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Why Do We Teach Art Today?

Conceptions of Art Education and Their Justification

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Different, and sometimes conflicting, justifications have been advanced for the importance of teaching art in schools. Following the broad historical conceptual frameworks established by Efland (1990) to describe these debates, the paper traces how these frameworks continue to be useful in categorizing contemporary arguments on the form of art education. The paper contends that many current popular justifications for art education lack a solid epistemological rationale. Out of this review, a conceptual framework that approaches art education as a study of reasoned perception is advocated as the soundest epistemological foundation for the field.

Art education is a discipline with a peculiar problem. Since the early 19th century, at the outset of American public schooling, there have been numerous and persuasive advocates for the inclusion of art education in school curricula. As Efland (1990) explains in A History of Art Education, at various times and places advocates like Charles Callahan Perkins, William Torrey Harris, and John Dewey were successful in securing an integral role for art education in the curriculum. Unfortunately, Efland’s historical depiction also shows how, as other voices challenged the value of teaching art, these footholds eroded. For example, in the 19th century, Perkins’s vision of art education as a useful form of industrial design training was challenged as perpetuating class distinctions. Later, Harris’s experiential views of art and knowledge were ultimately categorized as leftist and unscientific. Nonetheless, over time, through the cycles of curricula inclusion and exclusion, art enjoyed a vague sense of being valuable; however, precisely what that specific value was continued to remain elusive and fugitive. Therein lies art education’s peculiar problem. In the gap which exists between the valuing of art education and the time given to it in the curriculum, art education dissipates. Consequently, art educators, who must fight to maintain their discipline’s presence in the curriculum, are continually returning to the question of why do we teach art?

There is no simple answer to this question. Just as there were profound differences and conflicts between Perkins, Harris, and Dewey on the specific value of art’s contribution to education, similarly, among today’s advocates of art education, there is no broadly accepted argument for why art is important as an area of study. We have diverse conceptions of what art is, and diverse conceptions of how we might recognize educational outcomes of art instruction. Should art education be primarily focused on individual expression or should it be oriented toward cultural awareness?
and visual sensitivity? If we believe that all students should study art, what are appropriate empirical outcomes through which we evaluate the effectiveness of instruction? Do we look for the evidence of learning within art itself, or do we find the evidence in other areas of the curricula?

This conceptual diversity has bequeathed a history marked by multiple curricular purposes and conflicting justifications. Some argue that this is how it should be, suggesting diversity is the hallmark and strength of the arts. Indeed, it is suggested such diversity mandates "an eclectic approach to an art curriculum" (Efland, 1995, p. 38). However, it may be that this eclectic approach is essentially a politically expedient cobbling of conflicting views. Achievements in national advocacy such as Goals 2000 (1994), or more recent local successes such as Delaware's new high school graduation requirement of one credit in either the visual or performing arts, are indicators of modest political success by this coalition. But are these enduring changes, or just another turn of the historical cycle? Is this a widening circle, or, to borrow a metaphor from Yeats (1920/1992), "a widening gyre" (p. 76). To push the metaphor a little further, is this a widening gyre in which the center cannot hold and from which we can soon expect things to fall apart?

I am concerned that whatever current success art education has enjoyed is based more on the politics of holding diverse conceptions of art together than on the strength of a clearly articulated, persuasive, and enduring educational rationale. I am concerned that the absence of a conceptual center in the eclectic approach to arts curriculum will ultimately prove problematic. My fear is that without a center, the historical pattern of educational cycles will continue, and the current curricular reforms will prove to be as ephemeral as the curricular reforms of the past. Ultimately, despite some momentary gains, art education will remain a marginalized field of inquiry. However, I do not believe that this need happen, because a potentially enduring educational rationale does exist today within the current array of voices.

There is no lack of contemporary debate over the aims and outcomes of art education. Debates range from the way art is conceptualized (Eisner, 1988; Gardner, 1990; Neperud, 1995) to specific approaches for classroom practice (Clark et al., 1987; Burton et al., 1988). These debates are important. It is essential to understand points of agreement, as well as areas of difference, for differences matter. Different rationales carry different assumptions about epistemology, curricula, and pedagogy. It is important to be clear about the explicit and implicit choices that are spun from these assumptions. It seems reasonable and appropriate that educators be aware of their own assumptions about art education, and that they be able to clarify in their own minds what it is they are choosing to teach and why. As Ronald Neperud (1995) states, "an awareness of differences
allows for choices to be made, whereas unquestioning and unreflective acceptance of a position precludes choices" (p. 1).

