is knowledge that is produced and distributed within the professional discourses of art history and cultural studies, it is at odds with the regulative discourse of schooling (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). At the time of this visit, before the opening of the grand court (Norman Foster 2000) and the reintroduction of the 'ethnographic' collections from the Museum of Mankind, the Parthenon frieze, symbolising both an originary and exemplary point for 'Western Civilisation', was still at the heart of the building. The hierarchical arrangement of culture is everywhere in evidence in this institution so that a continuum between British and classical Mediterranean traditions, the western tradition, is seen as pivotal to world history. Although not consciously recognised, students subliminally assimilate the semiotic messages of this arrangement so that their place in relation to the dominant, canonical culture, in terms of race, class and gender, is reinforced. Since the visit, artefacts from the former Museum of Mankind have been 'reintroduced' to the collection. The majority of the African artefacts, specifically those from sub-Saharan Africa, are housed in a darkened but carefully redesigned basement, an architectural and typological afterthought. Papazafiriou, however, drawing on the work of Gretton (2003) argues that it is disempowering not to familiarise students with the dominant discourse; without such acculturation they will always remain outside.

10. The importance of the visit then is for students to confront canonical artefacts in all their splendour, to appreciate the weight and length of history so that, back in the classroom, reproductions can be complemented by experience of the real. But the external observer notes the limitations of the visit. For her the students, unfamiliar with behavioural recognition rules (Duncan 1995), were hyperactive and unfocused (external reports ACHiS archive, IoE). Due largely to the limitations of time, students superficially carried out the exploratory tasks set by Papazafiriou and the collaborating teacher (the external observer notes twenty minutes contact with the exhibits).

### **Classroom: review**

11. During the following lesson, whilst most students continued their painting, small groups in rotation joined Papazafiriou and the external observer to review a homework. Students had been asked to write about the social and historical contexts of the artefacts they had studied and their observations were discussed and critically evaluated. I was present at a subsequent lesson where eighteen students were present, eight girls and ten boys. Before the lesson began, Papazafiriou had displayed an extensive array of resources, reproductions and his own transcriptions/pastiches on the side of the room facing the windows (Plates 4 and 5).

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Plate 4 Art room resources

Plate 5 Art room layout

The collaborating teacher began the lesson by asking questions to review the museum visit. The following is a transcription from a video recording of the beginning of this directed discussion:

*Boy 1 I saw some pictures on the pots.*

*Teacher You saw some pictures on the pots. What were these pictures about? One thing first.*

*Boy 2 um – curses.*

*Teacher You saw curses. How were these actually described on the pots? – [teacher gestures] was it sort of words or was it people, or was it animals, what was it?*

*Boy 3 Hieroglyphics.*

*Teacher There were hieroglyphics. How did you know that they were curses? Any ideas, how did you know?*

*Boy 4 Because it was like reading, kind of like, different /// and that, see. [Teacher points to another pupil]*

*Boy 5 The like, the pictures were symbols because like they were [pause] have a /// or something.*

*Teacher* Well done. So you interpreted that did you? The word is interpreted. But did you have information to help you, or did you get it from looking at the pots?

*Girl 1* Near to the pots [faint] there was some writing.

*Teacher* There was some writing in the museum. Where was the writing?

*Boy 4* It was on the box.

*Teacher* Did it help to read the writing?

*Students* Yes/it did.

*Boy 6* It had hieroglyphics and the meaning of them.

*Teacher* So you saw the pots and then by the pots was a little card with some writing on it. By reading the writing told you what the pot was about. Did it help you to enjoy what you were looking at?

*Students* Yes

*Teacher* Can anyone mention anything else they saw on a pot? [hands go up] Someone who hasn't spoken yet. You haven't [pointing].

*Boy 7* I saw some coffins – ur. Egyptian. How Egyptians buried people.

*Teacher* Did you see them on the pots or did you see them in a different part of the Museum?

It transpires that the latter was the case and the teacher invited students to recall this experience. This regulated and carefully led conversation was skilfully moved on by the collaborating teacher to a consideration of Greek and Roman art, in particular signifiers of gender and class, through which the teacher managed to elicit further responses from the reticent girls. The whole interaction took just under ten minutes. Evidently, twenty minutes of access to artefacts was long enough for a notable amount of information to be assimilated and made sense of in relation to existing knowledge; some of it reinforced in the homework review, some gleaned from other areas of the curriculum (in particular history) some of it formed by commercial culture and its engagement with the abject (here in its most popular manifestation, the Egyptian mummy). The willingness displayed by students to move between experience of the visit and prior knowledge demonstrates that given a discursive environment they are adept at making connections and giving teachers what they expect (and it must be noted in this instance, what students thought the camera wanted: attentiveness, eagerness, enthusiastic but regulated behaviour).

### **Classroom: spatial organisation**

12. I intend to spend time examining the spatial organisation of the art classroom and the temporal management of resources within it. In this way some sense of what Bernstein

identifies as a characteristic of the internal classification can be analysed in relation to art and design. The display of reproductions and teachers' and students' paintings was positioned on the wall opposite the windows and by the teacher's desk. This enabled students to view the whole display in a bright light without any distractions from external events. The images were surrounded by subject-specific words identifying formal elements and content, together these constituted the available reference resources. The material resources: tools, work, media, were stored on the other sides of the room. In this way there was a clear demarcation between outcome and means, albeit that the outcomes were exemplary ('quality' reproductions and teachers' work) whereas the means, school materials, were 'inferior' (although 'real'). The directed discussion of the museum visit was orientated around the collaborating teacher so that the attention of the students was on him and not on the display or the window; in this way the discursive activity was focused on recall, on students' memory of the visit and connections external to the art room. After this discussion, the collaborating teacher refocused students' attention toward the display as he intended to refer to it whilst explaining the making activity. There was a clear demarcation between the discursive and the instructional and the instructional and the regulative domains both in terms of spatial orientation and in relation to mode. In the discussion the teacher made use of words to revisit the visual whereas within the instructional and the regulative he made use of visuals supplemented by text and speech to encourage particular forms of imitative making. Just as the physical orientation of students was directed in each case away from the alternative, the cognitive processes were similarly separated. Once the making activity was underway there was far more teacher and student mobility, the noise level increased, student discussion oscillated between commentary of their work and social conversation. Meanwhile the teachers' interactions (collaborating and researcher) became increasingly practical (technical advice) and regulative (behavioural proscriptions). The critical dimension of the lesson shifted from the historical and contextual to the formal and technical. Although this example was a successful lesson on many levels it remains indicative of the insularity of art and design. The internal classification spatially and conceptually preserves the two discrete domains, isolating making and divorcing it from discursive critical study.

### **Evaluative rules**

We can see that the key to pedagogic practice is continuous evaluation... Evaluation condenses the meaning of the whole device... The purpose of the device is to provide a symbolic ruler for consciousness. Hence we see the religious origins of the device: religion was the fundamental system for creating and controlling the unthinkable, the fundamental principle for relating two different worlds, the mundane and the transcendental...

RELIGIOUS FIELD  
Prophet  
Priest  
Laity

PEDAGOGIC FIELD  
Producers  
Reproducers  
Acquirers

(Bernstein 2000: 36-37)

### Questions and answers: expectations and understanding

13. In order to examine the significance of evaluation and assessment within the context of ACHiS I wish to examine just one interaction that took place during the introductory session of a complex but well sequenced residency in which the researcher, Caroline Perret, worked with a small group of sixth form students studying AS art and design (Addison et al 2002). I choose it not because it is indicative of the residency as a whole but because it highlights the disjunction between the expectations held by students and teachers within the two disciplines that ACHiS attempts to reconcile. It is important to point out that the disjunctions noted were subsequently brought closer, as Perret notes: 'the students used their experience and environment to create works whose meaning was inextricably associated to their form: works often highly abstracted and subjective, in which it is impossible to dissociate one from the other' (researcher evaluation, ACHiS archive, IoE).

THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN REDACTED  
DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR  
OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

Plate 6: Richier 'The Shepherd of Landes' (1951)

14. The following questions and answer were written in relation to a reproduction of Germaine Richier's 'The Shepherd of Landes' (1951) respectively, by Perret and a sixth form student:

*Look at the reproduction in terms of:*

- *the formal elements: 'colour, form/shapes, line, texture';*
- *content/subject matter: the title might help you;*
- *context – what was the situation in France at the time of the artwork?*

*Now go back to the different formal elements of the artwork: what do they tell you?*

*Student response:*

*the height gives it the power, but the background gives the impression of a toy skidding in a bit of grass like a scarecrow.*

(Perret in Addison et al 2002)

Here, Perret has taken students through a typical process of analysis, starting with attention to the formal elements followed by identification and denotation, a reversal of the way in which an untrained person might come to the image but one conditioned by the students' familiarity with formal concerns. The contextual question that follows clearly needs further, probably non-visual, information that must be provided either by a teacher or researched by students. In this instance Perret had provided a comment relating the production of the sculpture to the Second World War guiding students to a context that would seem determining. Perret deployed this sequence in order to gauge the prior knowledge of students (with whom she was unfamiliar) and subsequently provided and enabled them to seek historical information pertinent to their study. The final question in the set suggests that knowledge of the context of production is likely to make students reassess their initial understanding of the formal elements, that is to read them as indexes of context, or, as Perret puts it, to establish a 'dialogue... between formal elements and context' (in Addison et al 2002). In this formulation content, or meaning, is held to reside in the relationship between context and form and further, the relationship between the viewer and the artwork; the old art historical split between form and content is complicated into the tripartite context/form/content and further, context (of production) form/content/context (of reception)/sense. Whatever the split, such separation into categories is inherent in all processes of analysis and the art historian needs to be receptive to this forensic approach. The art and design student, however, may come to works of art with a different, altogether more acritical agenda, one in which they are led to identify with a favoured work both for its formal characteristics (commonly called 'style') and its denoted content (the 'subject'). The hope is that the student will assimilate these elements and make them their own, in other words develop them as signs of 'self'. However, in this equation the contexts conditioning the production of each work of art and thus the subjectivities of the artist and student, must be entirely different. Much of the theory underpinning twentieth century art education revolves around theories of self-expression and autonomy and depends on the notion of an 'essential self' (see Chapters 5 and 6). It is evident that the current orthodoxy in school art where the look of others' work is appropriated, contravenes the mythology of art and design where 'finding oneself' or 'being different' is a primary quest. On the contrary it could be argued that the prevailing process of appropriation enables students to assimilate and naturalise dominant codes and conventions, that through immersion they learn how to don essentialist garb and play at being the artist. The new art history attempts to demythologise such antics. Given this mismatch it is no wonder that an intervention into the art and design curriculum by an art historian would focus on the determining role of the contexts of production and on the social and historical construction of subjectivities. Initially, the orientation of this particular intervention reinforced the distinctions between two sets of



aims, those of art history and art and design, the categorisations and framings of which are at odds.

15. The specialised forms of knowledge within art history demand considerable contextual data before the interpretive act can take place. Such data will include a diachronic map of highly specific social and cultural histories, although the emphasis will be on the latter. Additionally, some knowledge of the 'stylistic' development of canonical western art is also an advantage (Gretton 2003) both because it provides a self-contained, self-referential narrative of excellence (from which comparative judgements can be made) and because it provides familiarity with the dominant discourse without which critique is impossible. The canon is ever present, even within revisionist art history, where the constructedness of its values are analysed and exposed; as Gretton (1986) argued the canon would be renewed by the new art history. Within the development of an individual student's critical skills the chronological place of cultural, iconographic, psychoanalytical, semiotic and social analysis is seen methodologically as more advanced (elsewhere I have questioned this assumption in relation to semiotic analysis which I argue is closer to young people's everyday interpretations than art historical categories; Addison 1999a). Very often BA courses in art history still begin with a canonical survey of western art, although this is not the sole feature of the first year. It is thus assumed that schooling does not provide this body of knowledge for all students. The new 'A' level Art History (AQA), as if in response to this lack, offers one such survey although its trajectory, until Modernism, is predicated on a classical lineage (for example the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are absent). However, very few who take art history at university have followed this syllabus. Sixth form students of art and design tend *not* to have assimilated the chronological map that art historical processes require, nor do they feel they have the time to apply the research skills that they may have developed in other curriculum areas because it would take them away from making (confirmed by all 1<sup>st</sup> year ACHiS researchers).

16. Some of the researchers, particularly those with little experience of teaching except in the context of the post-graduate seminar, were both surprised to find this lack (a lack of what they considered to be general knowledge) and surprised to encounter a reluctance in students to develop ways to assimilate it, knowledge for which they themselves had been hungry in their youth. This lack and reluctance from the ACHiS art and design students might be assumed to have some basis in class consciousness since students with a middle class habitus, as Bourdieu and Darbel argue, inevitably investing in the cultural capital of this type of knowledge:

only a pedagogic authority can break the circle of 'cultural needs' which allow a lasting and assiduous disposition to cultural practice to be formed only by regular and

prolonged practice: children from cultivated families who accompany their parents on their visits to museums or special exhibitions in some way borrow from them their disposition to cultural practice for the time it takes them to acquire in turn their own disposition to practice which will give rise to a practice which is both arbitrary and initially arbitrarily imposed. ... Inasmuch as it produces a culture which is simply the interiorization of the cultural arbitrary, family or school upbringing, through the inculcation of the arbitrary, results in an increasingly complete masking of the arbitrary nature of the inculcation

(reproduced in Frascina and Harris 1992: 177)

However, as has been argued in the first year findings, although class-habitus may play a part, the findings of ACHiS suggest that the overwhelming rejection of discursive or systematic text-based study is significantly determined by the singularity of art and design and the pedagogic devices deployed in the classroom/studio. Yet, increasingly, examination criteria suggest that an indicator of success in the subject can be found in a student's use of subject specific (art historical) language. Perret designed her residency to demonstrate that a short, art historical intervention could encourage students to question the perceptualist and formalist limitations of the school art orthodoxy, develop more reflective practice, and, in so doing, to develop a specialist language.

17. With this in mind, the student's response *'the height gives it the power, but the background gives the impression of a toy skidding in a bit of grass like a scarecrow'* might be dismissed as ahistorical, one conditioned entirely by emotional associations and thus one that fails to meet the aims of the ACHiS project: 'Once the initial problem of the students not understanding the term context had been resolved, the references of their analyses continued to be their own emotional response' (Perret report, first draft). However, it can be argued that this particular student used the resources available to her with some invention, that is within the limitations of the reproduction and her lack of historical knowledge of post-war France. Although the statement lacks historical signifiers, the metaphors conjured make best use of the data provided by the reproduction and are thus rooted in the material base of the mediated image. What was the expectation, what would an appropriate answer have been; one that conformed to the recontextualising and evaluative rules of art history? But more significantly what had the student actually done?

### **Interpretative work**

18. The student was provided with a photographic reproduction of Richier's work and she made the statement in consultation with the collaborating teacher. In it she suggested that the work is powerful, a 'positive' quality that she may have sensed herself but that perhaps she considered echoed her teacher's judgement and she, like most students, wished to acquiesce to their tastes. She sensed the latter because, first, the work had been selected as worthy of study (in art and design students are aware that works of art that are not liked by

the teacher are only rarely displayed, particularly as there are no prescribed works in the syllabus) and, second, the way in which Richier had been positioned in the residency (the words chosen by Perret, her intonation, her body language) are likely to have suggested her particular interest. However, the student provided an indicator for this quality, the

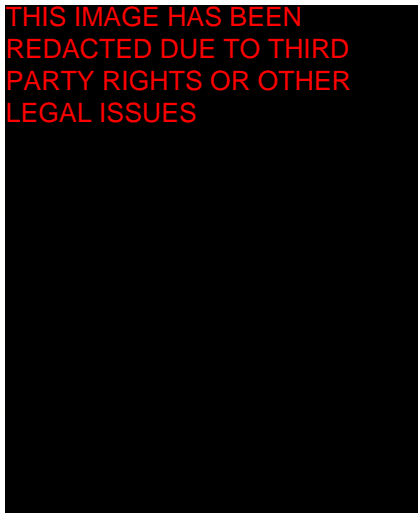


Plate 6: Richier 'The Shepherd of Landes' (1951)

sculpture's height, which she estimated from its relative scale to known features in the background and to its stretched proportions. Drawing on the work of social semioticians and the theory of multimodality, this process can be seen as an example of 'pupils' remaking of a teacher's message to create new signs [one that] can be seen as the process of learning' (Kress, Jewitt et al 2001: 6). The student's short phrase, '*the height gives it the power*' in itself necessitated a multiple process of estimation, an interpretation of the ways in which power is signalled visually and an attention to the judgements of her teacher and the interests of the resident art historian. Additionally, the student created a metaphor for the way in which the sculpture has been re-presented photographically, '*but the background gives the impression of a toy skidding in a bit of grass like a scarecrow*' the image reminding her of the cinematic convention for representing movement (particularly in animation) where the subject, for example a passenger in a train, is rendered in high focus whilst the surrounding or background environment flashes past in a blur, in this way the viewer identifies with the subject and their kinaesthetic experience. Further, the attenuated limbs of Richier's shepherd reminded her of a scarecrow, a simile that places the figure in its rural context and one that suggests both its material impoverishment and symbolic and actual power. The student's response did indeed draw on the affectivity of the image but she made sense of it by relating the affect to a series of socially-situated metaphors. Of course, the work done here is almost instantaneous and I may be interpreting the student's motivations incorrectly, but as Hodge and Kress argue:

The interpretation of texts is always a matter of guesses, not facts. But some guesses are richer and more plausible than others. A transformational reading of a text is often

hypothetical to some extent, but this is by no means a reason why semioticians should avoid attempting it.

(1988: 168)

19. The work done by the student was partly invested by her emotional responses (surely this is a positive thing, one that acknowledges the affective properties of art) but it also suggests that: 'focusing on pupils' texts and their transformation of the teacher's communicative work (across modes, in terms of composition, genre and analogy) serves to emphasise the dynamic nature of the process of learning and the ways in which different pupils' interests influence this process' (Kress, Jewitt et al 2001: 16). The lessons to be learned from this example are first, that teachers, at most levels, tend to recognise and assess most highly those forms of knowledge that reflect their own subject knowledge; thus, for those students who can accommodate themselves to the regulative rules of a specific subject, assessment holds no threat. Second, and consequently, 'fair' assessment should not be constrained by such regulative rules; this type of assessment demands only a replication of specialist signifiers and misses a student's true understanding and the particular value of their work. Perret did not fall into this trap because she was able to develop the students' knowledge before they submitted their work for assessment, but all too often students are penalised for a lack of knowledge and skills about and for which they have not been informed.<sup>28</sup>

20. Pauline De Souza, in her second ACHiS residency, came to similar conclusions. In discussions with the other researchers she positioned herself theoretically in the interstices of professional discourses on art; like many art historians she is plagued or delighted (depending on your point of view) by the forced peripatetic regionalisation of her work. Such mobility: conceptually, geographically and pedagogically, makes her representative of an increasingly common type of art historian, one who is aware of different audiences and their needs, albeit that that need is sometimes produced by the very institutions which serve to meet it. As has been seen, the pedagogic devices deployed in the gallery or the school are not, can not, be the same: if a device is dislocated from its context one or other of the audiences is likely to be disappointed. De Souza's second year residency took place with a year 10 group, the first year of GCSE, in a girls' comprehensive in the East-end of London. In the first year her exploration of semiotics as a possible language to assist in the realisation of installation work and its articulation as text had taken place in a selective, ex-grammar school (in Addison et al 2002). As with the other first year residencies, students were similarly resistant to writing, but she felt able to transfer the pedagogic devices that she used with students on Foundation and BA fine art courses to the classroom without much adaptation. This was not the case in the second year and, despite the enthusiasm of the

---

<sup>28</sup> This is a perception gleaned from year on year, post examination discussions by members of the Schools Subcommittee of the Association of Art Historians.

collaborating teacher and the eager participation of students, De Souza felt that the residency aims were not met. In her report, rather than produce a litany of failure, she decided to examine more closely small instances of student production, both visual and discursive. In this way she managed to evaluate learning unconstrained by the rhetorical aims of either ACHiS or the GCSE to see what learning actually took place rather than what did not. This is the key for reform in assessment.

## **Conclusion**

21. Bernstein is most interested in those processes that unite the material and immaterial worlds, in terms of knowledge, the 'thinkable' and the 'unthinkable' (2000: 28-30). The gap between these worlds is for him a potential, 'the meeting point of order and disorder, of coherence and incoherence; it is the crucial site of *the yet to be thought*' (ibid: 30). The yet to be named, the un-nameable in art, is a product of art's affectivity. The work of art is a peculiarly condensed 'sensuous and conceptual manifold' (Crowther 1993) which, for historical and cultural reasons, has become the locus of meaning making activity. Within this activity, in the form of pleasure and displeasure, felt as well as cognised meanings are acknowledged (Kant 1978) and these meanings can be made anew on each viewing; interpreted, articulated and discussed in social/educational settings. The affective potential of art, often linked to its materiality, in combination with its ability to refer is its strength. Art historians however, by privileging the written text as the locus of interpretation/meaning, reduce the visual and material artefact to something akin to a natural object (one that needs to be drawn into culture) or, at best, an artefact possessing only an immanence, one requiring the mediation of knowledgeable others, that is the art historians themselves; the learner, Bernstein's acquirer, has no active role in the process. There is then a danger that art historians might position themselves as oracles before the mute object, as priests before a lay public, trans-articulating the semiotic modes of art into the logocentric world of discourse and, in the context of secondary art and design, alienating the very audience that would most benefit from critical approaches to visual culture. If some of the researchers fell into the trap of reinforcing a logocentric and affective binary opposition, others demonstrated that through dialogic and discursive practices it is possible to establish a space in which assumptions and beliefs are questioned. In this space, and it is a space of criticality, the official 'liberal' curriculum may not be reformed overnight, but practice can be reconceived and slow, incremental change established.

22. By suggesting these dangers I do not wish to suggest that visual art does not have its histories, grammars, and semantic equivalents. But, the material bases of art (and more

broadly, visual culture): its affective modalities, its forms,<sup>29</sup> its simultaneity or temporality, in combination with its referentiality: its descriptive condensation, its metaphoric limitlessness, have a peculiarity in the way they make meaning possible. This is because the material base is foregrounded in art<sup>30</sup> so that, amongst other material and visual artefacts, it induces visceral arousals and emotional states of a different quality to words, and these cannot be contained by analysis, indeed these meanings may be experienced and understood outside language. Mediated, as here, by language, such experiences may appear precious, but experientially they can be profound. The problem for the school subject, art and design, is that to enable students to explore this potential is threatening, transgressive. The affective/referential potential of visual and material culture suggests an alternative, un-nameable order, one at odds with the logocentric curriculum and the 'rules of the father'. But there is a further danger with the un-nameable, for when art and design attempts to tame the affective and limit referentiality, when it is reduced to formal exercises, when even its powers of representation, its ability to refer to the experiential world, are limited to the picturing of artefacts chosen for their formal qualities alone, when all its meaning is reduced to its material base, then we have school art at its most hermetic and stultifying. As Bernstein claims:

These meanings are so embedded in the context that they have no reference outside that context. These meanings are not simply context dependent, they are necessarily context bound: and meanings which are context bound cannot unite anything other than themselves.

(ibid: 30)

23. As indicated (Chapter 2: 21) some of the assumptions underpinning ACHiS were themselves context bound, it would therefore be premature to offer up ACHiS as a blueprint for a hybrid prototype of action research. However, as an example of a reflexive process it has much to commend it, especially if it is taken as a beginning, a developing process towards a democratic research methodology based on interdisciplinary, inter-community, educational action. McNiff (1988) describes two stages (perspectives) in the process of action research:

The first perspective describes the outcomes when a teacher decides to intervene in his [sic] practice... Action research is seen as a way of characterising a loose set of activities that are designed to improve the quality of education; it is an essentially eclectic way in to a self-reflective programme aimed at such educational improvement. The second perspective attempts to identify the criteria of these activities; to formulate systems that will account for the improvement that is an anticipated outcome of the self-reflective programme.

(p. 2)

---

<sup>29</sup> E.g. colour, saturated or dissipated; space, expansive or intimate, bounded or open; surface, giving or resistant.

<sup>30</sup> Except that is for the pictorial (which would include the cinematic): the pictorial with the narratives and allegories that it makes possible to pertain to the verbal.

There is always a danger that if the central aim of action research is the 'improvement of practice' it will be reinterpreted by management as a tool for the development of functional competence: 'the teacher as an educational innovator is replaced by the teacher as a functionary' (Elliot 1997: 26). The assumptions that underpinned the interventionist orientation of ACHiS might serve to reinforce a deficit model of pedagogy in schools. For example, the parallel IoE/V&A curriculum development project, part of the 'Creative Connections' research (Robins and Woollard 2001) also accepted this model by offering In-service training as a possible solution to a problem before conducting school-based, diagnostic research into what the 'problem' was. That so many art teachers were willing to give themselves over to this programme suggests that participation in HE courses; INSET and taught MAs etc, can provide a reflective but additionally therapeutic context in which the teacher can gain some respite from the dystopian world of the school while simultaneously gaining academic and thus intellectual and cultural capital. But this posits an ideal in which the teacher is free from the exigencies and compromises of working with reluctant learners within a flawed system. Thus a condition of alienation is produced whereby the true self of the teacher, the teacher s/he would be in an 'ideal' situation, is divorced from her/his role in practice (Elliot 1997: 27).

24. Elliot describes a somewhat unexpected outcome of action research in secondary school where teachers are involved in developing the curriculum in cross-subject groups:

All involved experienced a measure of de-skilling and this motivated them to abandon the individualism that characterized subject teaching and to collaborate with each other in developing new professional knowledge, through sharing experiences and ideas.

(1997: 19)

This gives a somewhat negative gloss on teachers' motivation to opt for collaborative strategies, suggesting that they are only spurred on to change practice through dialogue once they have recognised a lack within their pedagogic armoury (although the culture of individualism can be particularly intense in art and design because it has already been fostered at degree level). However, a sense of a lack was also apparent in some of the researchers' evaluations. In both years, those researchers without experience of teaching at secondary level undoubtedly found it difficult to gauge the impact of their 'intervention', having only their personal experience of secondary schooling with which to compare events, and perhaps feeling that positive feedback by the collaborating teacher was morale-boosting encouragement rather than 'objective' evaluation. Researchers tended to blame themselves and/or students for perceived failures: e.g. disinterest, non-transmission of knowledge, reluctance to engage in critical practices (particularly in written form). This clearly has implications for the training element of the research project, the roles in partnership played

by classroom teacher and action researcher and the network of support provided between non- and experienced secondary/FE teachers within the research group.

25. The isolated profile that art and design has made for itself within the logocentric universe of secondary schooling remains intact despite the desire of many teachers to widen practice and acknowledge developments in visual culture (for example, teachers who contributed to ACHiS). The interest of art critics and art historians in ACHiS (primarily the latter) likewise manifested a certain separation, as if the representatives from the participating fields found it necessary to play out differences in order to assert their legitimacy, their ownership of a particular body of knowledge. However, the logocentric credentials and hierarchised privileges of the institutional researchers, undoubtedly produced tense relationships with those teachers who felt insecure about aspects of their subject knowledge and, as the project progressed, their pedagogic practice. Some researchers were unsympathetic about the pressures under which secondary teachers work and were unable to take into consideration the difference between their interventionist and occasional contribution as opposed to the non-stop demands placed on their collaborators. Researchers' relationships with students were by and large less problematic, although on one occasion a positive relationship with students was used by a researcher to undermine the position of the class teacher. These difficulties should not however mask the real efforts of many in the team to work through the problematics of action research, as Bridget Somekh (2000) claims: 'To be effective in supporting change regardless of political context, action researchers have to live with tensions and dare to cross disciplinary boundaries, fearlessly' (p. 115). It transpired that the central position given to collaboration in the rhetoric of ACHiS was not fully realised in practice and it is this area that will need to be given most consideration in any future developments. Peter Posch's 'strategic and dynamic networks' (2000: 55–65) offer philosophically cogent and pragmatic recommendations to assist this process because, as he describes them, they make possible 'ways in which people share their abilities for joint enterprises and for mutual learning and assistance. They contradict one of the traditional assumptions of schooling: the assumption of the separation of school and society' (p. 63).

26. This separation is typical of the singularity of the secondary school subject art and design. Yet, if art teachers retain the hermetic singularity of the subject, if they reproduce school art ad nauseam, ultimately it will ossify. If they ignore language they will fail to control the force that would dominate the subject. In the era of multimedia and multimodality the need for visual and material culture to come under the orbit of a critical curriculum is incontrovertible. Art and design is not empowered to do this alone, it is not given the resources, particularly in relation to time. In the current iconosceptic climate of English education the interdisciplinary art critic/historian could undoubtedly find a



constructive place within the curriculum even as it stands, contributing *in between* school subjects, whether art and design, citizenship, English, history, media studies, philosophy, the list could go on. But, because its own pedagogic devices are at odds with those of art and design, because any intervention is recognised as an attempt at further logocentric colonisation, in the immediate future the strengths of art history might find a more sympathetic home within the logocentric curriculum. Located here the art critic/historian in residence would be able to mediate *in between* the critical and the celebratory, the affective and the logocentric, the past and the present, the reflective and the productive, the personal and the institutional and would enable students, if not to act other, at least to think other. In the meantime art teachers need to develop a more discursive pedagogy, recognising and celebrating the power of arts' affectivity and referentiality but in the context of art's histories and its developing technologies and media. I intend to map out the historical reasons for this insularity in Part Two of my thesis, before, in Part Three, proffering critical pedagogy as a potential tradition in which to locate critical practice in art and design. This advocacy draws on the experience of ACHiS.

## Part Two: The Truant Curriculum

### 5. Modernism and English Art Education: borrowings and resistances

#### Introduction

The field of production *per se* owes its own structure to the opposition between the field of restricted production as a system producing cultural goods (and the instruments for appropriating those goods) objectively destined for a public of producers of cultural goods, and the field of large scale-cultural production, specifically organized with a view to the production of goods destined for a public of non-producers of cultural goods, 'the public at large'.

(Bourdieu 1993c: 115)

i) Within modernism, post-Kantian theories of the autonomy of art (Crowther 1993; Graham 1997) are to some extent supported by Bourdieu's sociological theory of restricted fields (1993f: 97); both suggest that particular types of production practised by a professionalised body of producers constitute, in this instance, art, and that other forms of visual and material production should be defined within large-scale non-art production. This simple binary opposition simplifies the relationship between different modes of production that fall outside professionalised practice (e.g. the cultural production of children) and forms of production that cross those definitional boundaries constituting the restricted fields of art, craft, design, critical theory and so on. Art is a cultural phenomenon that reaches beyond the restricted field of production theorised by Bourdieu (1993c; 1993d, 1993f) (see Appendix 1 for a working definition of art). In this chapter, therefore, I intend to examine how visual artefacts produced by 'makers' from *without* the restricted field, those by secondary school students, relate to the wider field of cultural production. I aim to uncover how and why the position of school art within this field is an acritical one. The autonomous field that Bourdieu defines (1993b) was a product of very specific conditions in nineteenth century Europe and I aim to uncover the structure of the 'field of power' in play between a series of contested and competitive modernisms in the field of art and to trace their effects on art education during the twentieth century. I select moments in the history of modernism in which the 'will to autonomy' serves quite specific ideological purposes, whether those of colonialism, humanism, national identity, or revolutionary politics. It is evident from these multiple functions that I see modernism as a heterogeneous cultural event, including, amongst other phenomenon in the field of art: a critical avant-garde (Foster 1996), a progressive and democratic collective (Clark 2000) and a primitivising and essentialising tendency (Perry

1993). As proselytised by influential figures in the field of art and art education, it is this essentialising tendency that transformed art education in English schools from a largely instrumental and reproductive training (Swift 1995) into a 'creative' subject, notably by Roger Fry (1909) Marion Richardson (1948) (a close friend of Fry, who attempted to translate his theories into practice) and Herbert Read (1937; 1943). During the first half of the twentieth century the progressive group was a very real instance of modernist counter-culture, an instance when the symbolic power of the traditional pedagogic authority had its legitimacy questioned and, in part, dismantled. However, the progressive group did not achieve this coup in isolation. Progressive art education secured a place in the school curriculum only as a result of an alliance with the developing field of psychology because here, art was believed to contribute to the unfolding growth of the autonomous, expressive individual. In this way, it was argued, art practices could unify and make whole the atomising structures and alienating effects of modern life. The only way it could do this was to celebrate 'natural creativity' through unfettered and essentially acritical activity, the assumed condition of the newly theorised child (Higonnet 1998) (for recent critiques of this position see Dalton 2001: 162-86; Atkinson 2002: 185-196).

ii) Modernism is not limited to fields within the arts and I shall need to refer to social phenomena that are accommodated by the same term, whether they be a practice, e.g. instrumental universal education, a concept, e.g. childhood, or a discourse, e.g. children's creativity. Art education has felt the incursions of other fields because of its subservient (that is dominated) position within the logocentric curriculum, particularly from psychology and sociology (fields that have informed and still inform educational policy), literature and literary theory (a parallel field that in the first part of the twentieth century usurped the role of moral guardian that art had boasted in the Victorian period) and, more recently, cultural studies (a consolidating field). These incursions have helped to shape its trajectories in conflicting ways, conflicts that have clear class and gendered roots intimately bound to the habitus of the agents who have wittingly and unwittingly produced a deeply bifurcated art curriculum. Despite conflicts within the field of art education itself, the position of art and design within the field of power of secondary education might be said to equate to the position that the field of art holds in relation to the field of politics. Just as Bourdieu (1993b) positions the artist as the 'fool', the 'idiot of the bourgeois family' (p.165), art and design may likewise be situated as a necessary 'other' within the school curriculum, a presence that helps to define the logocentric core by setting up an inverted image of its dominator.

iii) As a part of this critical investigation I have sought analogies between the development of literary studies in the first half of the twentieth century and formalism in the visual arts, although I shall also make passing reference to linguistics and semiotics. Through this

multiple, contrapuntal exercise I wish to suggest ways in which the current practices of art education have been produced in relation to parallel discourses in politics and cultural theory, a parallelism that has embedded contrasting philosophies within art education; expressivism (corresponding to humanist theories of selfhood in philosophy and personal growth in psychology) and formalism (corresponding to structuralist methodologies in anthropology and the social sciences). Both can be accommodated by the concept of a creative curriculum and both hold the promise of self-referentiality inviting intrinsic and autonomous definitions. Additionally, both have an idealist, revolutionary wing as well as a more pragmatic, reproductive and instrumental faction.

iv) My choices are limited to instances that I perceive as significant for the history of art education in England, a phenomenon conditioned by the conflicting interests of a developing democratic impetus at home and the economic imperatives of industrialisation and Empire, themselves inextricably bound together. Within this process I inevitably touch on debates around class, gender and race. I choose these because the latter is signaled in the National Curriculum for Art and design (DfEE 1999) in a way that is deeply problematic (as discussed in Chapter 1: 6). The second term, gender, underpins a significant separation in pedagogic philosophy and practice in the nineteenth century (and beyond) when, with the attempt within bourgeois ideology to domesticate women and valorise motherhood, the female presence in early schooling was established; this was to have profound effects on art education (Dalton 2001). The first, class, is implicit within the ‘turn towards a social view of visual culture’, to misappropriate the subtitle of a paper by Gunther Kress (2001), a turn that characterises much writing on art in the last decades of the twentieth century and which is informed by Marxist and/or post-Marxist theory (Hauser 1951; Clark 1973; Bourdieu 1984). My concern then is to consider ‘what the “turn” has been away from’ (Kress 2001: 29) and in so doing to arrive at a definition of what art in education was *then* before considering what it might be *now*.

## **I. Art and the education of the child**

### **From instrumental to creative pedagogies**

1.1 The concept of creativity is currently undergoing a renaissance particularly in education where reports outline its significance for developing both rounded citizens and a skilled labour force (NACCCE 1999; DCMS 2001a). This is simultaneously beguiling and threatening for secondary art and design educationalists. On the one hand, the renewed

interest can do nothing but support the art teacher's traditional role as guardian of creativity<sup>31</sup> (see Atkinson 2002: 138-139). On the other hand, this interest threatens art education because theorists posit creativity as a generic potential applicable to the whole of life and therefore right across the curriculum (Maslow 1968). Inevitably, such redistribution dilutes art and design's traditional role as torch-bearer, indeed, this process of 'democratisation' is a means to question the traditional meanings that had accrued to creativity during the Romantic period (Williams 1965) (particularly those of divine inspiration and madness so necessary for the concept of genius to take hold) or Freud's contention that cultural forms of creativity were a sublimation of the sexual drive (see Arieti 1976). In the rhetoric of contemporary educational and business management creativity has taken on an entirely positive and benevolent resonance, a meaning that is used along with 'innovation' to signal all that is good in practice (Seltzer and Bentley 1999; Rickards 1999). In this way creativity loses any of its specificity and comes to signal positive thinking in general. It could be argued that this benign definition is itself intimately linked to the parallel transformations of the term 'child' (with accruing terms like 'innocent') which together coalesce into the perfect object for educational practice, the open subject of pure potential. I begin therefore by tracing the fortunes of the term creative within the history of modern art education.

1.2 Raymond Williams (1965) usefully examines the changing meanings and fortunes of the term 'creative' in the first chapter of *The Long Revolution*, noting its absence in Greek speculation (here he suggests 'mimesis' is the closest concept) through to the sense of 'newly formed' in the Italian Renaissance (then a near blasphemy) and the Romantic's appropriation of creativity as some natural force peculiar to a particular blessed/cursed person, the artist. However, it is also during the Romantic period that childhood was theorised as a time of potentiality and infinite curiosity. In *Emil* (1762) Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) chose a garden as the ideal learning environment, a benevolent site where the boy/child is free to enjoy sensory experience but where he is also motivated 'to show signs of [his] power and activity by imitation, creation and production' (in Korzenik 1992). He does this by observing and drawing from Nature without the degraded distractions of conventional representations; in this way he comes to *know* rather than imitate the world. During the process, his tutor (a believer in 'negative education') draws with him, all the while (like some sophist) denying his own adult skills by feigning a 'graphic regression' so as not to interfere with the natural progression of his ward. Simultaneously, he collects the boy's awkward, searching drawings in order to frame and sequence them as a demonstration of the growth to maturity, a record that charts the journey from child to 'man'

---

<sup>31</sup> Art teachers have held on to the belief that they have sole ownership of creativity within the core school curriculum because only in art and design do students have the opportunity to express themselves and explore their 'feelings' unconstrained by text (as in English and drama) or hierarchised traditions (as in music).

as a process of personal creativity.<sup>32</sup> However, William Wordsworth (1770-1850), indebted to Rousseau's novel, recalled his own childhood in the 'Prelude: Growth of a Poet's Mind' (1799, 1805, revised 1850) in such a way as to make explicit the need for the artist to retain this natural creativity. But, if Rousseau stressed innate curiosity and coming to know the world through sensory exploration, particularly tactile or haptic exploration, Wordsworth valorised affective responses:

From Nature and her overflowing soul  
I had receiv'd so much that all my thoughts  
Were steeped in feeling; I was only then  
Contented when with blissful ineffable  
I felt the sentiment of Being spread  
O'er all that moves...

(in Wain 1986: 281)

Here, Wordsworth describes a world of emotion and sensibility rooted in pantheistic experience rather than analytical and abstract thinking. Following Rousseau, he is only one amongst two generations of nineteenth century Romantics who stressed 'feeling' as the only way to knowledge, a maxim that was to seep into the pedagogic theories of educators who have since come to be labelled progressives (Abbs 1987).

1.3 In the hands of the progressives Rousseau's ideas were, however, interpreted differently. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) argued that although the young child's immediate sense perceptions were the locus of their creative instincts they required careful nurture and moral direction, for, unlike Rousseau, Pestalozzi became increasingly cynical and saw in the human specimen a wild and selfish creature that required socialisation for productive work. The necessary class distinctions of modern life could only be united through religion, but the apparatus by which the moral order could be established had to begin with the beneficent family. From there, in small, local groupings (schools), the altruism fostered by the good family could be applied to social life and, finally, in a space of reflection, morality could be understood as essential to '*Menschenbildung*' (the formation of man). However, it was not the public figure, the great 'men' of the age, that could instil these values in the young rather it was mothers. In this way the domestic nurturings within the '*wohnstube*' (the living room) were theorised as fundamental to a healthy society. In *How Gertrude Teaches her Children* (1801) Pestalozzi recounted a pedagogic theory in which the teacher must develop 'naturally' the head, body and heart of the child as a harmonic unity. In order to facilitate such unity he recommended learning environments and activities, like the nature walk, that would accommodate all three. However, his manuals are severely didactic and it was Freidrich Wilhelm Froebel (1782-1852) who determined to systematise the 'spirit' of

---

<sup>32</sup> Here is, in embryo, the model of the retrospective one-man exhibition, the mainstay of modernist hagiography and myths of authenticity and individual progress.

