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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ART, SOCIETY AND ART EDUCATION: RECLAIMING AN ENRICHED CONCEPT OF ART

by

JUNE BUCHANAN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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.....

submitted by...JUNE BUCHANAN.....

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Supervisor

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Date 10 April, 1987

For Emmaline Mossman
grandmother/sister/spirit
of the earth embodied, empowered
who showed me that women are strong
who confirmed my own womanness and challenged me
to question, to reach for possibilities, to rejoice.
She prepared me for this journey

For Blair, Brian, Scott and Beverly
whose love, understanding and encouragement
strengthened me on this journey

For all of my students
who journeyed some of the way with me
especially those who will risk setting forth on their own

ABSTRACT

This thesis takes the form of a many layered journey in search of a concept of art that would be more inclusive of human experience and out of which can emerge the grounds for a more authentic art education. The premise is that contemporary art education reflects the same shortcoming found to be in society itself, that is, the splitting and hierarchical valuation of human endeavour into public and private cultural forms and the assumed naturalness of the domination of the one over the other. This is seen to manifest itself in art as the aesthetic of formalism and in art education as an emphasis on formalist principles and studio practices.

Toward this end the body of the work brings into question the relationship between art and society and the place of art education in that relationship. On one layer the work examines the concept of art itself, particularly, what it has come to mean in the twentieth century. On another layer the thesis pursues the sources of domination in general, turning first to Marxist and neo-Marxist analyses and then to feminist mediations. The feminist perspective claims that the root cause of domination is

neither economic nor class based but more likely related to gender ideology.

This paves the way for a more exploratory layer in which feminist and ecological considerations direct the work toward a re-imaging of the world and a re-visioning of nature, both our own and the world's. This points to the possibility of viewing authentic art as that which is derived from the art maker's experience and allows us to recognize the value of one's lived life as a source of art making.

Based upon a more inclusive concept of art, the work proposes an art program that draws upon three layers of experience -- biography, historical/social analyses, and reenchantment. The claim is that such an art program nurtures authenticity, critical reflection, and integrated presence and gives children an understanding of the place and value of art in their lives. Essentially, this art education invites children to dance the rhythms of the cosmos.

PROLOGUE

This work takes the form of a many layered journey, a journey in time and landscape in search of new human possibilities. Essentially the layering is a biographical account of the path followed in my own reclamation of meaning. Each layer represents another dimension of my own experience, the accumulation of my own lived time.

On its most elemental layer, the project seeks a more authentic undertaking for art education, particularly a concept of art that would be more inclusive of human endeavour. On its most complex layer, the work asks for reenchantment, the re-integration of humans with each other and the world.

The journey begins in the classroom with the frustrations of daily work: teaching a curriculum that appears to be alienating and disempowering; seeking resolutions from experts who do not speak to the problem; exploring theories that cannot encompass the question. As the work approaches the richer multi-layered dimension, it becomes more and more a portrait of myself dwelling in possibility -- discovering self, redefining relationships,

reclaiming history and mythology. Along the way I draw strength, and eventually knowledge, from my spiritual grandmother, thereby making connection and forming continuity with the lives, past and present, of others like herself. The journey ends with the reclamation of a concept of art that is inclusive of human endeavour, embodied and empowering. Essentially we are enabled to dance the rhythms of the cosmos.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

There is a certain pleasure in the discovery that one has journeyed a long distance without being fully conscious of one's progress -- so totally engaged in the travel, in the new vistas that one is oblivious to the junctures, to the effort spent in getting there. At such moments I reflect upon what took me this way, this far. Most surprising is the discovery that the journey is never quite so undesigned as it would first appear. Such is the case with this thesis.

This journey of many layers was made to search out my own question. But always at moments of reflection I could feel the presence and power of several more seasoned travellers. However subtle, however direct, they pointed me toward the routes I would follow.

Harry Garfinkle, in his wisdom, sent me in search of new human possibilities. Ted Aoki's own presence as teacher caused me to reimagine the project of pedagogy. Wilf Schmidt rekindled my concern for the authentic world of the child. John Jagodzinski not only helped me find the woman's road but travelled some of the way with me. I am grateful for their guidance.

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CHAPTER ONE

Imaging the Journey

This study takes the form of a journey in time and landscape, a journey to reclaim meaning. It is a journey that requires us to reflect critically upon our accumulated human experience; to reflect critically so that we may reawaken our imaginations and conceptualize new possibilities, particularly the possibility to live as integrated human beings in harmony with one another and the world. It is also a journey of reaffirmation as we rekindle an understanding of art as implicit in the human endeavour.

Essentially, the study brings into question the relationship between art and society and the place of art education in that relationship. On its most elemental layer, it addresses what is seen to be a shortcoming in contemporary art education, a shortcoming that is seen to be a reflection of the larger society, that is, the splitting and hierarchical valuation of human endeavour into public and private cultural forms and the assumed naturalness of the domination of the one over the other. This manifests itself in art as the aesthetic of formalism

and in art education as an emphasis on formalist principles and studio practices.

In order to propose a more authentic undertaking for art education, the work looks at the concept of art itself particularly what it has come to mean in the twentieth century. This is explored in an overview of the modern period situating art in its own history and tracing the apparent shifts from art in its more original context to the more recent avant-garde and the modernist/Post-modernist debate.

Art is placed within the context of society not only because that is where it is felt that art should be but also to focus upon changes in both human consciousness and institutions and upon the fragmentation of life and experience in industrial society -- in particular, the silent but constant estrangement of human consciousness reflected in the concept and practice of art. Throughout this thesis, the feminist perspective is alluded to as a catalyst in overturning uncritical assumptions about the nature of art and its making. The implication is that a questioning of gender ideology enhances our understanding of parallel forms of institutionalized power and status, which, it is felt, is the root cause of the appropriation of culture by one dominant point of view.

Coming to the Question

The study evolves from the observation of three contradictions which, upon analysis, reveal themselves as aspects of the same issue, that is, the ever increasing estrangement of human consciousness that is reflected in art practices. First, within our culture, we experience an almost disarming richness of cultural pluralism, yet at the same time art seems to be fragmented and disembodied. Art has become "precious objects" divorced from people's lives and the cultural relations of which it is a natural part. Second, while a dazzling array of possibilities makes many modes of art available to more of society, at the same time, there are qualitative differences in the sense of which art is assigned what status. To whom is art available? Finally, despite ever increasing exposure to a variety of cultural forms, evidence of critical consciousness seems less and less apparent in our culture.

Concerning the first observation, in contemporary art there is a profusion of individual artistic styles, themes, and processes that more or less has moved art out of the rarefied atmosphere of the nineteenth century museum into mainstream culture. Yet, despite this incredible diversity, for many art is separate from and has little meaning in daily life. The art of popular culture is not given the status of art per se. Art that has been given official status and can be called such, that is "fine art,"

communicates little and is inaccessible to most.

This is not difficult to explain. Rather than being seen as the product or outgrowth of human beings, culture has come to be removed from lived life and made separate and exclusive. Culture now refers to the narrow elitist "culture" as well as the more organic, historical form of which we are all participants. Likewise, "high" or "fine" art, deemed superior and set apart from daily living has as little potential to address everyday life as everyday life has of finding expression in it. Formalist codes and intellectualization lift such art out of daily life to give us an art that often is not much more than a cultural commodity that can exist only within museum and gallery type spaces that are set apart for its expression.

Such is the paradox of these institutions. Established to cultivate appreciation of the aesthetic, galleries and museums succeed best in alienating a person from one's own aesthetic as often as from the official, pronounced "aesthetic." Such art lacks an appeal to the human endeavour and the lived life and would seem to have lost its transcendent and transformative power -- art's capability to envision the human experience as part of the universe, integrated with the cosmos, and having creative and regenerative possibilities.

In this context, it is suggested that school art, defined here as the art that takes place under the auspices of public school education, has, for the most part, little

relevance to the life-world of our youth. Rather it is seen to be comprised primarily of studio practices with a sprinkling of art history and criticism, existing under the aegis of creativity and self-development. Derived from a formalist aesthetic, such practices would seem to do little more than perpetuate a reproductive code, the status quo, and to further relegate art to the periphery of experience, to the isolation of galleries and museums.

There seems to be little emphasis on art as expression and communication, on the reciprocity between communication and response. As well, there seems to be little opportunity to come to understand art as an integral part of each person's life-world or to consider it within a cultural context, to address the place that art has occupied in society since the beginning of humankind, to see art in the context of addressing the sublime, the ecumenical, and the humane in our existence, or to contemplate or experience its transcendent or transformative possibilities.

Regarding the second observation, it is suggested that in art there are levels of achievement or consciousness and that the higher levels appear to be equated with a limited segment of society, an elite in the sense of a small portion of society that has some particular advantage, for example, of circumstances. Viewed in this context, there is the suggestion of an alienation of art consciousness. Art is seen to be an integral part of the life-world of one

part of society, a cultural elite of sorts, but external to the lived experience of certain others which I would maintain to be the majority of society. While I am not subscribing to the notion that elitist art should become the art of the general public -- I do not see this as necessarily progressive, at the same time there is not general accessibility to any art other than the mass art imposed by the media which enters our experience more by bombardment than by choice.

The distinction I would want to make here is that the popular art of the general public is not the same as the fine art of a cultural elite. While the general public may be steeped in the popular art of everyday life, the fine art of museum and gallery-type spaces is inaccessible. Further, the aesthetic of fine art is used to indicate what is significant or good in art while the aesthetic of "lesser" art enjoys, at best, an inferior status. The ordinary person is deluged with magazines, films, television, posters, photographs, store windows, clothing and furnishing choices, homes to decorate, buildings and environment with which to engage. What is to be made of this aesthetic? What is art in the lived-life? It would seem more appropriate to recognize that art can exist outside the elitist framework of the gallery and museum, that potentially art abounds in the everyday world and must be addressed as having the significance that it has rather than being surrounded in its present shroud of ambiguity

and inferiority.

From the third observation regarding the apparent lack of critical consciousness it would seem that there are serious implications in the current and generally accepted taxonomy of art -- high art, popular art, and mass art, which are not, at first hand, visible. We approach these categories with a taken-for-grantedness that is astounding. We assume fine art as the legitimate art through an osmosis-like process.