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, I will review the major historical rationales for art education and trace how these historical differences are manifested in the current debates. It is worthwhile to review the diverse conceptual frameworks for art education that have been advocated by different individuals and compare the major points of difference. Besides providing an essential grounding, history "can be a resource for constructing our future" (Eisner, 1992, p. 41). Second, I will put forward an argument for where art education might best build a clearly articulated, persuasive and enduring rationale that can sustain art education's place within the school curriculum. I believe that this is important because art education has not been well-served by a cornucopia of justifications. A rich debate regarding the aims of art education may make for a lively philosophical discussion but it is a liability for educational policy. Such a liability should not be rationalized as a strength, for the empirical state of art education today shows that art is in fact marginalized. The inability to build a persuasive educational case for the arts, to be clear about why art education is important, and what art education can be, means that in an era of narrowly conceived outcomes for education, art is not taught.\(^2\)

**Rationales for Art Education**

Efland (1990) and Wygant (1983, 1993) have described the numerous rationales that have been put forward for art education in American schools. Efland notes the functional arguments put forward in the 19th century including: improvement in legibility of writing advocated by Horace Mann; acquisition of vocational design skills advocated by Walter Smith; and moral education advocated through the American Transcendentalist tradition by Charles Eliot Norton or as a Hegelian construct to unify a national culture advocated by William Torrey Harris. In the 20th century the justifications became more diverse. Efland shows how educators like Francis Wayland Parker and John Dewey (1934/1989) championed the experiential immediacy of art. Expressiveness through art was an essential element of progressive education as advocated by Harold Rugg and Ann Shumaker (1928). Viktor Lowenfeld (1947) argued that art was psychologically therapeutic. Later, developmental psychologists such as Howard Gardner suggested that art was a vehicle for aiding the growth of latent mental capacities (Gardner, 1990; Pariser, 1995).

Efland (1990) suggests that these intellectual arguments for art education can be grouped within three great "streams of influence" (p. 260): the expressionist; the reconstructivist; and the scientific rationalist. Each

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\(^2\)In describing art education as a discipline, this paper consciously places itself within a particular historical debate concerning the structure of curriculum (Barkan, 1966). The paper follows Schwab's (1969) description of disciplines as "fields of systematic intellectual activity" (p. 2). In Schwab's view, each discipline represents a discrete approach, utilizing specific tools, to intellectual inquiry. Similarly, Bruner (1960/1977) refers to a discipline as "the teaching and learning of structure" within a subject area. (p. 12) The conceptual framework of discipline and subject matter within curricula, as articulated by Barkan, Schwab, and Bruner, informs the argument of this paper.
of these divisions contain their own sub-sets. Each division has its contemporary advocates who continue the debate on the educational importance of art education.

Expressionist
Expressionists contend that the primary mandate of art education is to protect and nurture the autonomous, imaginative life of the child. Free expression is the desired outcome of art instruction. The expressionist stream has its roots in the 19th-century American Transcendental tradition which, in the works of Emerson (1849/1990) and Thoreau (1854/1972), advocates personal realization through reflective solitude. It has also been influenced by the popularization of Freud’s (1930/1961) concepts of the conscious and the unconscious.

Using art as a vehicle to express emotions is posited as essential for release from burdensome cognitive concerns and access to the unconscious which together result in positive developmental growth. Through the therapeutic benefits of art, mental health is fostered. Mental health contributes to a sense of individual competence. Lowenfeld, an advocate of this view, writes:

The child who uses creative activity as an emotional outlet will gain freedom and flexibility as a result of the release of unnecessary tensions. However, the child who feels frustrated develops inhibitions and, as a result, will feel restricted in his personality. The child who has developed freedom and flexibility in his expression will be able to face new situations without difficulties. Through his flexible approaches toward the expression of his own ideas, he will not only face new situations properly but will adjust himself to them easily. (Lowenfeld, 1947, p. 7)

Additionally, becoming aware of expressive qualities of art can bring children in touch with an emotional realm. Imaginative role playing associated with creative acts produces a safe realm in which to experience empathy. Children can imaginatively participate in allegorical depictions. They can safely experience emotions through their imaginative projections.