Pestalozzi's practice. In 1826 with the publication of *The Education of Man* Froebel interested himself in the 'self-activity' of the child and 'his' natural and motivated curiosity. In 1840 he founded the first 'kindergartens' for 'the psychological training of little children by means of play and occupations' (White in Walsh et al 2001: 96). Froebel defined the purpose of the kindergarten as 'an institution for self-instruction, self-education, and self-cultivation of mankind, as well as for all sided and therefore for individual cultivation of the same through play, creative self-activity, and spontaneous self-instruction' (ibid). In this he was particularly concerned to redress the imbalance of the logocentric curriculum by constructing a child-centred programme in which 'natural' sensory learning took the place of reasoning. Here, drawing was equal to the word in its descriptive powers: 'For the word and the drawing are always mutually explanatory and complementary, for neither one is, by itself, exhaustive and sufficient with reference to the object represented... The faculty of drawing is, therefore, as much innate in the child, in man, as is the faculty of speech...' (in Korzenik 1992: 51). Although for Froebel, drawing was a means by which the 'boy' negotiates his relationship with the world, the fuller and more considered practice of art was something that transcends nature for it draws out of the child all that is already there, art 'in its ultimate unity [is] the pure representation of the inner' (ibid).

1.4 It was in the USA that Froebel's arguments found a sympathetic and fertile response for there the child could be allowed to grow in an untrammelled Eden and could slough off the European skin of convention to develop a truly American spirit, somewhat like Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself' 1855 (see Nash 2001). For John Dewey (1852-1952) that spirit was democratic (1916), nothing but creative action could implant the democratic principle in the young (a notion that is discussed in Chapter 8, 'Critical Pedagogy'). In this continuing tradition in the USA, Victor Lowenfeld (1952) promoted natural creativity as the basis of art education. Like Pestalozzi, he believed that the denial of haptic learning was the cause of underachievement and promoted art as a counter to dominant instrumental and logocentric pedagogies. To indicate the persistence of Lowenfeld's theories as expounded in a later edition written with W. L. Brittan (1964) one has only to notice that the latest edition of *Creative and Mental Growth* is dated 1987. Within this American tradition, the creative potential of each child lost its democratic, ordinary sense, the sense that all learning at a basic level can be defined as creative because it presupposes the assimilation of new knowledge. Additionally, creativity was associated with the artistic field and thus with extraordinary acts. 'Creative' is an adjective often reserved for the discovery or application of knowledge unknown to people within the field or cultural formation from which the discovery/application has taken place (NACCCE 1999). This is why Bourdieu (1993f) can claim: 'What is called 'creation' is the encounter between a socially constituted *habitus* and a particular position that is already instituted or *possible* in the division of the labour of

cultural production' (p. 98). Here, creativity is the property of a 'post' pre-existing the creative individual whose habitus predisposes them to taking it up, or indeed within which they are inscribed, rather than a learning process, the characteristics of which have accrued to such socially and culturally fields of creative production. However, both these readings of creativity have little connection to art education as an emerging discipline within mass education during the Victorian era.

### **Art education in England**

1.5 The dominant form of English art education in the nineteenth century could not be further removed from the progressive model. Swift (1995: 115-127) recounts how from the 1850s education at secondary level was unapologetically designed on the basis of class. The 'poor' were instructed in skills that they could apply to future employment but, in addition, received moral guidance as a means to ensure disciplined and conformist behaviour. Middle class students were instructed in subjects that would provide them with signs of the necessary distinction for management, ownership and rule (e.g. Latin or Greek for boys). The art curriculum, The National Course of Instruction 1852, coordinated by Henry Cole (1808-82), was likewise divided between a programme in which working class students (mostly boys) were required to develop proficiency in mechanical drawing so they could matriculate with the necessary foundational skills for the schools of design (where they had to sign a form agreeing not to pursue fine art), and courses of cultural enrichment where the copying of elevated exemplars inculcated good taste in the middle classes (mostly girls) and potentially enabled candidates for a career in fine art (mostly boys). A long, sequenced and assiduous course of drawing was common to both which, although subtly distinguished in terms of exemplars and appropriate mark making, served a utilitarian function predicated on the principle of accuracy:

Cole's view was that neat straight lines were the bedrock of all drawing, and from the age of four or so children could be schooled in linear, geometric outlines from flat copies and simple solids until they were ready for more complex solids. This was not a view which gained universal agreement [see the quotation at the start of the previous paragraph, 7, and no. 25, for Ruskin's view] but it certainly formed the basis of all children's school drawing until the 1890s, and that of the Art School elementary classes until well into the twentieth century'.

(Swift 1995: 120-121)

Because art and design education in Victorian England was inextricably bound to the economy, industrial (for boys) domestic (for girls), it also served to inculcate and regulate necessary behaviours, those of production and consumption (Dalton 2001: 34-61), and to produce the 'docile body' (Foucault 1977), the morally acquiescent subject that the modern nation state requires. But, from the perspective of the progressive educator, it was not



accuracy but the creative production of the child that was cherished, a productivity that was a sign of innocence and an indication of healthy growth.

1.6 As if he were in league with European progressive educationalists John Ruskin (1819-1900) advised parents and educators to allow children free reign in their early years.

However, unlike his erstwhile forerunners he was quick to inculcate disciplinary measures once children were of an age when entry to adult sociality was pressing:

I do not think it advisable to engage a child in any but the most voluntary practice of art. If it [sic] has talent for drawing, it will be continually scrawling on what paper it can get; and should be allowed to scrawl at its own free will, due praise being given for every appearance of care, or truth, in its efforts. It should be allowed to amuse itself with cheap colours almost as soon as it has sense enough to wish for them. If it merely daubs the paper with shapeless stains, the colour box may be taken away till it knows better... In later years, the indulgence of using the colour should only be granted as a reward, after it has shown care and progress in its drawings with pencil. A limited number of good and amusing prints should always be within a boy's [sic] reach: in these days of cheap illustration he can hardly possess a volume of good nursery tales without good woodcuts in it, and should be encouraged to copy what he likes best of this kind; but should be firmly restricted to a *few* prints and to a few books... They [parents] should praise it only for what costs it self-denial, namely attention and hard work; otherwise they will make it work for vanity's sake, and always badly.

(Ruskin 1857: v-viii)

This induction away from childish things towards a cultivated and moral sensibility was, as has been demonstrated, considered to be the role of the mother (Ruskin admitted that his love of literature was entirely due to the affectionate administrations of his mother as she sat with him as a child reading aloud). The domestication of women in the philosophy of Rousseau and his followers had produced a feminine discourse of the beautiful which:

allowed the expression of tender and subtle emotion, of taste, elegance and smoothness... It was to be this discourse... taught by bourgeois women teachers, which was imported into school as a counter-discourse to the dominance of rational models of drawing. Through the benevolence of the bourgeois woman art teacher, the taste and behaviour of working class children could be elevated and improved.

(Dalton 2001: 44-45)

This somewhat limited and patronising discourse, through which the 'primitive' and vulgar was to be excised, was superseded by a discourse from early years teaching (also dominated by women) that was concerned with the affective and spiritual well-being of the child, an 'emotional labour' (Noon and Blyton 1997) that was a direct legacy of Romantic educational philosophy. The transatlantic exchange was significant here as child-centred European pedagogies infiltrated English education through an American, as well as European, filter in both their progressive and behaviourist forms (Dalton 2001: 65-66).

1.7 Art education in late nineteenth century schools, as opposed to mechanical instruction in drawing, was largely the preserve of women teachers. The Art Teacher's Guild had been founded in 1900 to represent this growing workforce and it enabled women to gain a significant voice in education. Members of the Guild were adamantly opposed to the didactic and instrumental pedagogy of their male counterparts in the National Society of Art Masters, promoting in its place the egalitarian, child-centred pedagogies associated with progressive and liberal education, particularly those of Ebenezer Cooke (c1837-1913) and Franz Cizek (1865-1947) for whom:

art was more than merely *comparable* to other educational disciplines in the curriculum, but was an aspect of human development whose absence impaired mental growth and diminished social fitness. All perceptible ills of society... could be attributed to the suppression of free creativity in children and the encouragement of a substitute, pseudo-creativity in the form of conventional art.

(Thistlewood 1992b: 182)

For the Guild, art education was evidently a historical necessity that could serve to transform the entire nation. It could achieve this because, in childhood, creativity is natural and creativity is the source of all positive change. It was the responsibility of art teachers, and they alone, to develop this natural proclivity rather than suppress it like their erstwhile colleagues. The progressive sequencing of this process, borrowed from psychological models, initially emphasised play and the expression of an 'inner life' through the imaginative transformation of traditional pictorial and craft materials. Only slowly, and only when the child was ready, should s/he be introduced to the conventions and social uses of art so that ultimately s/he could contribute to visual culture from a position of organic integrity rather than conventional inculcation. This evolutionary model of the child suggests that each person is a unique and separate being whose inner-self, essentially a 'spiritual essence' or 'mental construct', is separate from, and potentially contaminable by, social interaction. In this sense it is a model that presents itself as neutral in terms of gender and culture. It has clear affinities with the universal theories of expression being fought over in the field of art production (see Chapter 6: 1.10) in which the artist too was theorised as a unique individual capable of extraordinary feats of the imagination.

1.8 Initially child-centred pedagogies were only loosely connected with those anthropological and colonial discourses (some of which were supposedly paternalistically benevolent) that were simultaneously informing practice in the field of art production. However, through the writings of Roger Fry (1866-1934) progressive art education took on board the continental, universalising discourse of primitivism as well as the potential for formalist interpretation (1909) (3.1). It was largely due to the pedagogic experiments (1915-20) of Fry's champion, Marion Richardson (1892-1946), that a creative model of learning and teaching in art was given lasting credibility in the field of education in England. Fry

observed that ‘all children who had not been taught had got something interesting and personal to say...with keen and unjaded visual appetite. Further, most educated children infallibly lost much, if not all, of this power when they reached the age of complete self-consciousness’ (in Swift 1992: 126) and Richardson’s methods supposedly allowed the ‘unjaded visual appetite’ to be healthily directed to personal fruition rather than constrained and contaminated. Dick Field (1970) suggests that the significance of her methods ‘in the development of art education in this country cannot be overestimated’ (p. 54). After leaving Dudley High School (Birmingham) for London, Richardson’s ideas on the creative child were disseminated widely when she became involved in teacher education and by the 1930s her influence had spread all over the country. This influence was sustained by the publication of her book, *Art and the Child* (1948), which she wrote partly to counter the misinterpretation of her methods, ‘for her famous “descriptions” were travestied by others who did not really understand’ (ibid).

1.9 If the didacticists had had their day in 1918, it was the philosophy of the Guild (by 1940 reconfigured as the Society for Education in Art) that informed the Butler Education Act (1944) and the principle of individual growth permeated the provision for art in this legislation. The most prominent member of the society’s Consultative Committee was Herbert Read (1893-1968) whose psychoanalytically infused understanding of modern art helped to perpetuate the designated role of art education in ensuring a healthy and unified society. Thistlewood (1984) highlights his importance for art education mid-century:

In *Art and Society* [Read 1937] the artist was still an exceptional individual, an otherwise-neurotic who had chanced upon ways of evading this fate by expressing potentially repressed phantasy in plastic or literary form... In *Education through Art* [1943] everyone – that is, every child – is a potential neurotic who may be saved from this prospect if early, largely inborn, creative abilities are not repressed by conventional education.

(pp. 112-113)

This later book, written at a time of war, proved very influential and persuaded a wide public, but particularly teachers, that art practice provided not only a solace but the means by which society could be transformed towards a non-alienated, organic unity. Influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Read promoted the artist as an ‘ideal type’ capable of overriding conventional prejudices, a process central to his redemptive vision of utopia. This type, replicated and multiplied through creative education, would transform the whole population and lead to peace. It is not surprising given Read’s immense stature within the cultural establishment and his ability to communicate to a general audience, that his advocacy provided art education with a compelling rationale and a status that overturned earlier economic and recreational justifications.

1.10 For the traditionalists such speculation was so much ‘tosh’ (see the discussion in this chapter, 2.13 ‘A peculiarly English habitus: no-nonsense common sense’). The split in ideals between progressive and traditional pedagogies was reinforced by the establishment of two professional organisations that perpetuated the old gender divide: the Society for Education in Art (SEA) (formed 1940, previously the Art Teachers’ Guild) and the National Society for Art Education (NSAE) (formed 1944, previously the National Society of Art Masters [NSAM]). The SEA remained entirely persuaded by untutored forms of creativity whereas the NSAE were convinced by the need for a didactic programme. During the war, and immediately after it, the progressives won the argument for art education albeit that practice remained obdurately traditional in many schools. After the war the male members of the NSAE found in Basic Design (3.13) the potential for a new didacticism that could contribute to the masculine endeavours of industrial reconstruction (Dalton 2001: 102-105). Exercises adapted from Basic Design found their way into schools and for a short while transformed the look of school art in some centres. Basic design was therefore the only principled incursion into a pedagogy that upheld a pictorial regime, whether academic or ‘untutored’ (although this was supplemented by traditional craft activities). This regime could not be further from the reductive formalism of Greenberg (the dominant tendency in the field of art production during the same period 1950s and 60s) suggesting the extreme divergence of school art from mainstream developments in associated cultural fields. Despite the cogent advocacy of the progressivists the traditionalists ensured that for many school students, drawing from observation remained the bedrock activity right up to (and beyond) the 1950s, a legacy of Victorian pedagogy where drawing was both a moral and technical prerequisite for good design.

1.11 David Thistlewood estimates that Basic Design was a revolutionary period of creative art education. Pen Dalton (2001) however, convincingly exposes its masculinist credentials and Field (1970) would rather see it, and the period as a whole, as a nadir in British art education, one that, in combination with various expressivisms, almost ruined art and design’s hard-won place in the school curriculum. He notes that it was not until the later 1960s that ‘certain art educators [began] to argue that a truer balance must be sought between concern for the integrity of children and concern for the integrity of art’ (p. 55) (he cites Manzella 1963; Barkan [and Chapman] 1967; Eisner 1968). The scene was set for arguing the case for art as a cognitive and critical, as well as creative, field of study. But the way childhood was idealised as a period of innocent exploration, a necessary and benign prelude to maturity in which creativity and the imagination transform sensory experience into art, provided art teachers with a model of practice which still has its adherents today (Gentle 1985; Bloomfield 2000). This practice has been sustained in continuous dialogue with theoretical developments in the field of art production (Ehrenzweig 1967).

## **II. The dominant modernist traditions in the field of art production**

### **Official discourses**

2.1 By the beginning of the twentieth century the practices of artists were recognised within three dominant discourses, although none of these categories had hard and fast borders: art history, which, as will be shown in Chapter 6, was itself divided into factional discourses such as cultural history and connoisseurship (Ferne 1995); aesthetics, in which post-Kantian and Hegelian theories of the transcendent and autonomous vied for ascendancy (Graham 1997); criticism, divided between nationalist or universalist essentialisms and the newer materialist and politicised aesthetics (Harrison and Wood 1992: 17-216).<sup>33</sup> In Europe the professional production of fine art was equally divided between academic and avant-garde spheres of production.<sup>34</sup> Education in the visual arts was also divided between the fine and applied arts (craft and design) the latter being controlled more directly by government intervention as good design was perceived as essential to economic prosperity, quality exports providing a nation with the competitive edge necessary in the developing global markets (Macdonald 1970).

### **Universalism and Art for Art's Sake**

2.2 Kress (2001) suggests that during the nineteenth century historians of language, like art historians, were also concerned with origins and developments, although the family tree of Indo-European languages provided a different map to the sub-Darwinian grid of early twentieth century art (factual) history (see 2.7 and 2.8). This history of 'ceaseless change' and proliferating fragmentation led theorists to seek some commonality and in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) the question, 'what is a language?' was posed and potentially answered. This newer 'scientific' quest supplanted the old philological questions: 'where do languages come from?' and 'what happens to them?' In the field of art the art historian Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945) for example, invented a system of formal criteria based on binary oppositions: linear/painterly, plane/recession, closed/open, multiplicity/unity, absolute/relative clarity for the purpose of interrogating art works from any period of European history (1915). In this way he was able to universalise differences as products of human psychology rather than historical or cultural determinants or constructs (Ferne 1995: 127).

2.3 Likewise aestheticians attempted to find universal laws for the production of art that could explain how the diversity of production could meet common needs/drives, but their

---

<sup>33</sup> This taxonomy: aesthetics, art criticism, art history, art production, mirrors the categories prescribed in Discipline Based Art Education (Smith 1987) the dominant system of art education in the USA from the 1970s to the present day.

<sup>34</sup> Although in the nineteenth century, the academy (in a variety of forms) was usually the pedagogic institution from which the majority of artists, of any tendency, emanated.

answer was far from scientific. For example, the Edwardians Clive Bell (1881-1964) and Roger Fry drummed up the interrelated notions of ‘significant form’ and ‘aesthetic emotion’, the former being a universal phenomenon that the sensitive viewer is able to discern through a particular effort of taste and through which the latter is aroused. Being universal, the aesthetic emotion bypasses all historical and cultural differences.

That there is a particular emotion provoked by works of art, and that this emotion is provoked by every kind of visual art, by pictures, sculptures, buildings, pots, carvings, textiles, etc., etc., is not disputed, I think, by anyone capable of feeling it. This emotion is called the aesthetic emotion; and if we can discover some quality common and peculiar to all the objects that provoke it, we shall have solved what I take to be the central problem of aesthetics. We shall have discovered the essential quality in a work of art, the quality that distinguishes works of art from all other classes of objects... Only one answer seems possible – significant form... To be continually pointing out those parts, the sum, or rather the combination, of which unite to produce significant form, is the function of criticism.

(Bell 1914: 68)

For Bell, however, only certain individuals possessed the sort of sensibility that could divine ‘significant form’. Of course, these individuals either stemmed from an educated elite versed in the appreciation of art, typical of his own class and field, or from whole peoples, ‘primitives’ (from history), whose sensibilities had not been tainted by the desire for pictorial narrative peculiar to the majority of the Edwardian population and who had thus lived in a state of intuitive aesthetic bliss. Fry (1909) had already argued in ‘An Essay in Aesthetics’ that the reception and indeed production of significant form (although the term was yet to be coined) was more likely to occur when an artist avoided verisimilitude in favour of emotional intensity, a property in which the artist obtains a formal unity where the elements: ‘line, mass space, light and shade, colour’, arouse an avowedly visceral response (1909: 85). However, for Fry, the aesthetic emotion was not a capacity limited exclusively to those within the field, it was a faculty that potentially all could enjoy if only they could challenge their mimetic expectations by trusting their imaginations; this would require education. As an instance Fry provided the image of a child engaged in expressing ‘mental images’; art, he supposed, was the continuation in adults of this faculty: ‘Art, then, is an expression and a stimulus of this imaginative life, which is separated from actual life by the absence of responsive action. Now this responsive action implies in actual life moral responsibility. In art we have no such moral responsibility – it presents life freed from the binding necessities from our actual existence’ (ibid: 81). Art, produced and consumed for its own sake, is the pure freedom of the mind, at once different from and, at the same time, above and beyond the exigencies of everyday life. With this formulation Fry was able to naturalise the ‘pure gaze’ of late nineteenth-century French painting, the aesthetic disposition that Bourdieu (1993d) believed was the dominant aesthetic of the twentieth century: ‘the pure gaze (a necessary correlate of pure painting) is a result of a process of purification, a true analysis of

essence carried out by history, in the course of successive revolutions which, as in the religious field, always lead the new avant-garde to challenge orthodoxy – in the name of a return to the rigour of beginnings – with a purer definition of the genre’ (p. 264). What had been achieved by artists and critics as a historical effort towards autonomy, the construction of a field, was, like the ‘primitive’ within, internalised and universalised by Fry.<sup>35</sup>

### **The resurgence of moral imperatives**

2.4 The aesthetic of Fry and his followers was radically opposed to the advocacy of John Ruskin whose ruminations had dominated the Victorian discourse of the previous century and which Fry (1920) dismissed as ‘a web of ethical questions, distorted by aesthetic prejudices, which Ruskin’s exuberant and ill-regulated mind had spun for the British public’ (in Fernie 1995: 161). For Ruskin art manifests a moral certitude, not only through its content (a literary quality that was anathema to the new aestheticians) but especially through assiduous and loving craftsmanship:

**It has been just said, that there is no branch of human work whose constant laws have not close analogy with those which govern every mode of man’s [sic] exertion. But, more than this, exactly as we reduce to greater simplicity and surety any one group of these practical laws, we shall find them passing the mere condition of connection or analogy, and becoming the actual expression of some ultimate nerve or fibre of the mighty laws that govern the moral world. However mean or inconsiderable the act, there is something in the well doing of it which has fellowship of the noblest forms of manly virtue; and the truth, decision, and temperance, which we reverently regard as honourable conditions of the spiritual being, have a representative or derivative influence over the works of the hand, the movements of the frame, and the action of the intellect.**

... For there is no action so slight, nor so mean, but it may be done to a great purpose, and ennobled therefore; nor is any purpose so great but that slight actions may help it and may be so done as to help it much, most especially that chief of all purposes, the pleasing of God. (Bold as in Ruskin’s original)

(Ruskin 1903: 7-8)

Ruskin’s ‘doing things well’ takes on the force of a prophetic pronouncement in the development of design education at the turn of the century. In some respects Ruskin’s quest to develop an English art that could stand both as an emblem of, and as a didactic support for, English society was taken up by Frank Raymond Leavis (1895-1978) and his followers after the Great War; in other words the ideological function of moral unification that Ruskin envisaged for visual art was transferred to literature.

2.5 Interestingly a concern for English literature had emerged not in the universities but in the Mechanics’ institutes and working men’s colleges (see Eagleton 1983: 26) the very same sites where at the same time Ruskin and William Morris (1834-96) had delivered their

---

<sup>35</sup> The adaptation for art education of Fry’s theories by Marion Richardson has already been discussed (1.8).

lectures on the social role of art and craft. If the linguist was concerned with questions about how language worked and could therefore look at all forms of speech and writing, the literary critic was concerned to take readers and students into the heart of the nation and therefore had to discern the best and reproduce it as a canon (see Matthew Arnold, Chapter 1: 4). If the former is a science, the latter is like religion because it:

works primarily by emotion and experience, and so was admirably well-fitted to carry through the ideological task that religion left off. Indeed by our own time literature has become effectively identical with the opposite of analytical thought and conceptual enquiry: whereas scientists, philosophers and political theorists are saddled with these drably discursive pursuits, students of literature occupy the more prized territory of feeling and experience.

(Eagleton 1983: 26)

In this sense literature has the same objects of study, 'feeling and experience' as traditional, modernist art history, although in schools Leavis' insistence on 'rigorous critical analysis' provided the subject with a sounder methodological basis. The subjects are different too because of the claims made by the key proselytisers of the 1920s, Leavis and Fry. On the one hand, Leavis advocated a sort of retrospective indoctrination, standards of thought and expression which, had they been replicated, would have returned England to the 'organic' and 'agrarian' moral universe of the seventeenth century 'a form of living sensibility without which modern industrial society would atrophy and die' (ibid: 32). On the other hand Fry advocated a progressive pedagogy somewhat indebted to Rousseau (1762) for whom the absolute goodness of 'man' [sic] in his natural state was a repudiation of original sin, for man 'loves justice and order' so that his actions demonstrate that 'there is no original perversity in the human heart; that the first movements of nature are always right' (in O'Hagan 2001: 55). However, for Fry, the moral dimension of Rousseau's philosophy was too close to Victorian moralising and under the influence of 'art for art's sake' he reduced this dimension. With the purging of morality it was no longer goodness but the imagination that constituted the innate and timeless faculty possessed by children, a faculty that could easily be destroyed or inhibited by moral and didactic teaching methods (see Swift's essay on the teaching of Marion Richardson 1992). If art education was to abandon moral instruction the vacuum had to be filled. The word, the English language as used in English literature, was therefore given a national and moral significance in a way that the image had attained only once, and briefly, in British culture through the nurturings of Ruskin's articulations; but this significance was in any case one for which aestheticians no longer argued. It is true that in Matthew Arnold (1822-88) in particular *Culture and Anarchy* 1869, Leavis had a forerunner, but the context was very different 'English as a subject was in part an offshoot of a gradual shift in class tone within English culture: 'Englishness' was less a matter of Imperialist flag-waving than of country dancing; rural, populist and provincial rather than metropolitan and aristocratic' (Eagleton 1983: 37). The crafts movement as it



was sustained in art education up to the 1940s was the equivalent of this tendency although it was both more divided in terms of gender between practices 'appropriate' for girls and boys and more imbricated within modes of production and consumption (Dalton 2001: 49–52; 91–97).

2.6 It was Read (1.9) who was to develop a modernist ethics of art practice in education, an ethics informed by his political and psychoanalytical affiliations (initially one of anarchy, see his novel *The Green Child* 1937). His advocacy of imaginative processes (rather than his political convictions) was to resurface in the 1970s in the work of Witkin (1974) and later Ross (1978, 1984) and Abbs (1987, 1989) whose endorsement of key terms such as 'creativity' and 'imagination'<sup>36</sup> has rejoined the list of skills that should be taught to students in the National Curriculum (DfEE 1999) (as I demonstrate in Chapter 1: 8–11). Here, they symbolically perform their function as signals of universal worth. The work of this group revives the liberal humanism of Leavis (I am thinking of Abbs in particular who comes from a conservative faction within the field of aesthetics) arguing that the arts provide an aesthetic and spiritual counterweight to an instrumentalist, information-driven curriculum. But these appeals to truth in the name of universalism were, and are, profoundly Eurocentric in orientation (see for example Tom Hardy's discussion of Ruskinian racism, 2003). It is therefore necessary to consider theories of a universal aesthetic in the context of colonialism.

### **Art discourses and colonial hierarchies**

2.7 The proliferation of discourses around art and the way in which they were allied to developing nation states and colonial expansion invited a taxonomy in which the visual production of different cultures was categorised along a diachronic axis, each 'civilisation' had its own history (parallel, overlapping or separate) and a synchronic axis, on which each culture (whether 'civilised' or not) was given a position within an evolutionary trajectory. At the top stood European art, the heir of classicism and Christianity but indicative of modernity, followed by 'Oriental' art (especially Islamic), which to the European modernist suggested a development arrested somewhere in the middle ages (a time when in Europe the distinction between the 'cerebral' fine arts and the 'mechanical' applied arts was only just emerging); both the classical and the 'Oriental' had their origins in the primitive cultures of the ancient world. From this point of departure it was possible to go back further, to a time of 'pre-literate' or oral societies which were deemed 'savage'. In retreating so far back the modern observer could paradoxically be brought face-to-face with the present and in the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australasia and Oceania the astonished modern could observe a pageant which to them appeared to belong to prehistory, as if a

---

<sup>36</sup> 'Points de capiton' as Dennis Atkinson referencing Lacan would have them (2002: 139).

people had been ossified in some ordinary moment. In the doctoral thesis of Wilhelm Worringer (1881-1965) *Abstraction and Empathy* (1906) this trajectory is stated explicitly:

The extent to which the urge to abstraction has determined artistic volition we can gather from actual works of art... We shall then find that the artistic volition of savage peoples, in so far as they possess any at all, then the artistic volition of all primitive epochs of art, and, finally, the artistic volition of certain culturally developed Oriental peoples, exhibit this abstract tendency. Thus the urge to abstraction stands at the beginning of every art and in the case of certain peoples at a high level of culture remains the dominant tendency, whereas with the Greeks and other Occidental peoples for example, it slowly recedes, making way for the urge to empathy (1906: 70)

However, a significant worry for Worringer was the contemporary will to abstraction manifest in early modernism, an anti-classical tendency that for him uncomfortably united primitive and modern peoples and therefore needed to be explained away as the product of alienation, a means of spiritual reparation; art thus served to embody the degree to which a society was alienated from nature. In this way, contemporary manifestations of Worringer's quartet: savage, primitive, oriental, western (classical) could be applied to determine the relative position of their makers within a teleological metaphysics of the spirit.<sup>37</sup>

Worringer's polemical method has remained attractive to contemporary writers and even on the Left his manner is still emulated although, as will be seen, there has been an inversion of his metaphysics so that the 'savage' is reconstructed as some kind of ideal (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

### **Universalism, Primitivism and the child**

2.8 The hierarchical arrangement of cultures from savage, through primitive to modern, was simultaneously challenged and reinforced by the intercultural exchanges brought about by colonialism and trade (consider the developing 'markets' between the west and Japan, India and the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century) and by the European aesthetic experiment subsequently termed 'primitivism' (Goldwater 1938 and 1986; Rubin 1984; Rhodes 1994; Sheldon 1996). Primitivism describes a strategy rather than a movement, one by which European artists (initially from the avant-garde) appropriated forms, if not social practices, from those colonised cultures whose peoples were classified as 'primitive'. These forms signalled a certain 'authenticity', a closeness to the earth or the spirit that, of necessity, rejected academic, bourgeois conventions and therefore appealed to those artists who had been seeking alternatives to both the grand traditions of European art and the developing aestheticism, or 'art for art's sake'. The signs of authenticity: decorative and conceptual schema, flattened space, natural materials, un-modulated colour, took on a sort of talismanic

<sup>37</sup> It could be argued that despite the early connection with Expressionism and his later work with the Zionist philosopher Martin Buber 1878-1965 the increasingly conservative and nationalistic tenor of Worringer's writings on German art (from *Lukas Cranach* 1908 and *Form in Gothic* 1911, through to *Deutscher Jugend und Ostlicher Geist* 1924) paved the way for a National Socialist vision of eugenicist aesthetics.

significance because they signified as originary forms, forms that predated the development of graphic marks into different types of inscription, writing/literature, drawing/art, because they were the outcome of the 'instinctual' need to decorate utility objects and/or the traces of pre-logocentric religious ritual, a sort of 'ur' spirituality. For the primitivist these forms were signs of savagery (noble or ignoble) which, harnessed as a non-code, a sort of 'tabula rasa', could undermine and rejuvenate the over-cultivated, decadent art of the west.

2.9 In 1909 Maurice Denis (1870-1943) reported Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) as having said: 'Barbarity is for me a return to youth... I have retreated far, further than the horses of the Parthenon... right back to the dada of my childhood, the beloved wooden horse' (in Harrison and Wood 1992: 51). This sentiment is an early instance of the conflation between an infant and 'savage' aesthetic, a conflation that had already informed the racist ideologies of colonial management (Coombes 1994), and one that produced a taste for the 'naïve' that would complicate practice and especially assessment in art education in the second half of the twentieth century (see Field 1970). Dalton (2001) elaborates:

A theory of recapitulation, in which the growth of the individual (ontology) was seen to parallel the development of the human species (phylogeny) seemed to provide an explanation for gradual change, growth and developmental progress. Education was structured in stages to guide children through what was thought to be their natural ontology. In art education specifically, these developmental approaches can be seen in the influence of modernist art educators such as Franz Cizek, Roger Fry, Marion Richardson and have persisted well into the twentieth century.

(p. 69)

The nobility of regression and or naivety (that is expression uncontaminated by familiarity with convention, pure intuition) remained a central quest of primitivism so that as late as 1948 Jean Dubuffet (1901-85) could apologise for L'Art Brut in the following, by now familiar, terms:

We understand by this works created by those untouched by artistic culture; in which copying has little part, unlike the art of intellectuals. Similarly, the artists take everything (subjects, choice of materials, modes of transposition, rhythms, writing styles) from their own inner being, not from the canons of classical or fashionable art. We engage in an artistic enterprise that is completely pure, basic; totally guided in all its phases solely by the creator's own impulses. It is therefore, an art which only manifests invention, not the characteristics of cultural art which are those of the chameleon and the monkey.

(in Harrison and Wood 1992: 595)

2.10 Within primitivism freedom is no longer conceived along classical lines as the ability of the artist rationally to construct an artefact of composure, on the contrary, real art is devoid of any convention, real art is self-originating and autonomous because it is the direct expression of an essential, asocial self. As such, signs of the primitive, whether appropriated from 'primitive' cultures, children, or people with mental 'illness', were deployed by a

certain faction within the avant-garde throughout the twentieth century and were thus addressed in the discourse of those critics who wrote in close alliance with them, often artists themselves. Hal Foster (1992) elucidates how the European primitivist parodied the 'universal' language of the 'primitive' in an attempt to eradicate difference: 'If evolutionism subordinated the primitive to western history, affinity-ism recoups it under the sign of Western Universalism... in the celebration of human creativity the dissolution of specific cultures is carried out' (p. 24). Modernist art educationalists were thus able to appropriate the metaphor of a universal, primitive unconscious to promote non-didactic and unfettered pedagogies. For art historians, as opposed to critics, the art of 'primitives' was outside their remit, after all it was either prehistory and thus the domain of the anthropologist and ethnographer; or, the art of the 'insane' and the stuff of the clinician and psychoanalyst. Within these other fields different sets of tools were developed for the examination of a variety of visual cultures; art here was not art but specimen, evidence of social structure, or alternatively some aid to diagnosis (respectively, Boas 1927; Levi-Strauss 1955; Freud 1932). Art education could therefore deploy a scientific language borrowed from psychology to support aesthetic practices that were deeply indebted to a primitivist vision (a legacy of Romanticism). In this sense it was also alienated from modernity and therefore entirely at odds with a vocational education for an industrial age (the bedrock of art education in the Victorian period). This tradition requires some explanation.

### **The ideal of childhood**

2.11 In combination, the Victorian legacy, the gradual drip-feed of formalist procedures and the idealisation of the child as the locus of unfettered creativity were to produce a confusing array of possibilities for art education in schools, particularly in the context of an iconosceptic education system that was slow to meet the developing demographic and economic circumstances of post-war, post-industrial, post-colonial society. The idealisation and subsequent appropriation of childhood production in early modernist visual art is where visual art markedly diverges from any parallels with literature. However, childhood is a recurring theme in modernist poetry and novels and something of the condition of childhood is implicit within T.S. Eliot's sense of how good poetry works on readers, not by means of rational, critical deliberation, but by its ability to take possession of them by the 'cerebral cortex, the nervous system, and digestive tracts' (Eliot 1963: 290). Eliot's belief that art could penetrate to 'primitive' levels of the collective unconscious has a clear relationship to Freudian and perhaps, even more, to Jungian theory so that the age of childhood is seen to condition the whole of an individual's subsequent life. In the unconscious, the basic drives were seen to underpin everyone's most urgent desires and fantasies, authentic expressions of the self that were disavowed in bourgeois culture, expressions that aesthetic revolutionaries such as the Imagists in poetry and the Surrealists in the visual arts were intent on revealing;

an exposé of the primitive within. Andre Breton (1896-1966) had recourse to the image of childhood in his first Surrealist manifesto:

From childhood memories, and from a few others, there emanates a sentiment of being unintegrated, and then later of *having gone astray*, which I hold to be the most fertile that exists. It is perhaps childhood that comes closest to one's 'real life'; childhood beyond which man [sic] has at his disposal, aside from his *laissez-passer*, only a few complimentary tickets; childhood where everything nevertheless conspires to bring about the effective, risk-free possession of oneself. Thanks to Surrealism, it seems that opportunity knocks a second time.

(1924: 438)

2.12 Recourse to the image of the child is one trope of modernist aesthetics, an extension of the desire for authenticity that, because of its historical conjunction, presumes analogies between children and 'primitive' peoples. Indeed, a favourite metaphor for colonialism was that of the coloniser as civilising parent protecting and nurturing their 'primitive' wards who, like children, were helpless without the benevolent interventions of mature others. In this way a specious theory of cultural development was conflated with a theory of biological maturation. Interestingly, two of the most liberatory/anarchic philosophers of 'postmodernism', Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) develop, extend, stretch and invert these metaphors in educationally disturbing ways and thereby:

envisage a politics of the Lacanian imaginary. The goal of politics is to return to humankind's freedom, to a sense of being a passionate animal. They glorify the pre-symbolic stage of direct, fusional relationships, of spontaneity, of primitive, unmediated desire. They reject phallocentrism and denounce the family as the bearer of hierarchy and taboo. They look to children, to primitive peoples and most of all, to the mad as examples of people in touch with the power of the pre-symbolic. What these marginal groups are assumed to have in common is that they have not yet been fully 'Oedipalized', that is, that the symbolic has not yet entered them.

(Sarup 1993: 95)

Deleuze and Guattari elevate and idealise the pre-Oedipal to a position where it is doubtful that society can exist at all, certainly society could no longer be a collective construct in which individual desire is regulated by agreed symbolic systems to enable interdependent yet autonomous agents. Their antipathy to systems is not surprising given the anti-structuralist bent of recent French philosophy, even Foucault could assert: 'to imagine a system is to extend our participation in the present system' (quoted in Eagleton 1990: 386). Modernism as the project of the Enlightenment, mass education for the emancipation of the individual and, by extension, society is, in the eyes of Deleuze and Guattari, a giant machine of oppression. Yet their philosophy remains very attractive to people practising in the arts (David, C. and Sztulman, P. 1997; Bonami and Frisa 2003). In this extreme form, art practice and the education of young people necessarily diverge. Such practices are also perceived as antithetical to a dominant English sensibility in which demotic and

establishment discourses conjoin to face off the idealist or absurd fancies of cultural panjandrums (Sewell 1995).

### **A peculiarly English habitus: no-nonsense common sense**

2.13 Closely related to the vernacular or 'folk' tradition of early twentieth century English culture was a prevailing 'no-nonsense' attitude to the arts, whether visual or written, in which a propriety (petit-bourgeois) and an anti-intellectualism (anti-continental) coalesced to ensure an earthy (not obscene) and concrete (non-abstract) English sensibility that persists to this day. Although not an avowedly moral position, it has about it something of the work ethic and a 'morality' based on common sense.<sup>38</sup> In the early part of the twentieth century the task set literary studies was 'to safeguard the robust vitality of Shakespearean English from the *Daily Herald* [a populist newspaper of the day] and from ill-starred languages such as French where words were not able concretely to enact their own meanings. This whole notion of language rested upon a naïve mimeticism: the theory was that words are somehow healthiest when they approach the condition of things, and thus cease to be words at all' (Eagleton 1983: 37). In painting, the ability to picture honestly, already accorded moral credibility by Ruskin a century before (1888: 417), was given a common sense and populist spin by such figures as Alfred Munnings (1878-1959). At his valedictory speech as President of the Royal Academy given in 1949 before the guest of honour Winston Churchill (himself a no-nonsense painter of an earthy sensibility), he opined:

They [Royal academicians] feel that there is something in this so called modern art... well, I myself would rather have, excuse me my Lord Archbishop, a damn bad failure, a bad dusty old picture, where somebody has tried to do something, to have set down something that they have seen or felt than all this feted juggling, this following of, shall we call it the School of Paris. (I hope the French Ambassador is not here tonight)...

But, there has been an interruption to all efforts in art, helped by foolish men writing on the press, encouraging all this damn nonsense, putting all these younger men out of their stride. I, I am right, I have the Lord Mayor on my side [audience laughter]... And, on my left, I have our newly elected, extraordinary member of the Academy, Mr. Winston Churchill, and I know he's beside me because once he said to me, 'Alfred, if you met Picasso coming down the street, would you join with me in kicking his

---

<sup>38</sup> William Hogarth can be credited with the invention of these national characteristics in so far as they are manifest in the visual arts. For example, 'O the Roast Beef of Old England (Calais Gate)' 1748 is the most obviously jingoistic in its scurrilous anti-French sentiments but even in his gentlemanly self-portrait (engraved 1749) national and common emblems are the bedrock of his success. It presents a painting within a painting, a painted self-portrait out of frame (in which he sports both scar and turban). The canvas sits atop and is thus supported by three books: Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton, a configuration that suggests the transferral but continuation of a specifically English literary genealogy to the visual arts. However, to the left foreground sits his pet pug signifying his origins as a man of the people. To the right are the tools of his trade on which floats a plastic realisation of his line of beauty. In reading these elements from left to right (Kress and Leeuwen 1996) it can be deduced that a common man develops his interests through the mediation of a great literary tradition to become a gentleman of sensibility and thus on to produce a new theoretical yet concrete ideal of beauty.

something, something, something?’ [speaker’s and audience laughter] I said, ‘Yes sir, I would!’