This is no less the case for school art which, for the most part, disregards both the so-called popular and mass art. Rather, it appears to be oriented towards the reproduction of the "fine art" tradition. Though the production mode dominates, there is little evidence to suggest that this is other than reproduction. What is presented in the guise of art education points toward the approved art of the formalist tradition. Thus, on the one hand, it would appear that we are educating toward the "high art" of the galleries while, on the other hand, it would seem that increasingly, we are becoming absorbed in the giant "mass" culture industry as the advertising media imposes the parameters of a universal aesthetic. It defines or perhaps more correctly, insinuates, what, unquestionably, we should think, want, appreciate, or do. Meanwhile, the art that arises from and expresses the popular culture loses its identity, in fact, often is not given the status of art.

There seems to be little possibility to acquire an inner, or perhaps authentic, knowledge of art, a knowledge that, to use Pinar's expression, is born of "individual experience of a lived . . . sense of self and world" (1981, p. 433). There is little opportunity for addressing the taken-for-granted, for contemplating the dominant aesthetic, or for reflecting upon one's own aesthetic. It would appear that a critical consciousness is not a part of the experience of our students nor possibly of the teachers themselves.

Unfortunately, art education is seen to contribute a good deal toward perpetuating the circumstances of these observations. Present practices in art education give the illusion of being informed or educated in art whereas, in actuality, by ascribing to the elite art of formalism, they heighten the mystification that surrounds art itself and add to an artificially created cultural elite. Without an attempt, nor the opportunity, to develop critical consciousness, effectively, the status quo is perpetuated and art is maintained on the periphery of human experience. Ironically, as part of everyday life, most of us continue to manipulate materials, to form and make, to decorate and embellish, to look and feel, and to draw upon aesthetic opinions regardless of whether or not our actions are given the formal status of art. In this respect, most of us are very much involved with art if we broaden our understanding of the term to include other than the "legitimate" and

exclusive art of galleries and museums.

This study is an attempt to address such circumstances that cause us to disregard the art of lived-life as part of one's own aesthetic or the possibility of everyday life to inform our aesthetic consciousness and our art making. The point is that to be dominated by another's aesthetic implies the same alienation from self as any other form of domination. To understand one's own aesthetic enlarges one's possibilities not only for understanding other's but also for acting in the world in a way that draws upon the sensual and the emotional as well as the intellectual. Put simply, it enlarges our possibilities to turn round the insidious estrangement of human consciousness that has come to be characteristic of modern living.

In the context of these observations, certain questions have revealed themselves. Why and toward what interests do the hierarchical distinctions of a taxonomy of art occur? For the sake of clarity, there may be significance in knowing whose or which notion of art is being addressed. Here, one might question whether there is indication of consciousness in the full potential that art can allow at the moment or whether consciousness is being constrained by a limited notion of art. Certainly there is need to question the legitimacy of such a value based stratification, to examine how such taxonomies come into being, and whether and how they change or are altered.

What is of interest here is not simply the contents of

the original three observations *per se* but, even more so, what might be the basis or underlying causes. This suggests a critique of the radical roots of this set of contradictions, that is, situating them in their broader historical and political context and revealing the circumstances within which change may or may not take place. Here one would question what it means to be critically conscious aesthetically. What happens when one's own aesthetic is devalued or not recognized and experiences are framed from the perspective of another's aesthetic that is outside one's own understanding?

To this end one must address other questions including: How does one come to acquire certain conceptions of art? How do social institutions such as the school or family contribute to such conceptions? Is there a link between aesthetic consciousness and social context? Why is there not a general availability of art? Is equal access a realistic projection? Is it possible, or even desirable, for all of society to be critically conscious aesthetically? Or, is a limited notion of art always the case for a majority of society? This last question, of course, raises the whole issue of the avant-garde and its possible redefinition.

Statement of the Problem

Up to this point in the history of art education as a discipline there would seem to be no clear rationale for what should comprise art education. Historically, it has progressed from industrial training (Efland, 1983) through the child-centered focus of the Progressive era (Dewey, 1934; Lowenfeld, 1955) and the cognitive emphasis of the Sputnik era (Barkan, 1962) to a dominant emphasis since the 1960's on some form of aesthetic education (Jagodzinski, 1981). In actuality, we find essentially a pluralist position derived from several sources with varying degrees of legitimacy.

Yet, despite these theoretical shifts, the dominant aesthetic in the classroom continues to be formalism -- process and creativity prevail. What seems to predominate is the perpetuation of a reproductive code that is derived primarily from a formalist aesthetic. Out of this has been created the entity "school art" that is different from any other art, a derivative of our emphasis on an estranged abstract aesthetic. Comprised primarily of studio practices with a sprinkling of art history and criticism and existing under the aegis of creativity and self-development, we have what amounts to the "fundamental miseducation of children" (Chapman, 1982, pp. 56-57). Essentially the making of art -- the manipulation of materials according to the values of adults, is equated

with art education. There is little regard in art education for social context or personal aesthetic or for knowledge of the subject of art itself. For the most part, art of transcendence and transformation is not within the realm of possibility in school art. In this reconstructed reality, authenticity is displaced by artificiality, sublimation by alienation.

Current art education research seems to concentrate its efforts primarily on attempting to circumvent the problems of pluralism, particularly the ambiguity that surrounds the value of the different perspectives that seem to exist in virtual exclusion of one another. This involves overcoming the singular vision that accompanies a preoccupation with either the natural expressiveness of the child, the cognitive understanding of art from the perspective of artist, historian, or critic, or the affective knowing of art through intuition and sensuous experience. Another prevalent project involves means-ends studies that are primarily instrumental and, in reality, have little to do with art education, for example, the use of art making to enhance perceptual skills, self-concept, or knowledge in other disciplines.

Art educators have not dealt sufficiently with the place of art in education, with the place of art in society, nor with the distinctions between art and art education. Certainly, the task must involve the examining of assumptions about art and art education and the turning

around of the taken-for-granted world to discover whether the project of education is being fulfilled. Are we availing ourselves and our students of all the possibilities that lie in art? Or, are we hindering the project with maintenance of the status quo that takes refuge in this plurality? It is imperative that the relationship between art and society be addressed. What is the role of art? Of art education?

This study will attempt to make such concerns the issue for critical examination. In order to address the problem of art in everyday living, art in education will become the problematic. If there is to be greater understanding of the place of art in our lives, one has to question our understanding of art itself, particularly which concept forms the basis of art education. Such a discussion will establish that, for both educational purpose and social relevance, certain directions are more legitimate than others for art education.

The problem of this study is to reveal a concept of art that is more inclusive of human experience out of which can emerge the grounds for a more authentic art education. The question asked becomes, In the relationship between art and society, what understanding of art should form the basis of art education? How would this concept of art be reflected in praxis?

CHAPTER TWO

Scanning the Visible Landscape

A cursory review of current art education literature reveals agitation that centers primarily around two issues -- rationale and practice: art suffers a multiplicity of rationales (Lanier, 1974; 1983); art education maintains a kind of elitism with interest confined almost exclusively to the fine arts of museums and galleries at the exclusion of other visual arts available in the community (Lanier, 1983); theory does not filter down into practice (Efland, 1976; Hobbs, 1977; Lanier, 1974, 1983); school art (Efland, 1976b) is an entity in itself with little or no relation to either theoretical discussion or the art of the real world. In fact, Kern (1978) suggests that we have failed to demonstrate that the study of art can make a significant difference in the lives of students. In similar vein, Di Blasio (1981, p. 15) advises that possibly art education should admit that "hundreds of art programs throughout the country would come closest to dignity if they were allowed the privilege of a happy death."

Compounding these concerns are the mystification that surrounds art (Wolff, 1975), the concept of art itself, and

the feminist claim that the concept as we know it suffers a gendered bias that virtually excludes women as creators or interpreters of art in our culture. Added to this is the existence of what amounts to two forms of art education, the more conceptual aesthetic education and the practical model of school art. Suffice to say that the profession is undergoing a challenging self-examination.

The Dominant Conceptual Model -- Aesthetic Education

A reconstruction of the history of art education suggests the source of much of this concern may be located in the search for an appropriate rationale. For example, Dewey (1934), Read (1951), Lowenfeld (1955), Barkan (1962), Feldman (1970), Eisner (1972), Flannery (1974), Chapman (1978), Efland (1979), Dorn (1981), Jagodzinski (1981), Berson (1982), Hobbs (1977, 1983), Lanier (1974, 1981, 1983) all argue that art has a particular place in education. Unfortunately for the curriculum project, that "place" is grounded in many interpretations not only of art or art education, but also of education itself; we have come to condone a multiplicity of rationales, some of which are not specific to art alone. Thus, as art educators, we are left in the precarious position of making unreasonable and possibly exaggerated claims for value in art in endeavours which are not unique to art, while, at the same

time, not developing adequately its own legitimate role, thereby further veiling the issues.

The cogent question would seem to be: how is art to be related to education? Efland suggests that claims about their proper relations are "inextricably linked with conceptions of reality and the nature of knowledge" (1979, p. 5). In an earlier analysis (1971) he comments upon the shifting foci of art education, pointing to the wandering from one rallying cry to another with the resultant trading-off of one set of values for another. In effect, by the late 1960's, theoretically art education had evolved from the "child-centered" focus of the Progressive era to the cognitive emphasis of the post-Sputnik era. Essentially ignoring affect, this strong cognitive emphasis gave rise to a "cognitive backlash" resulting in the polarities of an either-or situation, that is, cognitive aesthetic education pitted against affective aesthetic experience.

Thus, while Lowenfeld (1955) developed the Progressive's notion of art activities to develop the "whole" child replete with an integrative and creative personality, Barkan (1962) challenged popular notions of creativity and materials exploration with his cognitively oriented triadic principle of artist/art historian/art critic. However, this cognitive emphasis was challenged by those who insisted upon the importance of the intuitive, sensuous knowledge of the affective experience. Kaelin,

1963, 1966; Madenfort, 1972; Stumbo, 1969)

Rising out of these two polarities to become the dominant paradigm of aesthetic education, the contextualists attempted a fusion of the cognitive and affective. Arguing for social and humanistic ends in art education (Chapman, 1971; Feldman, 1970; Lanier, 1972; and McFee, 1977), they advocated students be understood not only as artistic producers but also as cultural gourmets (Kern, 1970), connoisseurs (Eisner, 1977, 1979), critics, and historians, at the same time maintaining access to aesthetic experience.

