WHY WE MAKE ART AND WHY IT IS TAUGHT

RICHARD HICKMAN

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Richard Hickman is Senior Lecturer in education at Cambridge University, UK and is a practising artist.

Frontispiece: *Untitled*
Acrylic on Board 30x60 cm
Gareth Watkins, 1999.
Gareth was Artist in Residence at Homerton College Cambridge during 1999; he took his own life the following year.
Royalties from sales of this book will be given to Amnesty International.

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Contents

Section Four (Continued)

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RH

Preface

Are artists born or made? What is the driving force behind producing art works? Are schools facilitating or denying artistic development? What kind of art curriculum in our schools could cater for the developing needs of young people? What is the value in learning *about* art? Is assessment of young people's performance in art a help or a hindrance? These are the kind of questions which are examined in this book. Interviews with artists, school pupils, students and others who create things we might call art have helped provide an insight into the artistic process and the motivating force behind it.

The biggest and perhaps the most controversial of the above questions is the first. As Steven Pinker has noted [1] it has become taboo to even consider the possibility that human beings are born with certain aptitudes. When I was a young art teacher, the standard response to parents, colleagues and others who dared to suggest that a desire to draw and paint might be inherited, was that that sort of thinking ended up with the holocaust. This book is not about individual talent or artistic 'giftedness', it is concerned with the notion that the desire to create is a fundamental human urge which often unfolds naturally, but can be stunted or developed by cultural influences, including schooling.

Section One gives a brief general overview of the nature of art and its relationship to education. For the purposes of this book I use a fairly broad brush in the first section, to sketch in some background information. I have chosen to focus on artistic development as this is a theme which is fundamental to the issues which I am exploring. The core issues discussed in this book are derived from some introspection and contemplation upon my own practice and this has helped inform focused conversations with a number of people from differing backgrounds. The educational and other settings where I have worked and studied have enabled me to interact with other individuals who have been involved in art-making. This has given me many opportunities to talk about art in a personal and meaningful way. I have had the opportunity to meet with and talk to a range of different people about their art-making activities; the outcomes from these meetings are presented and discussed in Section Two. I have therefore chosen not to focus upon social and cultural issues, instead I have taken a broadly psychological perspective, informed by individual people's accounts as well as drawing upon autobiographical and textual information.

Section Three explores some of the issues which arise from the testimonies given in Section Two. These include a consideration of the nature and purpose of imagination and the role of expression in art-making as it relates to personal fulfilment; I make connections between this and themes of self-identity and self-esteem. Psychological issues are discussed, including the nature of creativity and its association with art. A major focus of this section is on schools

and schooling. I present a view of schools as institutions which are antipathetic to creativity in general and art-making in particular.

The final section, Section Four, considers the notion of 'creating aesthetic significance' as a fundamental human urge. It develops some of the issues highlighted in Section Three and puts forward some suggestions for an educational approach based on developmental psychology, with the art room as a model for schools and schooling. I advocate the desirability of giving school students more of a voice and also devote some space to the perennially problematic issue of assessing art.

I have attempted to draw together quite a few diverse ideas, culminating in reflections and observations in the final Section. Some of these ideas are more difficult to handle than others, and this is reflected in the various sections – some are lighter and easier to read than others – and, although there is a development of an argument hidden in there somewhere, each section ought to make sense on its own. To help the flow of the writing, I use the term 'art' throughout the book as a kind of shorthand. I hope that readers will be able to determine from the context whether this refers to 'art and design' – the preferred current nomenclature in the UK – or 'the arts', or indeed simply 'art' in the sense of painting, drawing, sculpting, printmaking etc. Similarly, I have made use of 'notes' at the end of each section which, in addition to giving precise references, amplify some of the points made.

Note

[1] Steven Pinker is Johnstone Professor of Psychology at Harvard University. See Pinker, S. (2003) *The Blank Slate*. London: Penguin. The sub-title is 'The modern denial of human nature'.

Richard Hickman, Cambridge 2005

Foreword

We should welcome and inwardly digest this excellent book that examines the necessity for art as a basic human need. It is often argued that art is a luxury, some kind of extra add-on to our lives, which should be concerned with the hardware of survival. This view is not only simplistic but fundamentally wrong. Art is the means by which life reflects on, transforms and indeed creates its values; human life without it would not properly be human at all. Once we have the means to sustain life, art is the way that life expresses itself – this expression is no add-on but part of its sustainability.

In education, the experience of making through art emancipates the individual from the already-made world by re-enforcing her as a maker. It allows the individual to become aware of and to value the uniqueness of her perceptions and acts; it is the most direct form of learning – where an openness to a self-acknowledged failure becomes the most useful weapon against the values of external conformity to an ever more standardized world.

Richard Hickman makes the critical distinction between learning about art as opposed to learning through it. Learning from the experience of making is an organic and therefore evolutionary practice – nothing to do with copying concepts or given forms but everything about interpreting things.

Perhaps the most important argument for the centrality of art in education is that the art room can become a zone dedicated to the exercise of curiosity, a place where the instincts of questioning can find their own paths to language. What happens when I mix this with that? How does what happens affect me/how does it affect others? There is an implicit injunction in the art room to take responsibility for the experiments the individual makes because she has chosen to make them; and when that focusing on response is sharpened by the sharing of the intentions of the maker and the perceptions of peer perceivers, the individual can both give form to and gain an appreciation of the value of her unique contribution to the world, allowing her to become an active maker of a living culture, rather than a passive consumer.

It does not matter whether the individual ends up becoming a professional artist: the important thing is that the direct experience of art makes the individual.

Antony Gormley

Section One

Art and art education

Art

The *art* in the title of this book refers to a multifaceted, complex and contested phenomenon. Most people have at least a tacit understanding about the nature of art – that it is in some way concerned with making. Further discussion on this particular subject could run to many chapters, and while not wanting to reinvent the wheel, I feel that it is necessary to define our terms, although one might think that enough has already been written about art and that further debate is superfluous. However, the very nature of art as a dynamic and fluid phenomenon means that previous debate often needs to be revisited.

It was not until the late 18th century that the distinction between 'artisan' and 'artist' became more general; the terms share the same root – the Latin *artis* or *artem,* which refers to skill. Dictionaries give at least 14 different senses of the word 'art' as it relates to skill; only one of these is in the sense of what is often referred to as 'Fine Art'. The general association of art with creativity and the imagination in many societies did not become prevalent until the late 19th century. I would say that in industrialised societies a commonly accepted notion of what 'art' is includes the concepts of not just skill but also expression and organisation, in addition to creativity and imagination. The distinction between 'art' and 'design' and that between 'art' and 'craft' is relatively recent and is generally regarded by many commentators as a western phenomenon. However, there are certain distinctions that can be made and some authorities have felt it necessary to distinguish between 'art' and 'craft', drawing attention to what are sometimes considered to be basic characteristics of craft that are absent in art [1]. Firstly, crafts involve the idea of an end product, such as a basket or pot, which has some utility; secondly, there is a distinction between the planning and the execution of a craft; thirdly, every craft requires a particular material that is transformed into an end product and which thereby defines the particular craft.

These three distinctions between art and craft might apply also to art and design, if 'design' were to be substituted for 'craft'; the distinction being more a matter of emphasis and degree, rather than of kind. Many artists plan their work and then execute it in a particular medium. Moreover, the notion of utility need not be confined to physical phenomena. Any distinctions that may be made between art and design would be similar to those proposed for art and craft, and again, those distinctions would be simply differences of emphasis. For example, one might view art and design as part of a continuum which has expressive/philosophical qualities at one end and technological/utilitarian

qualities at the other; in this sense, art and design are indivisible, although some do not share that view. Misha Black, for example, writing in 1973 on design education in Britain, asserted that the view that 'art and design are indivisible' is a misconception, stating:

> *At their extremities of maximum achievement art and design are different activities sharing only creativity and some techniques in common. Art I believe to be expressive of the human condition; it provides clues to what cannot be explained in rational terms . . . Design is a problem solving activity concerned with invention and with formal relationships, with the elegant solutions to problems which are at least partially definable in terms of day-to-day practicability* [2].

I prefer the view of the concepts of art and design as being at either end of a 'philosophical/technological continuum', that is, the differences in epistemological terms are in degree rather than in kind. Practicability appears to be an essential aspect of design, while being an unnecessary and occasionally undesirable aspect of art. It could, of course, be argued that art that is expressive of the human condition is an essentially 'practical' phenomenon in that it serves to give meaning to life.

In art education, the term 'art' is often used to cover 'craft' and 'design'. This extended use of the term is usually made explicit, as in the UK government's *Art in the National Curriculum* (England) which declared that 'art' should be interpreted to mean 'art, craft and design' throughout the document [3]. This declaration does not appear in the later edition published in 2000, which includes the word 'design' in the title, although there is a note to say that 'art and design includes craft' [4]. 'Art & Design' has come to be the term favoured by examination boards and award-giving bodies in the UK and so it would seem that the concept of 'art & design' (if not the label itself), although complex and wide-ranging, is the most frequently encountered concept which refers to the kinds of activities that normally occur in school. The polarised view of 'art' and 'design', exemplified by Misha Black underlines the often uneasy relationship between different approaches to art in education. This is eased to some extent by the term 'design & technology', a designation that can be said to give a clearer focus to the concept of design as a utilitarian and problem-solving enterprise [5].

It can be seen, then, that there may be some degree of overlap between the concept of art and the concept of design. The main area of difference seems to lie in the extent to which the notion of producing something to fit a particular requirement is considered important. There is clearly a lot of scope for confusion, as the terms 'art' and 'design' are both used in a number of ways. In the case of art, we also have the distinction between using the term 'art' in its

classificatory or categorical sense – as a means of categorising or classifying it as distinct from other things – and using the word 'art' in its evaluative sense, that is, giving value to something as in 'a work of art'.

What is commonly known in industrialised societies as 'art' has undergone many changes. The concept of art does not reside in art objects but in the minds of people; the content of those minds has changed radically to accommodate new concepts and make novel connections. It is perhaps odd that what is popularly referred to as 'modern art' is often work from the early part of the last century. 'Modernism' is a preferable term and, paradoxically, many people appear to be more aware of this term as a result of the coming of age of 'post-modernism'. In October 2002 I observed a group of post-graduate trainee art teachers in a gallery training session run by the education officer. They were divided into two groups of about ten. One group was asked to discuss and identify concepts associated with modernism, while the other group focused upon post-modernism. To my surprise, the group discussing modernism had some difficulty coming up with ideas related to the term, while the other group quickly produced a list of words which they felt were associated with post-modernism. These were 'plurality', 'eclecticism', 'irony' and 'humour': a group of words as good as any, perhaps, to describe the loosely knit body of ideas which make up post-modernist thought.

Post-modernism is derived in part from the writings of 20th century philosophy (especially French philosophy), in particular those influenced by Marxist theory [6]. It has generated a whole new range of issues; these include the notion that art is a redundant concept and that it is inextricably bound up with hierarchies, elites and repression. In particular, many artists working within the post-modernist framework consciously seek to challenge and subvert many of the presuppositions which have been made about the nature of art over the past two centuries. These presuppositions include the notions that an art object is made by one person, usually a white male; that it is of value as a commodity; and that the viewer needs to be educated and informed (usually by a critic) in order to appreciate it fully. Further to this, if the artwork is deemed to be of value (by critics acting on behalf of the art establishment), then it should be in an appropriate setting, i.e. an art gallery or museum, where it will be seen by suitably educated and respectful people for years to come. As a reaction to these notions, therefore, we have instances of artworks that are made by groups of people rather than individuals; by minority groups and by women who celebrate their status through their artwork; artworks that are not meant to last, created from non-traditional materials (or no material at all), displayed in non-reverential places and that are conceived as being of no value.

It is, of course, ironic that the work of artists, who are already valued by the art establishment as 'important figures', choose to attempt to subvert the commodification of art by sending their work as a fax, by making multiple copies

or by making it out of ephemeral material. The irony, in true post-modernist fashion, is compounded when such work is itself considered to be of value as a commodity, representing 'cutting edge' contemporary art. The real irony, however, is that much of what passes for contemporary art is even more inaccessible than the modernist art it supplants. More than ever, contemporary art is in need of interpretation by critics before many people can begin to appreciate it, by which time potential viewers will have lost interest or will have deemed that such art is only to be viewed by a privileged elite.

Art remains a contested concept, all the more so when we examine the shaky foundations upon which it is built. Some might say that 'art' is such a fuzzy concept, fraught with contradiction and ambiguity, that we need to sub-divide what currently comes under its umbrella into several different concepts, or that art itself is but one aspect of a broader concept of visual culture. Of central significance is the need for those concerned with inducting young people into a greater understanding of their world to examine carefully their own presuppositions about art and its relation to that world.

Art in education

In the UK provision for the training of specialist art teachers has gradually been eroded in recent years, particularly for the primary phase of compulsory education. There has also been a cutback in allocated time to allow for more emphasis on so-called 'core' subjects. Such developments have fuelled the fears of art advocates and have contributed further to a kind of siege mentality, where art rooms are isolated behind barricades to fend off further incursions by the barbarians. Overall however, art has rarely been more secure in terms of its (currently) assured place in the curriculum, at least in the UK, with record numbers of young people taking public examinations in the subject [7].

In English primary schools the subject has nevertheless been under threat, largely as a result of a misguided drive to get 'back to basics', as if art itself were not a basic and fundamental part of education and culture. At the time of writing there are signs that strategies which in many places supplanted creative activity with rote learning, are being phased out, with a welcome return to a more enlightened approach to the curriculum. However, the fact remains that specialist teachers of art in English secondary schools and elsewhere are in short supply, owing principally to the closure of specialist courses for pre-service training. Roy Prentice, in a report commissioned by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) noted that from September 2002, owing to government directives, 'students will have reduced opportunities to develop their subject knowledge in art and design' [8].

At post-16 level, the outlook appears relatively buoyant, with large numbers continuing to pursue the subject beyond the years of compulsory schooling, but the relationship between what is taught in schools and practice in Higher

Education remains, for the most part, tenuous. There is little conceptual overlap – some would say a huge chasm – between school art and the kind of art that occurs in art colleges. But this is to be expected. A similar kind of gulf would exist between the school and university versions of most subjects, and probably more so between classroom practice and professional practice. Some would say that this is not only to be expected but also desirable – asserting that, for example, conceptual art is to school art what quantum physics is to school science. My contention here is straightforward – that in order to understand art concepts at an advanced level, it is necessary to have an understanding of the building blocks for those concepts. Partly in support of this contention I discuss the role of developmental psychology later in this section.