(Munnings 1949)

Despite a rumbustious and somewhat faltering (alcoholically induced) delivery, and evidently delighted to have been accepted within the patriarchal establishment (albeit on deferential terms), Munnings’ text provides succinct evidence of a succinct ideology, empiricist in its reliance on sense data, idealist in its patriotism, phenomenological in import. The English artist (male) is a decent fellow whose intentions are clear; he shall paint a tree or a sky as he sees it (perhaps that should be *knows* it), the trees and skies of England (Munnings is careful to provide anecdotal evidence of his own appreciation of skies from particular locations) and without the meddling interference of intellectuals or absurd continental practitioners. No sensible chap could possibly argue. Intuitively, Munnings knew he was right and he was able to validate his intuition because proud men beside him thought likewise. Here, in one of the grandest and most industrialised cities in the world (soon after a massively technologised war during which the resources of empire were tapped to exhaustion and amid the privations of rationing) the myth of an agrarian and bountiful England was eulogised, not in lofty phrases, but concretely; Munnings was as common and four square in words as in pictures.<sup>39</sup>

2.14 This example is just one demonstration of the demotic and populist moral ‘sensibilities’ (to appropriate a term from Geertz 2000) at the heart of the post-war English establishment, in which an increasingly xenophobic, anti-continental faction pitted itself against those working for European integration. In the Thatcher years (1979-1992) this sensibility was systematically appropriated by the Right to become the dominant hegemonic tool in British politics, as Stuart Hall (1988) explains:

The point about popular morality is that it is the most practical material-ideological force amongst the popular classes – the language which, without benefit of training, education, coherent philosophizing, erudition or learning, touches the direct and immediate experience of the class, and has the power to map out the world of problematic social reality in clear and unambiguous moral polarities... Under the right conditions, ‘the people’ in their traditionalist representation can be condensed as a set of interpellations in discourses which systematically displace political issues into conventional moral attributes.

(p. 143)

It must be remembered that it was the Thatcher government that introduced the National Curriculum in an attempt to conserve the traditional curriculum in ‘humanist’ guise so as to

---

<sup>39</sup> Although the analogy might at first seem preposterous, there is something here of Heidegger’s ‘Dasein’ (despite the kow-towing to authority) a sense that knowledge is not produced cognitively through abstract theorising but felt through ‘pre-understanding’, a sort of brute knowledge inextricably bound to the body through *Being in the world*, a condition in which to be a man was to see/be a tree, a tree that was England, subject and object dissolving into national essence.

mask an education system that served to resurrect the Victorian principles of class-based segregation. In other words the common curriculum masked the profound distinctions manifest at the point of delivery (the independent sector did not have to follow the National Curriculum). Hall's conclusion that Thatcherism succeeded because, 'it [was] a form of regressive modernization' a new efficiency in a culture that had 'never, ever, properly entered the era of bourgeois civilization... never made the transfer to modernity' (1988: 164) is equally true of art education in schools during the same period, where a liberal programme of study (open equally to conventional and radical interpretation) masked the 'business as usual' approach of teachers, with the caveat that productivity would double if not treble.

### **Intermediate conclusions**

2.15 The antipathy of the dominant English sensibility to modernism, whether in its primitivist/essentialist or progressive manifestations, produced a ground-swell of anti-intellectual, provincial opinion and behaviour that has since come to be known as 'middle England'. Because the adherents of a primitivist and universal modernism were in such deep opposition to both the allegorical and perceptualist moral values espoused by nineteenth century theorists such as Ruskin, English literature, not art, became the vehicle by which the nation could embody its national characteristics; after all this literature had something of a history which was not entirely dependent on continental import. But the study of art had already been inserted into the disciplinary structures through which the modern nation state was able to produce and maintain its particular identity and, as an Imperial power, Britain could stand somewhat aloof from identity politics at home. The various disciplines that supported the arts replicated the patriarchal, social hierarchies of Empire onto the cultural plane, so that the material practices of 'primitives' and 'folk', women and children, were categorised outside art. That some intellectuals thought otherwise was, to common-sense thinkers, indicative of their lack of moral fibre. The subsequent development by the same intellectuals of a theory of universal creativity, in parallel with the burgeoning of social science, had the effect of levelling the cultural field in such a way that these same outsider practices became 'absurdly' valorised. In contradistinction, the common sense character of the English child could only be refined without fear of corruption by an induction into a literature that was at once real and elevated, a literature that provided a unified vision that was both sustaining at home and worthy of export to the colonies. Modernists were perverse in so many ways, the values they held were continental in origin and, paradoxically they either appropriated the forms of inferior, primitive conventions or were given to a love of abstract thinking at its most arcane. In the field of visual education, from the introduction of The National Course of Instruction in 1852, the slavish and mechanical copying of



exemplars was a process that dominated teaching outside the academy (although of course it had its place there too) right through to the mid-twentieth century and was a way to inculcate the observant, patient behaviour necessary for the myriad draughts'men' who served bureaucracy and industry, although Ruskin disapproved of this practice in no uncertain terms:

Understand this clearly: you can teach a man [sic] to draw a straight line and to cut one; to strike a curved line and to carve it; and to copy and carve any number of given lines or forms, with admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind but if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks, and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool.

(Ruskin in Clark 1982: 281-282)

In the academy, the function was equally transparent, to reproduce the elevated and morally efficacious pictorial traditions of the Victorians. In the twentieth century these instrumental roles found their way into mass art education. Here, the training was vocational and its purpose clear, even more so after the Great War when the commercial threat of a reindustrialised Germany set politicians into reforming educational provision. As Thistlewood (1992b: 183) makes clear in the (Fisher) Education Act (1918) local education authorities were given the responsibility to provide post-school training in support of craft and design industries. But in the theoretical (and continentally inflected) wing of art education, particularly in the writings of Fry, Richardson and Read, this instrumentalist bedrock was threatened by idealist principles in which creativity became the guiding principle. As I have demonstrated, the conflict between national and continental imperatives had its gendered implications for art education, as a skills-based pedagogy was replicated by the National Society of Art Masters and a holistic, creativist pedagogy was developed by the Art Teachers' Guild (a collective dominated by women and figure headed by leading modernist theorists, from Fry to Read). Only one aesthetic concept, formalism, united these factions, as both reified the visual elements of representation in such a way that it was possible to extract line, tone, texture, etc. from their application, respectively, to mimesis and creative impulse. Thus in art and design the 'basic elements' provided a middle way, a hook on which programmes of study could be hung without fear of factional censure.

### III. The relationship between the fields of art and art education

#### Formalism and the restricted field of production

3.1 Fry, building on the Symbolist theories of Maurice Denis, had already provided an inventory of formal elements,<sup>40</sup> and they were variously adapted, extended and reduced throughout the century. A generation after Fry the formal elements were to become the focus of a more puritan sensibility. The American critic Clement Greenberg (1909-94), in an essay 'Towards a Newer Laocoon' first published in *Partisan Review*, VII, no. 4 (1940) (reproduced in Harrison and Wood 1992: 554-560), proposed a formalism in which western art was to undergo a purifying process out of which it would emerge stripped of all matter irrelevant to its essence. In this formulation art becomes either painting, which is flat, shaped and coloured, or sculpture, which is plastic, shaped and textured, nothing more, nothing less; art no longer has to represent anything, it is itself, a necessary moment in a teleological struggle: 'The history of avant-garde painting is that of a progressive surrender to the resistance of its medium; which consists chiefly in the flat picture plane's denial of efforts to "hole through" it for realistic perspectival space' (p. 558). Like Saussurean semiology the fundamental interest for Greenberg was in the system: 'what are the elements of the structure... and what are the relations between the elements?' (Kress 2001: 30). But, unlike Saussure, for Greenberg the answer did not lie in the sign, for the elements of art signified nothing but themselves, pure matter freed from reference.<sup>41</sup>

#### Formalism and the meeting of fields

3.2 Greenberg promoted a branch of high modernism that within the field successfully divorced 'good' art from any instrumental or referential role, one that separated it out from the material base of economic and political life and placed it squarely within the super-structure. For Michael Fried writing in 'Three American Painters' (1965), this position was still a moral one: 'The formal critic of modernist painting, then, is also a moral critic, not because all art is at bottom a criticism of life, but because modernist painting is at least a criticism of itself' (in Frascina and Harrison 1982: 119). Bourdieu (1993c) affirms this analysis but without the moral gloss:

By an effect of circular causality, separation and isolation engender further separation and isolation, and cultural production develops a dynamic autonomy. Freed from the censorship and auto-censorship consequent on direct confrontation with a public

---

<sup>40</sup> A necessary litany at the time as Fry was trying to help his audience understand that pictorial art is not a mirror but a construction in which distinct elements combine to produce a representation, he was concerned with how these elements worked.

<sup>41</sup> Although Saussurean semiology is often accused of ignoring the referent, that is the object of the sign. However, parallels between the structure of language and the structure of visual representation had and were being explored by some visual artists and art historians, for example, Magritte (see Gablik 1972) and Schapiro (1937), but a more collective and concerted examination of this relationship had to wait until the 1970s/1980s, by artists such as Art and Language, Barbara Kruger and by art historians such as Bryson (1981), Alpers (1983) Mitchell (1986).

foreign to the profession, and encountering within the corps of producers itself a public at once of critics and accomplices, it tends to obey its own logic, that of the continual outbidding inherent to the dialectic of cultural distinction.<sup>42</sup>

(p. 115)

Just as Fry had been influential in the USA<sup>43</sup> Greenberg was a messianic force in England, his type of formalism dominating 'advanced' thinking in British art schools through the second half of the 1960s up to and including the 1970s.<sup>44</sup> Within the restricted field of art production, Greenberg's advocacy therefore effected an almost Calvinist censorship. Unsurprisingly, not all students who aspired to the field attained the legitimacy to remain in it. Those students (probably thousands) who had been trained under his tenets soon found themselves working in the field of education, the profession that in the arts (and perhaps even more the humanities) mops up the surplus of those who cannot afford to produce symbolic goods in a highly competitive and restricted market (see Bourdieu 1993 for a parallel situation in France). They found themselves teaching in colleges of further education (a burgeoning sector in the 1960s and 1970s) and in secondary schools where the tenets under which they had been trained quickly succumbed to formulaic procedures and assessable outcomes (see Atkinson 2002: 106-107). Alternatively, Greenberg's tenets appeared irrelevant when faced with the realities of popular expectations and an examination system in which the assessment procedures in no way acknowledged the 'pure gaze' in the form of abstraction.

3.3 Pictorial formalism has been mutated, reduced and disguised in secondary art and design and is often hidden behind other types of programme. For example, a head of an art and design department today may divide up the first two years of KS3 into termly outings into line, tone, colour, shape, texture, form, finding a suitable technical process for each, respectively: pencil drawing/mono-printing, charcoal drawing and collaged rubbings, painting, collage, drawing/shallow relief, ceramic modelling. Such a formalist/technical programme is provided with a theme that may be used across all years for ease of resourcing, a theme often taken from previous GCSE examinations, e.g. reflections, inside/outside, terms that can be interpreted widely but are often resourced with objects that insist students begin by observing and representing primary sources, e.g. a self-portrait seen on the convex surface of a spoon or kettle, cut fruit or disused pieces of electronic gadgetry. This visual

---

<sup>42</sup> What Bourdieu omits from this analysis however, is the extraordinary power invested in the high priests and secret societies of this network, in other words the logic of the field is not entirely determined by its own structural necessities. It is possible that the 'outbidding' can be open to variation, idiosyncrasy and redirection by charismatic figures and from collective resistance (for example the Situationists in France, Joseph Beuys in Germany Kaprow in the USA, Judy Chicago and other feminists internationally and most recently Hans Haacke (who has collaborated with Bourdieu), all of whom, in some way, were intent on dismantling the field of vested interests described by Bourdieu in 'The Market of Symbolic Goods').

<sup>43</sup> Influential as curator of paintings at Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1906-10.

<sup>44</sup> In the teaching of Anthony Caro, Greenberg's anointed saviour of sculpture, his influence was sustained. Caro's programme at St. Martin's School of Art was avowedly formalist and he contributed to the formation of taste as a judge on a number of national competitions, including Liverpool John Moores University).

record ('objective') is then subject to variation, for example, of material processes (extending technical skills such as mono-printing, clay relief) and/or style (enabling 'subjective' responses through expressionist and/or abstracted elaboration). The requirement to make reference to the work of others (DfEE 1999: 21) means that 'appropriate' artists' work is shown in reproduction and becomes the focus for transcription and pastiche (Hughes 1989). In a sense students are acculturated through familiarity into the dominant codes of proto-modernist and modernist European painting and the 'conservative' retrenchments and reactive practices that are a product of modernity without understanding that they are codes; for them they are records of reality, appearances and feelings (see Chapter 6 and the discussion of isomorphism and expressivism). Assessment is therefore based on technical competence and the ability to represent mimetically or with 'expression'. Although the curriculum appears to be being led by a thematic impulse, the theme is really a prop on which to deliver a formalist/technical programme.

### **Basic Design: from the restricted field to the field of mass production**

3.4 Greenberg's was not the only modernism within the field of art production to be imported into England. Earlier, the founder of the Bauhaus (1919–1933), Walter Gropius (1883–1969), had been quick to acknowledge his indebtedness to the socialist vision promulgated by theorists within the English Arts and Crafts movement, particularly Morris (1883). It is therefore not surprising, after the emigration of Bauhaus personnel and principles to the USA during the mid to late 1930s, to encounter in England a variation of Bauhaus practice after World War II. In the Bauhaus experiment an attempt had been made to ally modernist aesthetics and pedagogy to inform 'building' (Gropius was, after all an architect), in this sense it was an attempt to transfer an aesthetic from the restricted field (albeit of design) to the field of mass production. In line with the socialist principles that underpinned its philosophy the Bauhaus aimed to improve the built environment in order to transform society, an effort that, unlike the Arts and Crafts movement, was not necessarily antagonistic to new technologies and thus potentially applicable to industrial production. In practice this ambition was not fulfilled for, despite the dream of a unified and unifying social art, as the Bauhaus developed the various artists/pedagogues tended to factionalise and 'the increasing specialisation of architecture in particular... resulted in the separation of the disciplines into 'purist camps' (Meecham and Sheldon 2000: 45). In this way, and with its transportation to the USA, the Bauhaus can be seen to have opened up a theoretical space answered by Greenbergian aesthetics. England as a host destination for émigré Jewish and/or left-wing intellectuals during the Nazi purges tended to attract a less radical, more bourgeois immigrant, one comfortable with the conservative establishment and assimilable within developing academic fields (e.g. Hans Eysenck, psychology; Ernst Gombrich, art history; Nikolaus Pevsner, architecture; Karl Popper, history; see Anderson 1969). Thus,

Bauhaus formalism in any organised sense arrived late to Britain in the 1950/60s exported from the USA (earlier, more local applications are discussed by Thistlewood 1992a). Its English disciples drew heavily on the pedagogic writings of Paul Klee (1879-1940) and Lazlo Moholy-Nagy (1895-1946) to initiate post-school courses that collectively became known as the Basic Design movement (see Thistlewood 1992a and Lynton in Thistlewood 1992). The exercises in formal and material experimentation encouraged within this pedagogy were intended to support individual aesthetic experience and originating activity and thus to inform design for better living. But the 'abstract' results were often superimposed on structures, both physical and social, that were resistant (as an example see Passmore's architectural experiments at Peterlee, Walker 2003: 18). Significantly, a little before the modernist impositions were put into effect, the 'low' half of resistance was given credibility through an exhibition at the Whitechapel art gallery 'Black Eyes and Lemonade' (1951) in which vernacular and popular arts were displayed; the demotic 'cocking a snook' at the aesthetics of the restricted field.

#### **IV. Counter culture and critical studies**

4.1 What I have recounted in sections 1, 2 and 3 suggests a continuing pedagogic tradition in England, loosely humanist and liberal, that refers to art as a mark of distinction, a means by which to separate the child from the adult, the civilised from the primitive, the sensible and morally efficacious from the absurd or degenerate. To be more specific, it is an account of the development of art education in which an instrumentalist, reproductive curriculum was produced through an alliance between those attempting to universalise patriarchal power by the construction of a unifying cultural canon and those determined to conserve it through the production of capital; the first generating a respectful and dependent population, the second demanding a compliant and diligent workforce (men and women in their respective spheres). This alliance was in dialectical tension with the 'emancipatory', holistic rhetoric of essentialist discourses (especially primitivism) which, in contradistinction, produced a creativist, and solipsistic cultural experiment, pluralising in its effects. The latter was undoubtedly one strategy employed by the avant-garde, but in its essentialising, transcendental tendencies (spiritual or psychological) and, unlike the critical traditions that developed from Marxism, direct transformation of the material conditions of social production was neglected in favour of utopian dreams of 'Education for Peace' (Read 1950) or 'Art Education for Life' (Anderson 2003). This celebration of innate goodness and creativity in the face of social catastrophe was in marked contrast, for example, to the melancholic insights of Benjamin (1936) or the astringent denunciations of Adorno (1970). In this account it is evident that modernism was formed through contradictory projects and

actions, far from the monolithic grand narrative that it is sometimes painted to be. For example, through its revolutionary rhetoric the male bourgeois subject liberated himself from aristocratic patronage while simultaneously preserving patriarchal power (capital/culture) through the oppression of the colonial, female and proletarian 'other'. Similarly, in rhetoric, democracy enabled the people to voice their individual needs while in practice male bourgeois subjectivity was universalised and secularised and became the dominant discourse of the public sphere. If culture was the preserve of 'universal man', the scopic regimes of the sciences were the apparatus by which 'others' were objectified and particularised, these same 'others' (in Foucauldian terms produced through discourse, 1990) in turn resisting patriarchy by forming their own liberatory rhetoric and counter cultures. It was within modernism that a technologised dream of material progress was promoted as the means by which the masses could be emancipated. But this dream was anathema to an alienated intelligentsia who saw in it a false teleology that required a counter-valorisation of the 'primitive' condition, a condition through which a 'natural', non-alienating, pre-technologised authenticity could be retrieved. Nonetheless, it is because of these contradictions, not despite them, that modernism holds within itself the promise of its own renewal with its constant dialectical interplay of opposites and perpetual shifts in power relations. But, perhaps more importantly, it is modernism's built-in critical agenda that provides a mechanism by which it can signal progress through constant generational transformation (Foster 1996) and it was with the formation of the avant-garde that an 'institutional' counter culture was contrived to achieve this (Oedipal?) impulse, what for Bourdieu constitutes the field's cynical 'outbidding inherent to the dialectic of cultural distinction' (1993: 115).

4.2 The critical tradition, profoundly connected to the socialist agendas of the nineteenth century, was a significant force in cultural politics throughout the twentieth century in Europe, one that abandoned the utopian retrospection of the Arts and Crafts movement in favour of analytical critique. But because its methods depended on negation it failed to have much impact on art education in England before the coalescence of cultural studies as an interdisciplinary academic field in the 1970s (see McRobbie 1999: 78). Admittedly, the Socratic tradition of dialogic enquiry (Abbs 1994), and the liberal humanism which could be argued as its successor (see Manzella 1963; Barkan 1967; Eisner 1968) was injected into art education at an earlier date (in English art colleges art history became a mandatory field of study for all 'practical' students in 1963, see the Coldstream Report 1960). But in England this injection was motivated by the desire of influential academics (as the art college moved from Further to Higher Education) to overturn the anti-intellectualism I have already identified (2.13); it was not about social transformation, it was more to do with disciplinary status.

4.3 Stuart Hall (1999a) reminds readers that Raymond Williams associated the development of cultural studies in Britain with the adult education movement of the 1940s, in other words (like its Victorian predecessor, the Working Men's College) a cultural site where a marginalised majority (women and working class men) could develop a political voice. However, Hall suggests that 'cultural studies has multiple discourses; it has a number of histories' (p. 99); anti-racist, feminist, gay-liberationist, working class. But peculiarly, in Britain from 1956, a generation of activists had found Marxism a 'problem' and specifically because of its Eurocentricity. Hall, drawing on the Prison Notebooks (1971) by Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), understands cultural studies as a political project, one in which the 'organic intellectual' would have to recognise their pedagogic role as agents of social transformation; as such the historical specificity of the post-colonial, potentially post-patriarchal age, with its massive diasporas and injustices, would have to frame both theoretical and political work. In art colleges the introduction of complementary and liberal studies in the late 1960s accommodated both art history and the developing cultural studies. These two theoretical wings, uncomfortably co-encamped, were witness to an institution that symbolised the radical changes occurring outside as Britain emerged post-war as a plural and increasingly democratic society; of the two camps the one was horrified by the incursion of low cultural forms while the other could begin to believe that its project was securely underway. Unlike the self-referential debates within aesthetics, cultural studies 'is an intellectual even a theoretical practice driven less by its own theoretical project than by its engagement with, its attempt to respond to the demands of, a world outside the academy' (Grossberg 1994: 2). It isn't that artists were not at the forefront of intercultural exchange, were not attempting radical reconceptualisations of the relationship between artist and society (consider The Situationists in France, Kaprow in the USA, Joseph Beuys in Germany, Arte Povera in Italy, Hélio Oiticica in Brazil, Fluxus internationally and, more recently, feminist interventions) but despite the pedagogic efforts of some in this list, schools, and particularly art education in England, was entirely immune, that is insulated, from what was happening out there. At one moment in 1972, when John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* was broadcast as a television series, critical approaches appeared possible even within the primary sector, but the forces of tradition were quick to dampen any enthusiasm for his project (see Hildred in Thistlewood 1989: 44; Taylor, B. 1989: 100-112) and it should be remembered that the patrician *Civilization* of Kenneth Clark (1903-83) had been even more popular in 1969 a series repeated soon after and still available on video format.<sup>45</sup>

4.4 With the introduction of critical and contextual studies as a mandatory element in art and design (DFE 1991), it could be argued, that a cultural studies project of inquiry was inserted

---

<sup>45</sup> 'Civilization' fame lives on, for example it is the only visual arts programme to appear in the Radio-Times' 'A-Z of 40 all-time TV greats' (Graham 2003: 16).

into an insular and resistant curriculum in the hope that teachers and students might engage with the 'out there'. The reasons for this 'imposition' have been documented by Thistlewood (1989) and Dawtrey et al (1996) amongst others, and such terms as 'visual literacy' (Raney 1997) were coined to indicate the investigative and transformative aims of critical studies. However, the earlier formulation by the London and East Anglia Group for GCSE Examinations (1988) demonstrate that the critical skills envisaged were generic and collated to afford art and design a cognitive credibility (see also Gretton 2003); other apologies for its 'integration' include 'connoisseurship' (Eisner 1976) and 'informed consumption' (Robinson 1989), indicating that the aims could in other respects just as easily affirm the status quo of a liberal, reproductive education. As a part of the National Critical Studies in Art Education Project (1981-84) the pioneering work of Rod Taylor at Wigan (1986) convinced sceptical art teachers that the project might nonetheless inform and enrich making. Dennis Atkinson (2002: 104) attributes to Taylor's influence the move in mandatory art education from a child-centred pedagogy to one informed by 'socio-cultural' concerns. He also suggests that in order to service the needs of teachers and students in the management of the new 'critical curriculum', gallery and museum education departments became significant forces within institutions that had up to then been resistant to resourcing schools. But Taylor's contribution was seriously under-theorised and apolitical and his work has been reduced to universalising formulae that rehearse the very modernist myths that cultural studies, in the context of the National Curriculum, needs to question (1999). More pertinent perhaps was the contribution of art educationalists to the AEMS project (Mason 1995) which, with the political will and resources of such institutions as the Inner London Education Authority, made real inroads into anti-racist education. But during the last years of the Thatcher government any educational opposition to a petit bourgeois view of culture as something elevated and efficacious was largely eradicated and in this sense it became irrelevant except for the converted or the seriously aspirational. Cultural consumption no longer required 'Culture' whatever the teachers were saying, as John Willis (1990a) put it:

The field of education is likely to come under even more pressure. It will be further marginalized in most people's experience by common culture. In so far as educational practices are still predicated on traditional liberal humanist lines and on the assumed superiority of high art, they will become almost totally irrelevant to the real energies and interests of most young people and have no part of their identity formation. Common culture will, increasingly, undertake in its own ways, the roles that education vacated.

In so far as education/training becomes ever more subordinated to technical instrumentalism and to the 'needs' of industry, it will be seen as a necessary evil to be tolerated in order to obtain access to the wage in order to obtain access to leisure and consumption and their cultural energies...

(p. 147)



## Critical studies in art and design

4.5 Although the case for critical studies has long been made and is now enshrined in legislation, the way in which it has entered art and design in schools has been entirely ad hoc, and this serendipity has always been taken as a liberal given rather than as a contingent construct deserving analysis (as it would be in a cultural studies project). Dalton (2001) refers to this process as ‘the cumulative curriculum’ and she is critical of the lack of its main protagonists to provide a clear agenda, referring to the most recent survey of the field, *Critical Studies and Modern Art* (Dawtre et al 1996) in the following way:

There is no explicit stated project... there is no editorial map of the different intellectual genealogies and ideological perspectives from which each position has been formed... It falls back on the modernist consumerist concept of ‘freedom of choice’, bricolage, and the liberal acceptance of all perspectives as ‘equal but different’... [She concludes] The art curriculum allows for choice and diversity but its knowledges and practices have become fragmented and disassociated from one another, the reasons why they were introduced to the curriculum in the first place have been hidden.

(p. 116)

Without clearly identified aims invested in the ‘knowledges’ and values of those employed to teach it is not surprising that the case for extra-visual, critical, contextual and historical study in the form of critical studies has not been wholeheartedly accepted by art teachers themselves. The self-reflexive, critical turn of modernism remains absent in schools so that at the beginning of a new millennium the critical curriculum can be said to be a truly truant one. That this doesn’t have to be so is evidenced in isolated cases known, for example, to PGCE tutors in partnership with secondary schools,<sup>46</sup> Ofsted inspectors (although they are avowedly happy with the general situation; see Jones 1998), local education authority subject advisors (where they exist) and others in the privileged position of access to practice. These instances are gradually becoming accessible to public scrutiny through opportunities for teachers to research their own practice within research degrees and/or action research projects (e.g. Trowell 1999; Howatt 2002). What is probably needed on a pragmatic level is a series of texts and other resources produced collaboratively between artists, educationalists, teachers and theorists to provide explanations and demonstrations of critical study in action, learning resources that, before publication, should be trialled, reviewed and revised with students in schools. It would be important, as Dalton argues, for the authors to state their aims and ideological positions so that readers/users might begin to question the prejudices of the authors, an ethical dimension that in school text-books usually remains hidden. It would be equally necessary to demonstrate that the published test cases were not reproduced as exemplars for regurgitation, but should stand as models of practice to be

---

<sup>46</sup> For example, my three PGCE colleagues and I at the Institute of Education, University of London, have identified only four partnership art departments out of approximately one hundred where the curriculum can be said to be critical in anything but a vestigial sense.

applied to research determined by students and teachers in their situated contexts. As this process of transfer tends not to happen, it would be important to update and bring new texts to the series. If this is a pragmatic solution to the truancy, in the next chapter I further examine what actually happens and doesn't happen in schools in the name of art and design and I also consider the possibility of an interdisciplinary alliance within the cultural field that could help construct a critical art pedagogy.

## 6. The Interpretation of Art: practices for and against

### Introduction

i) In this chapter, I shall examine the resistance to the critical curriculum as it pertains to the instructional rather than regulative discourses in the secondary school art room (Bernstein 2000) before looking at the disciplinary fields that engage with the interpretation of art. This resistance did not spring from nowhere and in the first section I explore its genealogical formation (I have already noted a peculiarly English resistance to the intellectualisation of art in Chapter 5: 2.13).<sup>47</sup> As in the last chapter, I shall examine attitudes in schools to the critical discourses emanating from the field of art and the extent to which they inform one another. Predictably these attitudes are socially and culturally embedded and, drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984; 1993c), I shall look at the processes of en- and acculturation through which the interpretation of art becomes a social necessity for some, an alien or ‘symbolic act of violence’ for others. Although this middle section is an examination of the social effects of interpretative communities, its ‘neutral’ position, sandwiched between the anti and pro-interpretation camps, is not neutral at all. I place it there as a sort of continuation of the anti-interpretative camp because Bourdieu sees interpretative discourses in the field of art as entirely at the service of hierarchised social relations. He doesn’t appear to credit artists or others within the field, whether that of restricted or mass production, with the weight to resist hegemonic power in any effective way. As such, interpretation within his world cannot support a critical and radical art curriculum in schools. I use Bourdieu as my main point of reference because he is so valorised in the field of social studies. But, his analysis is historically and culturally situated and I suggest that if an art educator were to accept Bourdieu’s analysis as true, then the critical dimension of art and design should be abandoned because it could never be anything other than a cynical exercise in social humiliation. Many of the attitudes presented in this chapter are already implicit within the pedagogic practices outlined in the previous chapters and can be characterised as ‘against interpretation’, that is against the imposition of methods of interpretation that could interfere with the ‘natural’ and thus ‘universal’ processes involved in developing such innate faculties as the, ‘aesthetic emotion’ (Bell 1914). As with intuitive, creative ‘making’ this emotion only requires opportunity not the mediation of teachers. Alternatively, within the anti-interpretative camp, art serves to mirror, to re-present in pictorial form, and this too has been theorised as a non-cognitive process of perception.

---

<sup>47</sup> This middle-England resistance appears to be somewhat different to the taste of ‘middle-brow’ consumers in France, as analysed by Bourdieu (1984 and 1993c) whom he finds tend to defer to legitimised forms while not partaking in their pleasures.

### **A climate of suspicion and resistance**

ii) The intrusion of writing into this proudly image-based curriculum has produced a palpable climate of suspicion amongst art teachers (Addison et al 2003). Within the central enterprise of making, the interpretation of art (the work of recognised artists not students) is often marginal if not ignored. When interpretative work is attempted the experience can be negative for all involved, a sign of criticality presented reluctantly, front-loaded, teacher delivered or directed and, until sixth form, unsystematic, ahistorical and superficial. Sometimes, perhaps annually, a visit to a gallery or museum is organised as a means to stimulate critical enquiry and to engage students in interpretative discussion. As such this may be the only occasion in the year when students are expected to contribute to art and design in this way and only then when an interpretative session is provided by a member of the gallery education department (Robins and Woollard 2001). It is quite usual to find that visits are not organised until GCSE, in such cases students at Key Stage 3, the mandatory period of specialist art education in secondary schools, are excluded altogether. When they do occur, the gallery visit may relate to a curriculum project only to a limited extent, for example by providing an opportunity to collect visual 'data': cursory sketches, drawings of fragments of art objects and other artefacts chosen for their visual appeal or their association with a given 'theme', and, at GCSE, an opportunity to annotate throughout (a requirement for the examination board Edexcel). These drawings are sometimes abandoned, filed in sketchbooks, or they may become a source for exercises in pastiche (Hughes 1989) and formal variation. As I have discussed elsewhere (Addison 1999a) what here purports to be critical study can in no way be deemed investigative; there is a pervasive reluctance and, in some instances, resistance to the critical dimension of the art curriculum.

iii) Given the dichotomy between the resistance in practice described above and the legislated consensus outlined towards the close Chapter 5 (4. 4), here I look at attitudes to the interpretation of art in the secondary school curriculum (no doubt canonical, see QCA 1998) focusing on the subject art and design. I choose to highlight the term 'interpretation' to signal the critical activity that best encapsulates a process that already occurs in art departments, albeit limited to basic formalist analysis and occasional forays into the explication of pictorial meaning<sup>48</sup> (the latter usually occurring only when a teacher has had an art historical training). Any process of interpretation inevitably raises questions about the use of language to describe, analyse, interpret and evaluate works of art. I therefore examine the types of language and discourse that circulate in the field of art and discuss their applicability to secondary art education. In particular I take the opportunity to explore the dominant interpretative field, art history, a discipline that some art teachers perceive as

---

<sup>48</sup> See the advice given by Rod Taylor 1986: 38-39 and Bob Clements 1986, the most frequently referenced books specifically aimed at art teachers (QCA 1998).

synonymous with critical studies. This perception, and art teachers' lack of the requisite knowledge and skills,<sup>49</sup> is one possible reason for the absence of a critical dimension.

## **I. Traditions against interpretation and their popular descendants**

### **The mirror of nature, surrogate to texts, equivalence for feeling**

1.1 If 'the naturalness of the image makes it a universal means of communication that provides a direct, unmediated, and accurate representation of things, rather than an indirect, unreliable report about things' (Mitchell 1986: 79), interpretation (other than that which decodes the image as a surrogate language, the exposition of narrative and the decoding of symbols) is redundant. This notion has a long and distinguished pedigree (ibid: 75-94) but it entails assumptions and misconceptions that are perhaps understandable in their historical specificity. Here 'image' alludes to pictures, pictures of a mimetic cast, a representation, not the material, spatial, temporal artefacts that might be produced by the decorative, abstract or conceptual artist. The paradigm of the picture, the privileging of illusion, also has a long pedigree, but it has too a persuasive counter-argument, the notion that 'truth' lies beyond appearance, that illusionism is mere trickery (see Williams 1965, on Plato; Coomaraswamy 1956, on medieval proscription; Besançon 2000, on puritanism). Plato has been called upon to support both contentions. In his *Cratylus* (1926) he establishes a hierarchical difference between 'natural' and 'conventional' signs that privileges the mimetic over the arbitrary: 'representing by likeness the thing represented is absolutely and entirely superior to representation by chance signs' (p. 169). In *The Republic*, a later work, the imitative painter is banned from his ideal state: 'The artist's representation is therefore a long way removed from the truth... a charlatan whose apparent omniscience is due entirely to his own inability to distinguish knowledge and ignorance, reality and representation' (Plato 1955: 374-375; Book 10: 598).

1.2 In *The Republic* Plato clarifies this change of heart by positing a duality, that between noumena and phenomena. A noumenon is that which is intelligible, that which becomes available to consciousness through verbal thought whereas a phenomenon is that which is revealed to sight. (Plato 1955: 274-277; Book 6, 509-510) Thus, within Plato's dualism, this dichotomy is hierarchical; noumena are objects of the highest knowledge, truths and values. The image as an illustration of the word is able to support language (philosophy not literature) but is considered inadequate as an alternative, indeed it is only through the

---

<sup>49</sup> Because art history is an academic discipline, many art students perceive it as alien to their needs. As Bourdieu (1993c) points out when comparing the backgrounds of producers from complementary fields of art 'everything points to the fact that the proportion of contemporary producers having received an academic education is far smaller among painters (especially among the more avant-garde currents) than among musicians (endnote 17; p. 291).

mediation of words that people come to understand (rather than experience) those aspects of the image that elude iconicity and illustration. Thus in theory, by the twentieth century, the word (in the form of speech) had become both conceptually primary and representationally arbitrary (Saussure 1983) producing a distance between it and the perceptual world of appearances. With the word people are able to speculate through hypothesis, define through analysis and resolve through argument. These processes are seen as alien to images because they merely serve to mirror or indeed, in Platonic terms, provide false reflections twice removed from the truth.

1.3 Pictorial representation (and its product, the picture) is thus said to work on three levels:

- imitation - it resembles through an unmediated process of portrayal; cognised immediately, i.e. recognised or 'seen-in'; (see Wolheim 1987);
- illustration - it alludes directly to texts of which the viewer usually has some prior-knowledge (perhaps communicated orally) (see Damisch 1975);
- equivalence – it produces in the viewer 'visceral arousals' that echo the sensations felt and subsequently expressed by the artist (see Bell 1914).

The imitative function suggests that the understanding of pictures is instant, that there is no process involved in addition to those automatic ones normally used in the perception of visual phenomenon; it is unthinking, as in Pliny's description of the painting competition between Parrhasius and Zeuxis in his *Natural History XXXV* (1979). The illustrative function suggests a second influence, one that presupposes a supporting role for the picture, particularly in education, where it can represent for the pre-, il- and a-literate those narratives deemed necessary by the ruling class: for Pope Gregory 1 (590-604) as a means to represent Biblical narrative for the illiterate; for late capitalism as a means to ensure a consumerist desire for its products (see Williams 1961: 410-423; Packard 1981). But here a strength is conceded; the image can simultaneously present what the word can only do cumulatively through a temporal sequence: the image possesses an extraordinary efficiency, particularly since the invention of mechanical means such as photography (1837). The function of equivalence is a permutation of the expressive fallacy (Foster 1985) in which the artist is supposedly able to transfer their emotions into the body of the viewer. Here an artist's manipulation of the formal elements produces an aesthetic experience which, through association or possibly synaesthetic correspondence, produces an equivalent affective state: awe, pleasure, sexual arousal etc. Clearly three dimensional representations and cinematic means complicate this equation, but the spatial dimension of sculpture tends to be theorised

within visual and material rather than temporal paradigms<sup>50</sup> and, increasingly, popular cinema is castigated by the literary establishment for its avoidance of text (the 'true' form of narrative) with its appetite for, 'mise-en-scène', action and sensationalism (Fiske 1989).

### **Imitation: mimesis**

1.4 The belief that the recognition of images is a primitive process that bypasses the intellect, a process akin to the primary processes of perception, has been suitably discredited.

Although recognition may indeed be a perceptual phenomenon, perception is itself now theorised as a cognitive process: 'Many of our affairs are conducted on the assumption that our sense organs provide us with an accurate record, independent of ourselves. What we are now beginning to realize is that much of this is an illusion, that we have to learn to see the world as we do' (Young in Williams 1965: 33). Raymond Williams goes on to say:

Reality *as we experience it* is in this sense a human creation; that all our experience is a human version of the world we inhabit. This version has two main sources: the human brain as it has evolved, and the interpretations carried by our cultures... We 'see' in certain ways – that is, we interpret sensory information according to certain rules – as a way of living. But these ways – these rules and interpretations – are, as a whole, neither fixed nor constant. We can learn new rules and new interpretations, as a result of which we shall literally see in new ways.

(p. 34)

Perhaps I should abandon further speculation on this matter for, as Richard Rorty (1980) asserts: 'Nobody wants to make philosophically heavy weather out of the fact that you can't tell merely from the way it looks what a sentence means, or that you can't recognise a picture of X *as* a picture of X without being familiar with the relevant pictorial conventions' (p. 25). But the belief that reality, that is a reality somehow out there, is instantly transmitted via a person's senses to their cognition (a doctrine called 'isomorphism', Gregory 1977: 1-2) is surprisingly persistent in popular consciousness.

1.5 Similarly, language, when used effectively, has been considered a system that transmits one person's thoughts to another in a transparent and thus unambiguous manner; in this way the model of the world prescribed by the words (signs) of a communicator is replicated in the mind of some other (in isomorphist terms a mirroring process). This theory has been located in Shannon and Weaver's well known 'communication model' (1949), a product of mathematical information theory (reproduced in Kress and Leeuwen 1996: 46).<sup>51</sup> In it communication is said to work in the following way:

---

<sup>50</sup> Although it is central to theories accruing around Minimalism see Robert Smithson (1968), Rosalind Krauss (1981), Foster (1996).

<sup>51</sup> Reddy (in Wertsch 2001) believes this attribution to be erroneous, suggesting that it was the misapplication of mathematical formulae to theories of language that produced such a simplistic equation.

(1) language functions like a conduit, transferring thoughts bodily from one person to another; (2) in writing and speaking, people insert their thoughts or feelings in the words; (3) words accomplish the transfer by containing the thoughts or feelings and conveying them to others; and (4) in listening or reading, people extract the thoughts and feelings once again from the words.