In fact, what we are apt to find in art education is evidence of all of these developments present to some extent in one form or another. Thus, we find several varieties of aesthetic education co-existing with a strong interest in the instrumental value of art, what some authors such as Kern (1978) refer to as non-art areas or concerns. Clark and Zimmerman (1978, p. 34) list such non-art areas as "creativity, art therapy, self-realization, perception training, environmental awareness, social equality, special education, projective techniques and mastery of communication media" as the major rationales of contemporary art education. Suffice to indicate that art education presently makes some broad and distinctly different claims in endeavours which are not unique to art. No doubt art can and does contribute to each of these areas. However, it is the opinion of some (Clark and

Zimmerman, 1978; Dorn, 1981; Efland, 1978; Kern, 1978; Radar, 1976) including this writer that, in such instances, it would be very difficult to prove that any significant improvement in non-art areas is attributable specifically to art.

The stated values of art education may not belong exclusively to art, in fact, may not have much to do with that which is unique to art. In that case, one may be justified in claiming that art, in some instances, has gone beyond its own legitimate role to make unreasonable and possibly exaggerated claims when its value is stated to be in instrumental ends (Kern, 1979; Lanier, 1979), in cognitive learning (Efland, 1971), or in authentic aesthetic experience. (Hobbs, 1977; Jagodzinski, 1981; Lanier, 1981)

The point is that increasingly, since the 1960's, aesthetic education has become more and more acceptable as an appropriate direction for art education. (Hobbs, 1977; Lanier, 1933) However, we do not know what exactly comprises this aesthetic education in practice, we do not have at hand any developed criteria for determining whether this is an appropriate engagement for art education nor, in fact, for determining what would be an appropriate objective. At this point, it would seem that the task is not so much to determine the merits of the respective varieties of aesthetic education but to elucidate what would comprise an authentic art education.

Lanier (1979, p. 15) makes some steps in this direction when he recommends that art education, "should subscribe to a single purpose as its pre-eminent contribution to schooling." Of course he has his own idea of the single purpose that will both survive the claim that art is basic in education and be appropriate to our times and circumstances:

> This single purpose can be described as the enhancement of the pupil's aesthetic potential in visual experience. . . . In short, the purpose of art teaching is the "literate" citizen, one who is affectionately knowledgeable about all the visual arts of past and present and of other cultures and our own and how these arts can be dealt with . . . [but] literacy in visual terms should not mean merely efficiency in seeing, but should be defined as having a strong background in a wide range of visual documents.

He further explicates this conception of visual experience, indicating it not to be the "visual literacy" commonly equated with perception in art education but comparable to the sense of literacy implied in being well read. Then the initial classroom task would be the understanding of aesthetic behavior (1981) with the purpose of art teaching being to enhance pupil access to objects experienced aesthetically (1983).

Some suggestion of what might constitute the basis for

determining an appropriate orientation for art education is implied by Clark and Zimmerman (p. 34) who, in their dismissal of the previously stated values of art, indicate that art education should be based on the unique contribution of that which is indigenous to art. This immediately eliminates art curricula based on instrumental values or pure aesthetic experience since, as was discussed above, neither of these orientations is specific to art alone. It also opens the discussion to another set of alternatives.

An emergent vanguard of art educators, seemingly adhering to this notion of that which is indigenous to art, frame the question of the function of art in such a way that art is to address a more fundamental value, that is, the distinct value of art in human experience.

Kern (1976, p. 52) advocates the recognition of "art as a body of information and artifacts that needs to be studied in order to understand the role of art in human affairs." In similar vein, Hobbs (1977) proposes that art education pursue a social perspective which takes into consideration the cultural component of human experience. To this Jagodzinski adds an historical dimension claiming that

> aesthetics, art, and its experiences are socially and historically bound. . . . [New] art forms are critical and reflective of existence. . . . Each artistic "movement" has provided a different

affective vision for man to explore himself. (p. 29)

Situated in this context, Kern's (1978, p. 52) approach to the study of art as a discipline in its own right is topical.

> The objectives of the study of art as a discipline would be two-fold: 1) to develop an understanding of the nature of art and the ways it functions in our culture and, 2) in the light of this understanding, to be able to make rational decisions about art and its related aesthetic concerns as they impinge upon our personal lives. In other words, the study of art should result in students becoming knowledgeable about art and in being able to utilize this knowledge to enhance the quality of their lives in the visual aesthetic dimension of experience.

Thus, art education would not only include the skills and techniques of the artist but also those of the critic, historian, and philosopher as students investigate the structure, meaning, and value of art in the search to discover what art is. On the other hand, this might lead back to Dorn's questioning (1981, p. 31) whether reconstructionist models of art teaching are the best use of art in the school.

In fact, several of the alternative approaches to aesthetic education present attractive aspects of what an

art curriculum might include. Yet, nowhere is there developed the complete argument for assuming this to be the appropriate rationale for art education. It would seem that the basic assumptions behind such proposals would have to be revealed or clarified before one would have any notion of their potential. Without clearer understanding of the place of art in education, or, indeed, the role of art itself, without some basis for making informed judgements, we are inadequate to the task of discussing what should comprise an authentic art education. We can only project what should be the case according to our own prejudices -- certainly not a progressive solution.

Thus, it would seem that, insofar as thought is revealed in art education literature, we are caught in a bind. We continue to make analyses, ascribe meaning, project alternatives, and defend positions, in other words, perpetuate our own interests. However, we do not seem to know how the parts fit into the whole or how to get beyond where we are. Not only is it a bind, but also it is circular. How do we move from reproducing this limiting reality to participating in the creation of a new one?

To this point we have a substantial body of theoretical work. However, Horkheimer (cited in Weiner, 1974, p. 11) indicates that the real test of theory is not the judgment of scholars in the same field but "the agreement of men who speak and act for it." Then let us examine the practical influence of theory.

The Dominant Practical Model -- School Art

Resolving such theoretical concerns is not sufficient to the school situation. While the literature suggests that the dominant conceptual framework for school art instruction is aesthetic education, it also indicates another phenomenon -- school art, which must be recognized not only as the dominant mode of art education as found in the classroom (Efland, 1976, 1982; Hobbs, 1977, 1983; Kern, 1978; Lanier, 1974, 1983) but also as an entity in itself. Found only in schools but in schools everywhere and completely distinct from either adult art or child art (Efland, 1976), it is characterized by Wilson (1974, pp. 5-6) as game-like, conventional, ritualistic, and rule-governed, where "conventional themes are fed to children which result in school art with the proper expected look." Such characteristics would seem to set this art apart from the art of everyday life. Ironically, this is a feature it shares with fine or high art.

Despite what would seem to be a substantial body of theoretical work, it appears that the prevailing orientation in school art curricula, studio, is impervious to such theoretical considerations. Lanier addresses this conundrum in a terse statement that clearly illustrates that theory has not resolved the problems of art education.

Pointing to the irrelevance of the art curriculum to the present social crisis that constitutes the life-world of students, he claims that "Almost all that we presently do in teaching art in secondary schools is useless" (1969, p. 314). Further, that no significant change has occurred in the curriculum within the past forty years (Lanier, 1974, p. 13) is concurred with by Efland (1976, p. 43): Studio art and the mode and manner of the artist still predominate in a curriculum model that maintains art on the periphery of education.

Commenting upon the restrictive quality of this "preoccupation with the making of art objects which has plagued art education since its infancy," Lanier questions the notion of calling what we teach aesthetic education as necessarily indicating a change. Rather, he sees aesthetic education potentially maintaining the status quo for those teachers who emphasize studio production in the classroom: "Curricula which purport to follow the structure of aesthetic education too often reveal themselves on close examination to be studio curricula with some added components of criticism and history thrown in to make them 'respectable'" (1983, p. 34). Further to this, he makes a distinction (pp. 31, 32) between the student's perfectly legitimate world of art experience outside the school and quite another one inside, structured by the teacher's museum and gallery dominated discrimination.

Hardiman and Johnson (1983) have scrutinized data from

several current surveys pertaining to art education, including their own, in order to provide a description and analysis of the current state of art education. They tend to confirm the concerns of Lanier and Eflahd:

> The number of public secondary school art courses in studio areas increased by 35% during the past decade. This growth was characterized by a move away from a few general courses in art in which several media were taught, to a number of specialized art courses including basic design, drawing, painting; ceramics, photography, etc.. This change occurred most noticeably in the larger suburban schools. More than 50% of the secondary schools responding to the 1981 survey have eliminated art appreciation type courses during the same period of time. The districts which do offer such courses report small enrollments. In addition, it would appear that integrated programs in the arts and aesthetic education, which have been advocated with varying degrees of enthusiasm since the late '60's, have had little impact on the secondary school art curriculum. (p. 21)

Such a statement not only confirms; it is packed with what should lead to a number of pertinent questions. Unfortunately, even in the brief discussion of these trends, the authors do not raise let alone explore the

critical issues.

Does the fact that the studio model has withstood most theoretical discussion indicate that this focus is, in fact, most appropriate to art education? Lanier (1971) and Efland (1976) argue to the contrary. This is the case because theory, for the most part, has not filtered into educational practice -- the studio program prevails despite alternatives. Then, for what reasons do teachers continue with this dated and apparently inappropriate approach to art education when, seemingly, provocative alternatives exist?

Stroh locates the problem in the persistence of the assumptions of early art education. Much of this thinking was derived from "Viktor Lowenfeld, the Abstract Expressionists, and the iconoclastic period of the 1960's" which all pointed to a laissez-faire emphasis in art education, to process and psychomotor skills, but not to a cognitive emphasis in curriculum design. Learning occurred more or less through a process of "successive approximations" (1981, pp. 44,45)

La Chapelle (1982) uses a sociological analysis to suggest that the conditions which hinder an interchange between theory and practice in art education are ultimately derived from institutional forces, in this case higher education's resistance to change. With art education's evolution into an intellectual activity and the institutionalization of that activity, the boundaries

imposed by the norms and expectations of the discipline move it away from practice and toward isolation.

Some authors find the source of this studio emphasis in art education to be in the art departments or institutions of higher learning. (Hobbs, 1983; Miller, 1983; Stroh, 1981) Here the suggestion is that art educators are simply perpetuating the system under which they themselves were trained. In this context, reference is made to such practices as the separation of the arts department from the humanities and liberal arts, to the separation of studio practices from art history and art criticism, and to the strong aversion to using language in reference to visual arts.