There are those who advocate a real connection between art education in schools and the rarefied world of contemporary art. Some argue that it is crucial for art education to concern itself with all aspects of visual culture, including theme parks, shopping malls, television and the internet, claiming that this would give art education a central place in our thinking about cultural forms [9]. The problem here, however, is that there is a weighting towards a kind of literate understanding rather than creating. In much of the current literature there appears to be little attention given to *making*, with fewer references to the importance of practice.

Current and ongoing debate about the nature of art and its relationship with education and the rest of society is exemplified by Duncum and Bracey [9]. As editors, they draw upon a range of disciplines, including anthropological and sociological accounts of the nature of visual form, to present a polemical account in the form of a collection of essays. The authors of the essays take different stances, with arguments presented and counterarguments given. Taken together, these essays help unravel the complex nature of art and aesthetic understanding and its relevance to contemporary education. The central question in Duncum and Bracey's book is 'How can art be known?'. This is answered to some extent by posing other questions, such as the following, asked by Graham Chalmers:

> *how, in a variety of cultures, is visual culture talked about, viewed, understood, misunderstood, valued, trashed, ignored, used, and labelled?* [10].

Chalmers answers his own question by asserting that those aspects of visual culture, which some term 'art', are known through knowing what is considered of value within one's particular social group. Elsewhere in the book, Elizabeth Garber, an ethnographic researcher, declares that in order to know art it is necessary to know the cultural, social and anthropological study of the contexts in which it was produced [11]. That is surely so but do young people in schools necessarily need to be aware of these contexts when *making* art? This issue is discussed below.

The place of 'knowing and understanding' art

I have taken this phrase – 'knowing and understanding art' – from the English National Curriculum documentation; it has become a kind of shorthand for those activities that occur in art lessons that are not directly concerned with making. For several years, since the initial introduction of a statutory framework within which art teachers were to operate, the phrase 'AT2' – attainment target two – was used as an even more abbreviated form. I have heard several art teachers erroneously refer to 'AT2' as the 'art history' component of the curriculum. This was never intended to be the case. If anything, the 'knowledge and understanding aspect' of the art curriculum is related to the old term 'art appreciation' but current practice goes beyond that and also goes beyond what is associated with the more contemporary term (at least in the UK) 'critical and contextual studies'. It is expected, amongst other things, that pupils should be taught about formal aspects of art as well as about 'the roles and purposes of artists, craftspeople and designers working in different times and cultures'. Pupils are assessed according to the extent to which they have analysed how codes and conventions are used to represent ideas, beliefs and values in different genres, styles and traditions. They are also expected to be able to evaluate the contexts of their own and others' work and 'articulate similarities and differences in their views and practice', developing their ideas and their work 'in the light of insights gained from others'. These are huge areas of study but nevertheless refer to only one aspect of the requirements for art in English schools. There is an explicit expectation that 'knowledge and understanding' in art is related to and informs studio practice.

I have outlined the development of the critical and contextual studies aspect of the art curriculum elsewhere [12] but will briefly recapitulate here to give a context to the discussion. Since about the end of the Second World War there has been an off-on debate in education regarding subject-centred approaches and student-centred approaches. Subject-centred approaches are concerned with instruction that is based on the transmission of knowledge and skills, and are generally concerned with 'declarative knowledge', i.e. 'knowing that'. This has been contrasted with learner-centred education, which Herbert Read referred to as 'originating activity' and is generally concerned with facilitating creative expression or 'procedural knowledge', i.e. 'knowing how'. Read advocated a synthesis of these two approaches in the teaching of art [13] but remained firmly committed to the idea of education *through* art, as the title of his book suggests.

In the UK, Dick Field's influential book of 1970, *Change in Art Education*, drew attention to the need for a change in emphasis, arguing for a balance between 'concern for the integrity of children and concern for the integrity of art' [14]. Field's book echoed many of the ideas that were developing in America at that time and introduced the beginning of a new development in art

education. Manuel Barkan's 1962 article 'Transition in Art Education' [15], the theoretical foundations of which can be traced back to Bruner's conception of the structure of a discipline [16], proposed that art should be taught in a more structured way than had been advocated previously in American schools. Barkan's article was a precursor to his 1966 paper [17], which recommended that art curriculum development should be derived from its disciplinary sources: the artist, art historian, art critic and the aesthetician. This approach was later endorsed by the Getty Center for Education in the Visual Arts and the subject- or 'discipline'- centred approach to art education became established in American schools by the 1980s. Characteristics of 'discipline-based art education' (DBAE) were outlined by Dwaine Greer, who asserted that a curriculum based on DBAE

- focuses on the intrinsic value of art study;
- operates within the larger context of aesthetic education;
- draws form and content from the four professional roles, i.e. art historian, art critic, aesthetician and artist;
- is systematically and sequentially structured;
- inter-relates components from the four role sources for an integrated understanding of art;
- provides time for a regular and systematic instruction;
- specifies learner outcomes [18].

It can be seen that these seven features, which epitomise the nature of the 'discipline-based' approach, are far removed from the notion of the child as artist and from the concept of learner-centred education. There is an emphasis on art as an area of study, composed of four disciplines (art history, art criticism, aesthetics and studio practice), delivered by way of an objectives-based sequential curriculum.

The notion of sequential learning in art was taken up in the UK by Brian Allison. Allison stressed the need for learning in art to be cumulative and systematic, covering four inter-related 'domains':

- the Expressive/Productive Domain
- the Perceptual Domain
- the Analytical/Critical Domain
- the Historical/Cultural Domain [19].

This curriculum model was designed to address cognitive as well as affective aspects of art and was therefore deemed to be 'balanced'. It marked the beginning of an analytical, critical and historical dimension to art in British schools, coinciding with a concern for more measurable 'accountability' and

'standards', culminating in the Education Reform Act of 1988, which laid the foundations for a national curriculum.

It can be seen that there has been an inexorable move away from child-centred art education towards a more subject-centred approach, with an ever-increasing concern for more measurable aspects of art in education linked, as ever, to a general concern about standards in education. Key concepts underpinning this move are *sequentiality* – a concern for learning to be developmental and progressive; *subject-centred* – teaching about the subject as a body of knowledge; and *objectives-based* – an approach that pre-specifies lesson goals in terms of desirable learning outcomes. These concepts led inevitably to a concern for cognitive rather than affective aspects of art, aspects that are measurable, can be sequentially structured and can largely be specified in advance.

We have, then, a curriculum that is not aimed at the needs of individual young people but is the result of a perceived, but to my mind misguided, need to give a kind of academic respectability to art in schools. It is misguided because the subject does not need this kind of status – it has enough value in other ways – but more than this, because, in an effort to prove art's status as a discipline, far too much has come to be within its remit. The result leads inevitably to superficiality and a shallowness in understanding the nature of art through attempting to cover everything that is associated with it.

Developmental issues in art education

'Sequentiality' in the present context refers to the structuring of learning by teachers so that progress builds upon previously learned skills and concepts. Some educators have maintained that children, if left to their own devices, develop artistically without the need for adult intervention. The notion of non-intervention in a child's artistic development was developed by Franz Cizek, an Austrian educator in the early 19th century, and popularised through the writings of Viola [20]. Cizek encouraged children to express their personal reactions to events in their lives through art and held that all children have creative power and blossom naturally. Because of the lack of a sound pedagogical base, the idea of non-intervention in child art floundered but its legacy lives on amongst those educators who do not want to 'interfere' with children's natural development.

It is clear that children appear to be predisposed towards a certain pattern of development in art. It has been observed that in this pattern there appear to be particular stages, which have been well documented since the late 1880s. Rhoda Kellogg and co-workers [21] devised a scheme where stages of development in art are very roughly associated with ages and can be summarised thus:

Scribble	2-3 years
Shape	2-4 years
Outline	3-4 years
Suns, Radials	3-5 years
People	4-6 years
Almost pictures	5-7 years
Pictures	7 + years

Of course, one needs to be cautious about believing an age-stage correspondence to be accurate. These stages are merely 'averages' – individuals might not always conform to them. More importantly, as work by Wilson [22], for example, shows, environmental and cultural influences are a crucial factor.

Victor Lowenfeld's influential book *Creative and Mental Growth* outlined stages of artistic development that have become virtually enshrined in many art education publications, especially those aimed at teachers working in the primary phase of education [23]. Lowenfeld referred to the main stages of artistic development: the 'scribbling stage', the 'figurative stage' and the 'stage of artistic decision'. These stages are divided into different phases and are outlined below.

'The Scribbling Stage'

The first phase of this stage was identified by Lowenfeld as being the 'uncontrolled' or 'disordered' scribble phase. The very first attempts at graphic expression by young children consist of apparently disorganised broken lines and dots. There appears to be a lack of correlation with visual images. The child's interest seems to lie primarily in handling the materials and in the pure joy of physical movement and there is little coordination of small muscles in this phase. As a result, the child is unable to grasp drawing instruments with fingers, nor is the child able to draw with fine wrist movement, being more likely to grasp the instrument with the whole hand and move the arm from the shoulder. Attention span is often short but intense. Phase two of Lowenfeld's 'Scribbling Stage' he termed the 'Controlled Scribble' – a phase where order is increasingly apparent in the scribble, with concentration on repetition of the same kind of line – usually longitudinal or circular. A great step forward made in this phase is the attainment of a certain amount of motor control. Muscle coordination enables the child to draw continuous lines without the breaks of the previous phase. Of importance also is the fact that the child now realises the connection between physical activity and the marks that can be seen on the paper. The final phase of the scribbling stage is known as the 'Named Scribble' phase. This is when the scribble begins to exhibit a greater variety of direction and shape. In earlier phases physical movement was the prime interest; a change in thinking is indicated when the child names a scribble and begins to relate the marks on

the paper to concepts. The finished scribble may remind the child of an incident, person or object and thus a name or title is given to the work or an attempt to represent these may be made, naming the work before beginning to draw. During this stage it has been observed that there is a change from what is known as 'kinaesthetic thinking' to imaginative pictorial thinking.

Lowenfeld's 'Figurative Stage'

During what is labelled as the 'Early Figurative' or 'pre-schematic' phase of this stage children begin to realise the value of drawing as a unique form of communication and as a means of exploring the visual world. It is an aid to forming concepts about themselves and their environment. It is often suggested that colour use at this stage is emotional rather than logical but, of course, children use their own logic, which might not be accessible to adult observers. The unintelligible scribbles of the previous stage become personal, but recognisable, symbols. Both the child and the observant adult are able to see some resemblance to visual reality. The first recognisable symbol is usually a figure, indicating the child's interest in humans; there is a lot of variability between individuals with regard to the amount of detail employed. Features associated with the 'Middle Figurative' or 'schematic' phase are exhibited by children at many age levels – from pre-school through to secondary school age – but the awareness of the concept of space during this phase is often associated with the age range of seven to nine years in western cultures. Children during this phase form stable concepts of themselves and the world around them, expressed through art as symbols. These remain fairly constant in form, whereas in the previous phase symbols for the same thing could change totally from day to day. Details in the symbols become more complex and show great individuality. Symbols at this phase often show a different sense of proportion when compared with the work of older children (a head might be much bigger than a body or arms longer than legs). Children who are identified as being in the Middle Figurative Stage begin to see the relationship between things in the environment and themselves; this is indicated by the use of the 'base line' – things may stand on the bottom edge of the page or on a drawn line. Where before children saw themselves as the centre of the world, they now see that they stand on the ground. They also see that things can exist independently without necessarily relating to themselves. An interesting point to note is that the sky is often painted as a strip of colour at the top of the page. There might be variations with the base line, such as a double base line, which may be used to represent foreground and background, showing a desire to depict depth. Objects drawn at right angles on either side of a base line may be used to indicate things on two sides of a central point. There is a reluctance to overlap or 'occlude' objects; I say 'reluctance' rather than inability, as it has been demonstrated that children who normally occlude can overlap objects in their

drawings if they consider it important to do so. Other characteristics of this phase include 'X-ray pictures'. A child may wish to express the total concept of a structure that has an outside and an inside. In drawing a house, a wall may be left out to reveal the inside, as both might be considered to be of equal importance. There is often a combination of plan and elevation; in the same picture, some forms are drawn to be looked at from above. The forms that are 'tipped up' may be forms that the child considers important and which are intended to be viewed clearly. A narrative approach to picture making is another characteristic of this phase, with a combination of different time sequences; events that occur at different points of time and continuous sequences of events might be included in the same picture (see Figure 1 below).

At the 'Late Figurative' phase children realise that they are members of society, particularly of their own peer group. For this reason the Late Figurative phase is sometimes called the 'gang age' or the 'age of dawning realism'. The most noticeable feature of this phase is the child's willingness and ability to work in a group, coupled with a desire to act independently of adults. Portrayal

Figure 1: Examples of children's artwork, typical at 'Middle Figurative' stage (see note 24).
1a: *Celebration* by Miki.
1b: *Market Stalls* by Mami.

of the human figure, which in the last phase was a standard symbol composed mainly of geometric shapes, now shows more differentiation, with characteristics such as occupational roles clearly defined. Concentration is focused on details of the body: eyes, ears, nose and so on are included. The concept of space in picture-making undergoes further change, with the base line disappearing. Figures are arranged in space with greater attention to visual realism and there is use of overlapping. In children's work of the Late Figurative phase we might see attempts to depict three-dimensional space, with representation of distant objects being made smaller; the sky is usually filled in to the horizon instead of being a strip of colour at the top of the page.

The 'Stage of Artistic Decision'

This stage in Lowenfeld's descriptions of artistic development usually occurs during early adolescence and is sometimes referred to as the 'pseudorealistic' stage. It occurs at a time of transition from the relatively uninhibited period of childhood to the critical awareness of adulthood; with it comes a concern for the quality of the work produced, with a focus on the end product which takes precedence over the process of art-making. Adolescents are often self-conscious about changes taking place in their bodies and evidence of this concern is frequently seen in their drawings. In most cultures girls often emphasise 'feminine' characteristics, while some boys emphasise 'masculine' ones. Sometimes a feeling of shyness resulting from the growth of self-criticism and/or fear of criticism by peers appears to inhibit spontaneity. The world of fantasy and dreams is said to be a source of interest to both girls and boys and they might have a tendency to be attracted to heroic figures. At this stage cognitive development has reached a point where the child tends to cope more easily with abstract concepts.

Sometimes children at this stage might prefer to create artwork that shows visual realism and might be concerned with how the subject would appear to the eye. At other times they might feel as if they are part of the action going on and portray the subject in an emotional way. Often a child combines the two approaches. It is rare to find a child who is always visually stimulated or always emotionally stimulated but it is considered important to know that such a child might exist. Lowenfeld referred to these two types of learners as 'visual' and 'haptic'. The visual learner, according to Lowenfeld, is one who relates better to tasks that are well defined and concerned with naturalistic representation, while the haptic learner relates more to tasks that involve expression. Below are the characteristics of the two extremes.