Without resorting to Freudian ideas of the unconscious, the expressive aspect of art can also be seen, in large measure, as a form of play (Sparshott, 1970; Gadamer, 1973/1995). When art is regarded as a field of play, it is free to break rules and is not confined by the strict restraints of formal cognitive activities. Play is an arena of unbounded exploration at the edge of cognition, which permits the testing of new possibilities. Consequently, the free expression of art is perhaps the only subject area in the curriculum where such freedom is permitted. Art is a refuge, a place of physical release from the tensions of rigorous academics—and, as such,
is typically regarded as non-academic. In this light, the outcomes of art instruction are indirect. Art has no academic outcomes of its own; however, art supports the overall curriculum and aids "hard" academic subjects. Art clears the mind. It can help students "recharge," or it can be a useful filler course at the end of the day when students are burnt out on the tough work of academics.

One branch of formal aesthetics holds that art needs no justification for it is fully autonomous (Osborne, 1991). This is the art for art's sake viewpoint. Art provides pleasure to the discerning eye. The educational task is to teach strategies for the appreciation of these objects. Art lies outside of cognitive concerns. Art contributes an essential aspect of knowledge that is simply inaccessible cognitively.

The work of art...posits its own, self-enclosed area, which is withdrawn from the context of profane existence, and in which special laws apply. Just as in the ceremony the magician first of all marked out the limits of the area where the sacred powers were to come into play, so every work of art describes its own circumference which closes it off from actuality. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1944/1994, p. 19)

Thus, art makes a distinct, separate, and contained contribution to our whole being and to our conception of the well-lived life. Participation in this well-lived life may also be perceived as a significant part of the socialization of the child. From this view, the arts may be seen as providing navigation tools through an important social world.

Reconstructivist

Eisner (1988) observes that a curriculum is a mind-altering device. The educational question that follows is: "to what end are we altering minds?" A reconstructivist, Efland's second major categorization, is keenly aware of the power of curricula and is particularly concerned with normative outcomes inherent in curricula and pedagogy. Within the reconstructivist stream, art, culture, and creative expression are powerful agents in shaping educational outcomes. Art education is a tool for historical and moral instruction capable of transforming individuals and society. Art education is explicitly placed in the service of social transformation.

Schools are societal institutions. All schools have normative aims. With each new generation, each new classroom provides an opportunity for a society to build itself anew. These efforts of reconstruction can be to one of three different ends: reproduction, reinvention, or reconstruction. The first goal, reproduction, intends to create a mimetic image of the present society. In this situation, the outcome of education is successful if the existing paradigm is reproduced. The second goal, reinvention, uses the normative reconstructive function of school towards reinvention of a
modified society. Broadly conceived, the existing paradigm will probably be reproduced, but with allowance for variation in the model. The third goal, reconstruction, is a fundamental reconstitution of the status quo resulting in the creation of a new paradigm. Each model shapes and molds a new generation either in the image of the status quo or in a newer vision of society. Thus all three models are involved in forms of recreation. In that sense, all education seeks to remake society.

Historically, conservatives such as William Torrey Harris perceived the value of art education as providing illustrated exemplars for values training (Efland, 1990) aimed at perpetuating the dominant mores of American society. The arts modeled behavior. Contemporaries such as Broudy (1987) argue that the selection of exemplars is at the core of liberal education. These are examples of how art education could be placed in the service of a cultural reproduction paradigm. Yet it is necessary to note that these ideas were also taken to extremes by 20th-century totalitarian regimes that utilized art for cultural reproduction. In these instances, art was used as a tool to forge common values, and art education was carefully monitored so that only centrally approved values were expressed (Selz, 1968). In opposition to these totalitarian tendencies, Progressives, such as Viktor Lowenfeld, argued that art taught democratic values. Art education encouraged self-expression and independent thought. Art didn’t simply reproduce the values of the society, it encouraged their rediscovery and reinvention. Therefore, art education built better citizens and served to resist totalitarianism (Efland, 1990).

Current reconstructivists believe that art education has a special role and responsibility. Art education should go beyond the reproduction or reinvention of an existing society and should serve as an active agent for social change. For example, Stuhr (1994) and Freedman (1994) propose that art education is properly utilized in service of the larger goal of multicultural education. A major outcome of instruction, given their view, is to help all students become critical theorists capable of either analyzing power structures that are limiting their potentiality, or analyzing the structures in which they participate, thereby recognizing their own collusion in restricting the potentiality of other social groups (Grant & Sleeter, 1989).