Commenting upon the rigor with which studio art is still practiced in the 1980's, Hobbs (1983) points to the teacher-training program, suggesting that the majority of teachers are still being trained under the aegis of the making of art objects for self-expression and creativity. This he attributes to the pluralism at the intellectual leadership level, in effect, indicating that there is no leadership whatsoever. He locates the origin of the art teaching profession in university art departments where most art teachers receive their undergraduate training. Thus, to understand why art programs are as they appear to be, we must look to the prevailing values of art departments in general and art education programs in particular. Hobb's criticism is that rather than providing

intellectual leadership that would lead to viable alternatives, art education faculty typically fall back on disseminating to their undergraduate students the time-tested practice with which they themselves grew up. That is, simply, having children make art objects, the rationale being personality development. (pp. 32,33) Essentially, the operational philosophy of art education is no different from that of Lowenfeld and little different from that of the Progressive Education movement of 50 years ago.

Hawke's (1980) observations of the practice of beginning art teachers are relevant here: Teachers of art "attempt to establish a program for their students which contains repetitions of curricula, and models of teaching, which were significant in their own art education," that is the university Fine Arts studio model of teaching. (p. 291) Further, those teaching a "Fine Arts program" often find themselves resorting to "crafty" activities to keep their students interested. (p. 261)

Training for most art teachers involves Fine Arts education in the tradition of what Fuller (1983, p. 24) terms Late Modernism. Gablik's (1976) description of modern art gives some idea of the nature of the art that is carried over into the classroom as the model for the student's aesthetic. It is

> detached from all material needs and from any useful purpose. An art of conceptual and deductive logic, it is distinct from craft and

> from the integrated structure of society. . . . Twentieth century non-objective art is a definite break-away from concrete objects and images towards the construction of formal logical systems which are autonomous, and function independently of content. They are the pure expression of the artist's mental operations. (pp. 84, 85)

This is the art of the formalist tradition -- irrelevant to lived-life, devoid of human subject and context, caught up with aesthetic experience and abstract rules for gaining access to this experience.

However, analyses such as offered above (Hobbs, 1983; Miller, 1933; Stroh, 1981) do not strike me as having much more value than informed commentary. Rather than revealing why such is the case and the implications thereof, they seem to be adding more of the "what is the case." Again it can be seen that it is perpetuated but not why, thus missing the potential to go beyond the problem -- the analysis itself is reproductive. In this context it might be more fruitful simply to ask: why does studio art prevail in the classroom? In whose interest and toward what end? And, perhaps even more important, at what cost? That is, what in this studio approach is valuable and should be retained? And, what is there in the potential richness of art education that this approach cannot address?

Possibly Lowenfeldian influence and teacher training are very significant factors in maintaining the traditional approach to teaching art. Nevertheless, I would not want to dismiss the opportunity to carry the analysis further than this. For instance, it may be the case, as Bowles and Gintis (1976) suggest, that education is meant to perpetuate the social, political, and economic conditions. Or, does this point to Apple's (1979) hidden curriculum or Giroux's (1981) ideology of social control? Or possibly, this is, as Efland (1983) suggests, a residual of the nineteenth century working class aesthetic. Or it may be a manifestation of the purely rational way of thinking that has come to permeate the whole of our existence.

It would seem that there is adequate evidence in the literature to indicate a contradiction between theory and practice, that the dominant conceptual model of art education is aesthetic education while the dominant practical model is studio art. The point would seem to be that teachers are trained in and continue with what is familiar, studio art, and they are ill-equipped to deal with, or are not sensitive to alternatives. This is a situation which certain educators are indicating should not continue to be the case.

This breakdown of theory and practice reflects a similar phenomenon to be found on a grander scale in society as a whole. It is a further instance of twentieth century technocratic rationality, what Giroux (1981) refers

to as the culture of positivism. Then, the implications of the theory-practice split go far beyond the classroom. Without knowledge of these implications, teachers, for the most part, perpetuate this situation, albeit unwittingly.

The art that serves as a model in the classroom expresses a formalist aesthetic that maintains the status quo, a formalist aesthetic that, with its emphasis on the creativity of the individual and the fine arts of museums and galleries, reinforces an elitist concept of art and alienates students from their own aesthetic. This is an art that separates content from form, mind from body, work from life; an art which, on the one hand, is considered progressive inasmuch as it epitomizes the height of human intellectual development as seen in formal operational thought (Gablik, p. 85) while on the other hand, is inauthentic, excluding itself from the cultural and social conditions on which it depends and, by its very nature, eluding general or mass understanding or valuation.

There is no way of knowing from the art itself whether this art is better or more progressive. While it is assumed value free, unthinkingly, it has come to be accepted as the high art of the commonly held taxonomy. One knows that its dependence on a pristine abstraction is indicative of human intellectual development or progress. But, increasingly, one also knows that this draws on only one aspect of the human mind and the possibilities of consciousness, that there is a less precise, chaotic source

of human endeavour that goes beyond this isolating rationality to integrate us in many ways with every aspect of our existence. We also know that for one reason or another we are almost estranged from this other source and yet our exclusive dependence upon the rationality of science and technology is being eroded and gradually is shifting more and more toward inclusive, integrative, even authentic ways of thinking and existing. If, as art educators, we are aware of this shift, however gradual and subtle, how do we bring about a reflection of this in the classroom as the basis of a more authentic art education?

Certainly, one must question what is missed if art education is modelled after studio practices and a formalist aesthetic, particularly when one considers that the notion of the studio itself, as a physical space, has become formalized. What effect does this have on how one goes about the making of art or upon the art that is made? Or, on one's concept of what is legitimate or of value in art? In reality, wherein lies the uniqueness of the individual's own expression when a hierarchically structured aesthetic model defines, even if implicitly, the margins for what is considered good art? What are the effects of being dominated by an aesthetic that does not have the capacity to address the fullness of art?

What happens if my expression is continually modelled after another's aesthetic? What happens when there is not sufficient emphasis upon reflection, reflection upon my own

aesthetic, reflection upon my own aesthetic as it reflects my own life-world and experience? Again, the cogent question: What happens when my own aesthetic is devalued or not recognized and my experiences are framed from the perspective of another's aesthetic that is outside my experience and understanding?

If there is this suggestion of alienation of aesthetic consciousness, and the school is one institution that is instrumental in its reproduction, what, in the larger society, is conducive to, or instrumental in, this continuing to be the case? What comprises an authentic art education? What is the basis for deciding so?

As well, one would want to know whether rationales change. That is, does the purpose and value of art education remain the same for all time? Possibly one would want to contrast the position of Lanier (1979, p. 15) who indicates that the purpose and value of art education may not be perennial and universal but changes to remain appropriate for its time and place, to that of Arendt (1954) who maintains that education must be characterized by conservatism. Possibly in this dialectic lies the relationship between art and education.

In this context, art education should be located within its own social history in order to reach a clearer understanding of why school art, as such, prevails and the implications of its perpetuation.

School Art Contextualized

Public school art education exemplifies the gap between artistic and public discourse. Founded amidst "the contradiction between democratic rhetoric and oppressive practice" (Madaner, 1983/84, p. 26) of the nineteenth century, it had its origins in the European Industrial Revolution. That is, in industrial capitalism with its factory system and emergent working class, at which time the entrepreneurs demanded an education for working class children. Though the illusion is of pure care and benevolence, in actuality the motivation was primarily economic -- entrepreneurs needed trained workers to gain the competitive edge in industry.

By the end of the eighteenth century with the gradual demise of the guild systems in Europe, there was no agency to train artists for their roles in industry. Though the academies were in place to teach art, this was geared toward the fine artist of the upper class, certainly not appropriate for the working class and not necessarily applicable to industrial needs. The exception would be France's mercantile trade in such luxury goods as tapestries, porcelain, and fabrics which required the fine artists' training in decorative arts and thus was instrumental in maintaining little distinction between the fine and applied arts in the French academies.

Telescoping history considerably, we find henceforth

there was a split between education for the fine artist and that of the artisan, the art of the academy and that of the trade school. They served totally different purposes and classes and developed into quite different entities. On the one hand then, we find an art education that inducts its students into an elitist system of official codes in the grand tradition of les Beaux-arts, while, on the other hand, the interests of design in industry. According to Efland (1983, pp. 155,156) art education then perpetuated, and was meant to do so it would seem, class distinctions. One tradition was expressed in upper class patronage, academic eliteness, and an art-for-art's-sake ideology, the other in the industrial function of the working class, applied arts education, and eventually industrial education.

While both traditions taught through imitation, the difference was in subject -- the human figure versus geometry. Eventually, the academy was opposed as too rigid, particularly in Germany, and the emphasis on imitative drawing shifted to genius and aesthetic experience. However, this did not alter the split between upper class and working class art education.

Efland (p. 154) indicates that although there were attempts to democratize art education, the common school experience in America more or less emulated that of Europe. Thus, from the 1860's on in the industrial Massachusetts area, art education was fostered by the personal economic

interests of the merchant class who promoted industrial drawing in the common school as a means of developing the moral fibre, manual dexterity, and design knowledge necessary to industrial success. Co-existing was a fine arts tradition for young ladies of the bourgeois class.

In this context, the bourgeois class imposed itself upon the working class to leave the imprint of "working class art and a working class aesthetic" (Efland, p. 156). Common school art education had evolved to industrial training and the principal source of reform had been the economic self-interest of the wealthy ruling class. Art education was "not yet about either art or free inquiry, but about an acceptance of the industrial world and the right kind of moral character" (Nadaner, p. 26). No appeal was made to the aesthetic in this endeavour.

According to Jones (1974), by the 1890's art was elevated to an academic subject at the university. Art as decoration and appreciation together with changing views of the nature of the child began to influence art education in the common school. The emphasis gradually began to shift from industrial training to the child. The kindergarten movement with Froebel's concept of sensory learning and the "creative impulse," (Efland, 1976) Stanley Hall's child study centre (Ibid.), the notion of creative expression as formulated by Cizek (Duncum, 1982), and the beginnings of the progressive movement all pointed toward emphasis in creative expression. This was to culminate in Read's

(1936/1951) "meaningful experience" wherein the concern was for the creative and intellectual growth of the child with complete freedom to proceed at her own rate with the minimum of interference.

In the meantime, Dewey's (1934) notion of art informed a new concept, aesthetic education as formulated by Barkan (1962). This was countered by those such as Gaelin (1963) who denounced such a cognitive emphasis with an equal cry for the affective side of aesthetic experience and by others such as Efland (1971) and Lanier (1963) who attempted to reconcile the two.