The visual child

- draws or paints as if he or she were a spectator at a scene;

- is concerned with light and shade and differences produced in colour by lighting;
- tries to represent three dimensional space;
- concentrates on the whole rather than on details;
- tries to represent colour in a visually realistic way (as it appears to the eye);
- is analytical in approach.

The haptic child

- draws or paints as if directly involved in the action;
- gives space significance only if it is necessary to the expression of emotions and the self;
- concentrates on details;
- uses colour emotionally.

The implications for the art curriculum are clear – that it should cater for both kinds of learner.

I have given a fairly full account of Lowenfeld's work, as his influence on western art education has been enormous. More recent commentators have suggested that early studies in children's artistic development are characterised by their lack of emphasis on cultural and environmental factors [24]. There is also evidence to suggest that young children are more capable of using visual imagery as a mode of communication and expression than previously acknowledged. John Matthews, for example, argues that even the earliest pictorial behaviour is not limited to a simple sensori-motor exploration. His research suggests that early drawings can have deep meaning and demonstrate significant intellectual activity. Matthews also draws attention to the importance of learning contexts in early art activities. He asserts that as learning environments in early education are often dominated by women, there is significant impact of gender-biased practice upon the pictorial expression of both boys and girls.

Research in Australia, such as that reported by Cox [25], notes that cultural influences are important in children's development. This is exemplified by the artwork of the aboriginal Australian Walpiri people. Walpiri school children use and develop both the indigenous and westernised styles of drawing – they are pictorially 'bi-lingual', using traditional conventions as well as incorporating western ones in their drawings. Other developmental features, such as the tendency to resist overlapping during pre-adolescence, remain. Other authorities in the area of children's artistic development, such as Anna Kindler, make the important point that, in moving away from modernism, our conception of what child art is or could be changes. A whole new area opens up, giving, in Kindler's words:

> *opportunities to incorporate in art education realms of pictorial representation that have traditionally remained outside of its boundaries [calling for a] 're-evaluation of our understanding of the notion of artistic development'* [26].

What is apparent is that children's artistic development is a complex process of interaction between children's growing awareness of themselves and their environment. The importance of recognising this is that children who do not receive support, direction and guidance are disadvantaged; development might well occur without adult 'interference' but potential will be unrealised.

Intellectual development and artistic understanding

Several researchers have investigated the relationship between intellectual development and artistic understanding; one of the earliest studies was Elliot Eisner's work on the Stanford Kettering project [27]. The aim of this project was to produce a sequentially structured curriculum that was based on learning in productive, historical and critical aspects of art. This was part of the general move, at least in America, away from an emphasis upon practical studio art towards what was felt to be a more 'balanced' curriculum. As with other developments in general education which have impinged upon art education, much of the theoretical framework for the Stanford project was derived from Bruner [28]. Eisner's work at Stanford University was concerned principally with developing art curricula that related the development of artistic understanding to the learning of concepts and practical skills.

Other researchers in the early seventies were keen to explore the intellectual dimension of art education; Denise Hickey for example, studied intellectual factors in art appreciation through an analysis of the development of 26 critical abilities [29]. She established a matrix of perceptual and cognitive abilities for art criticism based on developmental stages of cognitive growth. Ninety 'elementary and middle school' children from an American urban school were asked to respond to artworks using Edmund Feldman's strategy for art criticism, which is based around the four student activities of Description, Formal Analysis, Interpretation and Evaluation [30]. Hickey equated emphasis on each of these activities with stages of development originally identified by Piaget [31], thus Description was related to critical abilities associated with observation; Formal Analysis was related to concrete operations and Interpretation and Evaluation were related to the development of interpretive and judgemental skills at the stage of formal operations.

A project that has focused more particularly on developmental psychology and its role in art education is Project Zero, based at Harvard Graduate School of Education and overseen by Howard Gardner [32]. Gardner has published extensively in this area [33], investigating the relationship between children's affective and cognitive development in art and stages of intellectual

development. Rosentiel and co-workers from Project Zero [34] used Piaget's theory of developmental stages to consider whether children's critical judgement of artworks followed a developmental sequence. They found that such a sequence could be determined according to the number and appropriateness of criteria for judgement. For example, younger children (at the concrete operational stage) gave limited responses, while older children gave more considered responses, with reference to formal properties of the artworks. However, the study did not attempt to equate specific types of responses to specific levels of development.

It can be seen that the Piagetian stage model has provided a useful starting point for many of these studies but this is not to say that Piaget's findings have been adopted uncritically. Gardner regarded Piaget's tendency to concentrate on logical and rational thinking as narrow and incomplete, stating that Piaget's work shows 'scant consideration of the thought processes used by artists, writers, musicians, athletes . . .' [35]. A particular point of departure from Piaget's stage theory lies in Gardner's notion that children as young as seven (i.e. at a 'pre-formal operations' stage) can be 'participants in the artistic process' at a sophisticated level, claiming that the groupings, groups and operations described by Piaget do not seem essential for mastery of understanding of human language, music, or plastic arts [36].

According to Gardner then, artistic development can occur outside the processes of formal operations. By the age of seven years, children's symbol systems will have become increasingly identified with cultural conventions; in other words, there is a movement from the private to the public domain. Development after this age is said to be a process of refinement, building upon existing skills and understandings. This does not necessarily contradict the findings of Hickey, whose work was concerned with language-based critical development (which could be said to be associated with Bruner's 'Symbolic' phase) rather than with the development of the process of art-making.

Other early studies by Gardner and co-workers have investigated children's responses to artworks from a developmental perspective. Of particular interest here is a study reported by Gardner *et al* that focused on a group of 121 four to sixteen year olds and revealed that children's levels of response to artworks could be correlated with three age bands [37]. The subjects' responses were grouped initially by age of the respondents as well as by the level of maturity reflected in their responses. There was such an overlap between chronological age and what might be termed 'developmental stage' that the two groupings were collapsed together, so 'age' and 'stage' were in effect synonymous. What were termed 'Immature' responses were found, not surprisingly, mainly amongst the 54 four to seven year olds; 'Intermediate' or 'Transitional' responses were generally found amongst the 51 eight to twelve year olds; 'Mature' responses were typically found amongst the 16 fourteen to sixteen year

olds. An open-ended 'clinical' procedure was employed by the researchers, which provided freedom to probe and follow up responses. The interviewees were shown various works of art and asked questions about them, such as 'Where did it come from?' and 'could you make it too?' It is worth noting that the research focused upon verbal rather than pictorial responses.

Typically, the youngest subjects revealed the most basic misconceptions about the nature of art but nevertheless had a certain magic; for example, a reported type of response suggested that paintings simply come into being by rising out of the paper. The middle, 'Transitional' group gave a 'mixture of mature and immature views' but certain characteristics were evident, such as a rather rigidly held view of art as a striving towards realism. Additionally, the subjects' responses to questions were seen to be extremely literal, with no generalised interpretation of the questions asked and giving responses based on the most concrete interpretations. The rigid views of the Transitional group were replaced in the oldest group by a tolerance of diverse artistic judgements, in some cases to the point where almost anything was acceptable as art. Although the oldest respondents appeared to hold a more complex and sophisticated view of art, they were reported to have a view of art-making as a mechanical process that focused upon naturalistic rendering and did not appreciate the relationship between form and content. This calls into question the designation of 'Mature' as applied to the older adolescents. It seems reasonable to assume that between the ages of eleven and sixteen there exists a wider range of understandings of art and art concepts, including more sophisticated notions as to the nature of art, and that the designation 'Mature' would be more appropriately applied to a more sophisticated type of response. My own work in this area (described below) has found that, typically, there are at least three levels of understanding of the concept of art amongst secondary age students [38].

Gardner *et al* reported that artworks were not 'universally' seen as essentially related to aspects of human cognition (rather than, for example, motor skills) until adolescence. In addition, many of the respondents in the fourteen to sixteen years group revealed an appreciation of expressive and personal aspects of art. Amongst the Intermediate group it was reported that one quarter of the subjects held the belief that animals could paint as humans did; those who did not agree with this assertion gave cognitive rather than physical reasons. This is in contrast to the youngest group, where some children apparently believed that the constraining factor was lack of hands or that 'their claws get in the way'; there was little awareness of any intellectual or perceptual skill involved. With respect to formal properties of artwork, there was apparently less evidence of development across age. Regarding the question of when a work is finished, it was reported that 'subjects of the older groups did not reveal appreciably greater sophistication' than younger respondents. There appeared to be a lack of

understanding of aesthetic criteria, as evidenced in the typical response, 'When the canvas is covered'. Very few subjects gave what was considered by the team to be an appropriate response – that a painting is finished when it feels right. The interesting thing for me about this study (apart from the delightfully surreal responses) is that the equating of appreciating with making was implicit in the questioning and therefore gives some insight into the development of intuitive understanding of the making process – something that previous studies had apparently overlooked or considered marginal.

Other researchers associated with Project Zero, such as Dennie Wolf [39], have investigated developmental phases with regard to art. Wolf reported three phases, each with its own distinctive way of inquiring, observing and making. The first phase, from four to seven years of age, is characterised by judgement criteria being based upon rudimentary preferences. Children in this phase can 'decode pictures' and can interpret to some extent but their interpretations are limited by a relative inability to distinguish between pictures and the objects they represent. During Wolf's second phase, from eight to twelve years of age, the effect of conventional education (particularly the learning of visual conventions and culturally-specific rules for image making) brings an intolerance of artworks that break such rules. The third of Wolf's phases is associated with the thirteen to eighteen age range. During this phase, according to Wolf, adolescents become more sensitive to the work of mature artists and can see the relationship between form and content; older adolescents can begin to distinguish between technical and expressive skills and can begin to see the difference between what they like and what is considered by others to be good. It should be emphasised, however, that only those who have received appropriate tuition reach the more sophisticated levels of this third phase.

Michael Parsons, working in the area around Salt Lake City in the USA undertook a long-term study, examining the responses of children and adults to art in light of his understanding of developmental psychology [40]. He formulated a series of five developmental stages that relate to different levels of response to artworks, focusing on four areas. Three of these areas are aspects of artworks: subject matter; emotional expression; and medium, form and style. The fourth area, which was termed by Parsons 'the nature of judgement', became most important at what Parsons termed Level 5 – the highest level. Parsons' five stages can be described briefly:

Stage 1 is characterised by a sensuous response to paintings; where subject matter is discernible, it is responded to according to its associations: 'I like it because of the dog. We've got a dog and its name is Toby' [41]. At this stage paintings are judged on the basis of their association with other experiences and liking a painting is the same as judging it.

Stage 2 is characterised by an emphasis on the importance of representation. Aesthetic judgement is on the basis of the extent to which recognisable things

are realistically depicted; the depiction of beautiful or attractive subject matter makes the painting better: 'You expect something beautiful, like a lady in a boat, or two deer in the mountains' [42].

Stage 3 is characterised by a concern for the expressive and emotional aspects of art, often to the exclusion of other considerations: 'You've got to have a gut feeling for it. It doesn't matter what the critics say about form and technique' [43]. The criteria of originality and depth of feeling are used as yardsticks at Stage 3. Parsons noted that at this stage respondents are sceptical about the possibility of objective judgements about art and about the value of talking about painting.

Stage 4 is characterised by an awareness of painting as a social phenomenon, existing within a historical and cultural tradition. There is a concern for and awareness of style and form and because art is seen as belonging to the public domain, reference is made to the views of others.

Stage 5 is characterised by an ability to reconstruct the meanings associated with artworks through critical appraisal of the values underpinning such meanings. Judgement is seen as an individual responsibility within the framework of social discourse.

We can see from these descriptions of the five stages that there are parallels with Kohlberg's stages of moral development [44]. This is to be expected, as Parsons acknowledges the influence of Kohlberg upon his own theoretical framework. The adoption by Parsons of Kohlberg's work as the model for his developmental theory has been criticised by others in the field, such as Goldsmith and Feldman, who feel that it 'leads to a confusion of moral, social, and cultural forces in the development of aesthetic judgement' [45]. Goldsmith and Feldman state that Kohlberg's theory does not offer a sufficiently broad account of cognitive development, noting that the highest level of moral development is not acquired without 'sustained instructional effort' and is therefore not universally achieved (although the sequence of acquisition is, like other stage theories, universally invariant and inviolate). Their principal criticism of Parsons' work is his omission of any reference to the distinction between universal and non-universal cognitive domains, an area in which Feldman has published extensively [46]. By this Goldsmith and Feldman infer that as not everyone is engaged in art activities, then any development in the artistic domain is going to be non-universal, that is, restricted. This, however, depends upon how broadly one defines 'art-making activities'. Parsons claims that the aesthetic domain (if not the artistic) is universal, at least at the less sophisticated levels of achievement, and that mastery in any domain, including Piaget's stage of Formal Operations, is dependent to a greater or lesser extent upon instruction.

Other criticism concerns Parsons' methodology, in particular his sample of interviewees [47] and his choice of artworks, which consisted of a set of eight

reproductions. Parsons based his stage theory for aesthetic development on interviews of 'over' 300 people of various ages, conducted over a period of 'almost' ten years. Despite the time frame for this investigation, it is not a longitudinal study; each respondent appears to have been interviewed once, the interview consisting of what Parsons refers to as an hour's 'gentle questioning'. I have no problem with this approach as such; of more concern with regard to Parsons' work is the reliance on a narrow set of materials for eliciting responses. The material used consisted of reproductions of western paintings that were produced between 1820 and 1936 (including two by Picasso, painted in the same year). There are several problems associated with the use of this stimulus material: firstly, reproductions of artworks are not artworks and give no indication of actual size (for example, Picasso's *Guernica,* used in the study, is over 25 feet long) nor do they give sufficient indication of the originals' surface qualities. Secondly, the reproductions were all of paintings, and so any conclusions drawn from responses to them would refer only to paintings, not art in general. Thirdly, most of the paintings referred to were well-known and there would therefore be a possibility that responses to them would be 'text-book' type responses. Moreover, their visual power could have been reduced as a result of over-exposure. Fourthly, the eight paintings chosen were limited to a narrow geographical and chronological range, reflecting Parsons' apparent bias towards expressive work, or more accurately, done in the expressionist school of aesthetics. This last point is particularly important because it relates to Parsons' overall view of the nature of art and therefore to his theory about 'how we understand art'. The importance attributed to expression and emotion in Parsons' framework is likely to be due to the choice of paintings used as stimuli, seven of which are clearly emotionally charged; crucially, the influence of the art schooling received by the interviewees cannot be discounted.