Reconstructivists also argue that art education programs should help students critically analyze the societal systems that place aesthetic values on objects (Freedman, 1994). Reconstructivists are openly dubious of the value of classical aesthetic appreciation. In their view, classical Western conceptions of aesthetics disembodify works from meaning by believing the artistic object is independent and autonomous. By isolating an object from its context within the world, works are stripped of their utility or cultural functional meanings. They are taken out of lived lives and com-
modified within an overpowering system of capital. In this manner, capitalism creates an artificial concept of aesthetic appreciation of beauty to justify commodities that are collected and exclusively appreciated by a moneyed leisure class. Thus, aesthetic appreciation is merely a rationalization of a dehumanizing process that takes art out of our lives.

Aesthetic objectification and categorization are seen as social and political constructions, and therefore they are a part of a repressive system. This system is operated by an elite which creates a culturally dominant definition of quality to which everyone is normed (Stuhr, 1994). Aesthetic objectification is a gambit, born out of a dysfunctional social structure. It is this system that is of overwhelming interest to critical theorists. The appreciation of supposed aesthetic objects is more a curiosity than a concern.

Thus, for the reconstructivist, art education should be a principal area of resistance to cultural homogenization. Students should achieve critical awareness rather than appreciation. Experiencing empathy through the arts is also counter-productive because the goal should be critical analysis. By stressing points of commonality and de-emphasizing difference, a program that advocates harmony defuses conflict and is suspect of actually promoting the promulgation of the existing social order (Stuhr, 1994). It therefore follows that art education, if conceived as a distinct subject area, can be seen as further reinforcing a disjointed, elitist view of the role of art and life. For critical theorists, active resistance is an essential response to recognized paradigms (Greene, 1988). Art education affords a distinctive opportunity through which students and groups may coalesce and work together. This process of critical analysis produces personal understanding and growth.

Ultimately the reconstructivist stream proposes shifting the role of art education away from art as a subject area in and of itself. For the reconstructivist, art is not a subject area, it is not the center of attention, rather, it is a tool for analysis that can be applied in other disciplines. Eisner (1988) points out that when art is used primarily as a tool for teaching across disciplines, it becomes an instrument through which to conduct inquiry rather than the subject matter of inquiry. This is precisely the tradeoff that the reconstructivists advocate. Within the reconstructivist stream, art is properly understood as an instrument, not a discipline. Indeed, reconstructivists believe it is regressive, and probably oppressive, to think of art as an end in itself. For the reconstructivist, the proper pedagogic role of art education is to facilitate teaching across disciplines for the purpose of critical analysis.

In the end, the reconstructivists contend that what is gained by using art as a tool for the analysis of social conditions and values, outweighs what is lost by not looking at art as a subject area. As Stuhr (1995) argues,
a reconstructivist art program encourages complex critical thinking and analysis. "Art taught in an interdisciplinary fashion is better able to reflect and create understanding about the social, cultural, and political conditions that it is a part of" (p. 218). The multiple forms of perceptions afforded by art provide multiple ways to reinforce curricular messages and encourage connections between subject areas. Art education thereby contributes significantly to the normative ends of school.

Scientific Rationalism
Scientific rationalists seek an empirical base for art education. They claim art education is a discipline with distinct methods for conducting inquiry and forming judgments. The result of such inquiry and judgment is a broadening of warranted knowledge.

Within philosophy, the study of warranted knowledge is referred to as epistemology. Each of the empirical sciences has developed its own procedures for defining what can be legitimately known and therefore claimed as knowledge within its field of study. Every other academic discipline’s claim to legitimacy within the university is similarly rooted in an epistemology. For art education, its epistemological claims can be divided into two main divisions: one philosophical, the other psychological.

Aesthetics is the philosophy of art and beauty, and it encompasses the process of forming judgments regarding these two concepts. In a classic and highly influential formulation, the 18th-century philosopher Immanuel Kant (1790/1987) posited a faculty of taste as governing aesthetic judgment. Most importantly, Kant claimed aesthetic judgment was distinct from logical judgment. (Beardsley, 1966). According to Kant, aesthetics deals with phenomena exhibiting subjective qualities that cannot be described using propositions. The faculty of taste becomes an agent through which we may seem to “know” and evaluate these objects even though their essential qualities exist in a sphere outside of formal reasoning. Kant’s legacy to Western thought was the perception of a stark division of knowledge between an autonomous aesthetic judgment and cognitive judgment.