(ibid: 290)

By extension the mimetic image is directly analogous to the word in that it mirrors the vision of one for another, another who might not otherwise be able to see what the former has seen. René Magritte (1898-1967) plays with such suppositions and expectations teasing the viewer to consider the paradoxical relationship between signs and their referents in his painting *The Treachery (or Perfidy) of Images* (1928-29). He portrays a pipe appended by the statement 'Ceci n'est pas une Pipe'. The point here is that an image, whether a pipe or a pope, is only a representation not the represented object itself. This is frequently forgotten in secondary art and design teaching where the *mimetic/perceptual* model of art education encourages students slavishly to produce the 'essential copy' (Bryson 1991), an 'unthinking' imitation of appearances that suggests the relationship between signified and referent is absolute and universal rather than contingent and culturally specific (a concept which in its cultural aspect is analogous to biological isomorphism). Richard Gregory (1977: 161-162) explodes such myths of universal perception by examining the commonly held assumption that perspectival systems mirror human vision. As an example he recounts the difficulty faced by people who live in environments in which there are no right angles and no distant horizon line in reading one-point perspective. Although the research cited was undertaken in the 1960s (and today it is likely that very few people could avoid the right angles of industrial technologies or indeed their representation on a screen) it demonstrates that people have to be familiar with both the object of representation as well as the conventions of representation in order to learn to read and use such systems. It follows that all forms of visual description are mediated through systems of representation and that these systems are not necessarily as 'universal' as is sometimes supposed. But universal vision remains an assumption of many art teachers and the tyranny of 'accurate' drawing does symbolic violence to the drawings of children in primary schools only to be reinforced in secondary education. These drawings are motivated, semiotic acts that are truly creative (if this word is to have any specific meaning it applies here), yet they come to be understood by their makers as failed attempts at mirroring a fictive universal vision (Atkinson 2002: 47-48).<sup>52</sup>

1.6 Just as perceptual psychology proves the inadequacy of isomorphist theories, within semiotics the way in which sign makers produce meaning radically questions the common sense notion of transmission. For Gunther Kress and Theo Leeuwen (1996) signs are

---

<sup>52</sup> In his paper 'Semiotics, hermeneutics and observational drawing' Atkinson examines the implications of this destructive process and does some justice to the drawings of young children.



culturally coded resources which in the hands of individual sign-makers are transformed to communicate motivated meanings. The social efficacy of these meanings is determined by use, albeit that they are conditioned by power relations (for example the metaphors, verbal or pictorial, produced by children are usually judged as quaint or peculiar and do not enter wider social discourses except as indicative or emblematic of childhood, as described above in the case of drawings). If a person interprets someone else's sign making so that there is a match between the signs and prevailing representational systems (codes) these signs are afforded social credibility. For the interpreter it is the degree of familiarity with, and immersion in, these systems and thus the way in which each person relates the elements of the system to their existing patterns of knowledge (a process known as acculturation) that determines their understanding.

### Illustration and language

1.7 Language has become the dominant semiotic system because words are the most effective means of communicating complex intentions such as propositions or proscriptions and because they do not depend on massive physical resources; they travel with a speaker and can be stored in the memory or efficiently recorded by means of writing.<sup>53</sup> Words have thus come to serve the needs of the powerful and, in city-based societies, from antiquity to the early modern period (before the invention of distance, audio communications) writing has proved the most mobile and permanent form of word making. As Claude Levi-Strauss articulates in his semi-autobiographical *Tristes Tropiques* (1955) (summarised here by Johnson 1999: 9-10):

- For thousands of years and even today, writing has been the privilege of the powerful elite...
- The period between the invention of writing and the expansion of modern science in the nineteenth century was a period of relative stagnation in which the quantity of knowledge fluctuated rather than increased.
- The only constant correlate of the appearance of writing is the formation of cities and empires with a high degree of caste and class differentiation, the primary function of written communication is therefore to enslave and subordinate...<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> Although the word is privileged as an analytical and argumentative tool it could be argued that the image has won the battle over description in the digital age (however, it must be said that the status of the word as the 'expression' of logic is somewhat at odds with its role within revelatory ideologies).

<sup>54</sup> But the way in which Levi-Strauss finds a 'discursive' function for semiotic practices other than word-making is more significant for my argument and although in Derrida's rejoinder the word in the form of writing is valorised to an extreme, it is also the means to question and undermine logocentrism (for Derrida the western philosophical tradition). Derrida too has recourse to visual metaphors such as the 'ecart' (trace) and he also recognises the correspondence between writing and drawing as forms of visual action (inscription) (1990). For him neither writing or drawing could be thought of as mirroring processes for they are both leaps 'into the unknown, with draftsmen being 'blind' as to where [their] efforts are leading' (Sim in Murray 2003: 100). In relation to art (pictures) Derrida's ruminations do not pretend to explanation, they are philosophical speculations around the image (see for example 'Restitutions of the 'Truth' of Pointing ['Pointure'] reproduced in Preziosi 1998: 432-449), speculations that have profoundly affected the professional practice of the visual arts (Brunette and Wills 1994). It may be that his work and working practices will yet inform educational theory in the way that Bourdieu's and Foucault's has; at the level of theory and its translation into policy. But Derrida's deconstructive method is deeply scholarly and cannot be readily assimilated into classroom practice.

Levi-Strauss' concerted attack on the primacy of writing, as Jacques Derrida (1976) deconstructs, is based on a number of misconceptions. First, a long-held prejudice (Plato to Saussure) in which speech is valorised as both natural and the source of writing, the latter being a practice that is a violent distortion of the *authentic* voice; second, Levi-Strauss confines writing to forms of inscription based solely on phonetics; third, he raises the status of non-literate societies (à la Rousseau) to one of innocence and fourth, he conflates (confounds) law and oppression. But this is an argument located in the binarism speech/writing; here writing is the surrogate to speech and, it could be argued within the hierarchy, images, as surrogates to writing, are in a particularly underprivileged position.

1.8 I have indicated something of the hierarchised relationship between word and image in 'Iconoscepticism' (Addison 2003) and don't wish to repeat myself here. But I intend to layer my discussion by indicating further logophilic fears particularly as they surface in the early modern tradition and as they play out in the education system. Stephan Mallarmé (1842-98), for instance, inverted the word/image power relation by arguing that the incursion of illustration in a text is a means to destroy the evocative potential of words through a process of making present, a fixing of meaning that is in effect an obliteration of meaning making (he also prophesied that the cinema would usurp the role of the illustrated text; see Miller 1992: 67-68). For Henry James (1843-1916) the power of the writer lay in their ability to suggest images, images so striking that a reader is often compelled to re-present the image in another medium, i.e. as an illustration. But to place them together was to diminish both: 'I, for one, should have looked much askance at the proposal... to graft or 'grow', at whatever point, a picture by another hand on my own picture' (quoted in Miller 1992: 69). Both writers predict the coming twentieth century battle between word and image foreshadowing the threat felt by a dissipating patrician class to the way that images were being utilised by the commercial classes (possessors of only moderate power in traditional cultures) to dominate the mass imagination, specifically through the means of advertising. With its presence, the image could more powerfully manipulate the desires of consumers, simulate the promise that a text could only suggest and thus, in the advert, word comes to 'illustrate' or supplement the image. Within a logocentric education system such a reversal was and is still seen as a powerful threat, a process that if it were to enter the school would undermine its very power base (Kress and Leeuwen 1996). It is for this reason that popular visual culture has been so feared within modern schooling and has ensured that images (as they appear in textbooks, for example) are always designed to be secondary or illustrative.

1.9 It is no wonder, given this history, that in the art classroom words are perceived with suspicion. The art teacher uses words, primarily in the form of speech, either to regulate behaviours or to provide emblematic 'points de capiton' to signal key concepts for the

specific pedagogised identities that the art lesson produces (Atkinson 2002; drawing on Lacan). This pedagogised subject is a strange imaginary who must assimilate quite contradictory competencies, for example s/he must simultaneously 'express her/himself' whilst developing observational skills to enable 'accurate' representations. It could be argued that the tasks set secondary students at Key Stage 3 encourages them to *illustrate* these 'points de capiton': the mono-print signals spontaneity and authenticity, the painted transcription diligence and deference, the 'ethnic' pastiche a celebration of difference and so on. The procedures of assessment demand that the teacher then relates the directed practice of students back to the 'points de capiton' as they are interpolated into the curriculum by means of level statements of attainment (DfEE 1999: 38-39). In this way the artwork comes to illustrate a student's 'ability' in relation to a fictive norm. Many art teachers become very adept at enabling students to replicate these 'illustrations' with ease, albeit that teachers are simultaneously disenchanted by the fact that they do so in order to satisfy the demand for grades.

### **Equivalents: mirror of the soul**

1.10 There is then a pervasive tradition that perceives words as a hindrance to the work of the image, a work that in its effect, so the tradition has it, has something incommensurable, something ineffable about it.<sup>55</sup> For the expressivist the gift of the artist is to embody an extreme instance of experience, often something associated with an emotion such as love, grief, devotion, ecstasy, despair and so on. For these believers the reception of a work of art does not require powers of divination or code breaking because the emotion (the work's presumed origin) is *in* the work and is thus *felt* directly by the viewer. This echoes the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce (1866-1952) amongst many others, who was able to assert in his *Guide to Aesthetics* (1913): 'The artist produces an image or picture. The person who enjoys art... peers through the hole which has been opened for him [sic], and reproduces in himself the artist's image' (in Harrison and Wood 1992: 108), an early attempt to assimilate the practice of modern artists into a philosophical system. Presumably this process is supposed to happen because traces of the emotion remain in the work (spiritual essences not representations) and these traces, assimilated by the receptive viewer, induce in her/him an experience of the same. Such a belief confirms a variety of theories of *expressivism*, (Croce 1901; Fry 1909; Heidegger 1935; Collingwood 1938; Langer 1953) the outward emanation of an inward experience understood intuitively, empathetically, through disclosure, immediacy and corresponding formal relations. As the purpose of the artist within a Romantic framework is to express their innermost passions, it follows that the criteria for success cannot be that of naturalist verisimilitude, nor classical rectitude, rather,

---

<sup>55</sup> In his inaugural professorial lecture 13.3.01 Goldsmiths, London, Sarat Maharaj said words to the effect: art history is a meat-eating epistemology in which the work of art is left as a bleeding corpse once the analytic knives have done their work.

the artist must express their urgency, their authenticity of feeling unhindered by convention. For example, the generating (and generational) rhetoric that Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1938) deployed in the 1906 'Programme' for Die Brücke is typical of the many utterances illustrating these beliefs at the beginning of the twentieth century: 'With faith in progress and in a new generation of creators and spectators we call together all youth. As youth, we carry the future and we want to create for ourselves freedom of life and of movement against the long established older forces. Everyone who reproduces that which drives him to creation with directness and authenticity belongs to us' (in Harrison and Wood 1992: 67-68). As discussed in the last chapter this 'belonging' was to take on divergent forms in early modernism once western artists had become convinced of the greater authenticity of the 'primitive' (Chapter 5: 2.8-10).

1.11 Many problems arise from this contention in theory, none more so than the rejection of artifice, the break with tradition and the lack of imaginative transformation that it presupposes. As Gordon Graham (1997) notes: 'It is not merely that expressivism ignores the value of imagination; it actually eliminates it. An emotion that is imagined need not be felt, and the absence of feeling is a mark of real artistic creativity' (p. 29). Within art in schools expressivism manifests itself most trenchantly in the concept of self-expression (see Atkinson 2002: 138). For teachers who subscribe to its tenets (or lack of them) the student comes to art to express him or herself as a 'natural' rather than a 'cultural' being; the mediation of language and the imposition of codes or exemplars is an interference in the free transmission of feeling. In this scenario whatever the student feels, or rather whatever feeling a student can recall (presumably they do not experience this emotion at the moment of making), is channelled directly into forms and representations by means of inherent capabilities. The fact that this representation is produced by means of a given medium, itself culturally rooted, is rarely considered in the equation; the art is not the manipulation of physical materials but the pure individuality of its creator: 'Expression, then, is an activity of which there can be no technique... Every utterance and every gesture that each one of us makes is a work of art' (Collingwood in Ridley 2003). Because the emphasis is on self-expression (getting it out) rather than communication (getting it across) it does not matter, in a sense, that this process is merely one of 'transportation'. The natural feeling, only incidentally channelled through a naturalised medium, is naturally transmitted to the viewer, a seamless and unmediated process. All that the teacher need do is provide students with time, facilities, praise and, occasionally, technical advice (see Field 1970 for an early critique).

## **Therapy**

1.12 The productive fictions of expressivism bear a kinship to the notion of *catharsis* developed by Aristotle (384-322 BCE) in which the work of art (and he was thinking primarily of drama and music), by representing powerful emotional states, purges the audience of the represented emotion (Jones 1962). Through this experience the audience vicariously lives out base jealousy or murderous intent and all negative desire is exorcised (what then of positive desire, of virtue, is that expunged too?). It is undeniably true that art can arouse emotion (even if for Plato such an admission is evidence of art's pernicious nature, for emotion can dilute or defile reason), but there is no evidence to suppose that the emotion resides in the work of art nor that somehow an emotion aroused is subsequently expiated. In school education and in the affiliated informal sector that accommodates school age students, the emotional and cathartic potential of art making is sometimes played out as a form of therapy. For example, 'problem' students, those with behavioural, emotional, physical and other learning difficulties are encouraged to 'vent their spleen', express their anxieties and fears (often in a context outside mainstream schooling). For example, the McMichael Gallery in Toronto advertises the benefits of art therapy courses at the gallery to:

- Provide a forum to confront difficult issues in a safe environment
  - Provide a means of coping with personal loss and multiple losses of loved ones
  - Provide a concrete forum for physical and drug related illness/pain
  - Provide a creative outlet for the release of feelings such as anger and fear
  - Provide a way to cope with changes in lifestyle and regain a sense of the future
  - Provide a social support network
  - Provide a sense of order and control
  - Provide an educational-based opportunity to learn about art
- ([www.mcmichael.com/art\\_therapy-prog.htm](http://www.mcmichael.com/art_therapy-prog.htm): 20.12.03)

In this case, and in this burgeoning sector, art making is seen as a healing process which provides professionals in the field with evidence for the purpose of diagnosis: interpretation by the 'healers' not by the students themselves (Phinn 2003). Alternatively 'good', hard-working students are presumed to need a relaxing pass-time in order to recover from the rigours of their academic work, for this purpose the art room may prove a sanctuary, a place where mental exhaustion or frustration can give way to 'recreation'.

## **Emotion and didacticism: feeling as a mark of distinction**

1.13 Feeling and the representation of feeling need to be differentiated if the trajectory of western art is to be understood. Leonardo Da Vinci (1452–1519) was one of the first artists to consider systematically the representation of emotion:

The good painter has two principal things to paint: that is, man and the intention of his mind. The first is easy, the second difficult, because it has to be represented by gestures and movements of the parts of the body... He who sheds tears raises his eyebrows till they join and draws them together, producing wrinkles in the middle of

his forehead, and turns down the corners of his mouth, but he who laughs raises them, and his eyebrows are unfurrowed and apart.

(from 'Treatise on Painting' 1497 in Montagu 1994: 64)

As part of the didactic programme for both the Catholic Church and the developing nation states, history painting served to demonstrate the exemplary behaviours expected of its members, or, indeed, the sanctions that would be imposed should these be transgressed. Inevitably this placed the 'actors' of pictorial narratives in extreme situations and a major objective for the artist was the depiction of the heightened emotions experienced by the protagonists, that is in their outward manifestation, the muscular changes called expressions: a scowl, a smile, evidence of a feeling. These expressions were codified by Charles Le Brun (1619-90) in the French academy and perpetuated through the teaching of the atelier system (Perry and Cunningham 1999). An erotics of vision in the eighteenth century (aristocratic) (Bryson 1981) and Realist programmes in the nineteenth (democratic) (Nochlin 1971; Clark 1973) threatened these codes but did not dislodge them from mainstream academic practice which, despite the attentions of modernist art histories, was still the dominant discourse in the visual arts until the last decade of the nineteenth century. This was a bourgeois discourse that tenaciously hung on to a classical past both because under aristocratic patronage classicism was power, and the majority couldn't help but aspire 'upwards', and because now, through the Enlightenment and the new historicism, classicism was associated with the civic and masculine honour, 'honnêteté', underpinning the republican and or proto-democratic patriarchal state (Chadwick 1989: 137). By the close of the nineteenth century the habits and gestures of nymphs, or indeed a Madonna, represented by Adolph-William Bougereau (1825-1905) for example, no longer served explicitly to teach but to embody distinction, in Bourdieu's terms purely a signifier of class (1984). The bourgeois spectator, in league with Kant's aesthetic disposition, could join with others of 'his' ilk and in a 'reciprocity of feeling' (Eagleton 1990: 75-76) confirm the one commodity that even economic misfortune could not take away, his taste, his cultural capital.

### **Against content**

1.14 The dominant modernist claim that Art = form (see Bourdieu 1984; 1993d) provides the explanation for one further argument against interpretation, one in which interpretation takes on the role of assassin. For Susan Sontag (1964) over-interpretation kills. The continual questioning of art produces a situation in which viewers/spectators are no longer able to experience each artwork in its physical and visual singularity because discourse swallows it up devouring its potential outside language. In this sense, her argument discusses iconophobic and iconosceptic tendencies long before I resuscitate their spectre in this thesis (however, she does not do this explicitly because she is primarily referring to literature). As will become clear, what she proposes is in fact a type of interpretation (she recognises

Nietzsche's maxim 'There are no facts only interpretations' [1964: 217]); what she cautions against is the interpretative rule that reduces all phenomenon to content (hidden or surface):

The old style of interpretation was insistent, but respectful; it erected another type of meaning on top of the literal one. The modern style of interpretation excavates, and as it excavates, destroys, it digs 'behind' the text, to find a sub-text which is the true one. The most celebrated and influential modern doctrines, those of Marx and Freud, actually amount to elaborate systems of hermeneutics, aggressive and impious theories of interpretation... According to [them] events only seem intelligible. Actually, they have no meaning without interpretation. To understand is to interpret. And to interpret is to restate the phenomenon, in effect to find an equivalent for it.

(p. 218)

1.15 Sontag is aware that any argument is made in a specific cultural/historical context and in the mid 1960s she saw interpretative strategies as 'reactionary': 'in a culture whose already classical dilemma is the hypertrophy of the intellect at the expense of energy and sensual capability, interpretation is the revenge of the intellect upon art' (ibid). Her argument thus rehearses the binary oppositions between, form/content, sensuality/intellect, reality/allegory, life/commentary. At the time she saw visual artists in particular fighting against interpretation, staging abstraction and pop art as anti-interpretative strategies, the one with no content the other with such 'blatant' content that it would be evidently absurd to consider giving it hermeneutic time. However, she did not see art as ineffable (and presumably still doesn't) and time was when interpretation had been necessary for the development of human consciousness:

Once upon a time (a time when high art was scarce), it must have been a revolutionary and creative move to interpret works of art so that they might be experienced on several levels. Now it is not. What we decidedly do not need now is further to assimilate Art into Thought, or (worse yet) Art into Culture.

(p. 222)

1.16 If the absorption of art into philosophical, anthropological and socio/historical discourses was removing the art object from the field of experience, what Sontag thought would bring it back in 1964 was: 'more attention to form in art... What is needed is vocabulary – a descriptive, rather than prescriptive, vocabulary- for forms' (p. 221). She cites various authors who, for her, exemplify the transparency needed to show ' *how it is what it is, even that it is what it is*, rather than to show *what it means*' (p. 222); included are: Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), Herman Northrop Frye (1912-91), Roland Barthes (1915-80) and Alain Robbe-Grillet, bringing the argument back to formalism and semiotics, but also, strangely, to iconography and iconology.

## **II. Enculturation and acculturation**

### **The formation, reproduction and transformation of taste**

2.1 Before examining art history and its relationship to parallel fields of interpretation, I intend to examine the social and cultural processes through which a person comes to feel the way they do, that is the way a person's habitus conditions the formation of their tastes and beliefs. I do so at this point because I wish to frame my discussion of art history by signalling my awareness of its reputation outside the field as a major player in the formation of legitimate culture. I focus on the analysis of taste produced by Bourdieu (1984; 1993) because his concepts, 'field', 'habitus' and 'capital', provide a convincing structural framework with which to analyse social formations similar to the one he described (France during the 1960s and 1970s) but also because I aim to refute some of his interpretations. Bourdieu's analysis describes a cynical and inescapable world of snobbery where each choice marks out its maker in a designated social position. Although this analysis rings true in terms of past practices, the field of art history and the parallel field of cultural studies have radically transformed the potential of visual studies to contribute to an art and design education that is socially situated and critically engaged.

2.2 Having researched the social formation of taste in France, Bourdieu concluded that a person's relationship to dominant forms of culture in the western nation state is determined by their hierarchical position within the social order (1984; 1993). It follows that a person's ability, or not, to recognise and assimilate legitimate forms of culture is a socially produced 'competence' that appears natural to the acquirer: 'Acquisition of legitimate culture by insensible familiarisation within the family circle tends to favour an enchanted experience of culture which implies forgetting the acquisition' (Bourdieu 1984: 29). This process of acquisition is a matter of enculturation (the process involved in forming the habitus). The slower process of acculturation refers to the way a person can develop competences that come from outside their immediate habitus and might be gained through formal education or indeed through a process of auto-didacticism. As an example, the ability to enjoy works of art by perceiving them through an 'aesthetic gaze' is likely to appear a natural process for a child brought up within a bourgeois family whereas it might have to be consciously acquired (or imitated/parodied) by a working class student embarking on a degree in art history.<sup>56</sup> As Bourdieu asserts: 'The 'eye' is a product of history reproduced by education... The pure gaze is a historical invention linked to the emergence of an autonomous field of artistic production, that is, a field capable of imposing its own norms on both the production and the consumption of its products' (ibid). The field of restricted production is dependent for its survival on a network of interrelated agents and institutions: artists, buyers, critics,

---

<sup>56</sup> 'Educating Rita', Willie Russell's popular play (1980), made into a Hollywood film (1984), recounts a similar process.



consumers, curators, educators, entrepreneurs, historians, galleries, markets, museums, a semi-independent field constituting a sort of high cultural industry capable of regulating the criteria of assessment by which by the field of power holds itself accountable. Because the capital to be gained from engaging with this field is symbolic, the normal rules of economic capital are suspended, or as Bourdieu would have it 'refused' (1993e: 75). As such, it is difficult to buy into the field (to belong requires some form of investment in intellectual capital) and so a person's symbolic position is inscribed within or placed outside the field by means of the field's material and discursive apparatus, a structural logic reinforced by a system of homologies:

Through the logic of homologies, the practices and works of the agents in a specialized, relatively autonomous field of production are necessarily *over-determined*; the functions they fulfil in the internal struggles are inevitably accompanied by external functions, which are conferred on them in the symbolic struggles among the dominant class, and, in the long run at least, among the classes. Critics serve their readership so well only because the homology between their position in the intellectual field and their readership's position within the dominant-class field is the basis of an objective connivance... which means that they most sincerely, and therefore effectively, defend the ideological interests of their clientele when defending their own interests as intellectuals against their specific adversaries, the occupants of opposing positions in the field of production.

(Bourdieu 1993e: 94-95)

It is arguable however, that the more fluid and rhizometric structures of post-industrial, diasporic, societies are producing social identities that are multiple and mutable; the habitus that is so overdetermining within industrial communities gives way to appropriation and parody, a lack of fixed or essentialised identities and concomitant forms of hybrid production and consumption (see 2.10).

2.3 In earlier historical moments these positions were relatively fixed; people tended to 'know their place' and they understood what was appropriate (designated) for their consumption. For example, in the history of early to mid-eighteenth century French culture, aristocratic patrons employed those artists who could best decorate the salons and boudoirs of their private villas; it was the field of eroticism that best reflected the surplus of pleasure and delicate play of gendered power relations afforded by the move of the court from Versailles to Paris (Bryson 1981; Chadwick 1989). The games of polymorphous perversity that enlivened these Rococo sites were entirely the preserve of the patrons and their guests and thus for their exclusive delectation, an interpretative mode unavailable to those lacking a knowledge of classical allegory and courtly gestures (presumably servants were not acknowledged as a knowing audience). The century before, at Versailles, Louis XIV (1638-1715) had prescribed a much more didactic function for painting where it had to extol the virtues of absolute power rather than absolute play. In no sense was Rococo panel-painting intended to enter wider public discourse. Indeed the invention of a wider public for art was

the product of the shift in power relations specific to European history where the bourgeois professions, educational, juridical and medical had developed as disciplinary adjuncts to mercantile and colonial expansion, and, as with any powerful group, they demanded permanent, symbolic representation. The mid-eighteenth century is notable in Europe, but particularly France, for a shift in power relations produced largely through internal transformations rather than from external forces. As Michel Foucault (1980) asserts:

There are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised; resistance to power does not have to come from elsewhere to be real, nor is it inexorably frustrated through being the compatriot of power. It exists all the more by being in the same place as power; hence, like power, resistance is multiple and can be integrated in global strategies.

(p. 142)

The public Salon and the Enlightenment criticism it encouraged were the apparatus through which painting entered public discourse and became a focus for social debate and an unwritten social contract (Crow 1985). It was here that the Rousseauesque cult of sensibility could re-insert a moral dimension to painting (despite the reforms already instigated by the Royal Court) and ultimately reassert the patriarchal and proto-democratic values of 'honnêteté'. The 'enfeebled' and 'feminine' taste of the aristocratic classes, as ridiculed by Enlightenment critics, was transformed under the twin stylistic guises of Neoclassicism and Romanticism with their respective interpretations of beauty, the sublime and the modes of reception suitable for their appreciation. Although the relations between artists and their publics today are intimately related to this pre-Revolutionary widening of participation, the relationship has been further complicated and its significance dissipated by the 'invention' of the 'avant-garde' in the mid- to late-nineteenth century.

### **Internal reflexivity within the field: the avant-garde**

2.4 It could be claimed that the avant-garde was the critical formation by which the emerging bourgeoisie checked 'the uncouth rapacity of the average bourgeois' (Eagleton 1990: 160), that is their tendency to philistinism. As Charles Baudelaire (1821-67) warned 'There is something a thousand times more dangerous than the bourgeois and that is the bourgeois artist, who was created to come between the artist and genius, who hides each from the other' (in Bourdieu 1993b: 167, from 'Curiosities Esthétiques' 1898). The avant-garde emerged as the critical turn of modernism, a time when a counter-culture deployed a space within the field of representation to question and transgress the consolidation of bourgeois ideology. It was produced through a strange coalescence of disparate cultural desires<sup>57</sup> and,

---

<sup>57</sup> For example: the quest to reverse and sustain the hope/loss oscillation of Romanticism, the failure of revolutionary politics to enfranchise the oppressed mass of people; the possibility of forging a transcendental aesthetics to take the place of god, or a space where the body could do battle with the ideal. Many responded to the frustration of unrequited desire by giving voice to their alienation (phlegmatically or with spleen), some by

whatever the motivation, the manifestation was at odds with the bourgeois norm of self-interest, its anti-aesthetic pursuit of compulsive appetites, of pure consumption. The aesthetic disposition marked out a difference from that norm, for Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) a rejection of the commodity, providing in its place a glimpse of the possibility of non-alienation, a pleasure devoid of pleasure, for Karl Marx (1818-1883) however, the ground-point of all knowing, sensuous perception (in this sense Marx was the heir of Hegelian educationalists like Freidrich Wilhelm Froebel (1782-1852) but devoid of their spiritual metaphysics). Following Marx's thought, the aesthetic is the antithesis of capital in that it is pure sensuous expenditure, experiential not cumulative or abstractable. However, for Marx the transcendental aesthetics is as false as any idealist philosophy, the common enjoyment of sensuous pleasure is the gift of life: on the one hand 'the society that is *fully developed* produces man [sic] in all the richness of his being, the rich man who is *profoundly and abundantly endowed with all the senses*, as its constant reality.' (Marx 1975: 353). On the other hand, the aesthete's quest for extreme sensation, 'unconstrained by material circumstance, becomes in him [sic] perversely self-productive, a matter of "refined, unnatural and imaginary appetites" which cynically luxuriate in their own supersubtlety' (Eagleton 1990: 201). In this way, with the appropriative capacity of capitalist institutions, the bourgeoisie, in the form of post-World War II, western governments, was finally to accommodate its antithesis, the avant-garde, as its conscience and soul. They did so by valorising both the avant-garde's utopian and dystopian dreams, its peculiar inversions and regressions and, finally, had them fetishised and commodified in the form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984), legitimating what would be illegitimate. For Foucault this analysis is too simple. The powers used by the emerging bourgeoisie were not readily available as truths to be imposed on a compliant lumpen-proletariat at home and a slave population abroad, rather they were revealed through social and cultural exchange/struggle and then deployed by means of the apparatus of power, one form of which is the institution (the origin of such power does not therefore lie in the institution itself). In this way, the avant-garde, as an institution of resistance, produces new knowledge which becomes available as a resource for political or economic utility. The particular aesthetic disposition so despised by Marx becomes in the hands of, for example, the Surrealist artist Salvador Dali (1904-89) an offensive weapon overturning the cherished bourgeois institutions of family and religion.<sup>58</sup>

---

escaping (psychologically or geographically), others by stretching the field of representation to accommodate the idiosyncrasies of subjectivity (systematically or spontaneously/automatically), yet others by transforming the cultural environment and social conditions of people's lives in an attempt to recognise and reverse the horrors of history (from Left and Right).

<sup>58</sup> However, self-exiled to the USA in the early 1940s Dali was transformed by fame into the mountebank of the unconscious, a marginalised and eccentric diversion from the realities of industrial production.

### **Expression and understanding: learning the codes**

2.5 As has been demonstrated (1.10), at the beginning of the twentieth century young artistic dissidents believed in the power of aesthetic experimentation to challenge bourgeois norms. The Expressionists, for example, determined to break the academic codes of bourgeois culture once and for all so that expression would no longer constitute a conventionalised representation but a material form inducing in the observer the same visceral changes that would mark an emotion in life; expression would no longer be the property of one class but universal, it would no longer be read but felt. Although for the American psychologist William James (1842-1910) an emotion is indeed identifiable with a visceral arousal (James 1884), more recently psychologists have argued that a visceral arousal itself cannot be the emotion, rather it is the necessary *condition* for one, since a visceral arousal can be the same for different emotions; for instance, butterflies in the stomach may signify an anticipation of fear or desire. A particular emotion is thus a combination of visceral arousal and cognitive and perceptual evaluations, evaluations that are concerned with the relation between internal sensation and the external events that have conditioned them (Schachter 1971). Art educationalists talk of altered states in the presence of art (Hargreaves 1983; Taylor 1986: 18-35); often an artwork is evaluated by a viewer to the extent to which it induces in them some visceral condition, 'the spine tingling effect'.<sup>59</sup> As has been suggested, to the observer this experience seems to be an ahistorical, non-cognitive phenomenon; for example, an aria in an opera may leave the listener weeping, but this listener forgets that some other person may in turn, turn away, for the slow subliminal process of en- or acculturation, as Bourdieu (1984) insists, is a prerequisite for receptive arousal in the first place. In this last instance what is moving for one is in fact a coded phenomenon (socially and culturally) and may prove alien or repulsive to another.

2.6. Bourdieu (1984) defines this receptive ability as a 'cultural competence' with which mastery of the distinctive features of the code 'is for the most part, acquired simply by contact with works of art – that is, through an implicit learning analogous to that which makes it possible to recognise familiar faces without explicit rules or criteria' (p. 4). Thus it is the degree of familiarity or immersion within a field that enables identification and appreciation and the determining factors in the habituation of an individual to 'luxuries', ('un-necessities') such as art, are education and social background; the two intimately circular. If an artwork does not conform to popular expectations (the mirroring of 'reality', inducing the sensation of pleasure) it is deemed irredeemably abstract and intellectualised, that is an art that chooses the: 'elective distance from the necessities of the natural and social world, which may take the form of moral agnosticism (visible when ethical transgression

---

<sup>59</sup> 'Spine-tingling' is a demotic phrase, deployed during the 1980s as a title for a Radio 3 programme in which cultural celebrities discussed the music that had such visceral effects on them.

becomes an artistic *parti pris*) or of an aestheticism which presents the aesthetic disposition as a universally valid principle and takes the bourgeois denial of the social world to the limit' (ibid: 5). Bourdieu (referencing Ortega y Gasset) suggests that in this way art continuously humiliates the 'mass' of people:

The music of Stravinsky and the plays of Pirandello have the sociological power of obliging them [the 'people'] to see themselves as they are, as the 'common people', a mere ingredient among others in the social structure, the inert material of the historical process, a secondary factor in the spiritual cosmos. By contrast, the young art helps the 'best' to know and recognize one another in the greyness of the multitude and to learn their mission, which is to be few in number and to fight against the multitude. (1984: 31)

2.7 Bourdieu's research in *Distinction* (1984) is perhaps more culturally and historically specific than he wishes to admit, for, although he constructs a generalisable theory of the social formation of taste, many commentators have assumed that the prevailing cultural conditions in France during the 1960s and 70s (the normalisation of bourgeois values despite 1968) are indicative of other western states both then and today. More legitimately, Bourdieu's analysis should be seen as a situated theory of the sociology of art, and the situation in England today is different to that of France in the 1970s. In the last chapter I have already suggested some of the cultural differences between England and France during the twentieth century. Although the formation of taste is still as profoundly influenced by class as it was then, as Henry Giroux points out: 'Bourdieu's work was... over determined by theories of domination and had no programmatic notion of power in the Foucauldian sense' (1992: 152). Bourdieu (1993b) sees the class-determined habitus of social agents as primary in the formation of their taste and he therefore undervalues the willed (or wilful) production of taste within the communal spaces in which power relations are formed (schools, hospitals, churches etc.). He also neglects the role of biological and psychological factors in the process.<sup>60</sup> Thus for Bourdieu power is nearly always perceived as a monolithic tool of oppression whereas for Foucault the diktat 'No' is not its only manifestation, the 'what if' enables new modes of production and discourse that intersect with others to constitute new types of subjectivity. It may very well be that the educator hoping to 'draw out' of the individual student their potential as social agents would do better to seek the subtle distinctions within socially determined genres of taste rather than dismiss or approve an individual's taste because it inevitably follows hierarchical and thus legitimising social

---

<sup>60</sup> However, others more persuaded by psychoanalysis (e.g. Zizek 1989) understand taste as a set of value-laden practices that potentially transcend the specificity of an individual's class because it is inflected by the psychic trauma of separation and the construction of desire. Although the subject may be formed within and by social relations and language, in Lacanian terms this process is triggered by the alienating process of the mirror stage (a process of disidentification/identification) and a recognition of the symbolic rules of the father. The resultant separation produces a lack that produces a desire that produces an infinitely mutable subjectivity. It may be a subjectivity constrained by the social relations in which it is formed and it may be a subjectivity that is fully conscious of its social 'place', but the play of power within those constraints may produce forms of agency that enable an individual (or a collection of individuals) to transcend those constraints.

categorisations. Nonetheless, as with Bourdieu's model, there is a sort of inevitability about Foucault's history of power as it passes from 'brute coercion, to insidious hegemony, to a power rescued at once from despotism and interiority and applauded as self-sustaining. Like the aesthetic artefact, power is non-instrumental, non-teleological, autonomous and self-referential' (Eagleton 1990: 389-390). In this sense the modernist avant-garde prefigures the possibility of a self-determining society, a society formed not through a process of 'liberation', as it were releasing its own being, but by a collective will of heterogeneity, by working on available material resources to produce itself.

### **Tradition**

2.8 A person engaged in the social act of meaning making, whether in the form of art or any other semiotic process, creates and appropriates signs from within and without their habitus, so that, in conjunction, they form meanings that communicate intentions in specific social situations, situations that in every instance will have different relations of power. But, replication cannot be assured; intended and received meanings are not necessarily identical. The most extreme traditions of expressivism clearly dismiss this difficulty because they deny the existence of codes: however it is one task of this inquiry to question theories of transportation and transmission by investigating communication theory in relation to a particular social practice called art. Because of the 'problem' of interpretation, tradition (that is a system of values made up of unifying codes and conventions commonly used within a specific culture) enables both the production and reception of signs to be a relatively painless process. A tradition is, in Foucauldian terms, something like a class, one form of apparatus through which power relations are ordered and sustained: 'Between the strategy which fixes, reproduces, multiplies and accentuates existing relations of forces, and the class which thereby finds itself in a ruling position, there is a reciprocal relation of production' (Foucault 1980: 203). A dominant tradition is one such reciprocal relationship of the reproduction of power, an apparatus that enables people within a given cultural formation to respond to one another in particular and largely predictable ways, ways that seem natural if those involved are immersed in that tradition, the tradition of their own habitus or the habitus of others with whom they exist in a particular relations of power and who therefore, to a limited extent, they 'understand'.

### **Transgressive acts and hybrid traditions**

2.9 Therefore, if an artist is to make a representation convincing and/or moving they will have to situate themselves in relation to the dominant tradition. For example, if a publicised artwork is couched in codes that are emerging or new its significance may be one of threat as well as conviction: in such cases it is in the interests of society to question the work for arousing negative emotions. Additionally, in these instances, it is often the forms of the

artwork, not its subject matter, that offend, that is its material base, organisation and presentation, what in relation to poetry Bourdieu itemises as ‘its most specific effects... from the consecrated betrayal of expectations, and from the gratifying frustration provoked by archaism, preciousness, lexicological or syntactic dissonances, the destruction of stereotyped sounds or meaning sequences, ready made formulae, *idée reçue* and commonplaces’ (1993c: 119). Any ‘subject matter’ that the new art work alludes to is probably already in discourse, even if that subject is normally repressed, disavowed or circulated illicitly (see Walker’s discussion (1998) of Marcus Harvey’s ‘Myra.’ 1997). This would confirm Bourdieu’s assertion that the habitus of a person unconsciously determines their interpretative responses:

The least conscious dispositions, such as those constituting the primary class habitus, are themselves constituted through the internalization of an objectively selected system of signs, indices and sanctions, which are nothing but the materialization, within objects, words or conducts, of a particular kind of objective structure. Such dispositions remain the basis upon which all the signs and indices characterizing quite varied situations are selected and interpreted.<sup>61</sup>

(1993c: 133)

The ‘experimental’ art object is commonly perceived as an example of transgression and summarily dismissed within dominant, conservative and popular discourses. Thus in the 1970s (it is qualitatively different today) it was difficult for contemporary avant-garde artists to be given a showing in the major institutions of art:

Academies... and the corps of museum curators, both claiming a monopoly over consecration of contemporary producers, are obliged to combine tradition and tempered innovation. And the educational system, claiming a monopoly over the works of the past and over the production and consecration (through diplomas) of cultural consumers, only posthumously accords that infallible mark of consecration, the elevation into ‘classics’ by their inclusion in curricula.

(ibid: 123)

However, ‘transgressive’ work may be taken up within the interpretive community of the avant-garde and used in the internal struggles for recognition that are characterised by those ‘mutual assertions of charisma’ that further feed the transgressive profile of artists produced by the Media (Julius 2003). For Bourdieu, interpretation is merely a signal of legitimated relations within a hierarchised field (often class based). Anyone within the field who understands this yet who promotes the potential of art to inform an education for social justice had better question their motivations for being in a field that functions to legitimate dominant power relations. In Bourdieu’s world, the interpretation of art for the majority of

---

<sup>61</sup> Although Bourdieu’s analysis rings true he is let down by the historically situated examples he provides: ‘An art which, like all Post-Impressionist painting, for example, is the product of an artistic effort which asserts the *absolute primacy of form over function*, of mode of representation over the object represented, *categorically* demands a purely aesthetic disposition which earlier art demanded only conditionally’ (1984: 30), an example that dates Bourdieu’s work, for Van Gogh and late Monet et al could not be more popular and invested with the spirit of the ‘people’: the art of the Post-Impressionists has also been subject to some of the most exacting social art history (see Clark 1984 and 2000).

students (those who fall outside the classes that benefit from the sort of cultural capital that art confers) is counter-productive because it serves the reproductive and hierarchised social relations of conservative culture.<sup>62</sup> And yet, as cultures become increasingly plural no one tradition within a specific location (country, city etc.) has a monopoly, although the dominant tradition, using such apparatus as the education system, continuously reasserts and reinforces its legitimacy to dominate. Each location is divided into sub-cultures differentiated in terms of race, class, gender, age and so on and some people are becoming increasingly adept at 'surfing' between and across codes. One might talk of people's 'bi-' or 'multi-codality', particularly the production of hybrid codes resulting from the diasporic migrations of the twentieth and this century. Many artists have contributed to the production and dissemination of these codes and it is in this context that visual culture has grown up (Mirzoeff 1999).

### III. Traditions for interpretation

#### **Art History as an interpretative enterprise**

3.1 If the visual is now being theorised as a means to legibility (Mirzoeff 1999; Evans and Hall 1999), albeit imbricated within a multimodal system (Kress and Leeuwen 2001), the interpretative enterprise of art history would once have told it differently: 'The discipline of art history has traditionally addressed the task of making the visible legible. In other words, it is apparent that the disciplinary apparatus has evolved as a means for reading objects' (Preziosi 1989: 56). This reading is predicated on a particular code, a system so transparent that it appears as non-code, namely chronology. If chronology is the overriding code of art history, autonomy, the significance of art for the aestheticians, is immediately put in doubt. 'Part of the trouble lies in asking the wrong question – in failing to recognize that a thing may function as a work of art at some times and not at others' (Goodman in Preziosi 1989: 190; see also Schapiro 1936). But within the temporal and, post-Hegel, teleological framework of chronology, the traditional art historian has had no further need to interrogate the silent artefact about its relationship to its historical habitus. The art object *is* its age and is therefore subjected instead to an analysis that rehearses the Saussurean opposition between signifier and signified, for the traditional art historian, form and content. This division produces two art historical objects: 'each of these facets could form the basis of two semiautonomous disciplinary objects with histories of their own... Each might appear to evolve or undergo diachronic or diatopic change, and each might have a "life of its own"' (Preziosi 1989: 30). Focus on the signifier produces a history of style (connoisseurship), focus on the signified, a history of meaning (iconography and cultural history).