Nadaner (1983/84) points to twentieth century attempts of public education to close the gap between artistic and public discourse through Expressionism and the Design movement, in particular, the Bauhaus. Expressionism, compatible with "free self-expression," emphasized a "democracy of the psychological" whereby "children in school and artists in society were seen to be linked . . . by something innate to everyone, a collective unconscious pool of expressive forms" (p. 26).

On the other hand, the Bauhaus negated the Renaissance connection and constructed "a democracy of the technological" whereby "traditions in western art were now subservient to basic principles of design" (Nadaner, 1983/84, p. 26). The fact that the overwhelming influence of the design movement on art education in the 40's and 50's is still predominant is not surprising in a

culture that "values technology for its own sake" (Ibid.). Rather, it further illustrates that the aesthetic, like other features of the human endeavour, has been made subservient to the interests of technology.

Most agree that the tenets of Lowenfeld (Alexander, 1981; Youngblood, 1982), Cizek (Duncum, 1982), and the Expressionist movement are residual in art education. Much of what happens is under the aegis of creativity and self-expression. But one must also agree with Nadaner that, "today, the design elements make up the most common course content in art education" (p. 26).

Rowland (1976, pp. 15,16) describes the school art scenario: 'Students are given formal instruction in the elements of design -- line, color, texture, etc., and then under the aegis of creativity, the teacher implores them to explore an idea or a number of ideas in a variety of media and to express themselves freely.' Considering the teacher's own probable training, it would seem that the direction of the expression may be preset, albeit implicitly.

Presumably the art teacher ascribes to what, more than likely, she is trained in herself and carries this into the classroom as the model of significant and good art. But, in most instances, this is an art that is removed from the life-world of most public school students and inaccessible to the extent of the students limited experience. Lanier insists that such a concentration on fine art as the

significant art "can only reinforce in the minds of the pupils the conviction that art is an esoteric area of human concern, unavailable to those who do not know its secrets" (1983, p. 34), which, I would suggest would be most at the student level.

With an art that is structured by the teacher's museum and gallery dominated discrimination, essentially a formal study of basic design, and the mandate of individuality and self-expression, the aesthetic would appear to have been pulled out of school art. The art that speaks of Marcuse's (1978) or Fuller's (1933) aesthetic dimension or addresses human endeavour, the art that situates itself within the culture of the art making, that speaks of cross cultural sharing and the humane, or that encourages transcendence and transformation cannot be addressed and thus, is not significant. Rather we are left with "the art which represents the continual wearing away of the spirit" (Richter, p. 27). Art is separated from the body and the life-world of the student. Formalism prevails as the dominant aesthetic with-in and with-out the schools. But, at what expense? What is being denied to children in that reproduced reality?

In its institutionalization, formalism was alluded to as being the democratizer. In contrast to academic art, all could know such art because all had access to the rules. (Richter, p. 23) But this may be pure illusion. Given the existence of a hidden curriculum (Apple, 1979)

and social structures that permit only a limited notion of art for the majority, in addition to the extensive formalization of the rules of form, color, and space, it is not likely that this art is more accessible. Rather, it becomes the special domain of the galleries and museums and that small elite who know the rules. For those who are exposed to it but do not know the rules, it is further evidence of the fact that art has nothing to do with living, that it speaks only to the informed. In any case, it is not understood as another and mutual way of knowing. Indeed, from the perspective of art in the classroom, it may well be that the teacher's own probable training guarantees that art does not become a democratizing agent.

Though well intentioned, art educators have not bridged the gap between artistic and public discourse. Rather, they have relegated art education to further irrelevance. There is now an aesthetic discourse that is particular only to school art and that has little or no connection to either public or artistic discourse. The emphasis of art education is as Nadaner claims:

> [S]chool programs experiment with materials and designs that will create the impressive object. Stereotypes of material and physical beauty are not questioned, but are systematically incorporated as comfortable end-points of the creative process. In sum, the status quo of the image world is reproduced and proliferated. (p. 27)

The possibility of critical inquiry into our modern culture of media imagery, or the "capacity of the individual to involve the feel of experience as the guide to purposeful action." (Ibid.) is usurped by unquestioned allegiance to a technologically limited aesthetic.

Historically, then, we have a development in school art which not only cannot disclose the fullness but also negates the possibilities of art, that perpetuates a limited notion which alienates the person from her own aesthetic. One must ask again: What are the consequences of reproducing this aesthetic in the classroom? What happens when one's own aesthetic is devalued or lost? When one lives alienated from one's own aesthetic and within the false consciousness of another's? How does one become conscious of and reclaim one's own aesthetic? Become aware of the other's aesthetic? Become conscious of the implications of the aesthetic for humankind? Can one impute value to different aesthetic consciousnesses? How does one progress aesthetically?

Extrapolating from Buck-Morss (1975), Gablik (1976), and Lippard (1983), abstract formalism gives us an art that, on the one hand, is promoted by the taste-makers and entrepreneurs and, on the other hand, is dehumanizing. According to Giroux (1981), the school is instrumental in reproducing such contradictions.

One would want to know how this aesthetic is

distributed and reproduced in the classroom. What is the aesthetic of the students themselves and what value is placed on this aesthetic? What, in the classroom relations themselves, reinforces this aesthetic and reproduces the relations of the larger society? In other words, how does schooling contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of the formalist aesthetic? How does it contribute to the devaluation or loss of one's own aesthetic? How does it help to perpetuate a society that more and more sets the person outside any way of understanding the wholeness or fullness of knowing, of experience or of self? Most importantantly, could these questions be turned round to ask how the school could contribute to a more authentic concept of art?

To approach such questions, it first seems necessary to consider the phenomenon of art itself. Giroux points to the necessity of both the historical and the critical in such an endeavour, what he refers to as the "self-formative genesis" indicating that a critical study of any field "becomes the historical development of specific social relationships operating at particular conjunctures during specific socio-historical periods" (p. 159).

Restatement of the Problem

To come to an understanding of what art is, and, in particular, the place of art in our society and which concept of art should form the basis of an authentic art education, it seems imperative to examine what place art has held in society from the time it became part of human experience; that is, to examine what art has meant as well as what it has come to mean. Making such an historical reconstruction will bring into view what we have come to regard as the traditions in contemporary art.

At the same time, it seems equally imperative to make problematic these traditions. Conceivably, the present use of the term "art" is confused by the distortions bound within the traditions themselves. For instance, are we correct in assuming that art has ascended as the straightforward, linear progression of styles presently acknowledged in most art history and art history teaching? Must we only acknowledge the Formalist principle of style evolution, pitting the rise of the innovative against the background of preceding or competing works, which in turn recedes as it is reproduced as the dominant genre and further innovative forms evolve? Is it, indeed, only the innovative, the new, that has aesthetic value? If this is the case, it seems probable that human genius will eventually exhaust itself of possibilities. In the meantime, how does one address the more traditional

expressions of the creative impulse? Is it appropriate or productive to accept unquestionably a taxonomy of art that relegates various forms of art making into a value-laden hierarchical structure?

The fact that stylistic evolution appears natural and logical and is, for the most part, what we are taught to accept, may go on unquestioned because our experiences have been limited to or shaped by an appreciation of only that which is innovative. It is just as possible that our art history has been mythologized; that there are compromises and distortions not only in art history but in the conditions that cause our history to appear in this linear, logical form in the first place. Is it not possible that such distortions have colored or even defined our concept of art?

As feminist literature will reveal, Giroux's (1981) "particular conjunctures" (p. 159) are, at best, illusions unless we are prepared to go beyond traditional analyses and pursue the root causes of hierarchical valuing of all human endeavours, not just art making. That is, feminist analyses indicate formalism to be one more aspect of the relations characteristic of every aspect of life in industrialized, technologized society. They also point to the need to enrich our understanding of art and to envision the possibilities to be found in art as in other cultural forms should we reach the point of living outside constricting hierarchical social relations that order human

endeavour into dominance/submission and public/private domains.

To re-iterate, the problem of this thesis is to elucidate what might be a more appropriate relationship between art and society and, out of this, what concept of art should form the basis of an authentic art education.

But, in order to suggest what should comprise an authentic art education, first it will be necessary to elucidate a more embracing, embodied understanding of art; one that is not only democratic but also conducive to transformation, to living creatively in a world where the perception is that, necessarily, all contribute and act in both a public and a private capacity, where hierarchies are no longer an issue. In order to come to such an understanding, we must first reconstruct the traditions of art as we have come to know them.

CHAPTER THREE

The Path: An Ever-widening Quagmire

A difficulty in dealing with any aspect of art is to discover which concept of art is being used. The assumption is that despite the predominance of a formalist concept of art and its hierarchical structuring of value, presumably there are a number of possibilities for what legitimately counts as, or can be called, art. In fact, some art historians have made it quite apparent that the concept of art is relative to or dependent upon the circumstances surrounding the making of art, particularly the nature of institutions that control the training of artists and the naming of criteria for what constitutes it. (Fuller, 1983; Hauser, 1982; Schorr, 1974)

One might go so far as to claim that, from one perspective, what is called art is determined by what those of the highest cultural level define as art at any particular moment. Then our art history just as easily could have taken on quite another complexion if other groups with different interests and criteria for art had dominated. Or, indeed, if the concept of art had been generous enough that the coexistent definitions had thrived

parallel to the dominant one.

From Techne to Autonomy

Pursuing the argument that the meaning of art has not always been the same, we soon discover that art has had different meanings at different stages of human development, not necessarily what we take as constitutive of art today. For instance, the Greek counterpart of our word "art," techne, referred not to the "fine" or "high" arts but, as Lobkowicz (1967) so lucidly describes, to a skill, that is, the skillful production of artifacts or the mastery of tasks.

It was not until the Italian Renaissance that the term art appeared, possibly as a derivative of arti, the term designating craft guilds. Whereas during the earlier Middle Ages, the equivalent of painters, sculptors and architects were regarded as manual workers, now there was a shift from the mere technical side to view painting, sculpture and architecture as part of the artes liberales, separate intellectual activities that were elevated above ordinary accomplishments. Techne was displaced by genius.