Although this rigid division of thought became the accepted paradigm for cognition, it has had many critics. Recent philosophers have increasingly proposed how aesthetic perception can be an integral part of cognition. For example, Robert H. Ennis (Broudy, 1987) posits an allusionary base of knowledge that serves as a metaphorical reference that is a prerequisite to critical thinking. To sharpen the point, Broudy calls this an illusory base for thinking (p. 18). Philosophically, Ennis and Broudy point towards a realm of informal logic, co-existing alongside propositional logic. Within informal logic, aesthetics is an essential part of cognition.
Kant's two spheres of judgment are preserved, but both are now a part of logic.

A second philosophical critique of the Kantian model synthesizes art within the terms of propositional language. Words are inadequate for expressing the meaning of images because images have their own language, grammar, and syntax. To be able to read the language of images requires the ability to recognize symbolic systems.

Wittgenstein (1958) struggled between the primacy of words and pictures in the construction of thought. Nelson Goodman (1978) suggested a solution to Wittgenstein's dilemma by proposing that both words and images can be used in cognition. To understand verbal language or images requires the ability to understand symbol systems. Images can be utilized in symbol systems with as much efficiency as words. By making such a claim, Goodman implies a new cognitive realm with which curriculum should be concerned. Literacy is not simply reading words, literacy means the decoding of symbol systems. If you do not educate children in reading symbolic forms, then they are functionally illiterate. Goodman states:

The worlds of fiction, poetry, painting, music, dance, and the other arts are built largely by such nonliteral devices as metaphor, by such nondenotational means as exemplifications and expression, and often by use of picture or sounds or gestures or other symbols of nonlinguistic systems. Such worldmaking and such versions are my primary concern here; for a major thesis of this book is that the arts must be taken no less seriously than the sciences as modes of discovery, creation, and enlargement of knowledge in the broad senses of advancement of the understanding, and thus that the philosophy of art should be conceived as an integral part of metaphysics and epistemology. (p. 102)

Goodman's claim is that the aesthetic realm is not just metaphysics, but that it has an integral role in determining what we know. Art is a form of inquiry which discovers, creates, and enlarges knowledge (1968). The arts are products of cognition, not separate and distinct from them. The arts are an essential element in epistemology.

As a form of inquiry, the arts are justified in claiming the position of a discipline within education. Aesthetics is properly understood as not being concerned with the appreciation of beauty, but as the relative rightness of a form created within a symbol system. Art is an essential academic discipline through which we understand and appreciate "rightness of fit" (Goodman, 1978).

Goodman's articulation of the epistemological claims for the arts was an important scholarly milestone within the field of philosophy. Yet his arguments had precedents and antecedents within the field of art educa-
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tion. Thomas Munro’s *Scientific Method in Aesthetics* (1956) first proposed the visual arts as a form of inquiry for the discovery, creation and enlargement of knowledge forty years prior to Goodman. Munro suggested art could be understood through critical inquiry utilizing observable phenomena like any of the social sciences:

There is no obstacle but the inertia of tradition to prevent aesthetics from undertaking an extensive program of direct comparative observation of particular examples from various arts, with the aim of discovering common and divergent qualities of form. This would imply a breaking down of the arbitrary distinction between aesthetics and art criticism. It would imply an effort to make all general theories grow directly out of detailed analyses of works of art... (p. 15)

In this tradition, Elliot Eisner (1994) shares with Munro and Goodman a desire to claim an epistemological base for the arts. But for Eisner, art is more than “reading” symbolic systems. His work seeks to build on the Gestalt psychology of Rudolf Arnheim (1954, 1969), the experiential philosophy of John Dewey (1934/1989), and the aesthetic theory of Susanne Langer (1942, 1957). Cognition is more than the construction of systems. Eisner contends that “language [i.e. symbolic systems] functions largely as a surrogate for experience” (1994, p. 29). The arts are important because they refine the senses through which we have access to the sensory experiences that expand our consciousness. Eisner’s epistemological viewpoint is more far reaching than Goodman’s; for him, the senses are a part of mind.