David Pariser, in reviewing Parsons' work, refers extensively to the Doctoral research of Housen as an example of research which is concerned with sequential developmental in art; however Housen's work remains, to the best of my knowledge, unpublished and any comment here is based on Pariser's account [48]. Housen investigated the development of artistic understanding in adolescents and adults by analysing 'stream of consciousness' verbal responses to a set of reproductions. Her work is apparently methodologically 'tighter' than Parsons', avoiding Parsons' 'gentle probing' and allowing her subjects to speak at length without intervention, thus eliciting responses which can be seen to be authentic and untarnished by implicit expectations on the part of the interviewer. I have adopted this approach when asking people about their artwork and it appears to be a useful way of obtaining, with some degree of veracity, this kind of information; however, my criticism of the use of reproductions in research of this kind remains.

There is a degree of consensus between Parsons' and Housen's stage theories; they both put forward the notion that there is a decline in egocentric responses and an increase in more reflective, socialised activities. The stages are loosely related to age but Housen suggests that there are four stages between the ages of fifteen and fifty-five, while Parsons found evidence for only two. As these two researchers examined different age spreads (from different sample sizes), it is possible that they were describing the same phenomenon but that it occurred differently in the two populations. Housen claimed that most children under the age of fifteen are at Stage 1 – the 'accountive' stage, where the respondent is concerned principally with the content of a painting. To have only one stage of development of artistic understanding from the pre-school phase through to middle adolescence seems unlikely; to suggest this on the basis of not looking at that age span would appear to invalidate the claim.

Nevertheless, the principal concerns of all of these developmental researchers is that artistic stages do exist (although they might be determined by environmental factors) and that in order to achieve the higher levels of aesthetic and artistic development, teaching is necessary. As can be seen in Table 1, which gives an overview of the work of Parsons (1987), with reference to Lowenfeld (1970), Housen (1983) and Gardner *et al* (1975), progression through the stages is characterised by a decline in egocentrism and an increase in more reflective socialised activities. It should be noted that this table, which describes stages in artistic development, refers to 'principal concerns' of individuals with regard to their engagement with art objects, not with art-making.

Table 1:
Stages in artistic development: an overview, with reference to Parsons' stages

Stage 1: Favouritism	
Lowenfeld:	'Scribbling Stage' (ages 2-4)
	'Early Figurative' or 'pre-schematic' (ages 4-7)
Gardner:	'Immature' (ages 4-7)
Housen:	'Accountive' (from pre-school up to age 15)
Stage 2: Beauty and realism	
Lowenfeld:	'Middle to Late Figurative' or 'schematic stage' (ages 7-9)
	'The Stage of Dawning Realism' (ages 9-11)
	'The Pseudo-Naturalistic Stage' (ages 11-13)
Gardner:	'Intermediate' (ages 8-12) – rigidity, concern for realism
Housen:	'Constructive' phase (later adolescence) – viewer constructs a framework for understanding art)
Stage 3: Expressiveness	
Lowenfeld:	'The crisis of adolescence' (ages 3-17)
Gardner:	'Mature' (ages 4-16) – extreme tolerance
Housen:	Development of intellectual understanding*
Stage 4: Style and form	
Housen:	Emotional content* (later adolescence/adulthood)
Stage 5: Autonomy/reconstruction of meaning	
Housen:	'Re-creative', viewer can reflect upon reflections (mature).

NB: Lowenfeld's stages refer more particularly to children's development in art-making, while Parsons' stages refer to principal concerns in terms of general engagement with artworks.

* Parsons' Stage 3 (concern with expressiveness) precedes a greater concern for intellectual understanding, whereas the reverse is the case with Housen's stage theory. However, in all stage theories, the sequences are considered to be invariant – stages are not jumped, and *higher stages are not achieved without instruction*.

In my own research work [49] I investigated the artwork and attitudes to art of early adolescents and found a range of different understandings about the nature of art. In this study I argued that the concept 'art' can be understood at different levels and that the principal tasks of art educators are to build upon students' personal conceptions of art and to facilitate a development towards a broader and more abstract 'public' concept of art. I further argued that by ascertaining levels of abstractness and degrees of complexity intrinsic to the concept of art, it would be possible, through an analysis of students' responses to artwork, to identify levels of students' understanding and teach in ways that initiate individuals into a higher level of understanding. The specific aspect of the research described here is concerned with fieldwork that sought to validate theoretical levels identified as a result of conceptual analysis. This analysis yielded four levels which indicate theoretical levels of difficulty. It was assumed that difficulty is related to abstractness, as abstract concepts are said to be acquired at later stages of cognitive development; difficulty is, in my view, also related (although to a lesser extent) to complexity. The designations 'Level 1', 'Level 2', 'Level 3', etc. are used for clarity and are not meant to imply that there may be fixed, static, quantifiable differences between the levels; the system for coding is outlined at Appendix I. The four levels found were:

Level 1: The concept 'art' might be used in a restricted and particular way, as in 'art is what we do in school'. The concept of art at this level would tend to be classificatory and may be dependent upon a limited media based view (e.g. 'Art is painting and drawing'). An individual operating at this level of understanding may have little awareness of the relationship between art done in school to the 'real art' of the art world; a school student could have a concept of art that is relevant to the context of art in the classroom but this may not be transferable to art in art galleries.

Level 2: At this level the concept of art might still be classificatory but will be broader, referring to a more extensive range of media (e.g. 'painting and drawing, sculpture, printing, etc.'). In addition, there may be a limited 'concept based' view (e.g. the concept of art might be limited to a single viewpoint such as 'Art is self-expression' or 'Art is creativity'). At this level there may be a need for a broader understanding of the nature of art so as not to be negatively disposed to art forms that do not conform to a particular view.

Level 3: This level is termed 'extended concept based'. It is suggested that there may be an awareness of art as a qualitative concept, concerned with the (skilful) arrangement of visual elements according to principles of organisation, to achieve meaningful (expressive, didactic, beautiful or 'significant') form.

Level 4: This higher, more abstract, level refers to the notion of art in what is known as its 'intensive' and 'extensive' forms. An individual operating at this level of understanding would be able to synthesise theories of art and formulate new ones.

In order to validate these theoretical levels of difficulty, a fieldwork study was undertaken. The respondents involved in the fieldwork were a group of nearly one hundred school pupils with an age range of eleven to fourteen years – an age group that was not examined in detail in many of the studies cited above. Three discrete levels were identified in school students' understanding of the concept art. There was, as one might expect, an indication that older students tended to be coded at the higher levels. Level 1 type responses were termed 'restricted media based' and tended to refer to school art, as in the following written response from a 12 year old boy:

> *I think art is a time to think about colour and what sorts of colour you would need for curtain [probably 'certain'] things . . . You also get a chance to draw/make what you want.*

Other responses at this level tended to restrict art to certain materials:

> *[art] is about drawing painting colours and most important is the shading because if the shadings are not right then the picture will not look right.*
> (12-year-old girl)

This type of response can be contrasted with the 'extended media based' responses at Level 2.

In general, the more naive responses to the stimulus artworks tended to be statements of like or dislike or simple affective responses such as, 'It looks very nice'. However some of the more sophisticated responses were affective in nature, in that they were personal and expressive reactions to the artworks, sometimes using poetic or metaphorical language. These did not fit easily into the categories of response that were formulated to analyse them and points to a need for a less mechanistic approach to art criticism, concentrating on the affective and reflective types of response which often characterise meaningful dialogue with art.

Most of the responses to the artworks shown were designated 'Level 2' according to the coding system employed. This indicated an understanding of the concept of art that is broader than the restricted media based responses that characterise Level 1. Additionally, Level 2 responses were characterised by references to expression and feeling; this ties in with Parsons' description of

Stage 3, at which level such things as creativity, originality and expression are appreciated. There is also a tendency at this level to define art in very broad terms, saying, 'Art is anything you want it to be'. This echoes the findings of Gardner *et al*, who referred to the extreme views that often characterised children's ideas about art in what they termed the 'Transitional phase'. Extracts of typical Level 2 written responses are given below.

14 year old boy:

It can be made out of anything, look like anything and still be considered as art. You can draw and make art at any age. Art can still be called art even if it is the worst picture you have ever drawn.

13 year old girl:

Art is a way of expressing ideas and opinions, creating something which other people can understand and interpret.

12 year old boy:

You don't have to be an artist to be able to do art. You can do a couple of scribbles and colour it in a weird way you can call that art.

13 year old girl:

Art for me is to do more with drawing and mixing colours it is just like a form of expression and a different way to express our filings [sic].

11 year old boy:

Art is drawing and painting and models and there is forms like music. Art is different forms of drawing . . . 3-D painting movies animation.

Although many responses referred to the affective or emotional and expressive elements of art as being fundamental, some also referred to its cognitive aspects; even some of the most basic responses indicated that art could be about 'what people are thinking about' (12 year old boy). Level 3 responses were termed 'extended concept based'. They referred to both cognitive and affective aspects of art and many such responses referred to the different uses of art as well as the range of forms it can take:

Art is a mixture of things, it can mean drawing and painting and imagining things and life things. It can also mean sculpting and a lot of good pieces of artwork have been drawn from your own imagination. There are a lot of different implements you can use – paint pencils, paper, clay sand etc. A lot of artwork portrays someone's mind or feelings and it can also tell a story.
(14 year old girl)

Definitions of art given above referred to a range of concepts associated with it, such as expression and creativity. The majority of the responses referred to art in terms of media employed and to the formal, observable properties of art; the next largest group referred principally to art as a vehicle for expressing feelings, while a smaller number (about 10%) felt that art was essentially concerned with creativity and imagination, while others referred to art only in terms of representation and image making. Surprisingly, there were no references to skill or to beauty.

This study provided some evidence to suggest that three definable stages of development with regard to the understanding of the concept of art can be found amongst English-speaking English school students in the eleven to fourteen age range. There were no responses which were designated 'Level 4', (that is being able to synthesise theories of art and formulate new ones) but this does not mean that adolescent school students are unable to operate at this level. There was a clear indication that levels of understanding of the concept of art are associated with school year, with older students in general performing at higher levels. Although there was no firm evidence to link teacher input with the levels of students' responses, the responses can be seen to give some insight into the influence of school activities upon students' understandings of the nature of art.

It is important here to reassert that the relevant literature seems to indicate that development of artistic understanding is related to general maturation but is dependent upon environmental factors. At the more sophisticated levels, instruction is essential; therefore the role of the teacher is crucial and schools have a central role to play. Much of the recent research into artistic development has focused on understanding art, gaining data from analysing responses to art objects rather than from people reflecting upon their own making. This is in keeping with the notion that everyone is a consumer of art but not everyone is an artist. However, I would argue that while not everyone is an artist (in the same way that not everyone is a critic or an art historian), in general everyone is capable of producing objects of aesthetic significance, some of which might be called art. More importantly, everyone has the desire to create for aesthetic pleasure, whether it be a cake, a garden or a pleasing arrangement of a beer-mat collection. There is a need for more research on the development of art skills and understandings in later life, bearing in mind that although stages are loosely correlated with ages, there is no reason why a young person cannot attain the highest levels of skill and understanding given the right environment. What such an environment might be is another area that demands research; I contend that it is unlikely to be the repressive and authoritarian ethos that characterises many schools.

Learning in art

Many commentators, including those involved in writing the English National Curriculum requirements, refer to the need for subject areas in the school curriculum, including art, to be concerned with developing knowledge, understanding and skills. There is an implicit expectation that at the end of a course of instruction, learners will know, understand and/or be able to do something that they were unable to prior to the lesson or series of lessons. This sounds like common sense but the terminology, in a similar way to the use of the word 'effective' when discussing schools achievement, is more at home in the factory or military barracks. Words like 'fun', 'joy', 'awe' or any positive affectation are ill-suited to the language of those who could be called 'effective curriculum delivery officers'. It is nevertheless incumbent upon adults, preferably trained experts in their field, to help young people to become familiar with the range of human accomplishments and to encourage learning at a deeper level than would be acquired simply through maturation. In art we are concerned with the acquisition of skills involved in such things as rendering, constructing and sculpting; we are also concerned with the development of understanding and the acquisition of subject-related knowledge. Of these, I suggest that skill acquisition should be our priority in the first years of schooling up until about the age of fourteen, with the focus for teaching being on 'threshold skills'.

The notion of 'threshold skills' is perhaps best illustrated by using an analogy of a frog at the foot of a flight of steps:

> *The frog wants to get to a juicy fly at the top of the steps, which are each ten centimetres high. The frog can only jump nine centimetres and so never gets even to the first step. After tuition in jumping technique and practice, the frog manages to jump the extra centimetre and can therefore leap all the way up to the juicy fly.*

An alternative approach might be to teach the frog to use its long sticky tongue and capture the juicy fly without having to jump at all – this could be seen as analogous to an intuitive leap in understanding as opposed to gradual step-by-step progress. Either way, the objective is to get the juicy fly, a concrete and easily discernable goal. For the teacher, having a clearly defined objective is a relatively easy way to organise learning activity and is appropriate for certain kinds of learning. It is relatively easy because skills-based activities such as throwing a pot are concerned with concrete concepts with clear perceptible outcomes: 'by the end of the lesson each pupil will have centred half a kilo of stoneware clay on the wheel and will have produced a hollow form twenty centimetres high'.

This kind of approach is appropriate and probably desirable for some kinds of activities, especially ones such as learning to weld or solder when there might be a safety element to consider and where a very particular skill is being sought. It becomes counterproductive when it is used for other kinds of skill or concept acquisition, such as colour theory. Teaching colour theory has a certain attraction for many art teachers probably because, like linear perspective, it contains rules and expected outcomes, it is concrete and is a (more or less) fixed body of knowledge. However, the potential for dead and deadening lessons is enormous. That perennial favourite, the colour wheel, exemplifies the kind of tedium to which I refer: 'By the end of the lesson pupils will know the terms primary, secondary and tertiary colours and will be able to mix them accurately using powder paint and brush.' Firstly, the pupils probably already know, intuitively if not consciously, about colour mixing; secondly, the colours will often not do what is expected – most ending up various kinds of brown; thirdly, they are being introduced to ambiguous concepts that conflict with what they will already have learned in science. This example is not a straw man – set up to be knocked down – it is one I have seen on literally hundreds of occasions. The most depressing thing, however, is the lost opportunity for teaching something really interesting and stimulating that involves colour and is relevant to the lives of young people. In terms of aims for art education, I would find it quite difficult to locate the place of painting a colour wheel and even harder to justify the time spent on the activity when there are so many other exciting, relevant and meaningful things to do. The little knowledge acquired, and the low level skills expected, could be picked up at each learner's own pace, almost as a by-product of a more stimulating activity involving colour. As young people progress in their skills and knowledge of art, the development of understanding becomes more important. This inevitably involves the teaching and learning of concepts. The following section reviews the nature of concept learning with particular reference to art and seeks to clarify some of the issues surrounding the learning of concepts.