But even at this, art did not maintain one meaning. As the dominant social groups shifted, their needs were reflected in what they required of, or accepted as, art. For instance, during the Medici patronage of the

quattrocento, it was believed that art constituted a phenomenal extension of the real world. In the painting, the real world was extended to incorporate the divine, and the images, substituting for divine presence, were assumed to affect behavior accordingly. (Alpers, 1982)

However, in the cinquecento, as papal influence declined and Protestantism pressed to dominate, religious art was separated from secular art. Protestant society, expressing the consciousness of the time, was critical of the existence of this divine world and refuted the substitutive power of figurative art. What was sought was an art for sheer enjoyment, an art that reflected the intellectual ingenuity and imagination of the artist. The effect was the creation of "the setting for the sophisticated art lover with his repertoire of skills in visual analysis" (Woodfield, 1978, p. 225). Thus the notion of works of art as "dimonstrazioni" (p. 221) assumed prominence in the sixteenth century with the emergence of artistic creativity or virtuosity and the phenomenon known as Mannerism. Hence the stage was set for the "release of the visual image into an autonomous world" (p. 213), that is, the possibility for regarding art as an object, an object that stands outside human lives to be approached with the disengagement of an attitude of disinterested interest. In other words; the aesthetic attitude.

This changing social function of art created a different criteria for what counted as art. According to

Ogden (1974) as quattrocento patrons shifted their interest from craftsmanship and the purely instrumental role of the figurative arts to an appreciation of the artist as gifted and art as a display of mental ingenuity, the seeds were sown for the disinterested interest necessary to the aesthetic attitude. However, human development did not yet include such radical changes in perception to see this emerge as the distinct characteristic of even the cinquecento. For the spectator, the world of substitution still persisted and fused itself onto the newer world of fiction and imagination (Woodfield, p. 222), not separating itself completely until possibly as late as the eighteenth (Ogden), or, more plausibly, as Burger (1984) maintains not until the nineteenth century.

Out of this, it should be noted, the painted picture, the Italian artist Alberti's construct of a framed rectangle as a window into a second or substitute world, became the basis of Western painting. Alpers analysis (1982, p. 185) illustrates how, stylistically, the frame defined a rectangular surface which lent itself to an ordering of the image and, thereby formal analysis. In its original context, the concern was for perspectival use of space where the appearance of the object was a function of its distance from the viewer. As composition preceded craft, so meaning preceded representational function. The subject matter, preferably the ideal human possessing or dominating the world, was meant to engage the

viewer actively in analyzing the deeper textual meaning under the surface's pictorial meanings or representation. Accordingly (p. 187), in Michelangelo's work, human figures are central since we are to read creation as the creation of man, and not simply the world he inhabits but the world he possesses.

It was in this rational ordering and textual meaning that was assumed art's power over life. Proportion and symmetry expressed a reasoned approach to art, the masculine approach to the world. The represented perfection of the ideal human figure, usually the male, implied the moral harmony of the world. What lacked proportion or order suggested the unmediated, the irrationality and presumably the immorality of the female point of view. Understood was the fact that good art was rational and masculine. Thus Michelangelo's claim that contemporary Northern art was an art for women: since it mirrored nature and the natural landscape, it lacked the reason and proportion of the human figure "as a prior model or measure for the harmonious pictured world" (pp. 194-5).

The distinct difference in the contents of these two modes of painting raises interesting questions regarding what was considered to be valid knowledge. It also makes evident the fact that the Italian model could not address all art making, even at that time, with traditional forms of pictorial art being pushed aside by Alberti's definition of the painting. (p. 187) With this in mind, it is rather

provocative to learn that seventeenth century Dutch artists came out of a crafts tradition with their training taking place within the structure of the craft guild in the company of other craftsmen such as tapestry-makers, smiths, doctors, bakers, and masons. (Alpers, 1983, pp. 112-14)

However, there is little left to the imagination when one questions the training of women in art in whichever tradition. As well, the inference of "male" and "female" raises the issue of how male artists perceived the female and causes one to wonder how the female perceived herself in this social milieu. If a difference in content denoted masculinity or femininity, was the difference due to cultural conditioning or biology? Can we attribute changes in form to masculinity or femininity, or, do we all draw from the same biological well?

It should be noted that this particular development was not a universal phenomenon but specific to the Italian Renaissance although its influence soon spread throughout Western Europe and eventually dominated most of Western culture. Ultimately, the standards for Western art, standards that have persisted to the present day, that is, the "fine arts" tradition, were derived from the attitudes and artistic developments of this period. In fact, it is the opinion of some (Hauser, 1982) that this commodity function of art that was instituted in the quattrocento and realized in Mannerism, marks the emergence of modern art.

Remnants of this influence are residual in art-making

today: the painted picture as the significant art construct; linear progression of style as the hallmark of cultural achievement; the sharp delineation between art and craft; the emphasis upon intellectualization; and, attitudes toward women as serious art makers. Certainly as part of the public school art history tradition, aspects of the Italian Renaissance still vie for the art public's consciousness.

As the high arts were being elevated to the status of autonomy, purely decorative and narrative art was being displaced by an art that was acquirable and portable, that is, a commodity. But it was a commodity that was accessible principally to those with special talent or means, the domain of a cultivated elite. For the most part, art that functioned as part of normal, everyday living was designated as feminine and relegated to the rank of a minor art or a craft. The question must be raised, How is it that the "high" arts accrued more value in Western art history than the applied and decorative arts and crafts which are represented primarily by women's endeavours in such traditional activities as needlework, weaving and pot-making?

To answer such a question one must look to a number of circumstances. First, the shift from a dependence on patronage to the principles of profit maximization of a market economy led to the culture of the court finally being displaced by bourgeois culture during the eighteenth

century. At the same time, there was an intensification of the notion of an autonomous art and the pure aesthetic experience on the part of both "high" bourgeois culcure and artists alike. Eventually art came to be characterized by autonomy and the absence of consequence. To realize just how far this influence has intruded into our modern experience, we must look at the development of this autonomous, linear art historical perspective as exemplified in the modern aesthetic, particularly in its dominant form, Abstract Formalism, and its foremost critic, the Avant-garde.

Abstract Formalism

Fuller (1983) indicates the beginning of the modern aesthetic by tracing the divorce of the high arts from the life-world with an anthropological reference to traditional aboriginal art: ". . . everyone participated in artistic production . . . art was a dimension of everyone's productive life" (p. 18). He describes this aesthetic dimension as including

> instinctive aesthetic sensations; and imaginative physical work on materials and stylistic conventions as given by tradition. Through engagement with the latter, an individual's work enters into the 'symbolic order' of a society

without losing its individuality.

And, for thousands of years the artist had been performing essentially practical tasks. He had "helped support life and had helped communicate with good and evil spirits as an intercessor at religious ceremonies and divine services." His role was inextricably intertwined with every aspect of life as "prophet and seer, eulogist and propagandist, teacher and educator, entertainer and master of ceremonies" (Lauser, p. 279)

However, with the development of industrial capitalism and the emergence of connoisseurs and collectors, and with the factory system and the emergence of a working class, the aesthetic dimension was taken out of everyday life. "Art" persisted but not as part of a person's lived relationship to her world. "Rather it became the pursuit of certain creative men of genius, who were set apart in the sense that they were not expected to bow to the inexorable dictates of an even more tyrannous Reality Principle" (Fuller, p. 20). Henceforth, the high arts were divorced from the life-world with the effect of aesthetic form having acquired its autonomy from, and indeed in opposition to, life as lived.

At the same time as the eighteenth century shift from court culture to bourgeois culture, there was an intensification of art's separation from bourgeois society. "High" bourgeois culture protested economic culture and artists isolated themselves from the masses and the market.

Finally, by the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, "The apartness from the praxis of life that had always constituted the institutional status of art" [that is, the production, distribution, attitudes toward, and reception of art (Burger, p. 22)] "in bourgeois society now becomes the contents of the works" (Fuller, p. 27). Aestheticism and Symbolism predominated. Form was transformed into content as art severed all social relevance to become pure aesthetic experience. Thus was achieved an art characterized by autonomy and the absence of consequence. (p. 22)

Burger describes this as the principle of development of art in bourgeois society: "Only after art had in fact wholly detached itself from everything that is the praxis of life" can we see "the progressive detachment of art from real life contexts, and the correlative crystallization of a distinctive sphere of experience, i.e., the aesthetic" (p. 23).

The assumption was that "there was an unchanging object known as 'art', or an isolatable experience called 'beauty' or the 'aesthetic' " the whole purpose of which was "gloriously useless, an 'end in itself' loftily removed from any sordid social purpose." Art was extricated from the material practices, social relations, and ideological meanings in which it is always caught up, and raised to the status of solitary fetish" (Eagleton, 1983, p. 21). Detached from history and consequence, its single criterion

being innovation (Jauss, 1982, pp. 34,35), art became a commodity, an object detached from the human subjects who produced or used it -- the grounds for abstract formalism were laid.

Buck-Morss (1975) makes a very important distinction between abstract formalism and abstraction.

> Abstract formalism and abstraction are not the same thing. The ability to abstract is a cognitive skill fundamental to human language competence . . . but formalism is a particular kind of abstraction. It is the ability to separate form from content, and the structuring of experience in accord with that distinction. Its model is the supra-empirical, purely formal language of mathematics. (pp. 37,38)

It is this separating of the subject from the object, with the object becoming a product of thought, that allows the idea to substitute for reality itself and thus splits thinking and doing, theory and practice. (pp. 40,41)

This divorce between theory and practice creates a situation where we do everything in the head. We are guided by the form of an argument and ignore its content. 'It follows that if contradictions exist in reality, they are dealt with in thought. Thus, from Buck-Morss' perspective, abstract formalism fosters a conformist position, a maintenance of the status quo. "Abstract, formal cognitive skills may indeed enhance the . . . ability to adapt to

present society rather than to critrcize or change it" (p. 41).

Recognizing formalism as the modern aesthetic paradigm, Richter, following Kuhn's (1962) analysis describes it thus:

> An aesthetic paradigm . . . is an interrelated system of beliefs concerning the proper objects of aesthetic experience, the correct way in which these may be perceived, their relative values, the underlying basis for them, the relationship between aesthetic values and others, and so on. An aesthetic paradigm functions by informing those who approach art under its influence, as to what to seek in works of art, how to seek this, how to recognize the relative values of those things that claim to produce it, and so on.
>
> Modern formalist aesthetics, in this sense, is an aesthetic paradigm -- it is an entrenched one. It achieved this status by supplanting its predecessor [and the corresponding significance of subject]. (Richter, 1981, p. 25)

In keeping with nineteenth century positivist philosophy (Kolakowski, 1968), the formalist aesthetic paradigm includes its own specific rules and evaluative criteria. There is no doubt as to what can be called art.