---

<sup>62</sup> Tom Gretton acknowledging Bourdieu's analysis has proposed a 'critical pragmatism' in which all students are acculturated to dominant forms of taste as a strategy of empowerment; see his paper 'Loaded Canons' (2003).



3.2 But what of the monograph? What of that near hagiographic life of the artist, that staple of traditional and popular art history? Donald Preziosi decides: ‘the disciplinary apparatus works to validate a metaphysical recuperation of Being and a unity of intention or Voice... This system, then, would situate the art historian and critic as sacerdotal semioticians or diviners of intentionality on behalf of a lay congregation’ (1989: 31). If, on the one hand, the canon is dominated by Names, on the other hand, historically, the vast majority of makers have been anonymous. This should prove a problem to the art historian but Preziosi notes that they have overcome it by ‘authoring’ the artist ‘c. 1347’, or whatever, one point within the chronological grid of art history, a place within the code. Such spatial metaphors also contain their geographical and cultural implications: What is central? What peripheral? What is typical? What is not? metaphors with all the attendant effects on ‘others’ at, and over, the borders, hierarchical, spatial and temporal (see Said 1993). At the point in the history of art history when the modern, classical version was being divorced from its conventional, theocratic function, it was necessary to co-opt the selfhood of the artist to reinforce an ideology of bourgeois individualism (Preziosi 1989). Concomitantly, the bourgeois community found it imperative to commandeer art history to assist in the formation of ideologies of difference and thus it was used complicitly in the form of essentialist histories of ethnic and national identity:

From its beginnings art history was a site for the production and performance of regnant ideology, one of the workshops in which the idea of the folk and of the nation state was manufactured. Today, the extension of its disciplinary horizons to all places and times essentially continues this program of identifying, manufacturing, and sustaining Selfhood and solidarity.

(ibid: 33)

3.3 Preziosi’s analysis here is rooted in the old ways of doing things, but things are supposedly different today despite the continuation of this programme. The so called ‘New Art History’ (Rees and Borzello 1986; Harris 2001) is the name given to the work of a community of academics, curators and publishers who self-consciously question the function of the discipline to sustain ideologies of nationhood and individualism (a community that is partly a product of the post-1968 social ‘revolutions’ in Europe and the USA; see Berger 1972; Clark 1973; Barrel 1980; Boime 1990). They not only achieve this through a ‘deconstruction’ of the ideological apparatus of these regimes but through a reassessment of the work carried out by the artist in relation to specific interpretative communities. In many ways their project confirms that of cultural studies (Chapter 5: 4.3) but unlike the latter, most art historians continue to privilege the production of art. Nonetheless, the reception of art and its circulation within wider discourses, what might be termed the social effects of art, is becoming the focus of study (see Bal and Bryson 1991). However, initially it was the concepts of selfhood and originality, personified in the figure of the male genius, that were theorised as fundamental pillars of modernism and were thus in urgent need of the

interdisciplinary procedures of demythologisation. Feminists in particular exposed the patriarchal systems on which this myth of self-generation depends and using the resources of Marxist, semiotic and psychoanalytical methods provided, and continue to provide, significant 'interventions' into the histories of art (Pollock 1988). Jonathan Harris (2001) in his recent survey of the new art history is not content with the term 'new' and prefers to signal a continuum of art historians who, through political motivation, have formed alliances that constitute a link with a continuing *radical* art history. In this he echoes Tim Clark (1974) who, taking his cue from Georg Lukács (1885-1971), valorises the art historical methods of certain cultural historians in the first quarter of the twentieth century, especially Alois Riegl (1858-1905), Max Dvorak (1874-1921) and Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968). For Clark, their 'importance' lies not in their oeuvre as an example of 'heroic' scholarship, but in the questions they posed. These questions are not fully answered in their writing, rather their texts provide the radical art historian with an expanded field of enquiry shifting the object of study from the creative act to the mode of production:

What are the conditions of artistic creation? (Is the word 'creation' allowable anyway? Should we substitute for it the notions of production or signification?) What are the artist's *resources*, and what do we mean when we talk of an artist's materials – is it a matter, primarily, of technical resources, or pictorial tradition, or a repertory of ideas and the means to give them form? Clearly – convenient answer, which has become the common wisdom now – it is all three: but is there a hierarchy among them, do some 'materials' determine the use of others? Is the hierarchy fixed? (my underlining)

(1974: 249)

Harris (2001: 194) suggests that radical art historians, from whatever camp or persuasion, define three types of 'structures' as fundamental to their analyses, 'representational', 'economic, political and ideological' and 'the viewing subject for art'. In other words he further redefines the project outlined by Clark and thus refers back to the questions posed during the 'heroic' phase of the discipline. Perhaps I should reiterate here the differences between the traditional and radical quests.

### **Production/economic, political, ideological structures**

3.4 Clark's 'Production', in Harris's terms the 'economic, political and ideological' structures within which art is produced, is not the concern of those for whom art is an autonomous entity and for whom morphological development is nothing more than a history of style indicating the journey of the human soul, a metaphysics of the spirit. Here the artist is either the conduit or the diviner of universal truths that transcend the incidental contexts that prevail at the moment of the artwork's production; truth stands outside of time. On the contrary 'what is universal is the need for relations, or for structure. There can be no language or thought that is not structural' (Sturrock 1993: 17) and so the new art historian must attend to the specificities of the complex relations that pertain to the artwork in

question. As with structure, mode of production (in Clark's and Harris's terms) is not the concern of the art historian who valorises the artist as the author of unique, intention-laden objects, 'men' who exemplify the indomitable determination and creativity of humanity; as Ernst Gombrich (1909-2001) says, 'There really is no such thing as Art. There are only artists.' (1950: 4). Here are pure 'voices', incontestable authorship, a direct line to the best of 'us': 'Michelangelo has triumphed over later artists, over the artists of the ancient world, over nature itself, which has produced nothing, however challenging or extraordinary, that has inspired genius...' (Vasari 1568 in Fernie 1995: 42). Because the artist/genius is above day-to-day exigencies, the universalist valorises style as an index of uniqueness, subordinating or ignoring the ideological apparatus with and within which the artist produces, exhibits and sells work (the systems of education, patronage, dissemination and reproduction). Of course, this absence of context is itself an ideological position, one that once served the theocratic doctrine of the divine origins of all creativity but has since been co-opted, as Preziosi determines (1989), within the bourgeois and 'liberal' notion of humanism, a sign of the absolute integrity of the individual. But, as is the way of ideology, the construction of value is naturalised for the believer. For Clark (1974) the task is to 'reveal' what he terms 'the constituents - the historical, separable constituents, normally hidden beneath the veil of naturalness - of these ideological materials. It is a means of testing them, of examining their grounds' (p. 252). This is sound Marxism where: 'the mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life processes in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness' (Marx 1859, from 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy' in Smith 1996: 238-239). For Marx the mode of production corresponds to the ideological structures (historically those of the 'Asiatic', 'ancient', 'feudal' and 'bourgeois' societies) by which the dominant class sustains its power over others, which in turn conditions the means of production through which it maintains its hegemony, its hold over social relations. Marx took Hegel's principle of a historically determined spiritual essence, the 'Zeitgeist', (the central core which spawned a series of interconnected social practices and material forms; see Gombrich's diagram in Fernie 1995: 224), threw out his metaphysics and replaced it with a material essence, economics (the base from which the super-structure emanated). Since Marx, dialectical materialism, for him always and everywhere producing class struggle, has been developed by others in such a way that the centrality of the economic and thus class determination of historical 'progress' has been questioned; the economic capital that underpinned Marx's notion of privilege and power has proliferated into 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu 1984), 'street cred,' (Hebdidge 1988), 'emotional capital' (Reay 1998) and so on, so that 'difference', rather than a culturally-sealed 'distinction', can be seen to condition the play of power, the struggles, alliances and achievements both within and between pluralist societies (Foucault 1980). In

this way disability, ethnicity, gender, race, sexuality, the repressed or disavowed, perhaps even the work of the artist (see Smith 1996: 247-248) have been theorised as determinants of consciousness and class-based 'taste' has been superseded by the more culturally and psychoanalytically informed term 'identity' (Hall 1997). Marx's mode of production is no longer singular; modes of production better describes the plurality of subject positions which has complicated, expanded and, for some, relativised, signification.<sup>63</sup>

### **Signification/structures of viewing**

3.5 Clark's 'Signification', in Harris's terms the structures produced for and by the viewing subjects for art (but with a bit of the representational structure thrown in), is not the concern of those art historians who believe that meaning is immanent, that is that the artwork contains within itself all possible meanings even if it requires the mediation of art historians as 'sacerdotal semioticians or diviners of intentionality'. For this priestly caste, meaning is almost entirely identified with the intentions of the artist and/or patrons, and therefore it is revealed rather than produced. It is interesting in this context to consider the methods outlined by Panofsky in his influential book, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (1955) as he stands on a methodological cusp and particularly as he is cited by both Susan Sontag (1964) and by Clark (1974). Panofsky's argument supposes that interpretation has two fundamental stages, the 'primary or natural' and the 'secondary or conventional' (1955: 53-54). The former is tacitly rather than intuitively understood, that is it is known experientially. This is in contrast to the conventional which is culturally, historically and socially coded; this is where the art historian enters as iconographer. But beyond this there is a further level, the iconological, in which it is presupposed that a collective consciousness can be 'qualified by one personality and condensed into one work' (p. 55) and also that it is possible to divine the subjectivity of a historical individual. Here the interpreter is engaged in a process by which the socially and culturally determined meanings of iconography converge in the inner most being of the artist. In his analysis of Panofsky's methodology, Stephen Bann (1996: 87-100) notices the disjunction between objective, iconographic exactitude and subjective, iconological speculation. Further he points out that Panofsky, having focused on content at the expense of form, realises that the exercise he has embarked on is only worthwhile in the first place because he had been enticed by the 'visual spectacle' of Titian's painting (Panofsky demonstrates his theory by analysing Titian's 'Allegory of Prudence', 1565-70). Bann suggests that Panofsky's motivation is therefore predicated on the 'innocent eye' beloved of Sontag. He goes on to interpret an engraving by Magdalena de Passe 'Apollo and Coronis' (1625) after a painting by Adam Elsheimer (1578-1610) by demonstrating, amongst

---

<sup>63</sup> But as Eagleton warns in response to Foucault's work: 'Any post-structuralist theory which desires to be in some sense political is bound to find itself caught on the hop between the normativity which such politics entail, and its own full-blooded cultural relativism' (1990: 385), (e.g. feminist arguments around clitoridectomy; patriarchal oppression or cultural identity?).

other things, how the work done by the formal/visual elements of the image (taking a semiotic turn) in concert with the image's literary allusions, together produce meaning. In the process he avoids at all costs delving into the subjectivity of any of the names involved. Rather than converging on the intimate, secret place of the artist's inner-being he is led to consider the process by which the image is translated and transformed at the hands of other artists/engravers and the social milieu for whom Elsheimer's work was produced and amongst whom it circulated. In other words Bann examines the relations of power and interest between artists and artists, and between artists and patrons, and the ways in which meaning is produced through social relations. Bann notices that many of the stories referenced in Elsheimer's work focus on healing and it may well be, he conjectures, that Elsheimer had patrons in medical circles; it is thus within the discourses on medicine in sixteenth century Rome that the historical significance may lie rather than in the 'personal psychological investment' of the artist. Therefore, for those who are concerned with signification, the artwork is in a sense incomplete without the productive 'work' required of viewing subjects who interpret it in relation to historically and culturally specific determinants, meaning is produced by an interpretative community through discourse. As Harris puts it: 'The audience or public *is* the society as a totality of groups and forces organising, and organised by, material structures of economic, political and ideological life, including those directly bearing upon art's understanding' (2001: 195). This is not to say that the meaning of the artwork can *only* be identified with those discourses produced by interpretative communities contemporaneous with the production of the work, this is always provisional and contingent. As Bourdieu (1993f) contends: 'This approach, which, in its most caricatural forms, subordinates the writer or artist to the constraints of a milieu or the direct demands of a clientele, succumbs to a naïve teleology or functionalism, directly deducing the work from the function that is alleged to be socially assigned to it' (p. 97). Because meaning is produced rather than revealed, it also accommodates the work done by the infinite number of viewing subjects who have since engaged in these discourses and all those who are still to form interpretative communities and who have therefore yet to make sense of the artwork in relation to their own particular histories. Meaning is infinitely mutable; it does not remain fixed at some point of origin. However, for the discipline in question meaning is paramount, for any historian, of whatever orientation, is telling a story about the past, albeit in relation to contemporary interests; as Harris asserts 'artworks, artists, and art history should be understood as artefacts, agents, structures, and practices rooted materially in social life and meaningful only within those circumstances of production and interpretation' (2001: 264). In this way, for as long as art remains a significant field of production for the academy, the art historian, or some other interpreter, the art historian is assured tenure if only because the meaning of historical artefacts must be reconceived in

relation to the changing and changed situation of the interpretive community.<sup>64</sup> Indeed, if art teachers in schools want to demonstrate how all cultural identities are situated within, and constructed by, historical and social forces they will have to relate historical artefacts explicitly to the present and emerging life stories of their students. Only in this way can they hope to challenge the mythologies of creative autonomy and selfhood that underpin the reproductive art curriculum.

### **Resources/representational structures**

3.6 'Resources', in Harris's terms the 'representational' structures, are not the concern of the idealist art historian, although physical and stylistic resources do figure within traditional art history in the form of connoisseurship where they are used as clues to help determine authorship and provenance (see Morelli in Fernie 1995). For the idealist it is only the 'Idea', albeit expressed through certain inevitable technical procedures, that is of any consequence. Therefore, attention is given almost solely to the 'signifieds' leaving the 'signifiers' either neglected or at best corralled as necessary clues on the path to a central Truth. As John Sturrock (1993) reminds the idealist:

We are led into error by a certain idealism, whereby we dissociate the two aspects of the sign and take the conceptual aspect to have precedence over the acoustic or graphic aspect. Many people assume that signifieds pre-exist signifiers, or that meanings 'await' expression. The effect of that assumption is to assimilate the signifieds, stored up as they must be in some pre-verbal repository, to the infinite number of potential referents in the world which undeniably do pre-exist their human investment in language.

(p. 16)

Although Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), the godfather of idealists, is never crass enough in his *Philosophy of Fine Art* (1835-8) to abandon the signifier and, like Kant, discusses the unity of Idea and form, there is nonetheless a hierarchy in his deliberations that has conditioned his project as interpreted by his many disciples:

... it follows that the loftiness and excellence of art in attaining a reality adequate to its Concept will depend on the degree of inwardness and unit in which Idea and shape appear fused into one.

In this point of higher truth, as the spirituality which the artistic formation has achieved in conformity with the Concept of spirit, there lies the basis for the division of the philosophy of art. For, before reaching the true Concept of its absolute essence, the spirit has to go through a course of stages, a series grounded in this Concept itself, and to this course of the content which the spirit gives to itself there corresponds a course, immediately connected therewith, of configurations of art, in the form of which the spirit, as artist, gives itself a consciousness of itself.

(in Preziosi 1998: 99)

---

<sup>64</sup> The study of Orientalism is an interesting recent case, particularly after the post-colonial insights of Edward Said in his book of the same name (1980) after which art historians applied his method of discourse analysis to Orientalist painting of the eighteenth and nineteenth century (see Nochlin 1991).

In 'In Search of Cultural History' (1967 part reproduced in Fernie 1995) Gombrich traces how Hegelians such as Riegl did however manage to search for the 'geist' in the most mundane of objects, 'as clearly manifested in the ornamentation of the Roman fibulae as it was in the philosophy of Plotinus' (p. 228). It was Hegel's intuition that all human production is intimately connected, that provided the permission for others to investigate any made thing as potentially of cultural significance. But it is more typical of the Hegelian to claim universal essence rather than the particularities of cultural production; in the words of Jacob Burckhardt (1818-97) 'The truest study of our national history will be that which considers our own country in parallels and in relation to *world history and its laws*, as a part of a great whole, illumined by *the same heavenly bodies* as have shone upon other times and other peoples, threatened by the *same pitfalls* and one day to be engulfed in the *same eternal light* and perpetuated in *the same great universal tradition*' (1872, part reproduced in Fernie 1995: 91) (my italics). Burckhardt's otherwise straightforward and convincing arguments for a form of cultural history collapse at the close of his essay in a miasma of universal tropes and teleological platitudes.

3.7 As I have already suggested, Hegel was not the first philosopher to have systemised the elevation of concepts and David Summers (1996) usefully summarises the genealogical beginnings of this 'conspiracy' in Plato and Aristotle,<sup>65</sup> where the mental image (the idea, the concept) having been produced through sensory perception, provides 'the model or intention for the actual image' (p. 3); signified precedes signifier. In terms of signification, as opposed to intention, this temporal sequence misrepresents the way in which art *works*, for the signification of a particular representation is the product of audiences interpreting<sup>66</sup> the relationship between signifieds and signifiers; in the reception of each artwork signified does not precede signifier. Summers makes a similar point 'representations are primarily significant not only in terms of what is represented, but also in terms of how it is represented. The what of representation – subject matter – is most significant for what it reveals in having been chosen, and how, the manner of treatment, reveals the syntheses and schemata' (p. 13). He also notes the etymological roots of 'representation' pointing out that its Latin equivalent 'repraesentio' is derived from the verb 'praesentio', meaning 'to be before'; this has two meanings: 1) to be spatially located before an object; 2) to be of higher rank or significance (p. 6). Thus a representation makes present for an interpretative community that which is historically important.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> One could come forward and add Saussure (1983) and more recently Kress and Leeuwen (1996).

<sup>66</sup> Summers notes the root of this word in negotiate or bargain (p. 7).

<sup>67</sup> Summers continues by showing that within ancient rhetoric a verbal representation was less a substitute or a resemblance more like an equivalence. By the time of the medieval scholastics a representation was 'that which *represents* other than itself to the operations of the mind' (1996: 7), a theory of signification had been reached but not without a hierarchical dimension because the lower forms representing the higher were in no way equivalent; this is the time of allegory and symbol. With Descartes the 'asymmetry' was different, for him the cause of visual sensation, light reflecting off surfaces was entirely at odds with the representation formed in the mind

3.8 For example, for Roman Catholics the infant Christ held in the lap of the Virgin, the Madonna and Child, is a sign that conventionally represents the incarnation, the signified (concept) 'god made flesh' or, more specifically, with the compositional focus on the child's penis (Steinberg 1996) 'god made man'. However, in conjunction with the humanity of Mary, the mother and child union is a sign that also embodies a related signified, the purity and divinity of motherhood. When this is represented by Masaccio (1401-28) in 'The Virgin and Child' (1426), in contrast to 'The Virgin and Child before a Firescreen' (1440) by a follower of Campin (active 1406-44) (both in the National Gallery, London), the technical and representational resources, the 'signifiers', produce contrasting effects. On the one hand, in the Masaccio, both the *mise-en-scène* and the technical manner are hieratic and austere while Mary's facial expression is somewhat bemused. On the other hand, in the Flemish work, the surroundings are domestic, the manner naturalistic and detailed and Mary's actions solicitous; thus for audiences the signification in each case is inflected by representational resources that indicate the ideological differences of the maker's habitus and the interpretative communities for which the paintings were produced. My descriptions are themselves formed in relation to my particular subject position and I make sense of them because of my particular interests and the relationship between my ideological position and those embodied in the paintings. My position is produced within specific secular and materialist discourses and it is therefore unlikely to correspond neatly with interpretations by Protestant, or Catholic, or Muslim communities. Similarly, a work by Cornelia Parker 'Cold Dark Matter' from 1991 has been interpreted by some<sup>68</sup> as an attack on the father and patriarchy. This interpretation was elicited by reading the object of the explosion, a garden shed (typically a private, domestic space for men) as emblematic of the father's psyche (the shed being both a repository and a potential) and, by reading the British army (the organisation commissioned to carry out the explosion), as a microcosm of institutional, homosocial, hierarchised, British patriarchy. The explosion thus plays on the private/public dichotomy of masculine power whereby male aggression, at the behest of a 'femme fatale', destroys its most private domain and in the process exposes the secrets of the masculine desire, a political act. Parker, in conversation with the feminist art historian Lisa Tickner (2003: 364-391) discusses a range of interpretative responses to the work and Tickner notes the gendered identity of the shed. Parker responds: 'That's the kind of interpretation I'm always trying to avoid: the shed is the male domain and therefore... I don't talk about personal issues or psychology. It's always about maintaining a space for the work' (p. 369). However, a little later she generously states:

---

(p.11). For Kant the implications of this insight were that the world as known is subjectively formed, an imaginative and decidedly pictorial process. For Hegel the disjunction between the human spirit and the world compels people to make the world like themselves so that culture becomes a form of higher representation.

<sup>68</sup> A group of four mature, female students during a semiotic workshop as part of the MA module 'Contemporary art and artists in education' at the IoE (2002).



And then I think being an artist is such a political thing in its own right. Just the fact that you're doing what you're doing is a political act, but I'm always trying to maintain a certain openness to interpretation. I want the work to tell *me* things, to surprise *me*, so that the work is kind of waste product from a process, an inquiry you started when you didn't know the answers at all. Later, in retrospect, you can talk eloquently about it but when you're in the middle of it you can't.

(p. 370)

As the meaning of the work of art is made anew in each interpretative act, what meanings come to hold validity at a particular moment of time depend on the power relations within interpretative communities and, at present, the validity of different subject positions is increasingly recognised by art historians:

Once launched into the world, the work of art is subject to all of the vicissitudes of reception; as a work involving the sign, it encounters from the beginning the ineradicable fact of semiotic play. The idea of convergence, of causal chains moving toward the work of art should, in the perspective of semiotics, be supplemented by another shape: that of lines of signification opening out from the work of art, in the permanent diffraction of reception.

(Bal and Bryson 1991: 243)

3.9 The new, radical art historian is thus more likely to be inclusive than the traditional one, less likely to be immersed solely in an age far from their own, more likely to relate their study self-consciously to contemporaneous conditions of production. S/he is also likely to understand that the needs of different audiences are determined by their habitus, they might even acknowledge the legitimate possibility of someone belonging to an interpretative community that thinks art doesn't matter, that it is nothing but an enrichment for the privileged, and they would also understand that traditional historical forms can be received as alienating or patronising. They may well consider that their studies, in demythologising the role art has played in the formation and maintenance of both totalitarian and bourgeois ideologies, is contributing to social justice and they would no doubt applaud the quest to develop critical approaches for young people in schools. But here the difficulties surface; they do not feel they can produce the resources designed to communicate effectively with this community. The academy's ways of thinking, its methodologies and languages are not popular or easily assimilated, there is a sense that its specialised voice cannot be 'translated' and as rigorous intellectuals academics are most certainly unwilling to 'dumb-down'.<sup>69</sup>

3.10 For schools the implications are clear, radical art history rarely figures in the art and design curriculum and only by chance in the teaching of History of Art (the bibliography of

---

<sup>69</sup> However, at a recent conference held at Tate Britain (2002) the Association of Art Historian's School's Group invited, art historians, publishers and teachers to debate the current impasse. During discussion it was evident that a new generation of art historians agree that it is important to write critical texts for school age students and also that art publishers are interested in this market. However, it is the Research Assessment Exercise, the mechanism used to assess the research production of academics in English universities, that militates against university academics spending time on school books because such production does not qualify as research.

AQA's 'A' Level syllabus includes little that would be considered 'radical'. There are a couple of exceptions in art and design, John Berger's outing into the discussion of art for mass audiences, *Ways of Seeing* (1972) and Dawtrey's et al's (1996) *Critical Approaches to Modern Art*. The former book (the latest edition is 1990) can still be found on the shelves of many schoolrooms but its initial popularity was largely secured by the television programme that preceded its publication. The text has many of the features of critical writing today; it is specialised and proudly Marxist. But it is infrequently referenced by students, standing instead as a sign of particular teachers' radical sympathies. The Dawtrey sold particularly well in Australia, the UK and the USA; however, in the London schools that I visit as a PGCE tutor (approximately forty) I have not seen it on the shelves (although I am looking for it and others of its kind). What is on the shelves is the *Story of Art*, a variety of titles from Thames and Hudson's 'World of Art' Series, mostly monographs, innumerable large format monographs from other publishers (used almost entirely for their reproductions) and books that have gathered dust from the 1940s onwards, nearly always traditional in orientation (QCA 1998), examples of what Bourdieu (1993c) defines as 'middle-brow' culture. The art department's library thus largely serves as a resource for transcription, pastiche and appropriation; text is almost incidental. When students do copy passages for their 'critical study' the texts are often from the first few pages of the book or refer to particular reproductions that they like; they seem to want certainties, the authority of expert interpretation, and they get it in spades from these loquacious and occasionally eloquent sources. It is my contention, therefore, that the traditional art historian finds an accepting and grateful audience for 'his' totalising narratives if he upholds the modernist myths of authorship and creativity on which the art and design curriculum is predicated, myths which encourage students to produce poor pastiches of classic, middle-brow exemplars. As Bourdieu explains:

It is legitimate to define middle-brow culture as the product of the system of large-scale production, because these works are entirely defined by their public... It follows that the most specific characteristics of middle-brow art, such as reliance on immediately accessible technical processes and aesthetic effects, or the systematic exclusion of all potentially controversial themes, or those liable to shock this or that section of the public, derive from their social conditions in which it is produced.  
(1993c: 125-126)

3.11 The ambition to produce a bestseller, however, is usually far removed from the motivations of scholarly art historians whose panoptic gaze is an apparatus for making the world and its past transparent for the laity. The scopophilic tenets and ocularcentric procedures of art history are, paradoxically, dissipated in the logocentric materiality of its rationale; not the object in itself or the object as reproduction but the oracular object given voice by the critic as priest, the object as writing. The recent exposure and critique of this programme has obliged the art historian to appropriate alternative methodological options. It

is easy to see how, for example, psychoanalysis may reinforce Selfhood even if in pathological form, or how social art history might atomise research by fetishising glossography, lifting the carpet of history and searching through the dust. However, the very fact of an object would suggest art history is still in thrall to the scientific quest, the understanding of an independent reality. The object once wrenched from its environment becomes available to the scientist's gaze as a morphological specimen, its life as a specific social and historical event is now an object of history, often a speculative history. Thus in the gallery the artefact is reified and decontextualised becoming the recontextualised aesthetic object and collectively, as the oeuvre, a projection of authorship. The social historian attempts to recover that life, to undo the damage by reinventing the object as text and in that process reinforces the logocentric and monomodal hierarchies of academic discourse putting it outside the reach of the school art student who is often intent on rejecting this tradition.

### **Visual and multimodal semiotics**

3.12. Because the function of a radical art history is to question the hierarchical assumptions by which art retains its significance in conservative social formations, it is no wonder that art teachers and students in schools are suspicious; radical art history questions the very principles of authorship that provides the subject with its popularity and curriculum rationale. Given this mismatch, are there alternative and systematic methods of interpretation that would appear less threatening? Elsewhere, I have argued a case for recognising the part semiotic analysis might contribute to the interpretation of art in secondary schools (Addison 1999a). I wish to close this chapter by revisiting Kress and Leeuwen's book, *Reading Images: the grammar of visual design* (1996), for three reasons. First, their theory recognises the importance of 'interest' rather than the traditional 'quality', a reorientation that enables critical and student-centred strategies to work in tandem. Second, their analysis reasserts the significance of theoretical rigour in relation to the visual, a prerequisite for gaining credibility within the logocentric curriculum (Kress and Leeuwen apply a linguistic model to the visual, employing concepts derived from Halliday 1978). Third, I want to raise some difficulties I have with the way the authors' hierarchise the relationship between expressive action and conceptualisation in a way that questions my understanding of the making of signs in the context of art practice.

3.13 'Signs are motivated conjunctions of meaning (signified) and form (signifier) in which the meanings of sign-makers lead to apt, plausible, motivated expressions, in any medium which is to hand. This process rests on the *interest* of sign-makers...' (Kress and Leeuwen 1996: 11). However, some communications evidently fail to interest. Whether communicated directly or mediated through codes and conventions it is generally agreed that

an artist attempts to express/communicate or represent/embody something that is of interest, that is significant for both her/him and the community of which s/he feels a part, or from which s/he feels apart. Williams (1965) concurs, what the artist has to say is significant and, although the desire to transmit such interest is common, the artist says it 'well' because they have developed certain expressive skills: 'But the purpose of the skill is similar to the purpose of all human skills of communication: the transmission of valued experience; but the artist's activity is the actual work of transmission' (p. 44). For Kress and Leeuwen and Williams, this act of communication, the 'motivated sign', is an entirely common phenomenon, a commonality which has led to its neglect, until recently, within aesthetic speculation. Williams opines:

It is characteristic of aesthetic theory that it tacitly excludes communication, as a social fact. Yet communication is the crux of art, for any adequate description of experience must be more than simple transmission; it must also include reception and response. However successfully an artist may have embodied his [sic] experience in a form capable of transmission, it can be received by no other person without the further 'creative activity' of all perception: the information transmitted by the work has to be interpreted, described, and taken into the organization of the spectator.

(1965: 46)

What then of sign-making? If the work of art is neither the object to which it refers nor its mirror, and, if it does not contain within itself the feelings it can arouse for others, might there still be some truth behind the idea of traces, some other token of the self or the culture within which sign-making occurs?

3.14 From Kress' and Leeuwen's (1996) examination of the grammar of visual design it can be deduced that there are many similarities between writing and drawing; this is a significant insight for both are largely conventionalised means of inscription leaving graphic traces that function to represent visually. Yet in the authors' exposition of the double metaphoric process of graphic semiosis, the example of a young boy's drawing of a car, they privilege the conceptual as opposed to the material and physical qualities of drawing because in the former the mark-maker realises his representational potential, his social role as a communicator. This hierarchy is supported by references to natural, evolutionary processes:

Together the drawings show how the child *developed* the representational resources available to him, and why circles seemed such an apt choice to him: the expressive, energetic physicality of the motion... persisted as the child developed this representational resource, so that the circular *motion* remained part of the meaning of circle/wheel. But something was added as well: the transformation of representational resources was also a transformation of the child's subjectivity, from the emotional, physical and expressive disposition expressed in the act of representing 'circular motion' to the more conceptual and cognitive disposition expressed in the act of representing a 'car' – a quite fundamental change.

(p. 9)

3.15 The developmental process Kress and Leeuwen describe no doubt marks the child's entry into a symbolic system of representation (a symbolism that will here, ironically, lead to the development of mimetic or iconic modes), but it does not mark the child's entry into graphic semiosis for he (in this instance) has already been signifying indexically, where 'the circular motion *remained* part of the meaning' (ibid: my re-emphasis). In art, as in any signifying system, the conceptual and expressive components (the material vehicle of the sign, received through whatever sensory mode) are inseparable, it is the productive, not the hierarchical, relationship between the two and the place of the sign within tradition that determines the sign's communicability. There is a danger that Kress and Leeuwen might be interpreted as duplicating Saussure's signified/signifier hierarchy so that the expressive activity, so dear to art teachers, might be deduced as a lesser, emotional, pre-cognitive activity. In this sense they appear to rehearse Plato's noumenon/phenomenon duality by placing concept before form; form comes to illustrate linguistic idea in a logical sequence which too readily privileges concept formation in the form of language above expressive action. In common with art historians, their methodology undermines a basic principle of practice in art and design, the equal role of material practices in the production of meaning.

3.16 Kress and Leeuwen's analytical method is thorough and systematic and it is useful to have a formal rather than lexical system. Yet in their emphasis on the visuality of the image, its dynamic and spatial characteristics, its monomodality, they neglect its other phenomenological properties and its relationship to other sensory modalities. However, in *Multimodal Discourse* (2001) these properties are more fully acknowledged and the interrelatedness of sensory modes is the basis of their theory.

Where traditional linguistics had defined language as a system that worked through *double articulation*, where a message was an articulation as a form and as a meaning, we see multimodal texts as making meaning in multiple articulations. Here we sketch the four domains of practice in which meanings are dominantly made. We call these strata... Our four strata are discourse, design, production and distribution.<sup>70</sup>

(p. 4)

The theory of multimodality is a major assault on logocentrism and has real implications for education if it is taken seriously, both in terms of curriculum and pedagogical practice. But in terms of this inquiry, an inquiry into interpretation, the authors' emphasis on production and dissemination would seem to preclude its significance for processes of reception. However, as they make clear:

---

<sup>70</sup> It is interesting how the noun denoting 'work' in the meaning making enterprise, 'articulation', whether singular or multiple, is a seemingly linguistic metaphor, the outcome of articulating. But articulation has the double meaning of physical manipulation alluding to other sensory modes. The work of the authors in formulating this new theory is indeed characterised by visual metaphors: 'sketch' and 'strata'.

Our model applies equally to interpretation. Indeed, we define communication as only having taken place when there has been both articulation and interpretation. (In fact we might go one step further and say that communication depends on some 'interpretative community' having decided that the world has been articulated in order to be interpreted).

(ibid: 6)

The theory of multimodality also questions, indeed collapses, the binary oppositions that underpin logocentric dualities: word/image; rational/affective<sup>71</sup>. However, rather than abandon my inquiry into the formation and reproduction of the subservient position of art and design in a logocentric education system because it investigates flawed and outmoded concepts, I have pursued it in order to make legible the dominant systems at a given historical moment, the moment when ACHiS was first mooted.

---

<sup>71</sup> I have applied concepts drawn from this theory of multimodality in my analysis of pedagogic interactions in Chapter 4: 18-19.

## 7. Summary

### Introduction

Before embarking on an examination of critical pedagogy in an attempt to propose a vehicle for a critical curriculum within secondary art and design, I intend to review the historical and theoretical arguments constructed in Part Two. To avoid duplication on a massive scale I shall provide a summary. Nonetheless, I am wary of a convention that, however welcome, is inevitably reductive, one that may be, like a conclusion: ‘a “framing” device, intended to keep old meanings in, through reinforcement, and new meanings out’ (Sturrock 1993: 166).

### Summary

1. Iconocriticism in education is the result of iconophobic tendencies in western philosophy (the logocentric tradition) which, in combination with the paradox of western ocularcentrism, produces an oscillation between phobic and philic responses to the visual and the image in particular (Addison 2003). Today, iconocriticism in education is manifest as an uncertainty about the value of the image and its uses within restricted fields rather than a prohibition of those uses. Intellectuals who have participated in the postmodern critique of western science often perceive western ocularcentrism as a causal element in the decline towards the dystopia of contemporary societies (Jay 1993) and they place the blame for a perceived malaise equally on the scopical and spectacular regimes of the modern nation state, respectively, its means of surveillance and representation and on the mega-visual apparatus of global capitalism, particularly the mass media (Foucault 1977; Baudrillard 1989; Virilio 1997). The mass dependence on spectacular and sensationalist entertainment is continuously denigrated by intellectuals who reinforce the binary oppositions between word and image, the logocentric and the affective and, in the popular imagination, reinforce the doxic principles of western thought (Bernstein 2000). However, the dominance of bi- or multimodal communications within the mass media, in combination with the proto-democratic principles of post-industrial cultures, produces a climate in which people are able to become increasingly multi-literate and bypass, particularly through the use of new technologies, the monomodal, logocentrism of traditional academic discourse (Kress and Leeuwen 2001).

2. Academic discourse, whilst purporting to be objective and thus above and outside any interest other than inquiry, has served to reinforce bourgeois ideologies of nationhood and

self-actualisation through the development of disciplines or fields that are allowed to set their own rules and modes of functioning (Bourdieu 1993). However, their supposed freedom is delimited to the extent that they are able to feed the various forms of capital necessary to sustain the modern nation state in economic and symbolic world markets, design and art, for example, respectively serving these two functions. Through the writings of its art historian apologists, art has been used by the modern nation state to sustain myths of selfhood and solidarity, the latter usually of ethnic and national identity (Preziosi 1989) (however, in the case of England during the twentieth century, it was literature and literary studies rather than the visual arts and art history that were the anointed vehicles for representing the creativity of the nation). Although the 'restricted field' of art production (the object of study of traditional aesthetics) is marginal to the central economic discourse, since World War II the counter-culture of the twentieth century avant-garde has been co-opted by the modern bourgeoisie as a mark of distinction (Bourdieu 1984). This ensures that access to high cultural forms is limited and socially determined, a form of cultural capital that remains alien to those whose habitus does not provide them with the necessary codes to read these forms, in other words, with notable exceptions, those outside the middle classes. Exemplary cultural forms are brought together in a canon through which a historical identity is constructed which embodies all that is best about a specific cultural formation. This is used by the ruling class to reproduce an idea of culture and its origins that the education system, in particular, reinforces and reproduces; thus the class, cultural and gendered biases of English, humanist pedagogy are manifested by a bourgeois, Eurocentric and patriarchal art curriculum within which each student is positioned (close or marginal to the centre). For Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) the curriculum and its pedagogical reproduction are a form of symbolic violence through which the dominant class refuses to recognise the worth of difference and restricts the fluid nature of cultural exchange within and across boundaries.

3. In the art classroom, the reproductive function of the canon is hidden within the culture of making and a rhetoric of creativity and self-expression. Painting has become the privileged activity within this productive domain, both because in the modernist field of restricted production it has historically gained ascendancy and because it is perceived as an efficient means of representation, that is as a means to reflect given worlds, whether exterior or interior. The perceptualist and expressivist conventions of secondary art and design serve these reproductive and actualising functions. However, it is the latter that art teachers hold most dear and tend to extol when defending the place of art and design in the curriculum. This place is predicated on an essentialist notion of subjectivity so that, on the one hand, art practices provide an opportunity for each 'subject' to express themselves and communicate the uniqueness of their personal identity (production), while on the other hand the appreciation of art affords access to, and thus an understanding of, other subjectivities and,



through the canon, an induction into those values deemed appropriate to the collective identity of nationhood (reception).

4. After World War II and increasingly after 1968, the cultural and psychological premises on which modernist art and design education had defended itself (the autonomy of the field and the autonomy of the individual within that field) were being challenged by arguments outside the field in which identity formation was being theorised as a product of co-construction (Vygotsky 1978). Instead of the unique and potentially complete individual subject that the humanist educator helps to unfold, the co-constructivist understands the individual as an agent produced in and through language and other forms of symbolic interaction. The individual is not a spiritual essence biologically manifest but a socially and culturally constructed material agent whose agency, the ability to act on and inform their social and other environments, is regulated by their position within prevailing power relations. The democratic imperatives of 'progressive educators' have therefore coalesced into an interdisciplinary conjunction termed cultural studies whose members were, and are, intent on enabling agency, and they believe they can only do this by producing a critical population. In relation to the field of cultural reproduction this process of empowerment has meant the exposure of the hegemonic means of the state; art has rightly been seen historically as one such means and is thus the target of analysis and deconstruction. However, the history of the avant-garde has been co-opted as part of the critical tradition and while this dominates the theory/practice alliance in higher education in art and design it is anathema to the school curriculum which serves to reproduce the dominant order. As a result, interpretation in schools, when as a discursive practice it happens at all, usually takes the form of formalist analysis, the morphology of art production. A liberatory pedagogy would need to engage critically with the lives of students and acknowledge the shifts in power relations between modalities of production and reception and the institutions they serve; this would require students to have a sense of themselves *in* history. Only this way can they develop agency.

5. Criticality is truant in art and design in secondary schools because, as it stands, practice in the subject depends on spurious notions of universality that help to sustain its popularity with students. This acriticality helps to establish its 'otherness', its difference to the critical and logocentric curriculum but as a necessary complement. Its fictions of universality, whether isomorphist or expressivist ensure that art teachers are able to neglect history and to pretend that visual practice crosses linguistic and cultural boundaries. The 'givens' of visual perception and human feeling supposedly enable the art and design student to bypass the types of learning in which a body of theory and knowledge is assimilated as information, because art and design is essentially a mimetic and experiential activity requiring expression

or representation, getting out what is already within or mirroring what is already out there; it enables the budding artist to engage with the a priori truths of experience. This is quite unlike other curriculum subjects where inculcation, getting in what is valued outside, and communication, getting those same values across, dominate teaching. For the art teacher it is therefore technical and practical know-how that necessarily dominate pedagogic practice and it is aesthetic criteria, loosely mimetic and or empathetic/intuitive, that are called on to assess student production. Art history is referred to as a means to introduce a proto/early modernist canon which reinforces the myths of selfhood and expression that the art curriculum serves to perpetuate within the larger equation of reproductive schooling. However, the school subject functions in this way at a time when practice within the field of restricted production is challenging those same myths, even if the institutions of global capital and state and nationhood are largely able to accommodate these challenges through the joint forces of the market and critical acclaim (Bourdieu 1993). Alternative modes of reception are practised within secondary schools, for example semiotics, but they tend to surface within subjects that have a politicised history and a more self-consciously critical agenda such as English, media studies, politics and sociology. In relation to visual and material culture semiotics is a collection of analytical methods that refute a central and divisive distinction of aesthetics, the art/artefact divide. As such semiotic analysis provides students with an interpretative tool by which they can critique the hierarchical basis through which the visual and material landscape is stratified. However, I would question the scientific pretensions of semiotics appropriating it instead as a hermeneutic aid, not an absolute or universal method but a necessary strategy for a specific moment in a particular history. Therefore semiotic analysis needs to be supported by historical and contextual study in order that the social and cultural conventions and modes of production that produce the field of art (in traditional art historical terms iconography and iconology) can inform what would otherwise be a type of immanent critique little different to the formalist procedures of modernist aesthetics and other text-bound methods.