For Eisner, the arts are a primary means for refining the senses. The arts expand our ability to express our knowledge in forms of representation. The differences between Eisner and Goodman are subtle but distinctive. Goodman suggests that aesthetic form can be understood through a relational system of symbols; Eisner suggests that there are forms of representation, previously characterized as aesthetic forms, that provide critical lenses for understanding what we have called empirical forms. It is the aesthetic that illuminates the empirical, just as the empirical gives rise to the aesthetic.

Our sensory experiences provide ways of knowing the world. These ways of knowing employ their own forms of inquiry. Our capacity to possess knowledge is actualized through multiple forms of representation (Eisner, 1993). Each form provides a lens for seeing the whole. Only by utilizing multiple lenses to create a triangulation with which to view a subject, can we begin to have confidence that we genuinely understand the object of our consideration. Therefore, literacy is our ability to encode and decode within various forms and, it is the responsibility of educators, who are concerned with literacy, to construct curricula that provides access to these forms. An education that is wholly focused upon only one
form is overly restrictive and inadequate to providing students necessary and sufficient tools to explore fields of intellectual activity.

Developmental psychology represents the second branch of scientific rationalism. It seeks to replace the traditional function of philosophy by providing a scientific explanation for epistemology. The central tenet is the belief that the mind unfolds in definable developmental stages. Epistemology, to a significant degree, becomes a matter of genetics and environment. What we know is a physical and behaviorist phenomenon that can be studied and analyzed. The scientist is looking for a natural progression, a graphable taxonomy, within the course of human development. The affordances within an environment that allow for certain unfolding processes to occur are of particular interest.

Jean Piaget's research into child psychology suggested a unilinear development of the mind (Pariser, 1995). Currently, Howard Gardner (1990) follows Piaget's broad model but argues for different modalities of development stemming out of different modalities of intelligences, rather than a single unilinear version of intelligence as originally conceived by Piaget.

According to Gardner (1983), there are different centers in the brain for different types of intelligence. Each can be developed sequentially, although this is a matter of choice, not inevitability. The arts become tools, gateways to experiences, which allow that inner process to bloom and blossom. We learn in experiential interactions that are uniquely characterized by the instruments we choose to employ be they a book, a protractor, violin, or a soccer ball. We do not develop simply by growing older. The educational opportunities that a child has provides the affordances for reaching his or her human potential.

As a co-director of Harvard Project Zero (which was founded by Goodman in 1967), Gardner has pursued, through a cognitive developmental paradigm, the implications inherent in the philosophical arguments of Goodman (Davis & Gardner, 1992). To Gardner (1990), the arts provide access to particular types of cognitive intelligence. The arts are tools to develop latent intellectual abilities. While Gardner (1977) advocates the use of multiple symbol systems and sensory modalities in relationship to the general curriculum, art itself is not the end. Gardner does not recognize an artistic intelligence, or an aesthetic intelligence, or a perceptual intelligence. Art is an affect of intelligence (Davis & Gardner, 1992). In the developmental model, art education is a domain of particular environmental perturbations that provide the opportunity for cognitive growth. The symbolic systems and modalities of art education are in the service of other constructed cognitive goals. Thus, as with the reconstructivists, art is a means to an end other than art.
The Theories in Schools
How do these theoretical debates play out in actual school settings? Data collected between 1992 and 1996 by the San Francisco Art Commission, from an art education funding initiative started by a consortium of private foundations in San Francisco, provides an opportunity to see how Efland's conceptual categorizations of art education were utilized. As a part of this grant program, 73 elementary schools within the San Francisco Unified School District drafted descriptions and curricular purposes of arts education programs they conducted and hoped to implement (San Francisco Art Commission, 1996). As the explicit purpose of the foundation funding was to support integrating the arts across the curriculum, it was not surprising that 65 schools stated this as an objective of their arts education programming. Of interest from the standpoint of this paper, 43 schools, nearly 60% of the elementary schools in the District, justified their arts education programs by reasons that could be ascribed to at least two of Efland's three broad conceptual categorizations. Additionally, 15 schools, slightly over 20%, indicated multiple reasons that could be attributed to all three categories. However, a nearly equivalent number of schools could offer no rationale of their own for arts education beyond their eagerness to receive grant money.

Looking closer at the reasons put forth by the individual schools, the lingering influence of Progressive education was evident as 36 schools listed personal expression and creativity as a reason for art education. The ascendance of reconstructivist views was seen in 29 schools listing multicultural learning as a curricular objective. Fourteen schools viewed art as a vehicle for developing critical thinking, and only 15 schools stated that learning art was a concern.