Accordingly, the formalist principle of "evolution"

marks innovation as the distinguishing feature of a work of art. Thus, as a new work arises against the background of preceding or competing works, and reaches the "high point" as a successful form, it is quickly reproduced and thereby increasingly automatized, until finally, it is supplanted by the next emerging form, itself lingering on as a used up genre. (Jauss, pp. 33,34) But the autonomous dynamics of this evolution must not be seen as directional since "as the dialectical self-production of new forms it requires no teleology" (p. 33).

The critic, Roger Fry, figures prominently among those who molded our modern interest in the formalist aesthetic. His writings on 'pure form' (1920/1974) reveal not only what formalism is but also for whom and toward what end. Perhaps Klingender's (1943/1975) paraphrasing best reveals Fry's intent: Art is a

> 'spiritual exercise' as remote from actual life as 'the most useless mathematical theory' but of 'infinite importance' to those who experience it. Those capable of doing so are, he admits, but few: 'in proportion as art becomes purer, the number of people to whom it appeals gets less,' . . . 'true art is becoming more and more esoteric and hidden, like a heretical sect.' . . . [Further] 'more and more I understand nothing of humanity in the mass and au fond I only believe in the value of some individuals. . . . I know

> that I have no right to detach myself so completely from the fate of my kind, but I have never been able to believe in political values.' (p. 10)

Klingender evaluates such art: "Estranged from life and indifferent to the fate of mankind, art, as here defined, has no other function but to cultivate the sensibility of the few elect" (Ibid.).

As art progressed through the twentieth century there was a gradual dehumanization or "dematerialization" (Gablik, 1976; Lippard, 1983; Ortega y Gasset, 1948/1972). Art, devoid of subject matter per se, becomes all process and visual information as perceived in the formal elements of design. The new reality exists in the surface itself, in the manipulation of materials, but not in human experience. There is a separation of mind from body, from the life-world. The individual loses significance. According to Fuller (1983, p. 26), the goal is anonymity.

Fuller tells us that modernism completed the "draining away of the aesthetic dimension even within the arts themselves" (p. 24). Eventually, art simply pursued sensuous effects. "Art was no longer a 'transitional object'" a mediator between the real and the 'cosmos of hope' but rather a mere thing, indistinguishable from other phenomena" (p. 33). Then, art also lost its illusory capacity or what Marcuse (1978) referred to as the ability to create realities within the existing one.

Technocratic Rationality and the Culture of Positivism

Abstract formalism is indicative of a particular rationality within a particular culture -- a technocratic rationality within the positivist culture of an industrialized society. Extracting from Lukacs' (1971) work on the structural identity between mind and society, Buck-Morss indicates that the logical structure of abstract formalism "far from being universal, is itself the product of history, . . . the form of cognition is itself social content" (p. 37). Thus, abstract formal thought "became the dominant cognitive structure with the emergence of Western Capitalism which first made possible a shift in the mode of production from agriculture to industry" (p. 39). Then, essentially, abstract formalism is a characteristic of industrialization which "when it begins to dominate all thought . . . becomes an end in itself" (p. 45), without regard for social and human considerations.

Buck-Morss links abstract formalism with the bourgeois idealist tradition of Kant and Western industrial capitalism. Using Lukacs' analysis which links Marx and Kant, she traces abstract formalism back to Kantian formalism which, she claims, has dominated technical and theoretical thinking in the West since the late nineteenth century. Accordingly, she indicates that Kant's formalism which "attributed cognitive value to the abstract structure of verbal judgements and the rational forms of time, space

and causality, regardless of particular, concrete content," paralleled "the Capitalist concern for abstract exchange value rather than social use value"(p. 38).

Further to this, Buck-Morss maintains that Kant's dualism (appearances/phenomena, essences/nouema) which separated formal mental operations from the perceptual objects which provided the content of thought, "was the cognitive counterpart to the alienation of workers from the object of their production" (Ibid.). From this, it follows that this logic "provided the structural base of social and economic relations and, within thought, so dominated other forms of mental operations as to provide a cosmological paradigm, determining the notions of reality and truth" (Ibid).

Buck-Morss' analysis of abstract formalism echoes Kolakowski's (1968) analysis of positivism, variations of which can be regarded as the product of a specific culture. In its contemporary form, logical empiricism, this culture is one in which "technological efficiency is regarded as the highest value, the culture we usually call 'technocratic'" (Kolakowski, p. 202).

Positivist philosophy, particularly the more radical view which, above all, insists upon strict obedience to verifiability, uses a language that limits our possibilities for acting in the world.

> It imposes upon us a collection of rules and evaluative criteria that tells us what kind of

> contents in our statements about the world deserves the name of knowledge and supplies us with norms that make it possible to distinguish between that which may and that which may not reasonably be asked. (p.202)

It is "an act of escape from commitments, an escape masked as a definition of knowledge" (p. 210). It invalidates all such matters as transcendental truths and synthetic judgements as "mere figments of the imagination stemming from intellectual laziness." It is "the escapist's design for living, a life voluntarily cut off from participation in anything that cannot be correctly formulated" (Ibid.).

Separating fact from value, the positivist rationality claims objectivity. Unable to view holistically, it fragments life into small pieces that can be examined scientifically thereby missing the interrelationships and interdependence of the parts. Discarding the historical and "necessary truths" (p. 215), it concentrates on the present, on what is, thereby ignoring what must be. As Giroux maintains (1981, p. 45), it neutralizes the ethical, minimizes contradictions and conflict and eliminates opposition. It <u>denies</u> "human action grounded in historical insight and committed to emancipation in all spheres of human activity" (p. 45). Carried by a self-perpetuating logic, it appears to be accepted by the oppressed and the oppressors alike. Its emphasis is technical control and coordination derived from a theoretical stance, a form of

social engineering analogous to the applied physical sciences, essentially, "a theory that reduces human life to animal forms of appropriating the world" (Kolakowski, p. 212).

Positivism, like all ideologies, is unaware of its own relativity and dependence on specific cultural values. "It is a technocratic ideology in the mystifying guise of an anti-ideological, scientific view of the world, purged of value judgements" (p. 202). It seeks to neutralize science and human thinking to achieve "the scientific view" making "the criteria for correctness of knowledge completely independent of the cultural, historical, and biological conditions under which this knowledge is achieved." With axiology neutralized, we have not only an absolute observational standpoint (p. 203) but also a situation that eliminates any possibility of encountering truth. (p. 212)

Kolakowski's and Buck-Morss' analyses illustrate the notion of a culture of positivism. Further, it appears that a technocratic rationality can be equated with a particular mode of thought, abstract formalism, and that the stage was set for this particular mode of thought by the level of cognitive development or achievement in society itself. That is, the shift from an agrarian to an industrial society was marked by a change in consciousness (Thompson, 1963; Ewan, 1976) which, at the same time, necessitated a change in culture.

In this context, Giroux (1981) centers an argument

around the rise of this culture of positivism. Adopting Gramsci's (1971) concept of ideological hegemony, he equates what he sees as a loss of historical consciousness with Marcuse's (1964) false consciousness, "the repression of society in the formation of concepts . . . a confinement of experience . . . restriction of meaning" (Giroux, p. 39). This is the basis for a dominating form of social control that takes place through an "elaborate system of norms and imperatives . . . used to lend institutional authority a degree of unity and certainty and provide it with an apparent universality and legitimation" (Ibid.).

A specific form of ideological hegemony, cultural hegemony, is used by ruling elites to reproduce their economic and political power. (pp. 39, 47) That is, advanced industrial societies distribute "not only economic goods and services but also certain forms of cultural capital," (p. 40) "that system of meanings, abilities, language forms and tastes that are directly and indirectly defined by dominant groups as socially legitimate" (Apple, 1979, p. 496). However, one must reject an overdetermined view of this relationship and recognize that historically there is always a dialectical tension within institutions and within the larger society which always provides the possibility for social transformation.

Underlying cultural hegemony is the rise of science and technology and the subsequent growth of the culture of positivism which linked supply and consumption. With the

monumental growth of productive capacity that came out of industrialization and the ensuing social conflict of the 1920's that saw workers seeking to put industrialism into their own hands and realize the utopian possibilities of machinery (Ewen, p. 201), there was need for both goods distribution and social control. The ideology of consumption addressed both of these needs of industry.

Consumer culture "was born as an apparatus for doing battle for the control of social space . . . for control over daily life" (p. 189). Corporate capitalism required a neutralized, pacific social ethic. It found this in the notion of a consumable social democracy where advertising and consumerism were agents of transformation in an ever shrinking arena for popularly defined culture. (p. 190) Corporate ideology maintained that a consumer society would both meet and neutralize political opposition to capitalism. The contentious issue of industrial management of worker time and social space was reconciled by corporate management's timely maneuvre to join forces with its opposition in a call for a better life, the mythologized American dream. Consumption would be the opiate for all ills. In fact, workers unwittingly gave up the possibility of determining the terms of their own existence in return for the false hope of meaningful relationships. Routinized, monsterous work was traded off for immediate gratification and excitement. According to Ewan (p. 194), this gave rise to a mass consumer market and mass culture,

and ensured penetration of the corporate principle into all aspects of human life. Mass culture was at the same time a controlling agent and an escape route.

As Lukacs (1971) argues, this had a decisive effect on paradigms of work, social life, and consciousness. All areas of social existence were now informed, though far from entirely controlled, by the newly charged rationality of advanced industrial capitalism. Essentially the standardization of popular culture and the advance of consumerism gave rise to powerful new modes of administration in the public sphere.

At the same time, while industrialized culture was radically transforming daily life, scientific management changed the real nature and perhaps the real value of work, bringing us to what Braverman (1974) describes as the "degradation" of labour. "Work, once the repository of skill and social interaction, [became] a series of preordained gestures" (Ewen, pp. 193-94). The integration of skill and imagination that had once characterized craft production "gave way to a fragmented work process in which conception was separated from both the execution and the experience of the work" (Giroux, p. 410). Thus, as the commodity became a universal form, the very perceptions engendered within this process" began to reflect these priorities: "the primacy of the system of exchange, the destruction of craft, the fragmentation of work and social life" (Lukacs in Ewen, p. 193).

Together with these changes was a form of "technocratic legitimation." The emphasis shifted from the human condition to material and technical growth and appeared to be a "social force generated by its own laws" (Giroux, pp. 41,42), laws governed by a rationality that appeared to exist above and beyond human control. As the prevailing consciousness, it celebrated the continued enlargement of the comforts of life and the productivity of labour "through increasing submission of the public to laws that govern the technical mastery of both human beings and nature" (Ibid.). The price for this increased productivity was "the continued refinement and administration of not simply the forces of production but the constitutive nature of consciousness itself" (Ibid.).