6. The complexity, contradictions and weight of the history that has formed the subject art and design are deeply embedded in the practices of art teachers and students. This strange mix has somehow formed a set of practices that remain popular with students partly because they are so very different to what happens elsewhere in the logocentric curriculum and partly because they provide access to a form of cultural capital that is easier to assimilate than that provided by the other core arts subject, music.<sup>72</sup> In this way, art and design possesses a peculiar set of multiple functions: it provides a sop to those deemed academically less able, an enrichment for those requiring cultural capital, a potential vocation and a haven for the

---

<sup>72</sup> The lower number of students choosing music at GCSE are indicative of this point. Alternatively, drama after KS3 is often popular as an extra curricular activity while dance has to compete with a vibrant youth culture.

'talented'; in no sense are any of these functions critical because they work to reproduce a comfortable notion of the visual arts in support of the status quo.

7. ACHiS could only ever be a local and short-term intervention within this peculiar matrix. Informed by both radical art history and critical pedagogy, it was inevitably bound to produce tensions. Most of the researchers were profoundly in thrall to the logocentrism of art history and critical theory and were also able to deploy its rhetorical and critical apparatus with skill. This provided them with a certain status in the eyes of both collaborating teachers and students but left them somewhat at odds with the culture of the art classroom. The researchers' critical interventions into the culture of making appeared, in some instances therefore, to be add-ons rather than integrated elements. On some occasions student evaluations suggested that they were unaware of the constructive effect that the intervention had had on their making although the research team found evidence to the contrary (Addison et al 2003: 46). From video-tapes of discussion and student presentations it is evident that some students had developed an understanding of art historical issues, improved their critical vocabulary and succeeded in applying research skills to the specificities of the visual field. But, in most instances, students were unable to synthesise their ideas in written form preferring discussion, debate and presentations. One of the most lasting effects of one residency was the way in which one of the researchers enabled students to re-conceive the space of the classroom. In place of the individual stool and desk, making activities were relocated to open, collective spaces in which sixth form students collaborated to make installations (ibid: 19-20). Here, the critical intervention did not take the form of a logocentric incursion, rather it took the form of a change in practice. In this instance the researcher was able to question and change established behaviours in such a way that two central traditions of the art room culture, personal expression and social chatter, were replaced by collaborative work and critical discussion. This suggests that within secondary art and design any critical intervention attempting to expose the hierarchies of art and challenge the established myths of creativity in the classroom, has to be conceived from within a multimodal rather than a logocentric framework and also has to engage with history from the perspective of the lives of students. I contend that the tradition of critical pedagogy is more suited to this endeavour than traditional art history pedagogy.

## Part Three: The Critical Curriculum

### 8. Critical Pedagogy

#### Introduction

i) Critical pedagogy is an established and burgeoning tradition in the USA dedicated to an education for social justice. Despite the fact that it is under-represented in England it is with this tradition that I place my hopes for the advancement of a critical curriculum in secondary art education. In the USA critical pedagogy is affiliated to a form of cultural studies that has permeated the art curriculum in high schools (albeit to a limited and localised extent) (Giroux 1992; Giroux and McLaren 1994; hooks 1994) and in the hands of some dedicatees it has transformed traditional art teaching into a socially engaged pedagogy (Paley 1994). As I have argued in Chapter 5 (4.1-3) cultural studies in England is more likely to find a welcome home in further and higher as opposed to secondary education, but when it does surface in schools it is more likely to appear in English or media studies than in art and design. However, in order to reconceptualise the art curriculum towards a critical model art teachers might recognise the basis from which cultural studies and critical pedagogy grew, namely a recognition that education is always a form of social and political practice the effects of which condition students' subsequent engagement with, and agency within, wider cultural formations. In the context of a developing democratic, post-colonial England, teachers of art and design might both learn from the ethical integrity of critical pedagogy and adapt some of the pedagogic strategies of cultural studies, a dual tactic that would challenge the hermeticism of school art. I shall examine the tradition of critical pedagogy in different contexts and try to learn from its successes, for example in Brazil, to assess whether strategies that have worked in very different circumstances are in any way transferable and translatable to the English context. It is important to examine the claims made by critical pedagogy for ownership of the project of empowerment and, from the point of view of my thesis, to discover how, in theory and practice, they relate to the hermeneutic and pedagogic traditions already discussed. Throughout I engage with some of the critics of the tradition and argue a case for strategic borrowings and interventions. Gradually, but incrementally (a continuation of Raymond William's *Long Revolution* 1965), art teachers can regain a significant place for art and design in the school curriculum by reconceiving it as a critical practice.

ii) The way in which critical studies has been introduced into secondary art and design in England has been very much an occasional, piecemeal affair. In Pen Dalton's brief examination of the genealogy of critical studies she deduces that: 'There is no explicit stated project... The art curriculum allows for choice and diversity but its knowledges and practices have become fragmented and disassociated from one another, the reasons why they were introduced to the curriculum in the first place have been hidden' (2001: 116). Correspondingly, ACHiS can be assessed as a somewhat fragmented endeavour, an interdisciplinary inquiry constructed out of available resources and lacking a unified political and pedagogical agenda. Through limitations of time, discussion between participants during the residencies tended towards the pragmatic. As such, debate around the premise of the research (the truant curriculum and the philosophical and pedagogical principles through which a critical curriculum might be developed) was often curtailed despite the reflexive credentials of the project at other times. As one of the AHRB assessors discerned, ACHiS was more like a pilot that deserves further research; time and other resources militated against its replication in other schools, so that in the immediate term it could only make a difference at the local level. If a central aim for those involved in ACHiS was to establish a culture of discussion and inquiry in participating schools, perhaps the team might have expanded on its own discursive procedures during the residencies themselves. I therefore close my examination of critical pedagogy by looking at the potential of dialogue to help reshape the curriculum. I do so because dialogue is often promoted as the panacea to the recalcitrant and emerging cultural differences that can play themselves out uncomfortably in the diasporic communities of major cities in the USA and England (Shohat and Stam 1995; Cahan and Kocur 1996; [unesco.org/dialogue2001](http://unesco.org/dialogue2001)). I end not with a series of recommendations (the ones emanating from ACHiS can be found in Appendix 6) rather I suggest some of the questions that art teachers might ask themselves and their students in order to break the singularity that has dogged development in the subject for the past thirty years or so. Perhaps what is needed is a clearly stated project (in Dalton's terms) that would enable art teachers to reconceptualise secondary art and design along critical lines while preserving its strengths as an alternative to the logocentric curriculum.

## **Education for democracy**

1. Critical pedagogy is a recent, emancipatory pedagogy developing from within the practice of mass education but rooted in democratic philosophy and theories of progressive education (Dewey 1916; Freire 1985; 1990). Mass education, intimately connected with industrialisation and empire, is often assumed to be the product of democracy, education for the social advancement of all. But this is not necessarily so; it could be credibly argued that

mass education was first introduced for the purpose of social containment rather than personal advancement (for critiques see Dewey 1916; Swift 1995). In this model, schooling is a form of social engineering through which the population at large is inculcated into those values considered necessary to ensure conformist social behaviour in support of the state (Bourdieu and Passerson 1970). Michel Foucault (1977) defines the school as the pre-eminent site for discipline.<sup>73</sup> Through schooling the ideal subject takes the form of the ‘docile body’, a way of being that in the collective ensures a governable population. Obedience is achieved through a mechanistic pedagogy in which learning and assessment are based on repetition, and replication (Skinner 1953). The examination is the means for regulating this process and increasingly statistics are drawn up to encourage ‘productivity’ and competition. In many ways it is a process that mirrors the factory production-line and the etiquette of bureaucratic control (a process called ‘social efficiency’ in the USA, see Kanpol 1994: 6-8 for a critique) but with the added weight of traditional moral authority rather than bald, national and economic necessity. In the strategies of Ralph Winifred Tyler (1968), a more humane face was given to behaviourist methods. He developed evaluative procedures that undermined the exclusionary processes of ranking replacing them with a system of competency-based learning; inevitably an over-determined and limiting system.

2. One of the philosophers who first opposed this model, making emancipatory education central to his philosophy, was the American John Dewey (1852-1952); he entirely opposed instrumental methods:

[we must] make each one of our schools an embryonic community life, active with types of occupations that reflect the life of the larger society, and throughout permeated with the spirit of art, history, and science. When the school introduces and trains each child of society into membership within such a little community, saturating him [sic] in the spirit of service, and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guarantor of a larger society which is worthy, lovely, and harmonious.

(1899: 39-40)

For Dewey (1934) it was creativity that produced the generative and positive forces for growth and cultural renewal and, unlike his English contemporaries Roger Fry and Clive Bell (5: 2.3), he envisaged creativity in education as a pre-eminently social entity.

3. It is important, however, to differentiate the critical, democratic wing of progressive education from other progressive developments due to the emphasis in critical pedagogy on social emancipation rather than, for example, the natural harmony of Johann Heinrich

---

<sup>73</sup> The etymological root of discipline is from the Latin *disciplina* which means both specialised knowledge and problems of power. ‘Etymologically the term is a collapsed form of *discipulina*, which is concerned with getting ‘learning’ (the *disci*-half) into the ‘child’ (*puer/puella* represented in the *pu* syllable in *-pulina*) (Hoskin in Ball 1990: 30).

Pestalozzi (5: 1.3) the 'cosmic unity' of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) (1904) or the familial community of Maria Montessori (1870-1952) (1909). By the close of the last century, the revolutionary Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire (1921-97) had become the most influential thinker and practitioner of critical pedagogy and his philosophy underscores the distinction between critical and progressive pedagogies (1990). Although his theories were articulated in a social, political and economic climate quite unlike that of England today, it is evident from his writing that he believed teachers should always acknowledge context before elaborating and implementing programmes of educational reform (1990); his instance of practice is no blue-print for universal application.

4. Freire wished to replace what he termed the 'banking method' of education in which 'the teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the students are the mere objects' (1990: 59) with 'problem-posing education' in which:

men [sic] develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in the process of transformation... Problem posing education is revolutionary futurity... Hence it identifies with the movement which engages men as beings aware of their incompleteness – an historical movement which has its point of departure, its subjects and its objective.

(ibid: 71-72)

Within the system and apparatus of oppression that the modern nation state deploys in the maintenance of power (Althusser 1971) the most pressing problem is the subaltern's paradoxically complicit position, a complicity that for Freire is born of fear. Stanley Aronowitz (1994) examines the psychological premise on which Freire posits this problem:

Oppression is not only externally imposed but... the oppressed introject, at the psychological level, domination. This introjection takes the form of the fear by members of the oppressed classes that learning and the praxis to which it is ineluctably linked will alter their life's situation. The implication is that the oppressed have an investment in their oppression because it represents the already-known, however grim are the conditions of everyday existence. In fact, Freire's pedagogy seems crucially directed to breaking the cycle of psychological oppression by engaging students in confronting their own lives, that is, to engage in a dialogue with their own fear as the representation within themselves of the power of the oppressor. Freire's pedagogy is directed, then, to the project of assisting the oppressed not only to overcome material oppression but also to attain freedom from the sado-masochism that these relationships embody.

(p. 226)

### **A culture of consumption**

5. In Freire's Hegelian, humanitarian vision, the subaltern's position, that of the illiterate, disenfranchised, Brazilian agricultural worker and [his] revolutionary futurity, appears hopelessly at odds with the position of the majority of English secondary school students. What is the equivalent? What do they introject? How are they oppressed? Surely to a

different, but no less entrapped, position within the class-inflected culture of consumption that Georg Lukács (1971) points to, a system manifest today in its most ambitious and absolute form, global, corporate capitalism (Fukuyama 1989). One of the reasons for the power and longevity of capitalist/bourgeois hegemony is its ability to coerce the subject/consumer to introject the 'laws' of fetishism and commodification. In this process, consumers place themselves under a regime of self-regulation: work enables leisure, leisure becomes a space in which to purchase the products of work, consumption satisfies those internalised desires that the 'subject' in fact knows are contrived by the capitalist system, but 'misrecognises' because s/he is addicted to, and 'guided by, the fetishistic illusion' (Zizek 1989: 31). In this way, the basic drives are redirected to form a perpetual cycle of production and consumption, all desiring energy dissipated into chasing the tail. Education itself is evidently not immune from the dominance of consumerism as a metaphor: public examinations, the specialist voice, the aura of high culture, all can be viewed as commodities for social advancement, the 'academic capital' of Pierre Bourdieu (1984).

6. If then, the purpose of critical pedagogy is to help students understand how they exist in the world and how they can come to inform and change that world, in what ways can the interpretation of art help them question the goals of a system of social rewards to which the majority know they cannot aspire? If Bourdieu's analysis is to be credited (1984; 1993) (and if England today equates with France during the 1970s) the majority of English school students (from working and lower middle class backgrounds) know they cannot aspire to the cultural or academic aristocracies. Instead, they satisfy consumerist desire and appetite by accumulating those products that the elites disdain but which provides them with credibility and satisfaction in their habituated social situation. As Bourdieu asserts, taste is statistically shown to be almost entirely conditioned by class, 'the choice of the necessary' (although such taste will be infused with gendered and cultural differences):

Thus, although working class practices may seem to be deduced directly from their economic conditions, since they ensure a saving of money, time and effort that would in any case be of low profitability, they stem from a choice of the necessary ('That's not for us'), both in the sense of what is technically necessary, 'practical' (or, as others would say, functional), i.e., needed in order to 'get by', to do 'the proper thing and no more', and of what is imposed by economic and social necessity condemning 'simple', modest' people to 'simple', modest' tastes...

This conventionalism, which is also that of popular photography, concerned to fix conventional poses in the conventional compositions, is the opposite of bourgeois formalism and of all the forms of art for art's sake recommended by manuals of graceful living and women's magazines...

(1984: 379)



## Interpretation and emancipation

7. One way in which interpretation might aid the process of emancipation would be if teachers were to promulgate the interpretative strategies of the social history of art and thereby expose the feet of clay on which the mythologies of art, particularly modernism, have been constructed and thus the social pretensions and snobberies that underpin the cultural capital of the dominant classes. However, the dangers of demythologisation are that the object of historical analysis can be stripped of any positive value so that it comes to represent not its potential but its socially negative and fictive past uses, even if these fictions have proved 'productive' (Meecham and Sheldon 2000). Given a carefully contrived, critically-inflected syllabus that does not stray too far, in terms of periods/artists, from currently used canonical texts,<sup>74</sup> art could be seen as nothing more than a tool of the state, nothing but a propagandist's dream, a repository for totalitarian spectacle and bourgeois solipsism, art could be 'demonised'. As Tom Gretton (2001) somewhat ruefully states:

as long as you are teaching 'art history' you are reproducing the category that needs to be theorised and it is very difficult to get a group of students in and to say, 'You are doing an art history degree but, oh boy, you shouldn't.' We could re-title our degree 'The History of Ideological State Apparatus, Branch 12' but then we probably wouldn't recruit any students.

(p. 31)

If the mythologies of autonomy and transcendentalism are exposed, if the material redundancy, the spirituality of art, is shown to be a fabrication, why bother with aesthetic contemplation at all? After all the delights of the 'anaesthetic' consumption promoted by corporate capitalism are easily obtainable, their exchange value readily understandable.

8. For Freire the only way to 'eject' the dominator and their 'style of life' is 'by a type of cultural action in which culture negates culture. That is, culture, as an interiorized product that in turn conditions men's [sic] subsequent acts, must become the object of men's knowledge so that they can perceive its conditioning power' (1985: 52-53). In many ways Freire refigures the castigations of the culture industry by Theodor Adorno (1903-69) although Freire does not believe in the redemptive power of art:

The secret of aesthetic sublimation is its representation of fulfilment as a broken promise. The culture industry does not sublimate it represses. By repeatedly exposing the objects of desire... it only stimulates the unsublimated forepleasure which habitual deprivation has long since reduced to a masochistic semblance... works of art are ascetic and unashamed; the culture industry is pornographic and prudish.

(Adorno and Horkheimer 1999: 38)

---

<sup>74</sup> I am thinking of Gombrich's ubiquitous *The Story of Art* (1950; latest edition 2000).

Abdul JanMohamed (1994) argues that perceiving this conditioning power is an impossible task without first going through a process of 'disidentification', 'a process of forming affiliations with other positions, of defining equivalences and constructing alliances' (p. 246). The first part of this process is what I would wish to call 'thinking other'. If art is one form of embodied evidence of others' ways of thinking and being, then the process of interpretation across cultural and historical artefacts is one way to achieve thinking other, to achieve the 'naïve transitive consciousness' of Freire. This imaginative practice opens up a space in which a new subjectivity can begin to be articulated (ibid: 245).

### **Crossing borders**

9. The philosophies of Dewey and Freire stand at either end of a continuum of educational reform leaving a legacy that suggests an incomplete teleological project. However, there have been philosophers of social theory, particularly from the Frankfurt school,<sup>75</sup> equally concerned to develop critical methods to oppose domination but who do not necessarily see an end to the critical project or, rather, their project is one of formulating critical methods with which to oppose those whose political project is far from democratic. Unlike the conservative tradition of consciousness, which attempts to establish truths through dialogue and argument, the aim of the Frankfurt tradition is to expose untruths through critique, particularly the untruths of the dominant classes. In other words, the protagonists of this tradition recognise that the knowledge/power relations of any existing or potential state are unlikely ever to attain the condition of perfect equity that would make critique redundant; such a teleological project is in fact antithetical to democracy within which critique is fundamental; Henry Giroux (1992) explains:

No tradition should ever be seen as received, because when it is received it becomes sacred, its terms suggest reverence, silence, and passivity. Democratic societies are noisy. They're about traditions that need to be critically reevaluated by each generation. The battle to extend democratic possibilities has to be fought in education at a very primal level. The very notion of knowledge, values, testing, evaluation, ethics all ultimately relate to social criticism and its role in democratic struggle.

(p. 156)

10. The categories which provide a conceptual framework for the analysis of oppression are familiar from Marxist and sociological theory: class, labour, mode of production and distribution but they have been extended by the Frankfurt school and others<sup>76</sup> to include more distinctly human properties, cultural and biological: race, gender, sexuality, ability, age and the whole litany that together comprise difference, difference that within the normative structures of the state proves an obstacle to equality of opportunity (see the discussion of

---

<sup>75</sup> I am thinking particularly of Adorno and Horkheimer (1999); Althusser (1971); Benjamin (1936); Marcuse (1978).

<sup>76</sup> In Britain, by the Birmingham School: Hall (1999a), in the USA Aronowitz (1994) Giroux (1997).

cultural studies in Chapter 5: 4.3). Even within the fundamental categories of Marxism the cultural studies researcher re-defines terms so that class, for instance, is not understood as a structural phenomenon but as an interpersonal medium through which people come to understand and respond to their social conditions (Giroux 1997). In this way culture is defined not in terms of its products but in relation to human interaction and agency, particularly as they are played out within structures of domination and subordination. Nonetheless, it is important to stress that these structures do not entirely determine action though they undoubtedly condition it.

11. The structure of the traditional school curriculum is, however, biased towards a view of knowledge in which it is separated out into disciplinary fields, which, 'disinterested' and 'objective', stand outside and above the social organisation of the school. In this way school subjects seem to constitute absolute categories which in conjunction totalise knowledge. Schooling thus functions to mediate all knowledge, and the values that it encapsulates, in such a way that they are naturalised and appear true. The categories that interest the culturalist are of course quite unlike the traditional subject disciplines; art, art history, history and so on, which, for the critical pedagogue are 'acritical' terms that signify a departmentalised totality, a totality ascribed a spurious universality in an attempt to disguise a divisional function within the hierarchical structures of liberal, bourgeois humanism, a tradition that is profoundly logocentric, Eurocentric and patriarchal.

12. One critical strategy has been to 'cross-borders' (Giroux and McLaren 1994), to collapse the territorial boundaries of a given discipline, its objects, language and method. One result of this strategy has been the emergence of new disciplines with new territories, objects, languages and methods. 'Visual culture' (Evans and Hall 1999; Mirzeoff 1999) as opposed to art, art history or aesthetics is the branch of cultural studies that addresses the image (it tends to neglect the haptic modalities of the artefact). Visual culture critics refuse to privilege fine art because, in line with their inclusive principles, they insist on recognising the significance of popular and mass forms of culture. By adopting analytical methods such as semiotics and discourse analysis their intention is to apply critical methods that offer a systematic and potentially shared language with which to address the multiplicity of cultural forms, to collapse typological borders. This prospect would seem absurd to the aesthetician who fulminating in the context of the autonomous and discrete practices of modernism, sees each practice as 'unique to the nature of its medium', (Greenberg 1965). Aesthetics is a pre-eminently humanist discipline, and the aesthetician, by placing the work of art at the centre of his/her enquiry, confirms the centrality of humanity and individual consciousness (Crowther 1993). Therefore, because the latter is supposedly embodied in works of art, it follows that each art object is unique, an extension of, or analogue to the individual,

collectively 'man'. For the aesthete the products of mass entertainment can never be art, for unlike it they are not an analogue of the human condition but a diversion from it, they are not unique but replicas, they do not engage the individual reflexively but disengage them in escapist fantasy (see Adorno and Horkheimer in paragraph 8; Greenberg 1939).

### **The agenda of cultural studies**

13. The concept of the unique and actualised self, so beloved of liberal humanism, is one that sets apart the individual person from the collective mass of the people. This concept has been co-opted within the creative rhetoric of art education: by Read (1943), for whom creativity becomes a psychological (biological) necessity or, for example, by Ross (1978) where the creative development of the individual is the product of nurture and education and thus cultural. This process of individuation produces a definition of a person 'as an essential being subject to, but not constituted by, the multiplicity of relations of a given social formation' (Aronowitz 1994: 223). Louis Althusser (1918-90), a Marxist theorist who has profoundly influenced critical pedagogues, insisted that, on the contrary, the multiplicity of social and thus material relations is exactly what produces the subject:

where only a single subject... is concerned, the existence of the ideas of his [sic] belief is material in that his ideas are his material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of the subject.

(1977: 499)

Thus, for the cultural critic (in solidarity with Freire) an emancipatory education is impossible until the individual can understand how they are constituted by their particular social formation, itself constituted within an inescapable history, Bourdieu's 'habitus' (1993b). In this scenario art becomes one facet of the multiplicity of social relations and its critical and historical study a way of analysing that constitution, a necessary step before transformation can begin.<sup>77</sup> However this emphasis on social structures and practices enables some critics to wag an accusatory finger: 'Cultural studies may sometimes be primarily thematic, paraphrastic and diagnostic in their way of reading... The orientation is more toward the culture and less toward the work itself, even though the heterogeneity of each culture is in principle recognised' (Miller 1992: 17). According to Joseph Hillis Miller cultural studies is a politically motivated discipline in which, on the one hand, a dominant culture is dismantled through theoretical critique while, on the other, peripheral, minority cultures are celebrated and empowered to assure their ascendancy, a transformative process of enfranchisement and reparation (ibid: 18-19). It follows that for the cultural critic the art of a dominant culture is interesting only in so far as it reflects that culture, only in so far as it represents its ideological structures (thus the critique of canon formation). When choosing

---

<sup>77</sup> Whether art can be a part of that transformation will depend on the subject position of the artist.

to analyse such art the cultural critic does so to expose and/or demonstrate its coercive properties, its injustices; it is used merely as an *illustration* of power relations external to the works themselves not as something *productive* of power relations.

14. Alternatively, according to Miller, the cultural critic finds it necessary to take a different approach when championing the art of a minority culture, promoting campaigns of visibility with their re-contextualisations and preservations and their necessary re-definitions of art and identity (Parker and Pollock 1981), often by means of 'strategic essentialism' (Spivak 1988: 13). The intention here is that such campaigns of revision will lift minorities from their position of subjugation towards self-determination, a position of subjecthood and agency. However, there is the danger that a dominant culture, in learning from its critics and adopting a rhetoric of inclusivity, is able to make difference visible in the belief that assimilation will inevitably follow. There is also a danger, if a minority culture is able to establish a form of dominance, as in the case of African/American traditions in popular music and athletics, that it will have recourse to the aesthetic categories that were once perceived as antithetical to it, thus jazz has been called the authentic, classical music of the USA (Miller 1992) (this instance is not so much an example of assimilation so much as appropriation by a dominant culture). As Kobena Mercer (1999) argues:

Visibility has been won, in the African American world, through complicity with the compromise formation of cultural substitutionism. 'Hyperblackness' in the media and entertainment industries serves not to critique social injustice, but to cover over and conceal increasingly sharp inequalities that are most polarised *within* black society itself, namely between a so-called urban underclass and an expanded middle class that benefited from affirmative action.

(p. 56)

15. To the cultural critic writing in the context of an emerging global culture, traditional aesthetic criticism appears inadequate and outmoded in the sense that it fails to address this success/failure (the transformation and predominance of mass culture) except of course negatively, dismissing it as 'kitsch' (Greenberg 1939; Adorno and Horkheimer 1999).<sup>78</sup> Modernist aesthetics is also antithetical to the multi-sensory, multi-media, multi-modal and virtual means of digital communications, means that cultural studies has grown up with, and with which it is symbiotically related. But niggling questions arise from this very relationship: 'are the strategies of cultural studies adequate, is not its sibling, the 'mega-visual' tradition, already too tainted by its collusion with global capitalism?' Moreover, as Miller notes: 'Since the university is at present one of the most powerful institutional mechanisms for assimilating cultural diversity, how can cultural studies avoid participating in the work of assimilation they would resist?' (1992: 46).

---

<sup>78</sup> How would Adorno respond today to the ascendancy of kitsch in the form of 'camp' or in the hands of appropriators such as Jeff Koons or David Mach?

16. Henry Giroux (1992) takes such criticism on board. He suggests that it is the job of university and school teachers to acknowledge the ways in which they are inscribed within institutions of power, that they are not necessarily representing themselves but particular forms of conventional authority. Therefore the type of borders that should be crossed are not only disciplinary but institutional, 'we need to enlarge the possibility for other groups to see schools as political sites where they can make a contribution' (p. 159). He offers a series of actions:

This means we [radical educators?] must make an attempt to develop a *shared language* around the issue of pedagogy and struggle, develop a *set of relevancies* that can be recognized in each other's work, and articulate a *common political project* that addresses the relationship between pedagogical work and the reconstruction of *oppositional spheres*. Second, we need to form alliances around the issue of  *censorship* both in and out of the schools. The question of *representation* is central to issues of pedagogy as a form of cultural politics and cultural politics as practice *related to the struggles of everyday life*. Third we need to articulate these issues in a *public* manner, in which...we're really addressing a *variety of cultural workers* and not simply a narrowly defined audience. This points to the need to broaden the definition of culture and political struggle and in doing so *invite others to participate* in both the purpose and practice central to such tasks.

(p. 159)

### **Key skills and performativity**

17. The ACHiS project (1999-2001) was an attempt at institutional border crossing, although the degree to which it informed alliances outside pedagogic institutions was limited. As I have examined in Chapter 3, the insularity of secondary schools and the organisation of the curriculum is a part of the apparatus of their reproductive function. Although critical studies and other, newer disciplines are established and contested within higher education,<sup>79</sup> the National Curriculum re-enshrines the late nineteenth-century lexicon of a liberal education in schools (QCA and DfEE 1999), itself derived from those categories constituting the Renaissance Humanitas (with the addition of the then emerging natural sciences) in turn derived from the taxonomy of a Roman, liberal education. Crossing borders does however appear to have a legislated place within English schools from the year 2000 but in the form of 'core skills', that is those skills deemed essential for participation as a British citizen, both locally and globally, namely: communication (using English), application of number (arithmetic), information technology (using computers), working with others, improving own learning and performance (QCA 1997) (my gloss in brackets) with the addition today of problem solving ([www.support4learning.org.uk/education/key\\_skills](http://www.support4learning.org.uk/education/key_skills)). But this is to confuse paradigm with type; the subject disciplines denote the paradigmatic division of knowledge within the tradition of consciousness (Smith 1999), even the mode of enquiry, whereas the core skills denote a typology of proficiency; not so much crossing borders to promote critical

<sup>79</sup> E.g. Sociology, Media, Post-colonial and Women's Studies.

consciousness so much as across borders to ensure social efficiency, the new performativity of management.

### **The critical curriculum and oppositional pedagogy**

18. Critiques of liberal education are not new, blueprints for a critical curriculum have been formulated by many, in England most notably by Raymond Williams (1965).<sup>80</sup> Giroux (1992) recognises the formative influence of Williams on his thinking, opening a section on 'Cultural Studies as Pedagogical Practice' by quoting one of his motivational aims: 'The deepest impulse was the desire to make learning part of the process of social change itself' (p. 163). In Giroux's version of cultural studies, students and teachers work together in a critical partnership through which they interrogate the way power is perpetuated by cultural institutions (including schools) and examine their own positions and potential agency within those same institutional structures: 'This suggests more than a politics of discourse and difference. It also points to a politics of social and cultural forms in which possibilities open up for naming in concrete terms what struggles are worth taking up, what alliances are to be formed as a result of these struggles, and how a discourse of difference can deepen the political and pedagogical struggle for justice, equality, and freedom' (p. 165). The result is an interventionist and oppositional pedagogy situated in dialectical relationship to conventional forms. Learning is no longer relegated to the *acquisition* of 'objective' knowledges or skills but is *productive* 'of knowledge, identities, and desires' (p.166). However, more recently Giroux (2003) has admitted the difficulties involved in developing a pedagogy of resistance during a time in which the commodification and privatisation of desire has become the dominant strategy of the dominant power, global corporate capitalism.

19. The practice of critique is a negative one, a process of repudiation and resistance, and it has been criticised by David Smith (1999: 36-37) for being epistemologically biased and for espousing teleological, utopian aims that, once realised, would put an end to interpretation.<sup>81</sup> But, in the hands of Giroux and McLaren (1994), bell hooks (1994) and Stuart Hall (1997) critical pedagogy often takes on a hybrid form somewhat like a combination of the methodological exactitude of critical theory with the positive rhetoric of Dewey's

---

<sup>80</sup> Williams writes: I would put down the following, as a minimum to aim at for every educationally normal [sic] child:

1. Extensive practice in the fundamental languages of English and mathematics
2. General knowledge of ourselves and our environment, taught at the secondary stage not as separate academic disciplines but as general knowledge drawn from the disciplines which clarify at a higher stage...
3. History and criticism of literature, the visual arts, music, dramatic performance, landscape and architecture [*incipient cultural studies*]
4. Extensive practice in democratic procedures... Extensive practice in the use of... sources of information, opinion and influence [*in reduced form, mandatory from September 2000 in the form of citizenship*]
5. Introduction to at least one other culture...to be given in part by visiting and exchange (p. 175) [my italics].

<sup>81</sup> However the subtleties and unrest of Benjamin, perhaps the most hermeneutic of its practitioners, might question this generalisation.

utopianism (his vision of the active and creative, democratic citizen). The former provides the means by which people can publicly expose oppressive governments and other state apparatus, overturning them through true democratic process (of which revolution could conceivably be a part), and the latter provides the possibility of freedom through creative action, the necessary rhetoric of hope which functions to counteract the negativity of critique. But in questioning epistemologies based on transcendentalist accounts of the 'spirit' the critical tradition has to conform to a scientific and materialist view of the world and, as such, does not have the flexibility to accommodate traditions outside a materialist trajectory in a pluralist age. Smith (1999) accuses critical pedagogy of doing violence to the very people it professes to be emancipating:

Dialogue in the critical sense becomes dialogue with a hidden agenda: I speak to you to inform you of your victimization and oppression rather than with you in order that we might create a world which does justice to both of us... [in this tradition] Pedagogy is concerned with mobilizing the social conscience of students into acts of naming and eradicating the evils of the times.

(pp. 36-37)

20. Friere was the first to espouse a type of violence, but not in the form suggested by Smith. A certain violence is the inevitable consequence of a justifiable antagonism (Freire 1985: 81), an antagonism born of the 'subaltern's' contemplation of their own existence, but an antagonism that is only a stage in a developing mutuality:

Freire emphasises the idea of self-liberation, proposing a pedagogy whose task is to unlock the intrinsic humanity of the oppressed. Here the notion of ontological vocation is identical with the universal, humanizing praxis of and by the most oppressed rather than 'for' them. For a genuine liberatory praxis does not cease, even with the revolutionary act of self-liberation. The true vocation of humanization is to liberate humanity, including the oppressors and those, like teachers, who are frequently recruited from among the elite classes to work with the oppressed, but who unwittingly perpetuate domination through teaching.

(Aronowitz 1994: 225-226)

In following Freire's principles the teacher does not speak for victims but provides the resources and structures to enable the 'oppressed' to speak of and for themselves, to come to self-realisation through a process that makes possible the redefinition of subject positions; 'denunciation' before 'annunciation' (JanMohamed 1994).

### **Engaged pedagogy**

21. The person who comes to know themselves and others must know themselves *in*, not outside, time. This truism chimes with a development from within critical pedagogy called 'engaged pedagogy', in which the teacher acknowledges and addresses the lives of their students, their prior knowledge and habitus (constituting as it does their class, race, gender, age, etc.) but, equally, in a spirit of reciprocity that undermines the private/public duality of



the professional. Here, teachers engage with their own lives and the ways that it informs their teaching and learning (hooks 1994: 13-22). This ensures that they cannot step outside from what they are teaching, they cannot pretend that what is taught is a body of knowledge somehow separate from themselves. What the engaged teacher is required to do is not dissimilar to the self-positioning beloved of the critical tradition (Gramsci 1971; Said 1980) but neither is it identical. Not only does the teacher need to say: 'this is me; me in a given time and context: work out for yourself why I say what I say to you,' it requires from them the difficult task of admitting: 'it is not only what I say to you in a given time, but what we say together in our time, what we say because of who we are in difference and because we say it in interaction, we say it in the hope that in the present, our interpretations of our pasts might help us to form a future in which each one of us has well-being'. Admittedly, hooks suggests that such a strategy is risky and its confessional tone has been accused by Foucauldians of being coercive and regulatory (Orner in hooks 1994: 21) but hooks goes on to declare: 'In my classrooms I do not expect students to take any risks that I would not take, to share in any way that I would not share' (ibid).

22. One of the ACHiS researchers, Jane Trowell, is much persuaded by the work of hooks. In an article written mid-way through the project (2001) she considered hook's philosophy in relation to the teaching of art history in schools. In so doing she revisited a central aim of ACHiS, namely, to discover what and why things are said about art in the art classroom especially by art teachers who recognise the importance of critical approaches. Embedded within the ACHiS aims is the assumption that discussion has at least a dual purpose. First, it provides students with a critical language to enable them to reflect on and interpret their own and others' practice. Second, it aims to involve students in the reception of art, craft and design so as to engage them critically in its cultural and historical contexts; art as social and cultural production. In some of the residencies students were encouraged to question essentialist and universalist myths and to consider the relationships between producer and audience, particularly those relationships in which hegemonic systems are used to manipulate and deceive audiences in the maintenance of 'unreasonable' power (Postman and Weingartner 1969). This last purpose enabled students to interpret and thus understand the significance of art within the reality of the 'mega-circulation' of images (Maharaj 2001), a process that exposes art as one among many interrelated forms of social and cultural production rather than an autonomous product of individual and special creativity, the pervasive myth of modernism. In her article, Trowell (2001) provides fifteen recommendations for an engaged approach to art history which, cumulatively, are an attempt to construct equitable power relations in the pedagogic field in the form of a practical guide. In this way she makes the aims of the critical pedagogues cited throughout this section (from Dewey to hooks) subject and context specific. Although many of the recommendations ask

the teacher to reflect on their own assumptions and their theoretical and ethical position in relation to students' needs, I quote the opening point because it frames and informs all the subsequent recommendations:

1. Start any new group by *discussing* what assumptions people, including yourself, have about the upcoming study: the subject itself, their potential within it, and the teaching and learning methodology. Discover why everyone in the group thinks they are there, what they want (or don't want) to learn, and where they wish to end up, and why. Sensitively bring to the surface discussion of majorities, minorities and total absences in the group (race, gender, class)?

The resulting insights will be invaluable for all, and form an honest starting point which can be referred to and built on. (my italics)

(p. 42)

It is therefore with an examination of discussion as a dialogic tool (for some, primarily a pragmatic solution to the difficulties that diversity throws up) that I shall close the argument for critical pedagogy in this chapter.

## Dialogue

23. The critical pedagogic process par excellence is then dialogue, a process that enables participants to acknowledge their possible differences and to voice their positions, a process that holds the potential if not of resolution, then at least of understanding. Nicholas Burbules (2000) usefully categorises six conceptions of dialogue: 1) liberal, debate; 2) feminist, reciprocity; 3) Socratic, argument; 4) hermeneutic, intersubjective understanding; 5) Freirian, emancipation 6) post-liberal (Habermasian) negotiation (pp. 252-255) (the terms identified are, in some instances, my own selections/interpretations). Whatever the differences of these positions Burbules contends:

They all place primary emphasis on dialogue as the adjudicative basis for social and political discussion and disagreement. They all privilege dialogue as the basis for arriving at valid intersubjective understanding or knowledge. And they all, in the educational domain, recommend dialogue as the mode of pedagogical engagement best able to promote learning, autonomy, and an understanding of one's self in relation to others. The prominence of these six views, particularly among educational theorists and practitioners of what might be called broadly the 'progressivist' stripe, has meant that dialogue is the topic of the day and that promoting dialogue and the conditions that can support it is taken as a central educational task.

(p. 257)

The discursive environment that I have been proposing for art and design follows the same imperative and is potentially the strongest support for securing a critical subject. Although Burbules admits that dialogue as a critical pedagogy has major advantages (see also Stibbs 1998 for the positive potential of discussing artworks in schools) he is also, amongst other

commentators (Ellsworth 1997; Smith 1999, Cameron 2000), suspicious of the ‘hegemony of reasonableness’ that sustains its benevolent status and I must spend some time recounting his argument so that I can defend my position.

24. Burbules’ objections to the dialogic panacea revolve around the problem of power relations and the way in which proponents of dialogue suppose that as a democratic process (because, in principle, anyone can contribute) it follows that dialogue is totally inclusive. What this elides is threefold: who instigates and thus frames dialogue? (a group who will inevitably hold the moral high ground for initiating a ‘benevolent’ process); on whose and what terms are contributors invited? (the selection of venue, time, representatives, ground rules and procedural structures, topics for discussion, the language for discussion); who is most at risk from contributing? (in the event of a lack of consensus some groups, by exposing their beliefs, may have laid themselves open to sanctions by people who, outside the dialogue, are in a position of power over them and who are now forewarned with knowledge that could be used against the very group most in need of empowerment). In relation to these issues Burbules asks:

What are the limits of reflexivity within dialogue? Is the invitation to participate already a kind of co-optation of *radical* critique and rejectionism? Are the dialogical aims of consensus, provisional agreement, and even understanding (across unresolved differences) based upon ideals of harmony and community that are always on *somebody’s* terms, and so threaten the maintenance of separate, self-determined identities?

(p. 258)

He goes on to define three dialogic models that have been devised and deployed in the name of social justice in an attempt to address the issue of diversity in education: pluralism, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism. Whilst he admits that the intentions of those promoting each strain have many virtues he also discloses what he believes to be the weaknesses of each in practice.

25. The first, pluralism, is a ‘melting pot’ in which *exchange* is the main vehicle for reaching a *reconciliation* of differences. Such dialogue involves agreements and compromises and perhaps *new understandings* with which all contributors can identify because they are produced together. However when it ‘comes to the end of *assimilating* diverse groups into predominantly mainstream beliefs and values... this asymmetry of change threatens... to erase significant cultural difference or to relegate it entirely to the private, not public sphere’ (p. 258) [my italics]. In this way pluralist approaches can unwittingly reinforce dominant perspectives because they represent the norm from which difference is identified and with which any negotiation must be informed. Often ‘common sense’, pragmatic solutions result because the ideal outcome is *social harmony*.