Concepts and art learning

It could be said that owing to its over-use in everyday language, the term 'concept' has caused difficulties for those who need a clear working definition. Whatever the cause, the term is often seen as being rather vague. Many researchers over the years have arrived at helpful definitions, some of these are summarised below. Bruner, Goodnow and Austin [50] gave an overview of what are perhaps the major characteristics of concepts, referring to them as having the following uses:

- they reduce the complexity of the environment
- they reduce the necessity for constant learning

- they provide a direction for activity
- they are essential for effective communication

These characteristics indicate what concepts do and thereby help build up a picture of what they are. A general insight into the nature of concepts is provided by Peel [51]. He stated that there are three parts to a concept: the intensive, the extensive and the name. The intensive aspect refers to ideas with some general property; using the concept 'art' as an example, the intensive aspect would refer to the criteria that need to be met (such as expressiveness) in order for something to be termed art. The extensive aspect would be all the examples of art that are known to exist, such as individual paintings, sculptures and so on. The name of the concept is the word or label that identifies or symbolises the concept, in the present case, the word art. Klausmeier, Ghataler and Frayer drew attention to the fact that the term 'concept' is used to refer to both individuals' personal mental constructs as well as to public entities and they gave a definition that is general enough to cover both uses:

> *Ordered information about the properties of one or more things, events, processes, that enables any particular thing or class of things to be differentiated from and also related to other things or classes of things* [52].

Central to this definition is the notion that concepts are units of information that have a particular relationship with other units of information. Schaefer [53] referred to the 'logic core' of concepts, which he defined as being the constant pattern of properties of a class of things or events; the concept name is associated with this logic core and serves as a vehicle for communication between individuals. A further aspect of concepts according to Schaefer is the 'associative framework'; this differs from the notion of the extensive aspect of concepts in that it is unique to each individual; it is a network of associations surrounding the logic core and is additional to the concept name.

Another distinction between concepts can be made in terms of levels. For the present purpose these levels can be called primary concepts (such as 'red'), which are taken from direct experience and classified; secondary concepts (such as 'colour'), which develop as a result of being abstracted and classified from other concepts; and tertiary concepts (such as 'art'), which are abstracted and classified from secondary level concepts. These distinctions are often referred to as 'higher order' and 'lower order' levels. It is important to note that the concept name can remain the same while the concept itself can be understood at differing levels of abstractness and complexity. To continue with the example of art, an eleven year old will probably have some understanding of art which would be functionally sufficient for that child's educational needs but the same level of understanding would be inadequate for the needs of a

professional artist, yet the concept name 'art' could be applied to both. Some concepts may be seen to be intrinsically more difficult to grasp than others, due mainly to their levels of abstractness and complexity: an abstract concept such as 'Aesthetic', for which there are no obvious perceptible instances, is likely to be more difficult than a concept such as 'Collage', which has a clear concrete referent. A distinction needs to be made here between two uses of the term 'abstract': one use refers to the idea of 'drawing away' while the other refers to the essence or idea of an object or event.

The factor of complexity could be said to be related to the hierarchical nature of concepts, that is, the extent to which the understanding of a concept is dependent upon the understanding of more basic, lower order concepts. This is sometimes referred to as 'level of dependence'. An understanding of a complex concept (that is, one made up of many elements) such as 'Colour' as an abstraction would therefore be dependent upon the ability to identify individual colours. However, the process of abstraction is not simply a case of moving from the particular to the general; it is possible that the general is already tacitly known and is intuitively perceived within the particular. This notion is based on the view that it is not possible to perceive an object in isolation from other phenomena and that one is tacitly aware of potentialities surrounding and emanating from the object. Bolton [54] refers in this context to the 'predictive nature of concepts' and argues that the abstracted general form of a concept is not the end result of a linear process but that 'generality is implicit in the experience of what we call the particular' (p. 16). It is likely that concepts and concept names are acquired according to what is known as their 'level of utility' [55]; 'Red', for example, would be acquired before both the more specific 'Carmine' and the more general 'Hue'.

Different worldviews embrace different conceptions of the nature of concepts. Bolton, in his later work, takes a phenomenological stand in his criticism of cognitivism, asserting that it is a fundamental mistake to treat mental phenomena as abstractions [56]. This is because by doing so one fails to take account of the individual social contexts from which the mental phenomena develop. Gilbert and Watts [57] note two underlying approaches to understanding the nature of concepts, referring to them as 'erklaren' and 'verstehen'. These two approaches and their associated ways of operating have polarised into what can be termed the scientific/quantitative/experimental paradigm and the artistic/qualitative/naturalistic paradigm. The scientific paradigm is concerned primarily with clarifying concepts through explanation – the 'erklaren' tradition – while the artistic paradigm is primarily concerned with understanding – the 'verstehen' tradition. These two worldviews are associated with differing conceptions of the nature of concepts: the traditional scientific view that concepts are static, finite, definable and public, and what we might call the 'artistic' view that concepts are not easily definable because they are

dynamic, developing phenomena, existing only in the personal domain. Gilbert and Watts refer to three approaches to the concept of concept, which are related to the two paradigms: the 'classical', the 'actional' and the 'relational'. The classical view holds that all instances of a concept have properties in common and that these properties are necessary and sufficient to define the concept. Gilbert and Watts object to this notion on the grounds that, amongst other things, it 'bears little resemblance to the rather messy actuality' of everyday life (p. 65). The classical view is also characterised by the notion that knowledge is made up of units of cognition and organised in the mind in static hierarchical layers, so that progress is dependent upon previously mastered units. The actional view contrasts with this and sees concepts as being dynamic and fluid, continuously reconstructing in the light of new experiences. A researcher operating within the artistic paradigm will tend to be concerned with individuals' personal conceptions rather than with universals. The third approach mentioned by Gilbert and Watts refers to the 'relational' view of concepts and is constructed from aspects of both the classical and the actional views. The relational approach emphasises the importance of the relational organisation of a concept, that is, its status relative to other concepts in a conceptual network, in addition to it having definable characteristics. This approach is implicit in Schaefer's view described above.

The move away from the 'child as artist' model for art education, with its emphasis on expression and creativity, towards an approach that emphasises the more cerebral aspects of art, necessitates clearly-defined goals that are related to bodies of knowledge. Bodies of knowledge, such as those in the areas of art history and art criticism, for example, are in the public domain. Art in the lives of young people is more concerned with personal constructs of knowledge and with self- identity – there are no generally accepted 'bodies of knowledge' in art that are necessary for young people to acquire. When attempts are made to identify what young people need to know in the arts the results are disputable, if not controversial. There needs to be a balance between subject-centred and learner-centred approaches to learning in art, with the emphasis on the former in the earlier years, moving towards a focus on the subject after basic skills and concepts have been acquired at the learner's own rate of individual development.

Where the learning of a particular area of knowledge in art is felt to be a necessary or worthy endeavour, it is not simply a matter of exposure – people need to be taught. Research has shown that the learning of abstract concepts in art is made easier by the use of visual support; because of the nature of the subject, such support can be readily drawn upon to facilitate learning. Contextual support, in the form of, for example, paintings or sculptures, would enable the learning of art concepts at sophisticated (i.e. more abstract) levels. Koroskik, Short, Stravopoulos and Fortin [58] conducted research based on

showing a reproduction of Marc Chagall's painting *The Birthday* to 120 undergraduate students, together with different supporting art contexts, to find the effects of contexts and verbal cues on students' levels of response to the painting. The 'supporting contexts' consisted of comparative conditions in which the key artwork was shown: with other paintings by the same artist; with paintings depicting the same theme; with works in other art forms (a dance, a lithograph and a poem). A second independent variable was introduced that consisted of verbal cues being given/not given which related the key artwork to its comparative context. They found that greater understanding of artworks amongst pupils could be facilitated by showing comparative art contexts, accompanied by explicit verbal cues about the artworks' shared characteristics. Further to this, it was extrapolated from their findings that it is wise to base art comparisons on key ideas that have some relationship to students' existing knowledge; this is likely to involve the transference of concepts learnt elsewhere to a new (art) context, thus expanding the students' understanding of those concepts.

Learning in art is much the same as learning in other areas of human endeavour but art can offer something special. This 'something special' has been examined by David Perkins, working alongside people such as Howard Gardner at Harvard Project Zero [see note 32]. Perkins, in *The Intelligent Eye* [59] referred to three different kinds of intelligence: neural intelligence, which is associated with the inherited mechanics of the brain and its networks; experiential intelligence, which is derived from learning; and reflective intelligence, which is concerned with the ability to stand back and make sense of learnt information. If we use a combination of experiential and reflective intelligence, we can then make creative connections in an artwork and this helps us to develop our thinking skills in a more general way. Art objects are particularly suited to this approach for a number of reasons. Perkins cites six:

1) Sensory anchoring: artworks provide an anchor for attention over an extended period of exploration.

2) Instant access: You can check something with a quick glance or you can point to it in the artwork; the picture is here and now.

3) Personal engagement: works of art beckon you to become involved with them – we are rarely neutral.

4) Dispositional atmosphere: art can provide a context that facilitates or cultivates a range of positive thinking dispositions.

5) Wide-spectrum cognition: through thoughtful looking at art, we can use many

different styles of cognition, including analytical thinking, visual processing and testing hypotheses.

And finally

6) Multi-connectedness: Perkins asserts that a typical feature of artworks is that they allow us to make connections between a great variety of things, which can include 'social themes, philosophical conundrums, features of formal structure, personal anxieties and insights and historical patterns'.

Perkins goes on to say that interacting with art can help develop a particular kind of intelligence, specifically reflective intelligence, described as 'a control system' for experiential intelligence [60]. The important point in all of this is that we need to give time for reflection and for thoughtful and organised looking, which, to use Perkins' words, should be 'broad and adventurous' and 'clear and deep'.

There is great potential for art to contribute to the wider school curriculum – not only to basic skills of reading, writing, listening, measuring and use of information technology but in a significant way to thinking skills. According to developmental psychology, learning occurs naturally, in stages but, as noted earlier in this section, the higher stages cannot be reached without structured teaching [61]. Art teachers can provide an environment that facilitates 'natural' learning but, again, this is not enough. In addition we need to direct, guide and instruct in a focused way, a way that focuses on both the learner and that which is to be learnt. We all learn by building upon our existing conceptual framework. To make art understandable and meaningful to pupils, it makes sense to teach through building upon pupils' initial affective reactions to it. Like a great work of art, classrooms and therefore art classrooms are complex and multi-layered; it is up to the art teacher to ensure that the layers are meaningful and the activities that take place are worthwhile with due regard for reflection – giving pupils space and time to reflect as well as to research.

Among educators who have made contributions to the debate on the relationship between the art curriculum and artistic development is Ralph Smith. Smith (who has been, among other things, the long-time editor of the *Journal of Aesthetic Education*) represents to many the reactionary face of art education. He has often been considered to be guilty 'in popular parlance, of politically incorrect thinking, or, worst of all, of being a conservative' [62] but he has stoutly defended his position as a radical liberal with a propensity for valuing 'excellence'. How such 'excellence' is to be determined is another matter. In Smith's view, there is no place for political labelling when it comes to scholarship and learning but it must be said that all thinking has to be grounded within a cultural and, by extension, political milieu. Post-modernism has, rightly, drawn attention to the dangers of various other 'isms' that beset western

thinking: ethnocentrism as well as elitism and its bed-fellows sexism and racism. Smith asserts that art is 'a special kind of human accomplishment that is expressive of indispensable human values' [63] and proposed a curriculum based on teaching art as a humanity. Smith's proposed curriculum consists of five stages of aesthetic learning that he claims to be appropriate for today's world. The proposed phases are developmental and can be compared with Michael Parsons' stages described above.

Table 2 shows Smith's and Parsons' stages together with a suggested practical focus for each stage [64]. The five stages represented are not, strictly speaking, age related; they cover the entire range from early years through to old age. An individual could be at any stage at any age but will have progressed through the earlier stages. Smith's first stage is 'exposure and familiarisation', which is put alongside Parsons' Stage 1 'sensuous responses'. During this early phase, people (usually young children) are introduced to the notion of visual form and become familiar with the idea that such things as paintings and other art forms exist and that they are created by people. Responses to these are affective rather than cognitive. Throughout this initial phase, media and materials are introduced and psychomotor skills are developed. 'Threshold skills' could include grasping a crayon and making a mark in a deliberate way and responding to that mark by making further marks that have some relation to it. They could also include, at later phases, learning how to gouge into or build up a surface for the purposes of making a relief print, mix paint to achieve a particular shade or solder together wire to form an armature.

During Stage 2 individuals look carefully at things and begin to make connections between phenomena. In Parsons' scheme there is a concern for beauty and realism, although, as anyone who has observed young boys draw can confirm, beauty is not always a primary consideration; arresting imagery that catches attention is a more accurate description of the concerns at this phase. There is certainly a desire for accurate representation and this is addressed through teaching that focuses upon looking carefully and which consolidates and builds upon the practical skills acquired in earlier phases.

During Stage 3 Smith highlights historical awareness. Individuals at this stage can readily acquire an understanding of historical time and a synchronic knowledge of art forms. Parsons' Stage Three has the focus on expression – individuals tend to be drawn to the expressive qualities of art. It follows, then, that practical work will similarly be concerned with developing skills in, for example, painting and drawing, with a concern for self-expression and a need to establish identity. Earlier concerns for verisimilitude give way to a tendency to favour expressive and emotional impact. People at this stage are more open to the full range of media and materials available for art-making.

By Stage 4 examples of different kinds of art objects from different times and places can be fully appreciated in terms of their social and cultural context.

Individuals are now in a better position to refine their own practical work in the light of others' artwork. A return to a concern for skill and proficiency in the use of media is evident. The final stage, which is normally attained only by those who have specialised in the subject (and have therefore been taught), is one where the individual can synthesise earlier knowledge and understanding of art forms. An informed personal view of the nature of art is developed and this is reflected in individuals' creative practical output; a personal style is constructed. The four levels identified in Section One can be located across the five stages, with Level 1 (a 'restricted' understanding of art) occurring in the later phases of Stage 1 and Level 2 (having the ability to synthesise theories of art and formulate new ones) occurring in the earlier phase of Stage 5.