The survey results demonstrated that contesting justifications between the major "streams of influence" of art education are present within the school district, individual schools and even individual classrooms. The results also suggest that teachers take what they want from each of the three broad conceptual streams and fashion their own approach. While this is hardly surprising, it does bring us back to the original question that was posed at the outset of this paper: is art education well served by multiple justifications? The survey results show educators reaching for a myriad of reasons to justify arts education, with the most popular justification being the use of art to teach subject areas other than art. While using art as a tool may be fashionable at the moment, will this prove to be an enduring argument for art education, especially when the day comes when a newer, more fashionable, instructional tool comes along?
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Beyond curricular utility and pedagogical approaches, art education must build a clearly articulated, persuasive and enduring epistemological rationale for itself. Epistemology is important because educators should be fully aware of how they are teaching students to think. Educators should be able to recognize the values regarding knowledge that are embedded in curricula. They should also reflect on their own values regarding knowledge and consider whether their own values match the curriculum. Out of their analysis of curriculum and personal values, educators need to articulate what is worth knowing through the study of art. I would suggest that unless art education is perceived as providing a body of knowledge worth knowing, it will remain marginalized. The issue then is not how art can be used, but what it is that we learn from art. From the work of the scientific rationalists, I would argue that the major contribution art education can make is helping students to learn to reason through perception.

Reasoned perception has a long history. The Greek word *aisthanesthai* means the ability to perceive. It forms the root for the English word *aesthetics*. The Greeks originally incorporated *aisthanesthai*, the capacity to appreciate qualities and distinctions within perception, as a part of reason. Plato argued successfully against the inclusion of *aisthanesthai*, and for a narrowing of epistemology, thereby initiating a distinction between thought and perception that continues to the present day.

Nonetheless, reasoned perception has continued to have its advocates who seek to reclaim the historical role for the senses in rationality. In the 20th century, from Martin Heidegger and Theodore Adorno in Germany to John Dewey and Maxine Greene in America there is a concern to expand what counts as knowledge within epistemology while preserving the accomplishments of the rationalist tradition. As significant as the rationalist tradition has been and continues to be, if reasoned perception is accepted as integral to our idea of epistemology, there are profound implications for what is worth teaching and how students' minds are engaged and transformed within the process of education.

Reasoned perception is the application of reason to create a meaningful and developed sense of perception. Eisner (1991) points out that it requires “active intelligence and application of refined schemata” to be able to make discerning preferences. (p. 174) We apply criteria, we construe knowledge. The role of the artist and poet is to help us to see, to take note, to notice.

If art education is about the development of reasoned perception, it changes not simply the way that art is taught, but the role of art education as a discipline within the entire curriculum. To see art as a vehicle of teaching reasoned perception sets a significantly different agenda for art

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education than approaching art education as teaching for expressiveness, or to teach other subjects better, or a discipline primarily concerned with the proper categorical classification of an object.

Can art education's other great conceptual streams offer an equally compelling epistemological argument? While there is much of value within the expressionist stream, it offers no clear epistemological justification for art education. To insist that the arts are only realms of expression and play is to denigrate their cognitive function. Its rationale is inherently anti-rational. Within the second stream, social reconstructivism speaks to the transformative power of art. To recognize the moral responsibilities of art education as a last bastion of Progressive education is a compelling argument with a rich historical tradition to draw upon. But this is a curricular and not an epistemological rationale.

The distinction is an important one. How an individual comes to know, and has confidence in the criteria on which that knowledge rests, is an issue of epistemology. How an individual is socially conditioned to a normative end is a curricular issue. Ultimately, critical theory is not really an epistemological rationale; it is a curricular rationale. This is not to imply that curricular rationales are unimportant; indeed, curricular rationales are a needed and an essential part of education. Nevertheless, we should not confuse curricular rationales as being epistemological rationales. I suggest that it is really only within the third stream of the scientific rationalists, both the philosophers and the developmental psychologists, who offer arguments and evidence towards solid epistemological rationales for art education.