26. The second, multiculturalism (see Mason 1995), takes as its founding principle *respect* for difference. Given this maxim multiculturalists attempt to *preserve* differences through *celebration* (enjoying difference for the sake of difference). However, multicultural visibility 'can have the effect of *exoticizing* differences, rendering them quaint or interesting as artifacts and not as critical points of reference against which to view oneself' (ibid). This approach is the one sanctified in the National Curriculum order for Art and design (see Chapter 1: 6) and has therefore been subject to most criticism in England. For example, John Holt (1996) cautions against what he calls a 'cultural kaleidoscope' (p. 131) because the spectacular, indiscriminate exposure of difference can distort cultures by misrepresenting them through stereotypes, for example by allowing historical artefacts/practices to stand in for today's (see Addison with Dash 2000). The multiculturalist is therefore in danger of essentialising difference, of limiting its manifestations to fixed historical, ethnic signs which can be played out in harmless distractions while the main business of life goes on as usual. Here the ideal outcome is *cultural tolerance*.

27. The third, cosmopolitanism, is a recognition of the '*unreconciled coexistence* of diverse cultures and groups' (Burbules 2000: 259). This approach acknowledges the past history of colonisation and the contemporary conditions of globalisation so that divisions may at times throw into relief the 'limits of assimilation, agreement, or even understanding' (ibid). It follows that in some instances 'there must simply be an end to talk that seeks to bridge or minimize differences... it *abrogates* - and sometimes prejudices and rejects out of hand - the *value of agreement*, excluding both the possibility of mutual accommodation and the possibility of a critical questioning of one view from a radically different other' (ibid). This approach has no ideal because it professes *realism*.

28. In response to the domestications of the first two approaches and the pessimism of the third, Burbules goes on to state: 'differences are enacted. They change over time. They take shape differently in varied contexts. They surpass our attempts to classify or define them' (p. 261). The implication of this statement is that, for a variety of reasons, different groups and individuals may choose to change the strategies through which identification is made possible depending on the conditions, particularly the power relations, in which the choice is made. Therefore, in the educational context, all approaches are worth considering just so long as they are stripped of their *neutral* clothing by de-naturalising the norms around which they are structured and just so long as the *power relations* that frame the specific pedagogic situation are acknowledged. Additionally, participants should critique the categorial distinctions that mislead through the fixed identities of hostile binary oppositions in three ways: by accepting the possibility of internal difference 'the unexplored and unrecognized dimension of one's self' 'differences within'; by subjecting naturalised concepts to

redefinition, 'differences beyond'; by refusing to capitulate to normative discourses and employing strategies of resistance to dominant conventions, 'differences against' (p. 261). Further, in order for there to be equity, all participants should participate in the deployment of the approaches so that their supposed neutrality is exposed and so that dialogue is recognised as a socio/historical, interactive, situated practice:

The utterances that comprise an ongoing dialogue are already made (or not made) in the context of an awareness of the reactions – real, anticipated, or imagined – of other participants. The more one pushes this sort of analysis the more the achievement, or suppression, of dialogical possibilities comes to be seen as an expression of a group interdynamic, and not something resulting simply from the choices and actions of individuals...

A dialogue is not simply a momentary engagement between two or more people; it is a discursive relation situated against the background of previous relations involving them and the relation of what they are speaking today to the history of those words spoken before them.

(p. 263)

29. Therefore it may be strategically vital to support and/or represent the views of others but in such a way that the histories of their' lives are made credible. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (1995) emphasise that:

Any substantive multiculturalism has to recognise the existential realities of pain, anger and resentment, since the multiple cultures invoked by the term 'multiculturalism' have not historically co-existed in relations of equality and mutual respect. It is therefore not merely a question of communicating across borders but of discerning the forces which generate the borders in the first place. Multiculturalism has to recognise not only difference but even bitter, irreconcilable difference... But these historical gaps in perception do not preclude alliances, dialogical coalitions, intercommunal identifications and affinities. Multiculturalism and the critique of Eurocentrism, we have tried to show, are inseparable concepts; each becomes impoverished without the other.

(p. 15)

It is my contention that however difficult to promote, such a process is crucial to the practice of an engaged and critical pedagogy, one where differences are not categorial but contingent and strategic and one in which the possibility of failure is recognised due to the incommensurability of some differences.

### **Closing thoughts**

30. The truant curriculum is a symptom of resistance in schools, an unintended signal of difference produced wittingly and unwittingly by many students and teachers involved in the field of art education. In a way the acriticality and supposed monomodal singularity of art and design are signs by which the subject is set apart from the logocentric curriculum. Art

teachers are right to assert this difference, both because the difference of art and design is a historical reality and because what is different about art and design practices is, to some extent, located in an affective space outside language (a space designated by Dalton as the 'aesthetic' 2001: 141). In this sense, art teachers' suspicion of writing is understandable. By holding language at arm's length, that is its discursive as opposed to its regulative potential, art teachers neglect the dominant social means for negotiating difference (in distinction from asserting difference) and fail to utilise the increasing part played by discussion within popular communications. Art teachers are right to be suspicious of assessment criteria as laid down by QCA and the examination boards, because the language of these criteria undoubtedly limits what it is that can be looked for within student production. Additionally, these criteria often steer assessors to overlook or disregard the semiotic means by which students attempt to make meaning (Atkinson 2002). Art teachers sometimes have recourse to the statements of artists who claim that whilst making artwork, reflective language is a hindrance to creative action (see for example Cornelia Parker's recent claim that: 'Later, in retrospect you can talk eloquently about it but when you're in the middle of it you can't', in Tickner 2003: 370). Such statements are referenced to defend the absence of critical discussion, but they ignore, for example, the role that language plays in helping young children to develop graphic means of semiosis (Kress and Leeuwen 1996: 5-11). These sentiments also mask the ahistoricism of art teachers' sense of their pedagogic identities which, by and large, remain in thrall to modernist myths of creativity and autonomy. Cloaked in this identity (of essence a fine art one) teachers often refuse to acknowledge the social function of art, craft, design and critical practice as a collective and distinctive field of cultural production with institutional and ideological histories. It is within these histories that their own identity has been produced and it is within this field that they position themselves as marginal players. Students' prior knowledge of, and engagement with, visual and material culture usually falls outside this field, an experience located within a habitus that, in England, is dominated by the mass media and local, familial and community traditions. These traditions are frequently ignored or denigrated by schools, a type of symbolic violence that further corals the subject art and design into a tiny, hermetically sealed space that ignores both the lived experience of students and the logocentrism of the system.

31. Art teachers teach in a field that is under threat; art and design is losing resources in terms of teachers, time and status. This slow process of marginalisation can only be reversed if art teachers begin to engage critically with the history of art education in England and work out how to regain a sense of the worth of art and design practices in the expanding field of visual, multimedia and multimodal culture. Both these acts require interdisciplinary,

interpretative action; developing strategic partnerships with like-minded fields is one way forward.

32. ACHiS was one such partnership which resulted in concrete recommendations from post-residency discussion (see Appendix 6). Many of the participants in ACHiS found it a positive experience, although it is evident from the synoptic report (Addison et al 2003) that, for some, the process of reflection was a difficult one, particularly when cherished beliefs were challenged and threatened. There is however a danger hidden within the process of demythologisation. The critical means through which teachers might engage students in coming to know themselves as subjects constructed in, and by, history are products of Enlightenment rationality and are therefore suspect in terms of the anti-epistemological theories of some poststructuralists. But, as Terry Eagleton (1990) (a)muses, theorists such as Foucault wish to have their cake and eat it, Foucault espousing both an opposition to oppression and a paean to the pleasures of power. No doubt a diagram could demonstrate the paradoxes presented by poststructuralist perspectives in the field of education; such a diagram could represent both a utopian and dystopian perspective on some of the sacred processes/artefacts of art education at secondary level so that, depending on your hermeneutic position, the very same phenomenon could be viewed as positive, negative or ambivalent. For example, the 'sketchbook' (officially a repository for observations, investigations and the generation of ideas) or the critical studies diary (see Chapter 3.10) could be recognised as ideal instruments for surveillance, latter day Catholic pastorals and sacraments of penance (Foucault 1990: 18-35) apparatus through which the teacher demands confession and is thus in a position to admonish, chastise and regulate behaviours. Alternatively, the sketchbook/diary could be argued as a site for self-reflexivity, an opportunity for an aesthetic working on the self that enables the student to achieve 'the perfect supremacy of oneself over oneself' (Foucault 1992: 31), a process in which the critical and productive are blissfully indivisible. But neither the conspiracy nor the epiphany rings true.

33. Perhaps the truancy of the critical curriculum is a grassroots tactic, 'a sort of oppositional guerrilla activity against ruling ideas' (Dalton 2001: 145) or perhaps it is a more long-term strategy of resistance in which logocentrism and managerial systems are confronted by their bodily other. My fear is, however, that neither of these activities is responsible for the truancy that is, neither is consciously deployed as a critical apparatus to undermine, resist or provide an alternative to the dominant system. If art and design as a school subject was born of two arguing parents (the instrumentalist, rationalising and conserving father and the activist, primitivising and progressive mother) then its somewhat docile offspring have oscillated between parental extremes, simultaneously professing instrumental and holistic

credentials for the art curriculum. In this way art and design offers up everything and nothing and in so doing places itself firmly within a conserving and reproductive role. It provides the middle class with those marks of distinction by which its social position is most visibly assured, but only at the expense of a critical engagement with the metaphysical belief system that provides art with that distinction in the first place. It provides a recreational and therapeutic service, even a place of solace, to those who fail or refuse to engage with the logocentric curriculum, and thereby places itself outside the critical curriculum and discursive practices in general. Art and design valorises material practices that have little utilitarian purpose and can therefore be ignored by the dominant faction who determine educational policy (those who argue that education should provide students with life, read employment, skills). It also signals creative activity in schools (in the form of public displays in foyers and halls) but often through a reproductive and acritical system of the perpetuation of exemplary outcomes. Such repetition denies the imaginative and creative potential of learning in pursuit of good grades and added value in league tables. In the wider sphere of education, art provides academics with an elusive and thus perpetually attractive object 'fatale' on, and with which, they can practice their logocentric craft ad infinitum. In the process, they reinforce the otherness of somatic and aesthetic knowing and relegate those who engage with it to the margins (whether exalted, as in the genius, or lowly: the school student, the hobbyist and the naïf). In all this, the social structures and interactions that Bourdieu (1984; 1993) is so at pains to reveal are ignored. Critical interventions can be a way to expose these hierarchical systems but they can also be a means to reinforce them. The ACHiS team managed both; yet in some residencies, and in some of the participant forums, it did offer up a potential, a discursive space in between the affective and logocentric. This is a space that interventionists themselves need to be capable of navigating, a space which many school students are initially adept at surfing and a space that deserves more theoretical research. For Bernstein (2000) these spaces in between are 'regions of silence', but this is a defining mechanism that needs to be questioned.



## Bibliography

Abbs, P. (1994) *The Educational Imperative: a defence of Socratic and Aesthetic Learning*. London: Falmer Press.

Abbs, P. (ed.) (1987) *Living Powers: the arts and education*. London: Falmer Press.

Abbs, P. (ed.) (1989) *The Symbolic Order*. London: Falmer Press.

Adams, E., McGonagle, R., Watts, P., Weiner, G. (1997) 'Action research and Social Justice: some Experiences of Schools in the Inner City'. In: S. Hollingsworth (ed.), *International Action Research*. London: Falmer Press.

Addison, N. (1998) *ACHiS proposal*. London: Institute of Education.

Addison, N. (1999) 'Rub Out? Appropriation and pastiche in art education'. In: G. Cox, H. Hollands and V. de Rijke (eds) *The Impossibility of Art Education*. London: Cameraworks.

Addison, N. (1999a) 'Whose Afraid of Signs and Significations? Defending Semiotics in the Secondary Art and Design curriculum', *Directions: Journal of Art and Design Education*, 18 (1) Oxford: Blackwell.

Addison, N. (2001) 'Tried and Tested: resourceful art histories in art education', *Engage* 8. London: Engage.

Addison, N. (2003) 'Iconoscepticism: the Value of Images in Education'. In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Issues in Art and Design Teaching*. London: Routledge.

Addison, N. (2003a) 'Expressing the Un-nameable: Art and design and the formation of sexual identities'. Unpublished paper given at Sex/Sexuality and Relationships Education Conference. London: Institute of Education.

Addison, N. and Burgess, L. (2003) 'Challenging orthodoxies through partnership: PGCE students as agents of change'. In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Issues in Art and Design Teaching*. London: Routledge.

Addison, N. with Dash, P. (2000) 'Towards a Plural Curriculum'. In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Learning to Teach Art and Design in the Secondary School*. London: Routledge.

Addison, N., Asbury, M., Chittenden, T., De Souza, P., Georgaki, M., Hulks, D., Papazafiriou, G., Perret, C. and Trowell, J. (2003) *Art Critics and Art Historians in Schools: A Synoptic Report of an Interdisciplinary Research Project*. London: Institute of Education.

Addison, N., De Souza, P., Georgaki, M., Hulks, D., Papazafiriou, G., Perret, C. and Trowell, J. (2002) Unpublished compendium of the ACHiS research reports *Regions of Silence: Spaces In Between*. London: Institute of Education.

Adorno, T and Horkheimer, M. (1999) 'The Culture industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception'. In: S. During (ed.) *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.

Adorno, T. (1970) *Aesthetic Theory*. Trans. R. Hullot-Kentor, London: Athlone Press.

Allison, B. (1972) *Art Education and Teaching about Arts of Africa, Asia and Latin America*. The Voluntary Committee for Overseas Aid and Development.

- Alpers, S. (1983) 'Interpretation without Representation, or, The Viewing of Las Meninas' *Representations* 1 (1).
- Althusser, L. (1971) 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses'. In: *Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays*. London: New Left Books.
- Althusser, L. (1977) *For Marx*. London: New Left Books.
- Anderson, D. (1997) *A Common Wealth: Museums and Learning in the United Kingdom*. London: Department of National Heritage.
- Anderson, P. (1969) 'Components of the national culture.' In: A. Cockburn and R. Blackburn (eds) *Student Power*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Anderson, T. (2003) 'Art Education for Life', *Journal of Art and Design Education*, 22 (1). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Arieti, S. (1976) *Creativity: The Magic Synthesis*. New York: Basic Books.
- Arnold, M. (1869) *Culture and Anarchy: An essay in political and social criticism*. London; Dublin: Thomas Nelson & Sons.
- Aronowitz, S. (1994) *Dead Artists Live Theories and other Cultural Problems*. New York; London: Routledge.
- Atkinson, D. (2002) *Art in Education: Identity and Practice*. Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Bailey, M. E. (1993) 'Foucauldian Feminism: Contesting bodies, sexuality, identity'. In: C. Ramazanoglu (ed.) *Up Against Foucault*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bal, M. and Bryson, N. (1991), 'Semiotics and Art History: A Discussion of Context and Senders.' In: D. Preziosi (ed.) (1998) *The Art of Art History; A Critical Anthology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ball, S. (ed.) (1990) *Foucault and Education: disciplines and knowledge*. London: Routledge.
- Bann, S. (1996) 'Meaning/Interpretation.' In: R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds.) *Critical Terms in Art History*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Barkan, M. and Chapman L. H. (1967) *Guidelines for art instruction through television for the elementary schools*. Bloomington, Ind.: National Center for School and College Television.
- Barrel, J. (1980) *The Darker Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting 1730 – 1840*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Barthes, R. (1957) *Mythologies*. Edition .(1993) Trans. A. Lavers, London: Vintage.
- Baudrillard, J. (1989) *America*. Trans. C. Turner, London: Verso.
- Bell, C. (1914) 'The Aesthetic Hypothesis.' In: F. Francina. and C. Harrison (eds) (1982) *Art and Modernism*. London: Paul Chapman in association with the Open University.
- Benjamin, W. (1936) 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.' In: F. Francina, F. and J. Harris (eds) (1992) *Art in Modern Culture*. London: Phaidon.

- Berger, J (1972) *Ways of Seeing*. London: Pelican.
- Bernstein: B. (2000) *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity*. Oxford: Rowan and Littlefield.
- Besançon, A. (2000) *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm*. Trans. J.M. Todd, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Binch, N. and Robertson, L. (1994) *Resourcing and Assessing Art, Craft and Design and Critical Studies in Art at KS4*. Corsham: NSEAD.
- Bloomfield. A. with Childs, J. (2000) *Teaching Integrated Arts in the Primary School*. London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Boas, F. (1927) *Primitive Art*. (Edition 1955) New York: Dover Publications.
- Boime, A. (1990) *The Art of Exclusion*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Bonami, F. and Frisa, M. L. (eds) (2003) *Dreams and Conflicts: The Dictatorship of the Viewer, 50<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition*. Venice: La Biennale di Venezia.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993) 'The Field of Cultural Reproduction'. In: *The Field of Cultural Reproduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993a) 'A Sociological Theory of Art Perception'. In: *The Field of Cultural Reproduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993b) 'Field of Power, Literary Field and Habitus'. In: *The Field of Cultural Reproduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993c) 'The Market of Symbolic Goods'. In: *The Field of Cultural Reproduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993d) 'The Historical Genesis of a Pure Aesthetic'. In: *The Field of Cultural Reproduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993e) 'The Production of Belief: Contribution to an Economy of Symbolic Goods'. In: *The Field of Cultural Reproduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993f) 'But Who Created the 'Creators'?' In: J. Tanner (ed.) *The Sociology of Art*. London: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, P. and Passeron, J-C. (1970) *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. Trans R. Nice, London: Sage.
- Bowl, J. and Rutt, M. (eds) (1999) *Amazons of the Avant-Garde*. London: Royal Academy of Arts.
- Breton, A. (1924) 'The First Manifesto of Surrealism'. Trans. R. Seaver and H. R. Lane. In: *Manifestos of Surrealism*. Michigan. Part reproduced in C. Harrison, P. Wood (eds) (1992) *Art in Theory 1900 - 1990*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Brunette, P. and Wills, D. (eds) (1994) *Deconstruction and the visual arts: art, media, architecture*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Bryson, N. (1981) *Word and Image*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bryson, N. (1991), 'Semiology and Visual Interpretation'. In: N. Bryson, M. A. Holly and K. Moxley (eds) *Visual Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Blackwell.
- Burbules, N. C. (2000) 'The Limits of Dialogue as a Critical Pedagogy'. In: P. Trifonas (ed.) *Revolutionary Pedagogies*. New York, London: Routledge/Falmer.
- Burgess, L. (1995) 'Human Resources: artists, craftspeople, designers'. In: R. Prentice (ed.) *Teaching Art & Design: Addressing Issues and Identifying Directions*. London: Cassell.
- Cahan, S. and Kocur, Z. (eds) (1996) *Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Cameron, D. (2000), *Good to Talk?* London: Sage.
- Chadwick, W. (1989) *Women, Art and Society*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Clark, K. (1982) *Ruskin Today*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Clark, T. J. (1973) *Image of the People*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Clark, T. J. (1974) 'The Conditions of Artistic Creation', Times Literary Supplement May 24 1974 reproduced in E. Fernie (selector/commentator). (1995) *Art History and its Methods*. London: Phaidon.
- Clark, T. J. (1984) *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the art of Manet and his followers*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Clark, T. J. (2000) *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes in a History of Modernism*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press.
- Clements, R. (1986) *The Art Teacher's Handbook*. London: Hutchinson.
- Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1994) *Research Methods in Education (4th Edition)*. London: Routledge.
- Coldstream, W. (1960) *1<sup>st</sup> Report of the National Advisory Council on Art Education*. London: HMSO.
- Collingwood, R. G. (1938) *The Principles of Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Coomaraswamy, A. K. (1956) *The Transformation of Nature into Art*. New York: Dover.
- Coombes, A. (1994) *Reinventing Africa*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Croce, B. (1901) *The aesthetic as the science of expression and of the linguistic in general*. Trans. C. Lyas, Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Crow, T. (1985) *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Crowther, P. (1993) *Art and Embodiment*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Dalton, P. (2001) *The Gendering of Art Education*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Damisch, H. (1975) 'Semiotics and Iconography'. In: D. Preziosi (ed.) (1998) *The Art of Art History; A Critical Anthology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- David, C. and Sztulman, P. (1997) *Documenta X*. Stuttgart: Edition Cantz.
- Davies, T. (1995) *Playing the System*. Birmingham: UCE.
- Dawtrey, L., Jackson, T., Masterson, M., Meecham, P. (eds) (1996) *Critical Studies and Modern Art*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- DCMS (2001) *Culture and Creativity: The Next Ten Years*. London: DCMS.
- DCMS (2001) *Libraries, Museums, Galleries and Archives for All: Cooperating Across the Sectors to Tackle Social Problems*. London: DCMS.
- De Beauvoir, S. (1949) *The Second Sex*. Edition (1974) Trans. H.M. Parshley, New York: Vintage.
- De Souza, P. (2001) *ACHiS Report*. Unpublished paper, London: Institute of Education.
- Debord, G. (1977) *Society of the Spectacle*. Detroit: Black and Red.
- Deepwell, K. (ed) (1995) *New Feminist Art Criticism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press.
- Derrida, J. (1976) *Of Grammatology*. Trans G. C. Spivak Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Derrida, J. (1990) *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and the Other Ruins*. Trans. P-A. Brault and M. Nass, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Dewey, J. (1899) *The School and Society*. (1915 edition) Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press.
- Dewey, J. (1916) *Democracy and Education*. (1999 edition) New York: Free Press.
- Dewey, J. (1934) *Art as Experience*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- DFE (1991) *National Curriculum Art Order*. London: HMSO.
- DFE (1995) *National Curriculum Art Order*. London: HMSO.
- DfEE (1997) *Connecting the Learning Society: National Grid for Learning the Government's Consultation Paper in A Summary*. London: DfEE.
- DfEE (1999) *National Curriculum Order for Art and design*. London: HMSO.
- DfEE (1999a) *National Curriculum Order for Design and technology*. London: HMSO.
- Dissanayake, H. (1992) *Homo Aestheticus: Where Art Comes from and Why*. New York: Macmillan.
- Dodd, J. and Sandell, R. (2001) *Including Museums: Perspectives on Museums, Galleries and Social Inclusion*. Leicester: Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, University of Leicester.
- Doherty, J. and Harland, J. (2001) *Partnerships for Creativity: an evaluation of implementation*. Slough: NFER.

- Duncan, C. (1995) *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*. London: Routledge.
- During, S. (1999) *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Eagleton, T. (1983) *Literary Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Eagleton, T. (1990) *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Edexcel (2000) *Specification: Edexcel GCSE in Art & Design...* London: Edexcel Foundation.
- Ehrenzweig, (1967) *The Hidden Order of Art*. 1993 edition London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Eisner, E. (1968) *A comparison of the developmental drawing characteristics of culturally advantaged and culturally disadvantaged children*. Washington: ERIC.
- Eisner, E. (1972) *Educating Artistic Vision*. New York: Macmillan.
- Eisner, E. (1976) 'Educational connoisseurship and criticism: Their form and function in educational evaluation', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 10.
- Eliot, T. S. (1963) 'The Metaphysical Poets'. In: *Selected Essays*. London: Faber.
- Elkins, J. (2000) *Why are these pictures puzzles?* New York and London: Routledge.
- Elliot, J. (1997) 'School-based Curriculum Development and Action Research in the United Kingdom' In: S. Hollingsworth (ed.) *International Action Research*. London: Falmer Press.
- Ellsworth, E. (1997) *Teaching Positions: Difference, pedagogy, and the Power of Address*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Elsner, J. Cardinal, R. (eds) (1994) *The Cultures of Collecting*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Evans, J. and Hall, S. (1999) *Visual culture: the reader*. London: Sage in association with the Open University Press.
- Fernie, E. (1995) *Art History and its Methods*. London: Phaidon.
- Field, D. (1970) *Change in Art Education*. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul and Humanities Press.
- Finnan, C. and Levin, H. (2000) 'Changing School Cultures'. In: H. Altrichter and J. Elliot (eds) *Images of Educational Change*. Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Fiske, J. (1989) *Understanding Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Foster, H. (1985) 'The Expressive Fallacy', *Recordings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*. Seattle: Bay Press.
- Foster, H. (1992) 'The Primitive Unconscious.' In: F. Frascina and J. Harris (eds) (1992) *Art in Modern Culture*. London: Phaidon.
- Foster, H. (1996) *The Return to the Real*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Foster, H. (ed.) (1983) *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*. Seattle, WA: Bay Press.

- Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish*. Trans. A. Sheridan, New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge*. C. Gordon (ed.) Trans C. Gordon, L. Marshall, J. Mepham, K. Soper, Harlow: Harvester Press.
- Foucault, M. (1990) *The Will to Knowledge. The History of Sexuality: 1*. Trans. R. Hurley (1978) London: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1992) *The Use of Pleasure. The History of Sexuality: 2*. Trans. R. Hurley (1985) London: Penguin.
- Franks, A. (2003) 'The Role of Language in a Multimodal Curriculum'. In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Issues in Art and Design Teaching*. London: Routledge/Falmer.
- Frascina, F. and Harris, J. (1992) *Art in Modern Culture*. London: Phaidon.
- Frascina, F. and Harrison, C. (1982) *Art and Modernism*. London: Paul Chapman in association with the Open University.
- Freire, P. (1985) *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation*. Trans D. Macado. Boston: Bergin and Garvey.
- Freire, P. (1990) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Freud, S. (1932) *Leonardo da Vinci: a psychosexual study of an infantile reminiscence* Trans. A.A. Brill, London: Kegan Paul.
- Fry, R. (1909) 'An Essay in Aesthetics.' In: F. Frascina and C. Harrison (eds) (1982) *Art and Modernism*. London: Paul Chapman in association with the Open University.
- Fry, R. (1920) 'Retrospect'. From: *Vision and Design* (1957) reproduced in E. Fernie, (1995) *Art History and its Methods*. London: Phaidon.
- Fukuyama, F. (1989) *The End of History?* Washington: Irving Kristol.
- Gablik, S. (1972) *Magritte*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Gadamer, H-G. (1977) *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Translated and edited by D. E. Linge. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.
- Geertz, C. (2000) *Local Knowledge*. USA: Basic Books.
- Gentle, K. (1985) *Children and Art Teaching*. London: Croom Helm.
- Gewirtz, S. (2001) *The Managerial School: Post-welfarism and Social Justice in Education*. London: Routledge.
- Gilroy, P. (2000) *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race*. London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press.
- Giroux, H. (1992) *Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education*. London: Routledge.
- Giroux, H. (1997) *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope*. Oxford: West View Press.
- Giroux, H. (2003) 'Do hope and critical pedagogy matter under the reign of neoliberalism?' In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Issues in Art and Design Teaching*. London: Routledge Falmer.

- Giroux, H. and McLaren, P. (eds) (1994) *Between Borders: pedagogy and the politics of cultural studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Golby, J. M. (1986) *Culture & Society in Britain 1850-1890*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Goldwater, R. (1938) *Primitivism in Modern Painting*. New York, London; Harper and Brothers.
- Goldwater, R. (1986) *Primitivism in Modern Art*. Cambridge Mass.: Belknap Press.
- Gombrich, E. (1950) *The Story of Art*. London: Phaidon.
- Graham, A. (2003) 'Take the Big TV Challenge!' In: *The Radio Times*. 30 Aug – 5 Sept.
- Graham, G. (1997) *Philosophy of the Arts: An Introduction to Aesthetics*. London: Routledge.
- Gramsci, A. (1971) *The Prison Notebooks: Selections*. Trans Q. Hoare and G. Howell Smith, New York: International Publishers.
- Greenberg, C. (1939) 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch.' *Partisan Review*. New York, pp 34-49.
- Greenberg, C. (1965) 'Modernist Painting'. In: F. Francina and C. Harrison (eds) *Modern Art and Modernism*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing in association with the Open University.
- Greenhalgh, P. (1997) 'The History of Craft' In: P. Dormer (ed) *The Culture or Craft*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Gregory, R. (1977) *Eye and Brain: the psychology of seeing*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Gretton, T. (1986), 'New Lamps for Old.' In: A. L. Rees and F. Borzello (eds) *The New Art History*. London: Camden Press.
- Gretton, T. (2001) 'Canon Fodder: an interview on Art History, Schools and Galleries.' In: N. Addison and E. Allen (eds) *Art Histories in Action: 'from armoured to loose canons.'* Engage 8. London: Engage.
- Gretton, T. (2003) 'Loaded Canons.' In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Issues in Art and Design Teaching*. London: Routledge.
- Grossberg, L. (1994) 'Introduction: Bringing It All Back Home, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies'. In: H. Giroux and P. McLaren (eds) *Between Borders*. New York; London: Routledge.
- Habermas, J. (1973) *Theory and Practice*. Trans. J. Viertel, Boston, Mass: Beacon Press.
- Hall, S. (1988) *The Hard Road to Renewal*. London: Verso.
- Hall, S. (1997) *Representation*. London: Sage in association with the Open University.
- Hall, S. (1999) 'Encoding, Decoding'. In: S. During (ed.) *Cultural Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Hall, S. (1999a) 'Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies'. In: S. During (ed.) *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.



- Halliday, M. (1978) *Language as Social Semiotic*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hammersley, M. (1992) *What's Wrong With Ethnography?* London: Routledge.
- Hapgood, S. (1994) *Neo Dada*. New York: The American Federation of the Arts.
- Hardy, T. (2003) 'The Trouble with Ruskin...' *The International Journal of Art and Design Education*. 22 (3) Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hargreaves, D. H. (1983) 'The Teaching of Art and the Art of Teaching: towards an alternative view of aesthetic learning'. In: M. Hammersley and A. Hargreaves (eds), *Curriculum Practice*. London: Falmer.
- Harris, J. (2001) *The New Art History: A Critical Introduction*. London: Sage.
- Harrison, C. and Wood, P. (eds) (1992) *Art in Theory 1900 - 1990*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hauser, A. (1951) *The Social History of Art*. New edition J. Harris (ed.) (1999) London: Routledge.
- Hebdige, D. (1988) *Hiding in the Light: on images and things*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Heidegger, M. (1935) 'The Origin of the Work of Art'. In: *Basic writings from 'Being and time' (1927) to 'The task of thinking' (1964)*; D. F. Krell (ed.) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Higonnet, A. (1998) *Pictures of Innocence: the history and crisis of ideal childhood*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Hodge, R. and Kress, G. (1988) *Social Semiotics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Holt, J. (1984) *How Children Fail*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Holt, J. (1996) 'Art for Art's Sake'. In: L. Dawtrey, T. Jackson, M. Masterson, P. Meecham, (eds) *Critical Studies and Modern Art*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress*. New York: Routledge.
- Howatt, S. (2002) *A critical examination of the value of the field trip within art and design education: its legacy and potential*. Unpublished MA dissertation. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Hughes, A. (1989) 'The Copy, the Parody and the Pastiche: Observations on Practical Approaches to Critical Studies'. In: D. Thistlewood (ed.) *Critical Studies in Art and Design Education*. Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman.
- Hughes, A. (1998) 'Reconceptualising the art curriculum', *Journal of Art and Design Education*. 17 (1). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hughes, A. (1999), 'Art and Intention in Schools: Towards a New Paradigm', *Directions: Journal of Art and Design Education* 18 (1). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hulks, D. (1996) 'The Critical Curriculum'. In: L. Dawtrey et al (eds) *Critical Studies and Modern Art*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- James, W. (1884) 'What is an Emotion.' In: G. Lange and W. James (1922) *The Emotions*. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Company.

- JanMohammed, A. R. (1994) 'Some Implications of Paulo Freire's Border Pedagogy.' In: H. Giroux and P. McLaren (eds) (1994) *Between Borders: pedagogy and the politics of cultural studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Jay, M. (1993) *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Johnson, C. (1999) *Derrida: The Scene of Writing*. London: Routledge.
- Jones, A. (2003) *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Jones, H. (1962) *On Aristotle and Greek Tragedy*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Jones, P. (1998) *The Arts Inspected*. Oxford: Ofsted and Heinemann.
- Julius, A. (2003) *Transgressions: The Offences of Art*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Kanpol, B. (1994) *Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. Westport, Conn.; London: Bergin & Garvey.
- Kant, E. (1978) *Critique of Judgement*. Trans. J. C. Meredith, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kemmis, S. (1989) *Some ambiguities of Stenhouse's notion of 'the teacher as researcher': towards a new resolution*. Norwich: University of East Anglia.
- Kincheloe, J. L. and Steinberg, S. R. (1997) *Changing Multiculturalism*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Klingender, F. D. (1947) *Art and the Industrial Revolution*. London: Adams and Dart.
- Korzenik, D. (1992) 'Foreign Ideas for American Originals.' In: D. Thistlewood (ed.) *Histories of Art and Design Education*. Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman.
- Krauss, R. (1981) *Passages in Modern Sculpture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: MIT Press.
- Kress, G. (2001) 'From Saussure to Critical Sociolinguistics: The Turn Towards a Social View of Language.' In: M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, S. J. Yates (eds) *Discourse Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.
- Kress, G. and Leeuwen, T. (1996) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, G. and Leeuwen, T. (2001) *Multimodal Discourses*. London: Arnold.
- Kress, G., Jewitt, C., Ogborn, J., Charalampos, T. (2001) *Multimodal Teaching and Learning*. London: Continuum.
- Kuhn, T. S. (1977) *The Essential Tension: selected studies in scientific tradition and change*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Langer, S. (1953) *Feeling and Form*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Lather, P. (1988) 'Feminist Perspectives on Empowering Research Methodologies.' *Women's Studies International Forum*, 11 (6).

- Levi-Strauss, C. (1955) *Triste Tropiques*. Trans. J. Weightman and D. Weightman (1973) London: Cape (edition 1992) Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- London and East Anglia Group for GCSE Examinations (1988) *Critical Studies in Art and Design (for Mature Candidates)* syllabus.
- Lowenfeld, V. (1952) *Creative and Mental Growth*. New York: Macmillan.
- Lowenfeld, V. and W. L. Brittan (1964) *Creative and Mental Growth*. New York: Macmillan.
- Lukács, G. (1971) *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. Trans. R. Livingstone. London: Merlin Press.
- MacDonald, S. (1970) *The History and Philosophy of Art Education*. London: London University Press.
- Maharaj, S. (2001) 'Inaugural Professorial Lecture'. London: Goldsmiths College.
- Manzella, D. (1963) *Educationists and the Evisceration of the Visual Arts*. Scranton: International Textbook Co.
- Marcuse, H. (1978) *The aesthetic dimension: towards a critique of Marxist aesthetics*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Marx, K (1975) *Early writings [of] Karl Marx*. Introduced by Lucio Colletti; Trans. R. Livingstone and G. Benton, Harmondsworth: Penguin; London: New Left Review.
- Maslow, A. H. (1968) *Toward A Psychology of Being*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Mason, R. (1995) *Art Education and Multiculturalism*. Croom Helm: NSEAD.
- Maykut, P. and Morehouse, R. (1994) *Beginning Qualitative Research*. London: Falmer Press.
- McKernan, J. (1991) *Curriculum action research: a handbook of methods and resources for the reflective practitioner*. London: Kogan Page.
- McNiff, J. (1988) *Action Research: Principles and Practice*. London: Macmillan.
- McRobbie, A. (1999) 'The Place of Walter Benjamin'. In: S. During (ed.) *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London; New York: Routledge.
- McTaggart, R. (1991) *Action research: a short modern history*. Geelong, Vic.: Deakin University.
- Meecham, P. (1996) 'What's in a National Curriculum?' In: L. Dawtrey et al (eds) *Critical Studies and Modern Art*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Meecham, P. (2000) 'Technology in the Art Room'. In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Learning to Teach Art and Design in the Secondary School*. London: Routledge.
- Meecham, P. and Carnell, E. (2002) *Visual Paths to Literacy*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Meecham, P. and Sheldon, J. (2000) *A Critical Introduction to Modern Art*. London: Routledge.

- Mercer, K. (1999) 'Ethnicity and Internationality'. In: *Third Text*, 49.
- Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1984) *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Source-Book of New Methods*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.
- Miller, J. H. (1992) *Illustration*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Mirzoeff, N. (1999) *An Introduction to Visual Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. (1986) *Iconology, Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Montagu, J. (1994) *The Expression of the Passions: the origin and influence of Charles Le Brun's "Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière"*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press.
- Montessori, M. (1909) *The Montessori Method*. (edition 1964) New York: Schocken.
- Morris, W. (1883) 'Art under Plutocracy'. In: G. Zabel (ed.) (1993) *Art and Society: Lectures and Essays by William Morris*. Boston: Georgeís Hill.
- Munnings, A (1949) After dinner speech given as President of the Royal Academy, April 22nd, London: BBC archive recording (author's transcription).
- Murray, C. (ed.) (2003) *Key Writers on Art: The Twentieth Century*. London: Routledge.
- NACCCE (1999) *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*. The report from the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education. London: DfEE.
- Nash, R. (2001) *Wilderness and the American Mind*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- National Council for Education (1998) *Fusion: Art and IT in Practice*. Coventry: NCET.
- Nelson, R. S. and Shiff, R. (eds) *Critical Terms in Art History*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Nochlin, L. (1971) *Realism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Nochlin, L. (1991) *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth Century Art and Society*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Noon, M. and Blyton, P. (1997) 'Emotion Work.' In *The Realities of Work*. London: Macmillan.
- O'Hagan, T. (2001) 'Jean-Jacques Rousseau'. In: J. A. Palmer (ed.) *Fifty Major Thinkers on Education*. London: Routledge.
- Ohrn, K. B. (1980) *Dorothea Lange and the Documentary Tradition*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Osborne, H. (1972) *Aesthetics and art theory: an historical introduction*. London: Longman.
- Owens, C. (1992) 'The Discourse of Others: Feminism and Postmodernism'. In: *Beyond Recognition*. Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press.
- Packard, V. O. (1981) *The Hidden Persuaders*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

- Paley, N. (1994) *Finding Art's Place*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Panofsky, E. (1955) *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Edition 1970 Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Parker, R. and Pollock, G. (1981) *Old Mistresses*. London: Pandora.
- Pearce, S. (1998) *Collecting in Contemporary Practice*. London: Sage.
- Pearse, H. (1992) 'Beyond paradigms: art education theory and practice in a post-paradigmatic world.' *Studies in Art Education*, 33 (4).
- Peirce, C. S. (1966) *Selected Writings: Values in a Universe of Chance*. New York: Dover.
- Perry, G. (1993) 'Introduction: Primitivism in Art Historical Debate'. In: C. Harrison, F. Francina and G. Perry (eds) *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction: The Early Twentieth Century*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press in association with the Open University Press.
- Perry, G. and Cunningham, C. (eds) (1999) *Academies, Museums and Canons of Art*. London: Yale University Press in association with the Open University Press.
- Peters, G. (2001) 'Against Integration: Distinguishing Art Theory and Aesthetics'. *The International Journal of Art and Design Education*, (20) 2. Oxford; Blackwell.
- Pevsner, N. (1940) *Academies of Art, Past and Present*. Edition (1973) New York: Da Capo Press.
- Phinn, T. (2003) *Attempting to bridge the autistic grand divide*. Unpublished MA dissertation. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Pijnappel, J. (ed.) (1994) *Art and Technology*. London: Academy Group Limited.
- Pinder, K. N. (ed) (2002) *Race-ing Art History*. London: Routledge.
- Plato (1926) *Cratylus, Parmenides, Greater Hippias, Lesser Hippias*. Trans. H. N. Fowler. London: Heinemann.
- Plato (1955) *The Republic*. Trans. H. D. P. Lee, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Pliny, the Elder (1979) *Natural History*. Trans. H. Rackham London: Heinemann.
- Pollock, G. (1988) 'Feminist Interventions in the Histories of Art.' In: *Vision and Difference*. London: Routledge.
- Posch, P. (2000) 'Community, school change and strategic networking'. In: H. Altrichter and J. Elliott, (eds) *Images of Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Postman, N. and Weingartner, C. (1969) *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Preziosi, D. (1989) *Rethinking Art History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Preziosi, D. (1998) *The Art of Art History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Price, D. (2000) 'Surveyors and surveyed: photography out and about.' In: L. Wells (ed.) *Photography: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- QCA (1997) *Key Skill units in: Communication, IT, Application of Number and Working with Others, Improving own Learning and Performance*. London: QCA.