Table 2: A developmental model for art learning

Smith's stages of aesthetic learning	Parsons' stages	Possible practical focus
exposure and familiarisation	Stage one: sensuous responses	Threshold skills
perceptual scrutiny	Stage two: representation	Perceptual training, using a range of media
historical awareness	Stage three: expression	Exploration of expressive use of media; identity
exemplar appreciation	Stage four: social and cultural awareness	Refining skills in the light of others' work
building a philosophy of art	Stage five: reconstruction	Development of personal style

NB: this is not a framework for the school curriculum. In general, it refers to stages of development from pre-school to maturity and old age but in any individual the final stages could be attained at any time after adolescence, given the appropriate environmental influences.

Aims, rationales and desirable outcomes

In order to consider what the nature of art in schools is, could be or should be, we need to examine why it is thought to be of value in the curriculum in the first place. Commentators on the role of art in education have considered many aspects of the subject and have come up with various strategies for course design, desirable outcomes and justifications for the inclusion of art in the school curriculum. The purpose of this section is to help clarify some of these issues. Put simply, aims, stated as desirable outcomes, and goals for art education come under the heading of *what* we are hoping to achieve. Rationales examine the principles underpinning the aims and explain *why* the aims are considered to be of value; they are concerned with justifying the aims. We could, for example, say that a desirable aim for art education is to promote creativity but a rationale would attempt to explain, from a philosophical perspective perhaps, why creativity is desirable.

First I will outline the nature of art in education as it has developed in many industrialised countries. Arthur Efland, in his important overview of the history of art education [65], identified what he termed three 'streams of influence' that underpinned its development: expressionist, scientific rationalist and reconstructivist.

Art educators adopting an expressionist approach are concerned fundamentally with individual growth, with facilitating creative expression and giving opportunities for exercising the imagination. Related to this are ideas associated with 'art for art's sake', and the notion that participating in art-making activities is intrinsically a good thing. Art activities derived from the expressionist philosophy are often seen as a kind of therapy, perhaps giving a respite from the rigours of what are often perceived as more academic subjects.

The scientific rationalists claim that art education is itself a distinct discipline with its own methods for conducting inquiry and forming judgements. Several commentators, such as Louis Arnaud Reid, have put forward the view that art is, or facilitates, a particular way of knowing [66]. The philosophical basis for this is supported by, for example, the work of Nelson Goodman. Goodman asserted that images are an integral aspect of cognition; the arts are said to provide an alternative (or complementary) symbol system. In addition to eminent philosophers identifying the visual arts as essentially cognitive, Rudolph Arnheim, in outlining his thoughts on learning from a psychological perspective, identified 'visual training' as one of three central areas, alongside philosophy and language training. Visual training, he asserted, is an area where students learn to handle visual phenomena as an important means of dealing with the organisation of thought [67].

The reconstructivists see art as a means to an end, as a tool for social change, rather than an end in itself. This can take many forms but is associated in recent times with art educators who are concerned with the promotion of 'visual

culture' and a radical reappraisal of the whole concept of art and its contexts. John Steers, General Secretary for many years of the National Society for Art and Design Education (NSEAD), notes that

> *those who espouse art education as an important vehicle for multicultural and anti-racist education are an example of the more socially-critical reconstructivists* [68].

These three streams can be seen as relating to three academic disciplines – the psychological, the epistemological and the sociological. Of these, 'expressionist' was the dominant theory associated with the non-interventionist teaching of the post-war years. Since that time the prevailing orthodoxy has tended to reflect the concerns of modernism, with a mix of formalist and expressionist approaches dominating classroom practice, at least until relatively recent times. The three streams cover the range of approaches to art in education that have developed over the decades. There is some overlap between them and it is rare to find practice that is solely within one camp. However, at their fundamental level, reconstructivist and expressionist approaches are probably mutually exclusive. Herbert Read is an interesting figure in this respect (and in many others). He has often been associated with a child-centred expressive approach to art education but in truth he was much more concerned with art as a social tool. He has influenced generations of art teachers through his passionate belief in what we might call 'the civilising effects' of art, encapsulated in the following from *Education Through Art*:

> *The lack of spontaneity in education and in social organisation is due to that disintegration of the personality that has been the total result of economic, industrial and cultural developments since the Renaissance* [69].

This quotation reveals Read's concern not so much with the psychological dimension as with the sociological; he was in fact a pioneer in advocating the socio-cultural dimension of art in education. Although Read's writing appears to emphasise feeling and expression, his focus went beyond this, being concerned with making society more civil by fostering 'the organic unit of society, the citizen' [70]. Read's vision of art education did not include the advocacy of art for art's sake; he asserted that aesthetic education is fundamental to general education in nurturing individual growth. After World War II this idea of what became known as 'creative growth' was taken up by Read's contemporary Viktor Lowenfeld in *Creative and Mental Growth* (described above). It is instructive to re-examine some of these earlier rationales for art in education, which in reality emphasised not free individual expression so much as the value of art as a civilising instrument. Its value,

though, was not seen in terms of the civilising effects of exposure to great art but in the potential it offered for emotional and intellectual growth through active engagement in making art.

The art education programmes of many countries have grown out of modernism and are based largely upon concepts derived from expressionist and formalist theories of art. In some countries, however, traditional art practice and its attendant culture has formed the underlying principles for art programmes. Many government documents concerning the role of art in education refer to 'imagination', 'creativity' and 'expression', even in those countries where traditional art activities have not prioritised such concerns. However, other concerns are given a high priority, such as the identification of cultural values and attitudes and developing an understanding of the relationship of the arts to the political and economic environment of society and how political and economic considerations influence arts practice in addition to understanding how the arts transmit and reflect social and cultural values [71]. It is clear that some cultures and political systems value social cohesion over individual fulfilment. This contrasts with apparently similar lists of aims put forward elsewhere, particularly in America, where individual expression and consumer education figure prominently [72].

Art as a way of knowing

Arthur Efland has elsewhere, in his book *Art and Cognition,* made a convincing case for learning through art and the value of interacting with art in a cross-disciplinary way [73]. Efland's is one of several relatively recent publications which have argued the case for a more cerebral account of art and its role in education; others include Dorn's book of 1999 and Eisner's of 2002 [74]. Dorn's book looks at the role of cognition in art learning and suggests some useful strategies for the classroom which underline the notion that art-making is an 'intelligent' activity. Eisner also challenges the supposition that the arts are in some way intellectually undemanding, arguing that some of the most complex and subtle forms of thinking occur when one is engaged in art-making and appreciating. Each of these publications is a product in part of the American public education system which, to an extent greater than that in the UK, creates an environment where art needs to defend itself in terms of public utility – giving rise perhaps to an instrumental view of art education, where the subject is expected to defend itself in terms of its contribution to 'higher' thinking skills. Efland presents a view of art in education that emphasises the intellectual status of art and challenges what he sees as the persistent perception of art as being 'emotive'. We can look to Efland to give us a sound overview of trends in art education and the historical basis for them. For example, in discussing Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development', he notes that this construct contrasts sharply with the long-standing notion in art education that 'the best

teaching is no teaching at all and where artistic accomplishments are judged primarily for their therapeutic rather than their educative value', a notion which has made it 'difficult to recognize the study of art as a cognitive endeavour' [75]. However, this last point reveals a fault line in the argument, in that this implies that the *study of art* rather than the *making* of it is the principal focus of attention when discussing cognition and art. There appears to be an emphasis, common in books of this kind, upon *responding to* rather than *making* art, although this is perhaps inevitable, given the thrust of the argument. With regard to education in general, he asserts that both declarative and procedural forms of cognition emerge from a common source but this is not acknowledged in curriculum construction:

> *Schooling for most students occurs within a curriculum where knowledge is experienced as a series of isolated, random facts. This compartmentalized curriculum reflects a long tradition in Western philosophy, which in large part is the consequence of a divided mind* [76].

While making a case for integrating the curriculum, Efland also underlines the particular contribution of art/the arts, as in the following passage:

> *The arts are places where the constructions of metaphor can and should become the principal object of study . . . It is only in the arts where the processes and products of the imagination are encountered and explored in full consciousness* [77].

Efland's emphasis tends to be upon engaging with art objects rather than on producing them. Elliot Eisner, on the other hand, has long advocated the specialness of art-making as a way of understanding the subtleties of life. In *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, he articulates clearly ways in which participation in art activities contributes to the development of higher order complex thinking skills, arguing that

> *the tasks that the arts put forward – such as noticing subtleties among qualitative relationships, conceiving of imaginative possibilities, interpreting the metaphorical meanings the work displays, exploiting unanticipated opportunities in the course of one's work – require complex cognitive modes of thought* [78].

As a subject in schools, art has its full quota of advocates who advance a range of worthy reasons for pursuing it at public expense. Four basic ones are associated with notions of self-esteem, therapy, leisure and vocation. Self-esteem can be related to self-knowledge. Before people can cooperate effectively

with other people they must understand themselves; the production of art is said to bring about a greater understanding of the self through exploration of personal ideas and feelings [79]. Promoting young people's self-esteem is, apart from anything else, a socially useful aim – people who feel good about themselves will be more socialised individuals than those who are bitter and resentful. The negative side to this is that in the current hierarchy of disciplines, such sentiments exacerbate the view that art is (only) for the socially and probably intellectually challenged (they are no good at anything else). David Hargreaves, in remarking positively upon what he found, refers to this as 'compensation' [80]. This sentiment is compounded by the view that art is some kind of therapy, designed to help release pent-up feelings through self expression and/or it is a leisure activity – a hobby which not only channels undesirable feelings but gives people something to do that is relatively undemanding and harmless. These rationales may well be true to some extent but they are not often promoted by art educators, nor is the vocational rationale (learning a practical skill), as this goes against the notion that art is something more elevated than anything concerned with simply making a living. I suspect that while the self-esteem, therapy, leisure and vocational rationales are quite commonly held, they are not often found in print, although Hargreaves claims that 'a very large number of art teachers recognise that the art room can be a sanctuary for difficult pupils' [81].

Art in the English national curriculum

There is a brave attempt in the English national curriculum documentation to set out the 'importance of art and design to pupils' education'. It describes ways in which art can 'promote learning across the curriculum in a number of areas such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, key skills and thinking skills'. These are grand statements of the kind art educators are wont to propound. They fit neatly into the standard government template but are nevertheless worthy and appropriately vague.

Pupils' 'spiritual development' is said to be promoted through 'helping pupils to explore ideas, feelings and meanings and to make sense of them in a personal way in their own creative work'. In addition to this, there is an expectation that pupils will be helped to 'make connections with the experiences of others' through engaging with others' artwork; this element is amplified in the use of exemplary artwork which has a moral component (the example given is 'Picasso's condemnation of warfare in his painting *Guernica*'). Suggesting that art teachers teach about moral issues through the use of artwork is getting into potentially difficult waters. What, for example, is to stop a latter-day Jean Brodie idealising the fascist sentiments of the Futurists? Teaching about the life and work of Caravaggio might not appeal to some conservatives; I have known of art teachers who have explicitly avoided referring

to David Hockney or his work because of Hockney's sexual orientation. Who should be responsible for the choice of artwork that is to be the focus of attention? The government? Art teachers? The students themselves? Issues associated with these questions are considered in Section Three.

The advice on cultural development reveals a wider interpretation of what an education in art can mean, with an emphasis on context – and with a recognition that visual form outside the traditional canon can be a meaningful activity in an art lesson. The examples given are 'the use of icons in religious art' and, more radically, 'corporate advertising'. We see here a nod towards a 'visual culture' approach.

The English national curriculum documentation goes on to recommend collaborative working to facilitate social development; this is reiterated under the heading of promoting what are identified as 'key skills'. Working with others and negotiating ideas are put forward as desirable activities, for which art as a subject in schools is said to be well placed to deliver. There are other attempts to elevate art activity by association with other alleged 'key skills'. Of interest here is that they are in the main related to practical making activities, 'knowing how' rather than 'knowing what'. These key skills include *communication* through pupils 'exploring and recording ideas' as well as 'discussing starting points and source materials for their work'. Another key skill, identified as *application of number*, is directly associated with making activities:

> *Through understanding and using patterns and properties of shape in visualising and making images and artefacts, working in two and three dimensions and on different scales, understanding and using the properties of position and movement (for example, rotating and transforming shapes for a repeat pattern), and scaling up a preparatory drawing for a large-scale painting* [82].

An additional 'key skill' identified is the use of Information and Communications Technology, which is a vital aspect of contemporary art education. Art is also seen to be of value in promoting learning skills, of 'improving pupils' own learning and performance'. This is achieved through pupils' critical discussion and reflection upon their own practical work. The notion of 'problem-solving' makes an appearance here. This particular key skill is, according to DFEE, developed in art through:

> *manipulating materials, processes and technologies, responding, experimenting, adapting their thinking and arriving at diverse solutions, synthesising observations, ideas, feelings and meanings, and designing and making art, craft and design* [83].

And so we can see that even in terms of promoting 'key skills' across the curriculum, the emphasis is upon the practical aspect; there are few attempts to single out the allegedly more cerebral aspects of art in order to justify its inclusion in the curriculum. Even in the section on promoting *thinking skills*, the emphasis remains upon teachers encouraging pupils to:

> *ask and answer questions about starting points for their work, explore and develop ideas, collect and organise visual and other information and use this to develop their work, investigate possibilities, review what they have done, adapt or refine their work, and make reasoned judgements and decisions about how to develop their ideas* [84].

There is no doubt that 'their work' refers to the practical art-making activities of pupils.

Earlier in Section One I referred to the common association of art with creativity and imagination. I have also noted the importance given by some educators to 'personal growth', which includes elements such as self-expression, intuition and imagination as ideas that are central to an individual's development. It is of interest, then, that the notion that pupils in school should be creative and imaginative and should use their intuition comes under the heading of art promoting 'enterprise and entrepreneurial skills'. The idea is that these skills are facilitated by teachers

> *developing pupils' willingness to explore and consider alternative ideas, views and possibilities, developing characteristics such as being prepared to take risks and to persevere when things go wrong, and encouraging pupils to be creative and imaginative, to innovate, to use their intuition and to develop self-confidence and independence of mind* [85].

The vocational aspect of art activities in schools makes a further appearance in the contribution of art to 'work-related learning'. The national curriculum documentation here is rather unambitious, asking teachers to do little more than make pupils aware of 'the range of possibilities for employment in the creative and cultural industries'. There is a further section on 'education for sustainable development' that talks of 'developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the role of art and design in shaping sustainable environments'. The section continues with the observation that art offers opportunities to explore 'values and ethics within art and design'.