Reconstructivists would probably argue that they engage issues of epistemology through critical analysis; however, there is a significant distinction between critical thinking and critical theory. Each of these two approaches teaches analytical skills, but each approach is employed to serve profoundly different normative ends: one perceives the normative aim of school as reinvention of society, the other sees that normative aim as the reconstruction of society. Reinvention develops within each person the tools and capabilities to analyze and construct individual meaning as they interact with the world. Reconstruction carries the expectation that students will be taught positive methods for group interaction. Reinvention is concerned with the individual, reconstruction is concerned with society.

What then of the epistemological rationales within the category of scientific rationalists? The developmental psychology approach is rich in describing artistry-measurable acts that demonstrate the development and increasing sophistication of skills. However, "artistic" problems studied by psychologists, such as the graphical mastery of perspective, may represent only a relatively minor rule-governed form of syntax within a visual form
of representation. Developmental science can tell us little about what it means to be artistic. A taxonomy of actions can show what happens, but it does not address why it happens. It is not clear how artistic vision will be educated. Knowing the course of a race is critical; yet it still doesn’t inform us of how we will choose to run it. In their work, Davis and Gardner (1992) acknowledge the need for art education to address “the cognitive components of perception and reflection” (p. 115), yet the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) does not accept perception as an intelligence that composes a part of cognition. MI theory does not directly address the issue of visual art. Aesthetic perception is an attribute to the intelligences of MI theory, but is not recognized as an intelligence. Thus, MI theory stops short of establishing an epistemological rationale for art education. Art education needs an epistemology that can fully embrace sense, concept and visual perception.

What developmental psychology has yet to speak to is “knowledgeful feeling and feelingful knowledge” (Broudy, 1987, p. 11). Jane Roland Martin (1992) also speaks of knowing through sensory perception; however, she is speaking in more radical terms suggesting that Broudy’s feelingful knowledge is properly understood as part of the empirical world—not an adjunct to it. Martin argues that the classical empirical approach of separating feelingful knowledge into a realm of aesthetics is a mistake. For Martin, feelingful knowledge should be properly recognized as a feminine component that complements the classical masculine definition of empiricism.

Like Broudy, Goodman, and Eisner, Martin suggests that the best epistemological argument for art is based on breaking down the stark dichotomy between empirical knowing and aesthetic knowing. This also emerges as a concern of Richard Rorty’s (1989) who proposes that aesthetic understanding is knowledge of empirical human relationships within the world. In his utopia, it is the artist, and not the scientist, who therefore holds the mantle of knowledge. Rorty states:

We need a redescription of liberalism as the hope that culture as a whole can be “poeticized” rather than as the Enlightenment hope that it can be “rationalized” or “scientized…”

In my view, an ideally liberal polity would be one whose culture hero is Bloom’s “strong poet” rather than the warrior, the priest, the sage, or the truth-seeking, “logical,” “objective” scientist. (p. 53)

The major philosophical arguments as presented by Ennis’s informal logic, Goodman’s symbolic systems, Eisner’s forms of representation, and Martin’s feminist empiricism all suggest a need to reconceptualize cognition that could provide an enduring epistemological rationale for art education.
Conclusion: Teaching Reasoned Perception

What form should art education then take? While there are curricular and pedagogical tools that can be taken from all of the great conceptual streams, I would suggest the soundest epistemological rationale for art is grounded in the philosophical arguments, curricular structure, and pedagogic methods that increase cognizance of sensory concepts to the end of developing skills in reasoned perception. This understanding is an integral part of the normative goals of school to build cognitive skills. Although clearly situated in the scientific rationalists category, such a rationale also shows a reconstructivist influence. By explicitly expanding the definition of cognition, society is implicitly changed. Additionally, in accord with expressionist concerns, technique and expression are necessary parts of instruction; however, neither technique nor expression are ends in themselves. The scientific rationalist goal of understanding sensory concepts and reasoned perception transcends studio techniques both technical and expressive. Sensory concepts and reasoned perception are forms which are rational and relational. As such, understanding them through work in symbolic systems and in informal logic are central to art education.

To expand empirical knowledge to include art, and moving art into the mainstream of disciplined inquiry, may require art to move down from its pedestal. It can no longer claim to be a discrete, objectified realm of knowing outside of rationality or an intelligence adjacent to cognition. Neither is it a neutral instrument for creating social self-awareness. It is, however, a realm of feeling, sensory concepts, and exquisitely varied forms of human representation that give us insight into what it means to be in, relate to, and comprehend. Or, even more succinctly, to have knowledge of the world.

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