- QCA (1998) 'A Survey of Artists, Craftspeople and Designers Used in Teaching Art Research.' In: *Analysis of Educational Resources in 1997/98, research coordinated by Clements, R. (1996-97)* CENSAPE: University of Plymouth.
- QCA and DfEE (1999) *The National Curriculum Handbook for secondary teachers in England*. London: QCA.
- Ramamurphy, A. (2000) 'Constructions of Illusion: photography and commodity culture.' In: L. Wells (ed.) *Photography: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Raney, K. (1997) *Visual Literacy: issues and debates*. London: Middlesex University.
- Re:source (2001) *A Learning and Access Standard for Museums, Libraries and Archives*. London: Re:source.
- Read, H. (1943) *Education Through Art*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Read, H. (1937) *Art and Society*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Read, H. (1950) *Education for Peace*. London: Routledge and Keegan.
- Reay, D. (1998) *Class Work: mothers' involvement in their children's primary schooling*. London; Bristol: University College London Press.
- Rees, A. L. and Borzello, F. (eds) (1986) *The New Art History*. London: Camden Press.
- Reinharz, S. (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rhodes, C. (1994) *Primitivism and Modern Art*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Richardson, M. (1948) *Art and the Child*. London: London University Press.
- Rickards, T. (1999) *Creativity and the Management of Change*. Oxford: Blackwells.
- Ridley, A. (2003) *R. G. Collingwood*. In: C. Murray (ed.) *Key Writers on Art: The Twentieth Century*. London: Routledge.
- Robins, C. and Woollard, V. (2001) *Creative Connections: Teaching and Learning in Museums and Galleries*. London: Institute of Education and Victoria and Albert Museum.
- Robinson, K. (ed.) (1989) *The Arts in Schools*. London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
- Rogers, A. and Allen, D. (1997) *What is Happening to Photography? A Case Study of a photography and graphic design course leading to the award of an Advanced GNVQ in Art & Design*. Arts Council of England with University of Portsmouth.
- Rorty, R. (1980) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Rose, G. (2001) *Visual Methodologies*. London: Sage.
- Ross, M. (1978) *The Creative Arts*. London: Heinemann.
- Ross, M. (1984) *The Aesthetic Impulse*. London: Pergamon Press.
- Rubin, W. (1984) 'Primitivism' in 20th Century Art. New York: Museum of Modern Art.

- Ruskin, J. (1857), (Second edition.) *The Elements of Drawing*. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.
- Ruskin, J. (1903), (Reprint of the 1880 edition) *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. London: George Allen.
- Said, E. (1980) *Orientalism*. London: Peregrine.
- Said, E. (1993) *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Sarup, M. (1993) *An Introductory Guide to Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Saussure, F. (1983) *Course in General Linguistics*. C. Bally and A. Sechehaye (eds) with the collaboration of A. Riedlinger; Trans. R. Harris, London: Duckworth.
- Schachter, S. (1971) *Emotion, Obesity and Crime*. New York; London: Academic Press.
- Schapiro, M. (1936) 'The Social Basis of Art'. In: C. Harrison, and P. Wood. (eds) (1992) *Art in Theory 1900 - 1990*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schapiro, M. (1937) 'The Nature of Abstract Art' *Marxist Quarterly* no 1, January – March. Schools Council History Project (1976) *A New Look at History*. SCHP.
- Seltzer, K. and Bentley, T. (1999) *The Creative Age: Knowledge and Skills for the New Economy*. Towbridge: Redwood Books.
- Sewell, B. (1995) *An Alphabet of Villains*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, D. and Leviton, L. C. (eds) (1991) *Foundations of program evaluation: theories of practice*. Newbury Park, London: Sage.
- Sheldon, J. (1996) 'Matisse and the Problem of Expression in Early Twentieth Century Art'. In: L. Dawtrey, T. Jackson, M. Masterson, P. Meecham, (eds) (1996) *Critical Studies and Modern Art*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Shohat, E. and Stam, R. (1995) 'The Politics of Multiculturalism in the Postmodern Age'. In: *Art and Cultural Difference: Hybrids and clusters*. Art & Design, London: Academy Group Ltd.
- Simons, H. (1987) *Getting to Know Schools in a Democracy: The Politics and Process of Evaluation*. Lewes: Falmer Press.
- Skinner, B. (1953) *Science and Human Behaviour*. New York: Macmillan.
- Smith, D.G. (1999) *Interdisciplinary Essays in the Pedagon: Human Sciences, Pedagogy and Culture*. Counterpoints 15. New York: Peter Lang.
- Smith, R. (ed.) (1987) *Discipline Based Art Education: Origins, Meanings and Development*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Smith, T. (1996) 'Modes of Production'. In: R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds) *Critical Terms in Art History*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Smithson, R. (1968) 'A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects'. *Artforum* VII.
- Somekh, B. (2000) 'Changing conceptions of action research'. In: H. Altrichter and J. Elliott, (eds) *Images of Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Sontag, S. (1964) 'Against Interpretation' In E. Fernie (ed.) *Art History and its Methods*. London: Phaidon.
- Spivak, G. (1988) 'Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography' In: R. Guha and G. Spivak (eds) *Selected Subaltern Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Spours, K. and Hodgson, A. (1999) *New Labour's New Educational Agenda Issues and Policies for Education and Training from 14+*. London: Kogan Page.
- Steers, J. (2003) 'Art and design in the UK: the theory gap'. In: N. Addison and L. Burgess (eds) *Issues in Art and Design Teaching*. London: Routledge/Falmer.
- Steinberg, L. (1996) *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*. Chicago and London: the University of Chicago Press.
- Steiner, R. (1994) *Theosophy: An Introduction to the Supersensible Knowledge of the World and The Destination of Man*. London: Rudolph Steiner Press.
- Stenhouse, L. (1975) *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*. London: Heinemann.
- Stibbs, A. (1998) 'Language in art and art in language.' *Journal of Art and Design Education*. 17 (1).
- Sturrock, J. (1993) *Structuralism*. London: Fontana.
- Summers, D. (1996) 'Representation'. In: R. Nelson and R. Shiff (eds) *Critical Terms in Art History*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Swift, J. (1992) 'Marion Richardson's Contribution to Art Teaching'. In: D. Thistlewood (ed.) *Histories of Art and Design Education*. Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman.
- Swift, J. (1995) 'Controlling the masses: the reinvention of a 'national' curriculum', *Journal of Art and Design Education*, 14 (2) Oxford: Blackwell.
- Swift, J. and Steers, J. (1999), 'A Manifesto for Art in Schools', *Journal of Art and Design Education*, 18 (1). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Tate, N. (1997) 'Keynote address'. In: *The Arts in the Curriculum*. London: SCAA.
- Tate, N. (1997a) 'Lord Leighton'. London: Times Educational Supplement.
- Taylor, B. (1989) 'Art History in the Classroom: a Plea for Caution'. In: D. Thistlewood (ed.) *op. cit.*, pp. 108-112, (reprinted in L. Dawtrey et al *op. cit.*).
- Taylor, R. (1986) *Educating for Art*. Burnt Mill: Longman.
- Thistlewood, D. (1984) *Herbert Read: Formlessness and Form*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Thistlewood, D. (1989) *Critical Studies in Art and Design Education*. Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman.
- Thistlewood, D. (1992) *Histories of Art and Design Education*. Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman.
- Thistlewood, D. (1992a) 'A Continuing process: the New Creativity in British Art Education'. In: *Histories of Art and Design Education*, Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman.



- Thistlewood, D. (1992b) 'The Formation of the NSEAD: a Dialectical Advance for British Art and Design Education'. In: *Histories of Art and Design Education*. Burnt Mill, Harlow: Longman.
- Tickner, L. (2003) 'A Strange Alchemy: Cornelia Parker' *Art History*, 26 (3). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Travers, R. M. W. (1969) *An Introduction to Educational Research*. London: Collier-Macmillan.
- Trowell, J. (1999) *How can 'engaged pedagogies' in art history create socially inclusive, critical & reconstructive learning processes?* Unpublished MA dissertation. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Trowell, J. (2001) 'Engaged Pedagogies': Social Justice and Art History: An Investigation and some Proposals'. In: N. Addison and E. Allen (eds) *Art Histories in Action: 'from armoured to loose canon'*, Engage 8.
- Tyler, R. W. (1968) *The Challenge of National Assessment*. Columbus Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Virilio, P. (1997) *Open Sky*. London and New York: Verso.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978) *Mind in Society*. M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner and E. Souberman (eds) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Wain, J. (1986) *The Oxford Library of English Poetry: Vol II Sackville to Keats*. London: Guild Publishing.
- Walker, J. (1998) 'Marcus Harvey's sick disgusting painting of Myra Hindley: a semiotic analysis', *The Art Magazine*, 14, Spring. London: Tate Gallery.
- Walker, J. (2003) *Learning to Paint: A British Art Student and Art School. 1956-61*. London: Institute of Artology.
- Walsh, D. J., Chung, S., Tuffekei, A. (2001) 'Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel'. In: J. A. Palmer (ed.) *Fifty Major Thinkers on Education*. London: Routledge.
- Weintraub, L. (1996) *Art on the Edge and Over*. New York: Art Insights, Inc.
- Welsch, W. (1998) 'Richard Rorty: Philosophy beyond Argument and Truth'. Website: HYPERLINK <http://www.uni-magdeburg.de/iphi/ww/papers/Rorty.html>
- Wertsch, J. (2001) 'The Multivoicedness of Meaning.' In: M. Wetherell, S. Taylor, S. J. Yates (eds) *Discourse Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.
- Williams, R. (1961) 'Advertising: The Magic System'. In: S. During (ed.) (1999) *The Cultural Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Williams, R. (1965) *The Long Revolution*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican.
- Williams, R. (1988) *Keywords*. London: Fontana Press.
- Willis, P. (1990) *Moving Culture*. London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
- Willis, P. (1990a) *Common Culture*. Boulder: Westview.

Witkin, R. (1974) *The Intelligence of Feeling*. London: Heinemann.

Wolfflin, H. (1915) *Classic art: An introduction to the Italian Renaissance*. (edition 1953)  
Trans. P. and L. Murray. Oxford: Phaidon.

Wolheim, R. (1987) *Painting as an Art*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Worringer, W. (1906) *Abstraction and Empathy: A contribution to the psychology of style*.  
Trans. M. Bullock New York: International Universities Press (1953) opening chapter  
Reproduced in C. Harrison, and P. Wood (eds) (1992) *Art in Theory 1900 - 1990*. Oxford:  
Blackwell.

Worthen B. R. and White K.R. (1987) *Evaluating Educational and Social Programmes*.  
Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff.

Zizek, S. (1989) *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. London: Verso.

### **Websites**

[www.mcmichael.com/art\\_therapy-prog.htm](http://www.mcmichael.com/art_therapy-prog.htm) 20.12.03

[www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/) 1998

[www.support4learning.org.uk/education/key\\_skills](http://www.support4learning.org.uk/education/key_skills)

[www.unesco.org/dialogue2001](http://www.unesco.org/dialogue2001)

# Appendices

### A Working Definition of Art

I want tentatively to present a ‘working definition’ of art. Its parts bear a close resemblance to definitions provided by anthropologists, semioticians and social historians and philosophers of art.

*[visual] art* = types of made/selected objects/events, multimodal constructions/condensations (‘texts’) in which the visual and symbolic are foregrounded<sup>1</sup>, objects/events motivated by the desire of people within specific cultural groupings to realise (embody/represent), preserve (memorialise), communicate (express) and disseminate (share/impose) ways of experiencing the world that they consider significant at a particular historical moment (the formation, reproduction and transformation of identity). These realisations are produced, received and used within and for specific societies to meet particular needs (contexts) and nearly always in relation to a dominant culture<sup>2</sup> (an ideological formation produced for and maintained by powerful social groups in order to contain or exclude and *possibly empower* others).

#### *Sources*

This working definition, rather than upholding the autonomous status with which art has been provided in modernism, draws on the work of social historians and philosophers of art who argue that art is both product and producer of social practices, it is inseparable from its uses (Hauser 1959; Clark 1973; Pollock 1988). Although art is a differentiated practice, it is embedded within, and thus constitutive of, social discourses (Bourdieu 1984; Geertz 2000) art is one part of culture, it is not a reflection of it. By culture I infer those interactions and realisations, practices and products, that signal for groups of people their difference from others (a process of ‘identification’ Hall: 1996), particularly as they play out between dominant, normative systems, and local and transcultural resistances. By realisations I mean those actions which produce meanings, that is meaning making through representation and embodiment, and by extension its communication, interpretation, reproduction, dissemination, maintenance and transformation. Such a position is rooted in social semiotics (Hodge and Kress 1988), where an analysis of power relations is crucial in revealing ideology as sign, and the theory of multimodality developed by Kress and Leeuwen (2001) which provides analytical tools with which to describe the complex social interactions that characterise meaning making, particularly in pedagogic situations.

---

<sup>1</sup> In some contemporary practice, e.g. sound art, the visual is paradoxically foregrounded by its absence, a negation that invites the ‘listener’ to consider the way that the image, in conjunction with sound as speech and music, is privileged in contemporary communications.

<sup>2</sup> Potentially ‘alien’; possibly imposed, possibly consensual, and probably divided between ‘high’ and ‘popular’ forms.

## Appendix 2

### Backgrounds of Researchers, Teachers and Types of Schools

#### 1. Backgrounds of Researchers

Researcher	Residency Year	Status at time of ACHiS	Specialism
Michael Asbury	First	PhD Student	South American Modernism
Pauline De Souza	First & Second	PhD Student; Teacher at HE level	Contemporary Practice; Cultural Studies
Maria Georgaki	First & Second	PhD Student	Design History & Design in Education
David Hulks	Second	PhD Student; Teacher at School & FE levels	Psychoanalytical interpretation
Grigorios Papazafiriou	First	MA, PGCE	Philosophy; Post- structuralism
Caroline Perret	Second	PhD Student	Representation of the body in France 1942-1952
Jane Trowell	First & Second	Teacher at FE & HE levels	Education for social justice

## 2. Types of School and Teachers' Backgrounds

Type of School	Residency Year	Student group	Teacher's Background	In Partnership with IoE PGCE
Girls' Comprehensive	First	Year 12: A' Level Textiles	Textiles	No
Co-ed selective Grammar	First	Year 12: A' Level Fine Art	Painting Photography Art Psychotherapy	Yes
	Second	Year 10: GCSE Art & Design	As above	Yes
Girls' Comprehensive (Church of England)	First	Year 12: A' Level Fine Art	Fine Art Printmaking	Yes
	Second	Year 10: GCSE Art & Design	As above	Yes
Co-ed Comprehensive	First	Year 12: A' Level Fine Art	Art History Fine Art	Yes
Co-ed Comprehensive	First	Year 8: KS3 Art & Design	Ceramics	Yes
Co-ed Comprehensive	Second	Year 7 & Year 9: KS3 Art & Design	Mathematics	No
Girls' Comprehensive	Second	Year 10: GCSE Art & Design	Textiles	Yes
Co-ed Comprehensive	Second	Year 12: A' Level Fine Art	Fine Art	No

### ACHiS Proposal for the AHRB (extract)

ACHiS – Art Critics and (Art) Historians in Schools

#### *The Research Project*

The aim of this research project is to extend the critical approaches used by teachers and pupils in schools for the analysis and interpretation of visual culture. Rapid social and technological change suggests that the ability to understand and communicate visually will be an increasingly important element of secondary education. It is through the agency of visual literacy (Raney 1997) a term coined to complement the ‘core skills’ of literacy, numeracy and communication, that this objective can be most effectively realised. The research team believes that the methods of art history offer particularly significant tools for its development (Fernie 1995). The radical and positive changes within the discipline over recent years have largely bypassed schools; this project will enable teachers to observe the new and interdisciplinary approaches of art history in action, in the classroom. This will enable the research team to question orthodoxies, broaden the curriculum and underline its cross-curricular links, examine the complementary possibilities of new and old methods and recognise the once marginal voices of others’ histories. In order to explore the value of these aims we propose to establish a series of professional residencies by art critics/historians in the form of action research. Art historical methods will be used and evaluated with pupils, utilising a gallery/museum visit as an integral component. Initially two subjects, Art and Design, and History, will be targeted, chosen both because of their immediate links with the discipline and the mutual benefits to be gained from collaborating in methodological experiment. The research team anticipates that in the future such residencies could contribute to other areas of the curriculum.

The need for this research has become increasingly urgent due to the shift from verbal to visual forms of communication (Kress and Leeuwen 1996: 15-16). Visual literacy is concerned with the perception, interpretation and representation of the visual world in general (natural and made) but the focus of this research is specifically on the latter, the production and reception of visual culture, be it in the form of art, craft, design or other types of visual communication. Although pupils are given the means to evaluate aesthetic considerations and the tools to question the propagandist techniques of the ‘Media’, they are often denied critical access to the world of symbols and artefacts, the contextual and phenomenal world of made human culture, past and present. This project aims to address this lack by providing pupils with skills for developing visual literacy and by suggesting critical methods, teaching strategies and resources for use by teachers.

#### *Aims*

- a) to test and evaluate the significance of art historical methods to:
  - inform modes of investigation in Art and Design, and History;
  - provide reflective tools for the evaluation and contextualisation of student practice in studio-based Art and Design education;
  - demonstrate vehicles for the critical examination of student misconceptions;
  - develop interdisciplinary, cross-curricular initiatives;
  - contribute to intercultural and pluralist syllabuses;
  - explore the significance of gender within cultural production; (this aim addresses the relationship of art history to critical, historical and contextual studies);

- b) to question perceived divisions between theory and practice, understanding and making, consumption and production (this aim proposes models to integrate Attainment Targets 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum Art Order (NCAO)) [Dawtre and Jackson 1996]);
- c) to encourage professionals in the field to engage with education at Secondary level (this aim addresses the issue of continuity and progression through partnership).

### *Context and Rationale*

This research project is intended to run in parallel with the Artists in Schools course which the Institute of Education has been managing in collaboration with the London Arts Board since 1994. The tradition of artists working in schools already has a recognisable history and has proved a fruitful partnership model enabling the professional development of artists and the broadening of pupils' experience of art and design (Burgess 1995). In contrast to this, the contribution that the critic/historian could make to the school curriculum has rarely been tested, whether in specific subjects or cross-curricular learning.

These residencies will form the basis of a research project in which teachers, art historians, gallery educators and educational researchers will bring diverse areas of expertise and experience to work together in an unprecedented partnership. It will provide teachers with access to new methods and approaches which they can adapt to the culture of the classroom. For art critics/historians, it will facilitate an introduction to the National Curriculum and examination syllabuses, an awareness of the needs of school pupils at different stages and the opportunity to develop and implement schemes of work. Finally, the project will provide evidence for gallery educators and educational researchers to propose efficient strategies for outreach, effective programmes of study devised in collaboration between schools and galleries, and ways of integrating critical and contextual methods in studio-based, humanities and media education.

### *Methodology*

1. Action Research, in the form of five (per annum) professional residencies in schools by art critics/historians (drawing on the methodological approaches evaluated by Argyris and Schon 1974).
2. Collaborative Research, the action researchers will develop a shared theoretical position and pedagogy in partnership with teachers, gallery educators and university lecturers and researchers. This research process ensures, 'democratic (participatory) involvement', a 'responsive dynamic (dialectic) between theorising about practices' and the possibility of transformation (Henry 1986: 86-95). The aim is to initiate grounded theory that relates both to what works for teachers in different contexts and what a subject discipline proposes as an inclusive foundation of knowledge and its interpretative methods.
3. Methods, devise (in negotiation with teachers in schools) schemes of work/projects based on an investigation of the concept 'the real', positioned and framed by the researcher's specialist period/culture. The projects will incorporate appropriate interpretative methods, e.g. semiotic, formalist, iconographic, and evaluate them for their efficacy as investigative tools for critical and contextual studies in Art and Design and History.



4. Evaluation, the residencies will be evaluated by all participants:
- school students - through questionnaires and focus groups;
  - action researchers, teachers, and independent assessors - through written reports focussing on; relevance to the developing curriculum and target audience, the role of collaboration through partnership (Bryant in Scott and Usher 1996). In addition action researchers will write a detailed methodological evaluation;
  - research leader and coordinators - through written reports, will provide an interim evaluation in the first year followed by a summative overview in the second which will examine each of the reports in relation to their local specificities, their differences and commonalities, the possibility of generalisation and reviewing the feasibility of constructing and disseminating common pedagogic methods and resources. The team will seek to disseminate and publish their findings and recommendations at conferences and in relevant journals. In addition the residencies' materials and resources will be collated and the team will consider the production and publication of teachers' packs.

### *Partnership: Mode of Working*

The four main contributors in this partnership; teachers, gallery educators, art critics/historians and university lecturers and researchers have few opportunities to collaborate in developing a shared theoretical position and pedagogy. The need for a sustained contribution by art critics/historians in the classroom has emerged because of rapid changes in the National Curriculum, in particular the development of critical and contextual studies as a core component in all Key Stages in Art and Design and as a significant objective in GCSE, GNVQ and A level syllabuses. Currently, not all teachers possess the requisite skills an art critic/historian can bring to help integrate the practical with the theoretical. Similarly, in History pupils are required to 'read visual texts' in addition to written documents significantly adding to the forms of historical evidence traditionally selected for analysis. Art critics/historians are in the position to introduce appropriate methods for these forms of critical practice. This action research project will provide the opportunity to investigate and evaluate how their particular skills can help teachers develop aspects of the curriculum they sometimes find problematic.

### *ACHiS Time Table*

The ACHiS project will run for two academic years 1999/2000 and 2000/2001.

It is hoped that should the findings indicate positive learning outcomes a further proposal will be submitted extending the project both in duration and across the curriculum.

1998	Preparation
January/February	Assess pilot residency (independent assessor E Allen)
February/March	Write Research Proposal
6 March/April	Coordinators' meeting
March/April	Write evaluation of pilot residency
3 April	Present paper and promote ACHiS in Education Forum at
AAH	Conference
June	Submit proposal to funding bodies
July/August	Establish methods and criteria for the evaluation of ACHiS write an application form

## Implementation

Summer*	Advertise Research Project in AAH Bulletin
November/December	Resubmit revised application to AHRB
1999	
April/May	Confirm host schools
June/July	Coordinators interview and select prospective action researchers
November	Observation: Learning in the Gallery: with Tate Education: 1 day
December	Planning: introduction to Learning at Secondary level and Art
	History in the Curriculum, IoE and partnership school: 4 days
December	Planning: devising a Scheme of Work with host teacher: 2.5 days
	Writing and resourcing SoW: 2.5 days
2000	
January/February	Residencies and assessments: 5 days or equivalent
March	teachers' and external assessors reports, pupils' written responses
	ARs' written evaluations: 2 weeks
April/May	Coordinators' reports: collate materials re teaching packs/resources
Repeat sequence for the second year, 2000/2001 as from Summer* 1998	
2001	
June	Coordinators' final report: seek publisher for research findings and teaching packs

### *Evaluating and Extending Partnership*

These residencies will enable the research team to test theories of visual literacy for their significance and efficacy in the classroom. A series of evaluative reports will analyse the residencies from the different positions and examine the role of collaboration in research.

Tate Education is embarking on a series of research projects exploring the role of language in visual literacy. It is anticipated that the ACHiS project will provide key testimony for this broader, collective project. The research team believes that this project, although modest in scale, will have significant implications for the way visual literacy is managed across the curriculum and that it will provide evidence for the development of good critical and pedagogic practice. ACHiS will be a unique partnership at an opportune moment.

**ACHiS Questionnaire**

Name: ..... School: .....

Position held: ..... No of years teaching experience: .....

Sex: Female  Male

**Please define your ethnicity (please tick):**

**Asian:**

- Indian
  - Pakistani
  - Bangladeshi
  - Chinese
  - Other  .....
- (please specify)

**Black:**

- Caribbean
  - African
  - Other  .....
- (please specify)

**White:**

**Other:**

.....

(please specify)

Type of School/College: ..... No of students on the roll: .....

**Please provide the name of the examination boards you follow and the no of students taking:**

GCSE Art & Design ..... AS/'A' Level: ..... GNVQ/AVCE: .....

No of staff in the art department (please specify): Full-time  ..... Part-time  .....

**Please give a detailed response and do feel free to write any additional comments attaching extra sheets of paper if necessary. Please note when completing the questionnaire the term 'art' stands in for (art, craft and design) and the term 'artist' stands in for (artist, craftsperson and designer).**

**RESOURCES**

The following section looks at the types of resources you draw upon/make available to students. Where resources are not open to all students please specify the relevant year group alongside the examples you have given.

**1. Which of the following types of art does the department make available to students? Please specify the different:**

- cultures .....
- historical periods .....
- popular cultures .....
- processes: e.g. ceramics, architecture, fine art .....
- women artists .....
- other (please specify) .....

**2. Which of the following resources do you use in Schemes of Work (SoW)/projects? Please tick those that apply and provide examples.**

- visual reproductions:
 

	Yes	No
a) slides	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) postcards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) posters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where resources are not open to all students please specify the relevant year group alongside the examples you have given.

- visits:
 

	Yes	No
a) gallery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) museum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) architectural site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) studio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- artefacts and objects in your department:
 

a) art	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) craft	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- residencies:
 

a) artists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) art historians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- texts:
 

a) books	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) journals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- audio visual/multi-media:
 

a) TV/Video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) CD-Rom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
  
- educational packs  Yes  No
- other (please specify)  Yes  No

3. Does the department use these resources in any of the following ways? Please tick those that apply and provide examples. Where resources are not open to all students please specify the relevant year group alongside the examples you have given.

- |   | Yes                      | No                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) exemplary models (for imitation)   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) stimulus for discussion (e.g. issue-based)                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) discipline-based programme:<br>(e.g. art history, art criticism, aesthetics) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) focus for investigation  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) other (please specify)   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. At what point in a SoW/project do you make reference to these resources? Please tick those that apply.

- |                 | KS3                      | GCSE                     | Post-16                  |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) beginning    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) middle       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) end          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) continuously | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) never        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## ENGAGING STUDENTS IN INTERPRETATION

This section asks about the ways in which you enable students to interpret art.

5a. How would you characterise the way you enable students to interpret art? Please tick those that apply.

	KS3	GCSE	Post-16
a) description	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) formal - analysis of visual elements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) iconography - the meaning of images	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) semiotics – decoding signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5b. And in what form? Please tick those that apply.

	KS3	GCSE	Post-16
a) question/answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) student presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) independent research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) annotated sketchbook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) reviewing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) curating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How often do you enable pupils to interpret art? Please tick those that apply.

	KS3	GCSE	Post-16
a) in every SoW	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) never	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Given the requirement to address the cultural, moral, social and spiritual education of students would you say there is an explicit political/ideological, religious or ethical basis to the way your department presents and investigates the art of others? (please specify)

## EDUCATION

This section asks about your art education, the way in which you were taught and the writers who influenced you.

8. When, where and at what level did you study Art History/Theory? Please tick those that apply, provide names of the institutions/colleges and the year in which you completed your course of study.

	Yes	No
a) 'A' Level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) BA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) MA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) PhD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**9. How were you taught Art History/Theory? Please tick those that apply and identify the relevant course.**

- |   | Yes                      | No                       |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) chronological survey of Western Art  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) stylistic development                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) biographical survey                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) feminist revision of canon (Western) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) cultural studies                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) other (please specify)               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**10a. How do you keep up with developments in art education?**

**10b. How do you keep up with developments in art history/theory?**

**11. Which writers have informed the ways in which you use artists' work in the classroom?**

The ACHiS team would like to thank you for the time you have taken to complete this questionnaire and ask you to return it in the SAE provided by **Tuesday 8 May 2001.**

## Teachers' Responses to Question 1

## CULTURES (RESOURCES: QUESTION 1)

Teacher	Cultures
001	Aboriginal artist, African masks
002	as broadly as possible (Aboriginal art, masks) ...
003	African, Asian, other tribal
004	Asian, Chinese
005	Wide variety e.g. Islamic, Mexican, Japanese, African, Aboriginal, Chinese
006	Yes
007	Asian, African, Oriental (Korean, Chinese, Japanese), South American
008	Yes
009	African, Egyptian, Mexican, Islamic, Japanese, etc.
010	Yes (Our aim would be to make as much of this available as possible. All at different times)
011	Yes
012	Indian, African, Native American
013	Indian, African, Mexican, Japanese, Islamic, Celtic, etc.
014	Variety of Eastern and Western cultures: Asian, African, Aboriginal, Islamic, European
015	Yes
016	African, Aboriginal, Japanese, other
017	Yes
018	Japanese
019	Varying, African, Oriental, Aboriginal, N American, etc., etc.
020	As many as possible e.g. African, S American, Asian Eastern, Greek
021	Indian, American, South East Asian, Aztec
022	Aboriginal, African, Western European, Japanese, American, religions
023	All in books, visits to galleries, postcards, some slides/videos
024	Yes
025	Yes
026	Chinese, African
027	Multi-cultural approach, Western-Non-Western
046	Contemporary and Ancient - Global
028	Egyptian, Aboriginal, Western
029	Asian, African, Oriental, Australian
030	African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, S American, Black American Mexican
031	See attached SoW
032	Native American, African, Asian, Aboriginal, South American
033	Mainly Western/European
034	Yes (folders of resources)
035	Western, Asian, Australasian, N American, ++
036	African, Caribbean, Islamic (books)
037	Usually Y8 Specific non-western, Aboriginal, African, Asian, Indian
038	Aboriginal (Y7), Indian Art (Y8) and perspectives - parallel, Masks - various cultures, Islamic (Y9)
039	positive range of multicultures, prevalence of European
040	All (books, slides, videos, TV, Internet)
041	Yes
042	***, Egypt, Mexico
043	Western, Afro-Caribbean, African, Asian, Native American, Aust Aboriginal
044	Yes
045	Years 8, 10, 11 in particular but all generally
047	Contemporary, European, Non-European and C20

## HISTORICAL PERIODS (RESOURCES: QUESTION 1)

Teacher	Historical Periods
001	Ancient Greece and Rome - Renaissance - C20 Art
002	again in relation to themes - I resource broadly from different areas of history/culture
003	From cave painting to modern era
004	C19, C20
005	Various e.g. Ancient myths, Renaissance C19, C20 Art
006	Yes
007	Pre-historical, Mayan/ Aztec, Baroque, Renaissance, 19 to 20, 21 Century
008	Yes
009	Full range
010	Yes (... as much as possible ...)
011	Yes
012	generally touched on, not detailed
013	Majority C19 & 20, Contemporary Artists, 15th-17th C reference books
014	Medieval, Renaissance, Classical, Modern
015	Yes
016	All - emphasis on C20 Art some Contemporary
017	Yes
018	Medieval, Gothic, Contemporary
019	Renaissance onwards, mainly C19, C20, C21
020	Mostly C 20, some earlier movements
021	Renaissance, C18, 19, 20 European Art
022	range from Aboriginal, Celtic, to post-modern, emphasis on Contemporary
023	All in books, visits to galleries, postcards, some slides/videos
024	Yes
025	Yes
026	C19 &20, Impressionism onwards
027	From Pre-historical to Contemporary
046	N/R
028	All
029	All
030	Depends on project
031	See attached SoW
032	Varied
033	Renaissance to Contemporary/Post-modern
034	Yes (folders of resources)
035	All
036	From Egyptian to present day (books and slides)
037	Predominately C20 but also Renaissance and Middle Ages
038	Non set rigidly in each year group, mainly C20 and Contemporary, Y8 Renaissance
039	weighted towards C20, but a good overall range
040	All (books, slides, videos, TV, Internet)
041	Yes
042	Ancient to Modern
043	Renaissance, Medieval, C20, Ancient (NC coverage)
044	Yes
045	All year groups
047	Contemporary, European, Non-European and C20



## POPULAR CULTURES (RESOURCES: QUESTION 1)

Teacher	Popular Cultures
001	Video, Music, Advertising, Fashion
002	Fashion - Contemporary
003	Fashion, Pop Art, Graffiti
004	Pop Art, Popular Design e.g. CD, LP covers
005	Pop Art, Contemporary Art, Film and Media
006	Yes
007	Baroque, Renaissance, C19, 20, 21
008	Yes
009	Pop Art, Modern Graphics
010	Yes (Our aim would be to make as much of this available as possible. All at different times)
011	Yes
012	Graffiti
013	Magazines, Video
014	Graphic Design, Typography, Graffiti Art, Contemporary Magazine Design
015	Yes
016	N/R
017	Yes
018	Goldsworthy, Bourgeois
019	Pupil driven
020	Street Art, Outsider Art, Fashion
021	Animation, Computer Graphics, Film/Photography, Fashion
022	Students' own experiences
023	All in books, visits to galleries, postcards, some slides/videos
024	Yes
025	No
026	No
027	No
046	N/R
028	Western
029	Yes
030	Depends on project
031	See attached SoW
032	Advertising/Packaging
033	Taught within design - integrate above ideas
034	Yes (folders of resources)
035	Mainly Western
036	Magazines etc. influencing Pop Art
037	Contemporary issues explored through Pop Art (Y8)
038	Cartoons - Lichtenstein (Y8), Advertising packaging (Y8-13)
039	Not enough, but experimenting more recently
040	All (books, slides, videos, TV, Internet)
041	Yes
042	Pop Art and other Contemporary issues/ideas
043	Graffiti
044	Yes
045	All year groups
047	Relating to Graphics in particular

## PROCESSES (RESOURCES: QUESTION 1)

Teacher	Processes
001	3 Design, Printing and Digital Art***
002	Ceramics, Fine Art, Mixed-media - Collage & techn, p sculp, print processes, 3D using recycled materials
003	Ceramics, Printing, Architecture, Fine Art
004	Ceramics, Fine Art, Print making, Graphic Design
005	3D plaster cast, Wire Sculpture, Photography
006	Yes
007	Fine Art, Ceramics, Architecture, Web, Computer
008	Yes
009	2 and 3D (not Ceramics) Fabric Printing (seniors) Lino, Monoprint
010	Yes (Our aim would be to make as much of this available as possible. All at different times)
011	Yes
012	Ceramics, Architecture, Fine Art, Design, Printing
013	Ceramics, Fabric print, Lino, Papier-mâché, Batik, Paper making, Fine Art, Sculpture
014	Painting and Drawing, Sculpture, Ceramics
015	Yes
016	Ceramic books are available, Gaudi
017	Yes
018	Ceramics, Architecture, Fine Art, Sculpture, Painting
019	Fine Art, Mixed Media, 3D
020	Printmaking, textiles, 3D and Ceramics, Painting, Design, Graphics, Mosaics, Mould Making etc.
021	Fine Art, Ceramics, Sculpture, ICT, Graphics, Photography
022	Photography, ICT, Drawing, Ceramics, Painting, Textiles, Basic Printmaking, Sculpture
023	All in books, visits to galleries, postcards, some slides/videos
024	Yes
025	Architecture, Fine Art
026	Ceramics, Product Design, Fine Art, Textiles, Set Design, Costume
027	Ceramics, Architecture, Fine Art, Printmaking, Collage
046	N/R
028	Fine Art and 3D
029	Ceramics, Print, Fine Art, Design
030	Fine Art, Ceramics, Printmaking, Textiles
031	See attached SoW
032	Ceramics, Architecture, Sculpture, Print, Artefacts
033	Fine Art, Ceramics, Photography
034	Yes (folders of resources)
035	Ceramics, Fine Art, Digital, Photo, Print
036	Books on Ceramics, Architecture, Fine Art, Photography
037	Mostly Drawing/Painting - some Sculpture, Printmaking - Lino, Screen Printing, Batik
038	All years do Ceramics, Painting/Printing, Graphics, Mixed media, Sculpture
039	Big range, some gaps - Fashion/Textiles/Illustrators
040	All (books, slides, videos, TV, Internet)
041	Yes
042	Ceramics, Photography, Fine Art
043	Fine Art, Sculpture, Ceramics, Crafts, Printmaking
044	Yes
045	Years 8, 10, 12
047	Ceramics, Painting, Printmaking, Photography, Graphics, Textiles

## WOMEN ARTISTS (RESOURCES: QUESTION 1)

Teacher	Women
001	***Kruger, Sherman, Chicago***, O'Keefe, Riley, Frink
002	What I can access in terms of women artists - tends to be more contemporary
003	Never as separate issue
004	N/R
005	Various e.g. Kahlo, Lange, ***, Bourgeois
006	Yes
007	Cindy Sherman, Jenny Holtzer, Jenny Saville, Louise Bourgeois
008	Yes
009	Variety
010	Yes (Our aim would be to make as much of this available as possible. All at different times)
011	Yes, this is intrinsic to each area of critical & contextual studies
012	At present only about 5 are mentioned - needs to be improved
013	Ana Maria Pacheco, Yayoi Kusama, Lubaina Himid, Cassatt, Valadon, Alison Watt, Sokari-Camp, Hicks ...
014	Kahlo, O'Keefe, von Werefkin, Kollwitz, Morisot
015	Yes
016	Various
017	Yes
018	Frida Kahlo, O'Keefe, Rachel Whiteread
019	Kahlo, Chicago*** and others when relevant
020	Yes, visiting artists each year Y10/12
021	Mary Cassatt, Paula Rego, Chadwick, Saville, Kahlo, etc.
022	particularly sculptors and textile artists
023	All in books, visits to galleries, postcards, some slides/videos
024	Yes
025	Yes
026	Jenny Saville, Freda Kahlo, Georgia O'Keefe
027	F Kahlo, C Sherman, R Whiteread
046	N/R
028	Louise Nevelson
029	Yes
030	Generally to include women artists in all aspects if possible
031	See attached SoW
032	Contemp and historical e.g. S Boyce, F Kahlo, G O'Keefe ...
033	Usually work with spec 'packs'/books direct individual students to artist
034	Yes (folders of resources)
035	Mostly C19, 20, 21
036	Books and slides - women artists from Renaissance to present
037	Kahlo (Y7), O'Keefe (usually Y10), Piper (Y10)
038	K Malone (Y8), C Salamon (Y9 & 6th), various individual GCSE/A Level
039	Improving range, curriculum development project 1999/00, women focus
040	All (books, slides, videos, TV, Internet)
041	Sometimes
042	As appropriate
043	Kahlo, Saville, Boyce, Morisot
044	Yes
045	All when applicable
047	Yes, including European and Non-European

### ACHiS Recommendations

1. Curriculum and pedagogic development
  - 1.1 A critical curriculum within the subject Art & Design can only be developed by building a discursive environment. This needs to happen from the first year of secondary schooling in order to habituate students to critical practice. In this way the current antipathy felt for text-based activity could be ameliorated and the opposition between word and image (unique to the subject) replaced by a dialogic relationship. The art critical/historical residency is one way in which such discursivity can be encouraged.
  - 1.2 The emphasis on monomodality; language by art critics/historians, visuality by Art & Design teachers, must be challenged because it denies the multimodal nature of learning. Both disciplines ought to reflect on the limitations of their pedagogic means.
  - 1.3 Art & Design teachers should be encouraged to participate in action research in order to review and revise both the curriculum and pedagogic practice. The ACHiS model, action research in partnership with an interventionist, deserves further research.
2. The contribution of art critics/historians
  - 2.1 Art historical publications are rarely aimed at secondary school audiences. Art & Design teachers often have to reproduce the ubiquitous texts of old because the new art criticism/history is inaccessible on many levels. Art critics/historians might consider writing other forms of publication for this educational sector: publishers are beginning to realise that there is a market and teachers and students would welcome the support. (It could be that the RAE in its current form militates against this sort of participation).
  - 2.2 The ACHiS residency model might be adopted in an extended form by art critics/historians wishing to contribute to secondary school education: to develop the curriculum by working critically in between professional discourse/practices, to extend their own pedagogic practice and to provide continuity between educational sectors (breaking the cycle of misunderstanding).
  - 2.3 Art critics/historians might constructively adapt the ACHiS residency model to inform curriculum subjects besides Art & Design, particularly those in which visual and material culture is central, e.g. Design and Technology, Media Studies, but also those where it can be overlooked, e.g. History, Citizenship.
  - 2.4 Art critics/historians proposing residencies require training in pedagogy; HE education departments in partnership with schools could provide training programmes.

- 2.5 Art & Design teachers require INSET from art critics and art historians in order to keep abreast of recent developments.
3. Higher Education
- 3.1 Following the lead taken by some universities, undergraduate courses in Art & Design and Art History could build in an educational module (including student placements) as many graduates pursue professions with an educational component.
- 3.2 Models of critical studies teaching for undergraduates at art college and student teachers on Art & Design PGCEs could draw on the theories of engaged pedagogy to develop student participation.
- 3.3 HE education departments should provide INSET for Art & Design teachers in which the application of developing subject knowledge to classroom practice is explored.