Tellingly, there are no references to self-expression or expressive activities anywhere in the document. It is not clear what the principal underlying rationale is for the inclusion of art in the English national curriculum. One thing is clear, however, and that is that notions of self-expression and related ideas about

personal growth do not figure prominently. We have seen that where self-esteem and/or self-confidence are mentioned, it is (along with those other concepts long associated with art – creativity, imagination and intuition) in the context of 'entrepreneurial skills'. Many artists and teachers will associate these affective aspects with the subject; I would suggest that there is at least an unspoken understanding that they are essential and intrinsic to work in the arts. There are numerous other published aims for art education, found in prospectuses and syllabuses elsewhere. An education in art is said to promote a lot of desirable outcomes. The following is a sample gleaned from various countries:

- Knowledge and understanding of one's cultural heritage
- Knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of others
- Understanding of the visual world – perceptual training
- Understanding of one's inner world, of feelings and imagination
- Practical problem-solving through manipulation of materials
- Enhancing creativity through developing lateral thinking skills
- Facilitating judgements about the made environment
- Inventiveness and risk taking [86].

This list shows the range of concerns, which in various forms and with differing emphases come within the general remit of art teachers. Since putting forward these eight concerns of art education, as a synthesis of published work on the subject, I have considered how they impinge upon the individual and upon actual art curriculum content. One thing that again stands out is the lack of reference to the role of individual expression and personal response. In broad terms, we can think of rationales for art in education as being concerned with social utility, personal growth and visual literacy. The eight aims listed above can be related to these three areas in the following ways.

Social utility

This refers to aspects of art education that can have a practical effect upon individuals in terms of their contribution to, and role within, society. It is related to promoting creativity and the development of fine motor skills and can have a clear vocational element to it. The aims of 'inventiveness and risk taking', 'practical problem-solving' and 'enhancing creativity through developing lateral thinking skills' fall largely within this category. It is noteworthy that in a survey of the careers of British art graduates [87], Harvey and Blackwell make the following comments:

> *Art and design, probably more than any other sector, develops graduates' critical and creative abilities and their imagination.*
> *In the modern world, employers crave new ideas and want risk-takers, lateral*

> *thinkers and creative problem solvers, in short, people who can suggest solutions without requiring a full set of information upon which to base any decision. Art and design graduates have enormous potential in this respect and should be encouraged to develop and make the most of these elements that are 'natural' to the art and design environment and which respondents considered were well-developed on their courses* [88].

Personal growth

This area refers to individual development; it is concerned with self-expression, intuition and imagination. There is also an association with the therapeutic aspects of involvement with art – the pleasure of making. The aim of 'understanding one's inner world, of feelings and imagination' is central to this rationale.

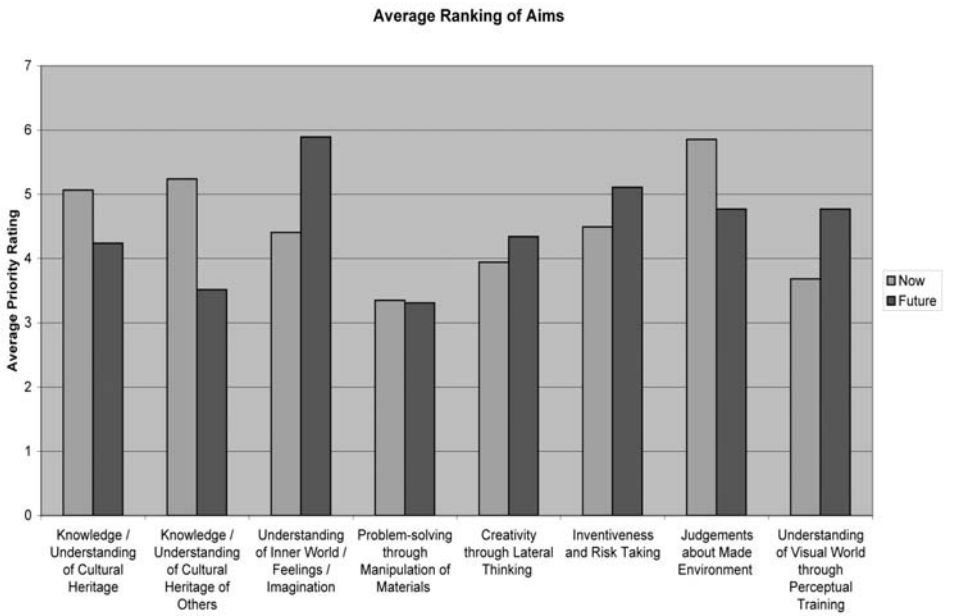
Visual literacy

This area is concerned with promoting knowledge and understanding of visual form, culture and heritage, in addition to developing aesthetic perception. The following aims fall largely into this category:

- Knowledge and understanding of one's cultural heritage
- Knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of others
- Understanding of the visual world – perceptual training
- Facilitating judgements about the made environment.

There is some overlap. For example, 'perceptual training' could be seen to be an important aspect of personal growth, as could 'practical problem-solving through manipulation of materials'. The prominence of each of these areas is subject to the whims of educational fashion; for example, in the 1960s the area of personal growth was deemed to be of greatest importance, especially in the UK, whereas current trends indicate the prominence of visual literacy. The *de facto* future of art education lies in the hearts, hands and minds of specialist teachers of art and design. It makes sense, then, to ask new 'trainees' about their views – what they consider to be important now and what they think will be of importance in the future with regard to the orientation of art education. In the summer of 2003 I gave a questionnaire to a group of trainee teachers of art and design in their final term from three different institutions [89]. They were asked to rank, from the list of eight aims for art education given above, the aims that they considered to be most important and least important, both currently and in the future. The students' predictions for the future were based on their own personal view as determined by the way they perceived trends.

Table 3:
Mean average ranking of aims, as determined by PGCE students



The highest bars indicate the lowest priority. For example, 'understanding of inner world' was given the lowest priority for the future, while 'problem-solving' was given the highest priority for the present.

The questionnaire survey on aims for art education was concerned with individual students' perceptions; there were no significant differences in attitudes between the three institutions. Of the eight aims listed above, and in Table 3, 'facilitating judgements about the made environment' was given the lowest priority by the largest number of respondents (34%); this was in relation to their present priorities. For future priorities, 'understanding of one's inner world, of feeling and imagination' was considered to be the lowest by the largest number. The aim of 'understanding of the visual world – perceptual training' was rated as currently being second in importance to 'practical problem-solving through manipulation of materials', while the respondents overall tended to predict that 'knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of others' would be more important (second to 'problem-solving') in the future. The aim of facilitating 'problem-solving through manipulation of materials' activities seems therefore to be consistently ranked as being of the highest priority. The

greatest variability between what was felt now to be of importance and what respondents overall predicted for the future was with regard to ' knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritage of others'. This was given first priority by nearly a quarter (23.4%) of the respondents for the future, while for the present, less than one twentieth (4.3%) rated it as being the highest priority. This appears to indicate that beginning teachers' perceptions of what is important in art education is likely to move away from concerns with feeling and individual expression towards a concern for understanding visual form from a range of different cultures. The most important aim, however, remains that of 'problem-solving through manipulation of materials. The key aspect here, found from follow-up interviews, is the 'manipulation of materials' rather than the 'problem-solving' aspect.

Much of what has been written about art in education appears to be from a modernist 'fine art' perspective. Certainly classroom practice seems to have this bias – it is extremely common to see painting and drawing with an emphasis on a mixture of expressionist and formalist approaches. This is perhaps surprising given the range of background (i.e. undergraduate) disciplines that characterise many specialist teachers of art. It is not so surprising when we witness the school art orthodoxies that so many beginning art teachers slip into at an early stage in their careers.

In order to examine the range of degree specialisms that teachers of art bring to the profession, I took a sample from two different institutions responsible for the post-graduate training of art teachers for the years 2000 to 2004 [90]. I found that fine art (including painting, sculpture and printmaking) accounted for 52 out of 163 students' degree specialisms (32%). Design on the other hand (including photography, silversmithing and jewellery, three dimensional design, graphic design, interior design and fashion design) accounted for 69 of the degree specialisms. If we include ceramic and glass (11) plus textile design (22), this gives us 102, with history of art (plus other non-studio subjects such as anthropology) at ten making the total of 163. So on this sample we can see that while fine art is the largest single contributor, less than one third of those training to be teachers of art are from fine art backgrounds. I would suggest that the principal activity which appears to bind these degree backgrounds together is drawing – a skill which ironically has been downplayed in fine art course in recent years. The corollary of this is that aims for art education that have a 'fine art' bias are inappropriate and a more skills-based approach, perhaps with a greater emphasis upon drawing, would be more in keeping with the aptitudes and interests of specialist teachers of art.

In his 1982 publication *Art Education – a Strategy for Course Design,* Maurice Barrett lists 21 'worthwhile outcomes' for art education [91]. These outcomes, which are put in terms of general educational aims, describe the role of art in achieving certain desirable outcomes. Eight of the 21 are concerned

with what we can describe as 'making activities': for example, 'to develop the ability to organise marks, shapes and forms so that they communicate or demonstrate our response to what has been observed'. These making activities are variously concerned with recording, expressing and communicating through exploring, organising and manipulating visual form. There is an explicit connection, made in Barrett's list of worthwhile aims, between self and society, as in, for example, 'to be able to realise personal uniqueness in a community or in society as a whole, so that the pupil can learn from and contribute to society'. Other values are also made explicit – the importance of 'personal uniqueness' and 'self-reliance' and the importance of being able to express personal feelings in a 'world shared with others'. The subject of art itself is given somewhat less attention, but given the historical and cultural context of Barrett's book, figures more prominently than one might expect, with reference to understanding 'the dynamics of visual form'. There is also a nod to art's role in cognition: 'art should be recognised as a form of thinking able to sustain creative ideas and provide a framework for judgement'. Problem-solving and the development of visual perception, combined with sensitivity to the made environment, are evident. The complete list of Barrett's 21 'worthwhile outcomes' is well worth looking at and can be found in Appendix III. It is also worth noting that the heads of art departments who were surveyed at that time (the late 1970s) appeared to rate the development of perceptual skills, imagination and expressive skills – all associated with 'making' – more highly than developing understanding of cultural forms. There appears to be little significant difference between the views of art teachers of the 1970s and those of trainee teachers of art some 30 years later, despite the considerable cultural changes that have occurred. Perhaps the reason for this lies not so much in teachers' conservatism as with a perennial and abiding concern for creative self-expression.

Concluding remarks for Section One

In this Section I have outlined broad areas for justifying art in young people's lives and have suggested that most of the stated aims for art in education can be summarised under three headings of social utility, personal growth and visual literacy but that these are not mutually exclusive. Of particular importance, I feel, is the notion, highlighted by Herbert Read, of the basic unit of society being the individual and it is individuals' capacity for expression, their use of intuition and imagination and their pleasure in making that contribute to a healthy society.

I have given a brief overview of the nature of art and its place in education. It is acknowledged that the concept of art is too fuzzy and too contested to be of much value; it is also a concept that can be understood at different levels of complexity and abstractness. However, learning in art cannot be discussed in

any meaningful way without reference to concept learning. I take the view that learning in art is fundamentally developmental and is an interaction between a logic core acquired through maturation and interaction with the environment; thus understanding is, of course, unique to each individual. While outlining a view of artistic development that is said to be universal, I emphasise the importance of environmental factors and note that higher levels of development cannot be attained without appropriate teaching.

I note that most of the research in learning in art focuses upon learners' interaction with and response to art objects made by others – there is a dearth of studies looking at the development of practical studio skills beyond childhood. While this book does not fill that gap, it does focus upon the importance of making as opposed to responding, the latter being a development that I have described as being associated with a move away from learner-centred to subject-centred approaches in art education. Subject-centred approaches are in turn associated with issues of accountability and the measurement of performance – performance of individual learners, teachers, schools and school districts.

Most rationales for art education emphasise, among other things, the role of art-making in developing individuals' self-esteem and a sense of identity. They point to the value of facilitating expression and imagination that can promote creativity. This in turn helps ensure that human society remains dynamic and is able to confront and tackle new problems as they arise. art-making is, however, an intensely personal activity for the most part, especially in industrialised societies, and provides an opportunity for meaning-making and self-reflection. It is therefore important to pay attention to personal accounts of the part that art-related activity has played in people's lives. To this end the following section is devoted to individuals' perspectives on their own art learning.

Notes and references for Section One

[1] Authorities include Collingwood, R.G. (1938) *The Principles of Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Raymond Williams noted that the terms creative and imaginative have become associated with the word art as a means of classification since 1880 – see Williams, R. (1983) *Keywords*. London: Flamingo, p. 43.

[2] Black, M. (1973) 'Notes on Design Education in Great Britain', in D.W. Piper (ed.) *Readings in Art and Design Education* Book 1 – After Hornsey. London: Davis-Poynter. The quotation is from p. 34.

[3] DES (1992) *Art in the National Curriculum*. London: DES, p. 3.

[4] DfEE (2000) *Art and Design.* London: DfEE/QCA, p. 14.

[5] There is also, in the English school curriculum, an association between design and technology. This association of design with technology is of interest etymologically, in that 'technology' is associated closely with 'art', the Greek root from which it is derived being 'tekhne', meaning an art or craft; in the modern Greek curriculum, art (when it appears – very rarely) is known as 'kalotekhne', or fine art. Williams notes that 'technology' was used from the 17th century to 'describe a systematic study of the arts . . . or the terminology of a particular art' Williams, op. cit. p. 315.

[6] A seminal work is 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception' originally written as an essay by Max Hormheimer and Theodore Adorno, translated into English in 1972. Of particular interest in this paper is their assertion that, despite the notion of individuality as a bourgeois concept, the artist as an individual has a crucial role to perform in challenging the 'commodity society'.

[7] Recent statistics from OFSTED, the British government's office for 'standards in education', reveal that 211,724 school students opted to take the GCSE examination in art; this can be compared with 56,742 students opting for music in 2003/4.

[8] Prentice, R. (2002) *An investigation into Art and Design Education Components of courses of Primary Initial Teacher Education*. A survey commissioned by the QCA, published by the University of London Institute of Education. The quotation is from p. 5.

[9] This notion has been put forward by Paul Duncum – See Duncum, P. & Bracey, T. (eds.) (2001) *On Knowing – Art and Visual Culture*. Christchurch, NZ: Canterbury University Press. See also the chapters by Howard Hollands ('Ways of Not Seeing: Education, Art and Visual Culture') and Darren Newbury ('Changing Practices: Art Education and Popular Visual Culture') in Hickman, R. (ed.) (2004, 2nd ed.) *Art Education 11-18: Meaning, Purpose and Direction*. London: Continuum. There is also an interesting chapter on theme parks by Nick Stanley in Hickman, R. (ed.) (2005) *Critical Studies in Art and Design Education*. Bristol: Intellect.

[10] Graham Chalmers in Duncum, P. & Bracey, T. (eds.) (2001) *On Knowing – Art and Visual Culture*. Christchurch, NZ: Canterbury University Press, p. 86.

[11] Elizabeth Garber. ibid.

[12] See Hickman, R., 'A Short History of Critical Studies in Art and Design Education', in R. Hickman (ed.) (2005) *Critical Studies in Art and Design Education*. Bristol: Intellect.

[13] Read, H. (1947) *Education Through Art*. London: Faber and Faber.

[14] Field, D. (1970) *Change in Art Education*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 55.

[15] Barkan, M. (1962) 'Transition in Art Education: Changing Conceptions of Curriculum Content and Teaching.' *Art Education*, 15, 12-18.

[16] Bruner, J. (1960) *The Process of Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[17] Barkan, M. (1966) 'Curriculum Problems in Art Education', in E.L. Mattil (ed.) *A Seminar in Art Education for Research and Curriculum Development* (USDE Co-operative Research Project No. V-002) (pp.240-55). University Park: Pennsylvania State University.

[18] Greer, W.D. (1984) 'Discipline-Based Art Education: Approaching Art as a Subject of Study'. *Studies in Art Education*, 25 (4), 212-18.

[19] Allison, B. (1982) 'Identifying the Core in Art and Design'. *Journal of Art and Design Education*, 1, (1), 59-66.

[20] Viola, W. (1936) *Child Art and Franz Cizek*. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock.

[21] Kellogg, R. and Odell, S. (1967) *The Psychology of Children's Art*. London: Random House.

[22] See Wilson, B. and Wilson, M. (1977) 'An Iconoclastic View of the Imagery Sources of Young People'. *Art Education*, 30 (1), 5-15. A more recent account by Brent Wilson of his views on child art after Modernism can be found in the section on 'Learning in the Visual Arts', E. Eisner and M. Day (eds.) (2004) *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education*. Other researchers have found what they believe to be cultural distinctions in children's artistic development but these tend to be superficial. See, for example, note 24.

[23] Originally published in 1947. I have drawn upon the fifth edition of this book: Lowenfeld, V. and Lambert Brittain, W. (5th ed., 1970) *Creative and Mental Growth*. London: Collier Macmillan. It is an indication of the importance of this publication that it has run to several more editions.

[24] Masami Toku's work, published in *Visual Arts Research*, was titled 'Cross-Cultural Analysis of Artistic Development: Drawing by Japanese and U.S. Children'. In this paper Toku maintains that the universal tendency of artistic development is limited to the years before children are exposed to cultural and educational influences. In a study that compared several hundred drawings by American and Japanese children given a specific theme ('Me and my friends playing in the school yard'), the most telling difference between the two groups appeared to be the preponderance of cartoon-style drawings amongst the older Japanese children. There appeared to be no evidence to suggest that

children of both cultures did not conform to the standard model of artistic development. It is interesting to note that the pictures I have chosen to illustrate typical features of the middle figurative schematic stage happen to be Japanese. In the examples given, I have protected the identity of the children concerned and have given my own titles to the pictures.

[25] Cox, M. (1998) 'Drawings of People by Australian Aboriginal Children: The Inter-mixing of Cultural Styles', in the *Journal of Art and Design Education*, 17 (1), pp. 71-9. The paper draws upon research conducted by Dr Edith Bavin of La Trobe University.

[26] Kindler, A. (1999) 'From Endpoints to Repertoires: A Challenge to Art Education', in *Studies in Art Education*, 40, Summer 1999. See also Kindler's contribution to 'Learning in the Visual Arts' in E. Eisner and M. Day (eds.) (2004), op. cit.

[27] Eisner, E. (1969) *Teaching Art to the Young: A Curriculum Development Project in Art Education*. Stanford: School of Education, Stanford University.

[28] Bruner referred to three stages of intellectual growth – enactive, iconic and symbolic. In Bruner's enactive phase of intellectual growth, thought and action are interrelated; the iconic phase is characterised by thought being governed by perception of concrete phenomena, while the symbolic phase is characterised by language use. Bruner, J. (1966) *Towards a Theory of Instruction*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[29] Hickey, D. (1975) *The Development and Testing of a Matrix of Perceptual and Cognitive Abilities in Art Appreciation, Children and Adolescents*. Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis: University of Indiana, Minneapolis.

[30] Feldman, E.B. (1970) *Becoming Human Through Art*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. Feldman's strategy has been widely used in subsequent research but has been criticised for being too reliant on formal analysis of artworks rather than students' responses and for its lack of attention to contextual factors. See, for example, George Geahigan's contribution to Wolff, T.F. and Geahigan, G. (1997) *Art Criticism and Education*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

[31] Piaget's classic text *The Origins of Intelligence in Children* is often cited. Piaget, J. (1952) *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*. New York: International University Press.

[32] Project Zero was founded in 1967 as an interdisciplinary collaborative enterprise by Nelson Goodman, who provided the philosophical basis for the work. Goodman was among the first to propose that visual images as well as words can operate as symbol systems and that being literate means being

visually literate, in terms of being able to decode certain symbol systems, in addition to being able to read and write. This means that art can be seen as a form of enquiry. The web site for Project Zero is: http//www.pzweb.harvard.edu. See Goodman, N. (1978) *Ways of Worldmaking*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

[33] For example: Gardner, H. (1973) *The Arts and Human Development*. New York: Wiley; Gardner, H. (1980) *Artful Scribbles: The Significance of Children's Drawings*. New York: Basic Books; Gardner, H. (1982) *Art, Mind and Brain: A Cognitive Approach to Creativity*. New York: Basic Books; Gardner, H. (1990) *Art Education and Human Development*. (Occasional Paper 3). The Getty Center for Education in the Arts; Gardner, H. and Perkins, D. (eds.) (1989) *Art, Mind and Education*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

[34] Rosentiel, A., Morison, P., Silverman, J. and Gardner, H. (1978) 'Critical Judgement: A Developmental Study'. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 12, 95-197.

[35] Gardner. H. (1973) op.cit. p.76

[36] ibid. p. 45

[37] Gardner, H., Winner, E. and Kircher, M. (1975) Children's Conceptions of the Arts. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 9, (3), 60-7.

[38] Hickman, R. (2000) Adolescents' Concepts of the Concept 'Art'. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* (Spring 2000) 107-12.

[39] Wolf, D. (1988) 'The growth of three aesthetic stances: What developmental psychology suggests about discipline based art education.' *Issues in Discipline Based Art Education: Strengthening the Stance, Extending the Horizons*. (Proceedings of Seminar held at Cincinnati, Ohio, May 21-4, 1987). Los Angeles: The Getty Center for Education in the Arts.

[40] Parsons, M. (1987) *How We Understand Art: A Cognitive Developmental Account of Aesthetic Experience*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

[41] ibid. p.22.

[42] ibid.

[43] ibid. p.23.

[44] Kohlberg, L. (1981) *Essays on Moral Development*, vols. 1 and 2. San Francisco: Harper and Row.

[45] Goldsmith, L.T. and Feldman, D.H. (1988) 'Aesthetic Judgement: Changes in People and Changes in Domains' [commentary on Parsons (1987) *How We Understand Art*]. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 22, (4), 85-92. The quotation

is from p. 86.

[46] Feldman, D. (1980) *Beyond Universals in Cognitive Development*. New Jersey: Abley.

[47] Parsons based his theory on interviews with people in and around Salt Lake City who 'do not represent a careful sample of any population' (Parsons, 1987, op. cit. p. 18).

[48] Pariser, D. (1988) Review of Michael Parsons' *How We Understand Art*, in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 22 (4), 93-102.

[49] Hickman (2000), op. cit.

[50] Bruner, J., Goodnow, J., and Austin, G. (1956) *A Study of Thinking*. London: John Wiley.

[51] Peel, E.A. (1971) *The Nature of Adolescent Judgement*. London: Staples Press.

[52] Klausmeier, D., Ghatala, E. and Frayer, D. (eds.) (1974) *Conceptual Learning and Development: A Cognitive View*. New York: Academic Press. The quotation is from p. 4.

[53] Schaefer, G. (1979) 'Concept Formation in Biology: The concept "Growth"'. *European Journal of Science Education*, 24, (1), 87-101.

[54] Bolton, N. (1977) *Concept Formation*. Oxford: Pergamon.

[55] Clark, H.H., and Clark, E.V. (1977) *Psychology and Language*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

[56] Bolton, N. (1991) 'Cognitivism: A Phenomenological Critique', in A. Still and A. Costall (eds.) (1991) *Against Cognitivism: Alternative Foundations for Cognitive Psychology*. London: Harvester. See also Markova in the same book. Markova examined the Platonic/Cartesian notion of fixed universals, contrasting this with the Hegelian view that universals correspond to 'concepts that are the product of human evolution' (p. 81) and asserted that there are no universal concepts which are ontological entities existing independently of the human mind. Markova, I. 'The Concepts of the Universal in the Cartesian and Hegelian Frameworks', in N. Bolton (1991) ibid.

[57] Gilbert, J.K. and Watts, D.M. (1983) 'Concepts, Misconceptions and Alternative Conceptions: Changing Perspectives in Science Education'. *Studies in Science Education*, (10) 61-98.

[58] Koroskik, J.S., Short, G., Stravopoulos, C. and Fortin, S. (1992) 'Frameworks for Understanding Art: The Function of Comparative Art Contexts and Verbal Cues'. *Studies in Art Education*, 33, (3), 154-64.

[59] Perkins, D. (1992) *The Intelligent Eye – Learning to Think by Looking at Art*. Santa Monica: Getty.

[60] Perkins, op.cit. p. 5. I use the term 'interacting' here quite carefully, as Perkins only refers to engaging with others' art forms. When I asked him about the cognitive value of making art, in a seminar, he was unforthcoming.

[61] Parsons, M. (1987) *How We Understand Art: A Cognitive Development Account of Aesthetic Experience*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

[62] Smith, R.A. (1992) 'Building a Sense of Art in Today's World'. *Studies in Art Education*, 33 (2) pp. 71-85. The quotation is from p. 82.

[63] ibid. p. 74.

[64] I use the term 'stage' to indicate the broad, generalised developmental steps. I also use the term 'phase' to refer to parts of a stage and 'levels' for parts of a phase. This, of course, implies that such divisions exist; in reality they do not, but they do offer a useful theoretical model for discussing artistic development.

[65] Efland, A. (1990) *A History of Art Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

[66] Reid, L.A. (1986) *Ways of Understanding and Education*. London: University of London Institute of Education.

[67] Arnheim, R. (1989) *Thoughts on Art Education*, Occasional Paper No. 2, Getty Center for the Arts, Santa Monica, p. 55.

[68] Steers, J. (1997) 'Ten Questions about the Future of Art Education', *Australian Art Education*, nos. 1 and 2, pp 9 – 20. This paper was updated as version 6 and presented at the 'ACTA' conference, Melbourne, Australia, 23 May 1998. For an account of how 'reconstructionist' ideas in art education can be translated into classroom practice, see: Clark, R. (1998). 'Doors and Mirrors in Art Education: Constructing the Postmodernist Classroom', in *Art Education*, 51, (6), pp. 6-11.

[69] Read, H. (1943) *Education Through Art*. London: Faber and Faber, p. 202.

[70] ibid. p. 221.

[71] These goals are paraphrased from the Hong Kong Government's Curriculum Development Council (2000) *Key Learning Area: Arts Education*, pp 12-13.

[72] Kenneth Lansing wrote in 1971, for a largely American audience, about general educational aims and the role of art in education. He identified a number of features that may be considered to be characteristic of 'the educated person'; he outlined the role which art could play in developing such characteristics.

Lansing wrote that the production and appreciation of art requires aesthetic sensitivity and therefore people who are educated in art are better equipped to make informed purchasing decisions. Lansing K. (1971) *Art, Artists and Art Education*. New York: McGraw-Hill. See Appendix II for a fuller account of Lansing's thoughts on the relationship of the 'educated person' to art.

[73] Efland, A. (2002) *Art and Cognition – Integrating the Visual Arts in the Curriculum*. New York: Teachers College Press.

[74] Dorn, C.M. (1999) *Mind in Art: Cognitive Foundations in Art Education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum; Eisner, E. (2002) *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. London: Yale University Press.

[75] Efland, A. (2002) op. cit. pp 48-9. The 'zone of proximal development' is the difference between the level of solved tasked that can be performed with guidance from a teacher (or other adult) and the level of independently solved tasks; it is the place where the learner and the teacher meet.

[76] ibid. pp.154-5

[77] ibid. p.153, emphasis in original.

[78] Eisner, E. (2002) op. cit. note 58, p. 35.

[79] Hall, J. (2nd ed., 2004) 'The Spiritual in Art', in R. Hickman (ed.) *Art Education 11-18: Meaning, Purpose and Direction*. London: Continuum.

[80] Hargreaves, D.H. (1983) 'The Teaching of Art and the Art of Teaching', in M. Hammersley and A. Hargreaves (eds.) *Curriculum Practice: Some Sociological Case Studies*. London: Falmer. (p. 131). See also Sikes, Patricia J. (1987) 'A Kind of Oasis: Art Rooms and Art Teachers in Secondary Schools', in Tickle, L., (ed) (1987) *The Arts in Education – Some Research Studies*, p. 143, Beckenham: Croom Helm.

[81] Hargreaves, op.cit.

[82] DFEE (2000) op.cit.

[83] ibid.

[84] ibid.

[85] ibid.

[86] Hickman, R. (1999) 'Rationales for Teaching Art – An International Perspective', in *Proceedings of the 38th World Congress of the International Society for Education through Art*, Brisbane, 1999 [electronic publication].

[87] Harvey, L. and Blackwell, A. (1999) *Destinations & Reflections: Careers of British Art, Craft and Design Graduates*. Birmingham: Centre for Research

into Quality, UCE.

[88] ibid. p. 4.

[89] The three institutions were University of Cambridge, University of Exeter and University of London Institute of Education. These institutions were opportunity samples but also selected on the basis of having consistently received the highest praise for their art education programmes from government inspectors. A synthesis of the survey results can be found at Appendix V. A complete breakdown of responses is available from the author.

[90] The sample was from two universities over a three-year period, giving a total number of specialist trainee art teachers of 163.

[91] Barrett, M (1982) *Art Education – A Strategy for Course Design*, London: Heinemann.