The emphasis of positivist rationality is technical control and coordination derived from a theoretical stance, a form of social engineering which denies the principle of people determining their own existence. It is this denial that Giroux takes to be the "essence of the prevailing hegemonic ideology." Increasingly committed to "an ever-expanding network of administrative systems and social control technologies," (p. 45) a technocratic rationality cannot entertain such notions as emancipation. Within the limited, fragmented view of this framework, there is no perspective from which to speculate potential change. "Silent about its' own ideology, the culture of positivism provides no conceptual insight into how oppression might

mask itself in the language and lived experiences of daily life" (Ibid.).

The culture of positivism does more than simply rationalize existing society:

> [T]he culture of positivism is not just a set of ideas, disseminated by the culture industry; it is also a material force, a set of material practices that are embedded in the routines and experiences of our daily lives. In a sense, the daily rhythm of our lives is structured, in part, by the technical imperatives of society that objectifies all it touches. (p. 44)

Though there are challenges and contradictions to this system, generally they lack political focus and "end up serving to maintain the very conditions and consciousness that spurred them in the first place" (Ibid.). This latter conclusion is particularly relevant to the Avant-garde insurrections within the art world that so readily become co-opted.

The significance of a discussion of cultural hegemony is in illustrating how technocratic rationality and positivism are manifested in modern culture. Also, it lets us see how this rationality, as part of the prevailing cultural hegemony, is essential to the reproduction of the formalist aesthetic. But, as will be developed later in the thesis, the notion of technocratic rationality has far deeper implications than simply the reproduction of the

formalist aesthetic. Indeed, this type of rationality is indicative of the intellectual or cognitive development of society itself which, in turn, corresponds to our history of industrialization. And it is this same rationality that frames or dictates not just the art but a whole way of life with similar limitations and contradictions including hierarchical valuation, the artificial split between public and private endeavour, and other such relations of dominance/submission.

Transposing the above discussion to art, one can readily see that abstract formalism has far reaching consequences that go beyond conformity to include reification, fetishism and alienation, potentially the separation of the person from her culture, her history, her self-reflection and certainly any notion of her own aesthetic. Since mediation between the work and the viewer is not a consideration, there is little or no possibility for the reception and influence of the work, for the changing horizon-of-expectations that Jauss (1982, p. 28) claims to be necessary for critical understanding. In the same way that our tastes reflect what has been adopted as the standard, so our consciousness is moulded and our desires smothered. We are left with an art of the head, an art that is disembodied. What is born of individual experience is displaced by objectivity and universality. The possibility of personal transformation is of little or no consequence in the larger formalist scheme.

Although the formalist view of art has been the standard by which artistic products have been judged since the Renaissance, by the mid-twentieth century this view was challenged as irrelevant. The question is, did any opposing views of art have the impact intended? Or, does the formalist code still insinuate itself into contemporary art making as a continuation of the autonomous fine arts tradition? The very fact of cultural hegemony implies appropriation of any opposition.

In this context, if abstract formalism still informs what counts as the aesthetic, who defines this aesthetic, and who has access to it? How is it legitimated and whose interests does it serve? What are the contradictions between its claims and reality? What does this aesthetic contribute to the well-being or transformation of humankind? What is missing for those whose aesthetic it is not and at what cost? How abstract formalism has manifested itself in twentieth century art is illustrated in the ensuing discussion of Modernism and the avant-garde.

Modernism and the Avant-garde

Though its seeds were sown as early as the Italian Renaissance, the autonomous Fine Arts tradition finally emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century period of industrial capitalism. Burger (1984)

argues that this was only possible after art, as the "pure" aesthetic of nineteenth century Aestheticism, had altogether detached itself from the praxis of life and this was perceived as fact, that is, only after this complete separation could the aesthetic develop "purely" (p. 22) and the phenomenon of art become fact. Only after perception of art as fact (p. 17) could the avant-garde movement turn against art as institution with full cognizance of its endeavour.

From the eighteenth century, with the decline of both official patronage and the Academies and the corresponding rise of the gallery systems and museums, courtly-representative culture was displaced by bourgeois culture. Artists' dependence upon patrons gradually was replaced by "an anonymous structural dependence on the market and its principles of profit maximization" (Burger, 1984, p. x). Art was being turned into a cultural commodity.

Historically artists were dependent for training and consequent status and security upon approved institutions, from the early Christian monasteries, through lodges and guilds, and, from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries onwards, the officially supported academies which determined the officially approved style. However, during the nineteenth century, the academies declined in importance. In fact, their alliance, whether formally or indirectly, with conservative political forces aroused the antipathy of many artists. As well, the rise of the notion

of artistic genius and the need for its free expression required the artist to work outside the academic tradition. Thus, for one reason or another, artists removed themselves from official patronage and training and the consequent status and security.

However, the art critic and art dealer were instrumental in filling this breech between the new breed of artists and the academy. The prosperity of the middle class bourgeoisie in nineteenth century France, England, Germany and the United States created a need for symbols of this newly acquired wealth, status and power. This greatly enhanced the market for paintings leading to a revival of art dealing in the late 1850's, making it possible for artists to reach the public and eventually support themselves. Artists, at the same time despising attachment to the materialist values of this bourgeois society, unwittingly relinquished control of their work to museum policy makers, critics, historians and dealers--henceforth, the official tastemakers and the dominant force in the art world. (Cockcroft, 1974, p. 39)

As the aesthetic of the aspiring bourgeois class which had achieved a consciousness of a class pour-soi in the Sartrean sense and consolidated their political power, this art was an expression of the "pure" aesthetic of late nineteenth century Aestheticism. The notion of art as an institution with autonomy status was developed fully by the end of the eighteenth century. The aesthetic writings of

Baumgarten, Kant, and Schiller "presuppose[d] the completed evolution of art as a sphere that [was] detached from the praxis of life" (Burger, p. 25). However, it was not until much later that the contents of this art lost its political character and succeeded in being nothing other than art.

The separation of art from bourgeois society was a gradual process, intensifying as there came to be increasing consciousness on the part of the artist and the perceiver. Increasingly, from the middle of the nineteenth century, "the form-content dialectic of artistic structures shifted in favor of form" (Burger, p. 19). Increasingly, the content of a work of art, its statement, receded "in relation to its formal aspect, which defined itself as the aesthetic in the narrower sense" (Ibid.). Viewed as increasing command over means and sensitizing of the viewer, the point is that "means become available as the category 'content' withers" (p. 20) to the point of becoming stylistic principle. Eventually, "the apartness from the praxis in life that had always constituted the institutional status of art in bourgeois society" (p. 27) became the content of works.

Once autonomy was acquired, the self-criticism of art could proceed. Having shed all that was alien to it, art necessarily became problematic to itself. "As institution and content coincide, social ineffectuality stands revealed as the essence of art in bourgeois society, and thus provokes the self-criticism of art" (p. 27). Though still

political in the sense that it was not created in a vacuum, at the same time that art acquired its autonomy, art also lost its power. Perhaps the most effective aspect of the avant-garde protest has been the revealing of this "nexus between autonomy and the absence of any consequences" (p. 22).

It is to aestheticism and the consequent autonomy and lack of social impact that the avant-garde protested, their aim being the reintegration of art into the praxis of life. The avant-gardists turned against art as institution, that is, "the productive and distributive apparatus and also the ideas about art that prevail at a given time and that determine the reception of works" (p. 22). They made such general categories of the work of art as artistic means or procedures recognizable in their generality "because they no longer chose means according to a stylistic principle, but [availed themselves] of them as means" (p. 19). With this "self-criticism of the social subsystem, art," came the "'objective understanding' of past phases of development" (p. 22) and the possibility of realizing the "obsidedness" of such constructions.

The bourgeois concept of "high culture" was expressed in "Modernism" which embraced the "pure" aesthetic (Huyssen, 1981, p. 27) and, at all costs, avoided modern mass culture. Initially, Modernism described itself through transition, originally the transition from old to new, from tradition to present; more recently Modernism

appearance of a new order while, in actuality, its conservativeness gave it "due patronage in all domains of cultural and intellectual life" (p. 70).

As Eagleton suggests, such an aesthetic had particular relevance for the dominant political system: "It has helped, wittingly or not, to sustain and reinforce its assumptions" (1983, p. 196). Indeed, the natural conformity of this art to Cold War needs suggests "a major form of complicity with the status quo" (Tagg, p. 70). Its novelty of style and succession of stars suggesting progressiveness, the culture industry as much as the government realized in this ahistorical, apolitical art not only Cold War propaganda for the Free and Open West, but also, an art that offered no challenge to the imperial, economic and military interests.

Whereas Modernism was to preserve high art from the encroachments of mass culture, the original intent of the avant-garde was to democratize art. That is, avant-gardism was intended to bridge the gap between popular culture and high art, to reintegrate art into everyday life, or, as Huyssen (1981) points out, to subvert art's autonomy, its artificial separation from life, its institutionalization as "high art" (p. 27).

From the outset, avant-garde artists announced their opposition to the rationalism and authoritarianism of modern industrial life and called for free, individual self-expression and the rehabilitation of the flesh.

However, co-opted by the power brokers and the culture industry, the avant-garde has never been the radical breakthrough it was intended to be.

Gowans (1981) comments upon the rise to prominence of what he terms avant-garde art:

> Avant-garde arts have . . . a subjective social purpose: to inculcate a certain way of seeing in ethically relative, and hence politically harmless terms. For this reason governments everywhere, with the sure instinct of the powerful and would-be-powerful throughout history, have patronized and encouraged and thereby created that self-contradiction, our avant-garde Establishment.

Indeed, as the feminists illustrate, the social and creative freedom that vanguard art was supposed to embody as a universal ideal was, in reality, a freedom for a limited number, "a freedom for men only, a freedom that depended upon the domination of others" (Broude and Garrard, 1982, p. 11).

Duncan (1982, p. 294) exposes what she refers to as the myth of the avant-garde: male virility and sexual domination co-existent with individual artistic freedom and artistic innovation. Assuming an anti-bourgeois stance, the avant-garde artist's exploitation of women as models and his dependence upon dealers and collectors constituted on a sexual level the basic class relationships of

capitalist society.

Further, the anti-bourgeois stance of the avant-garde was quickly co-opted by art historians who realized this art was ideologically useful: "Vanguard paintings . . . function as icons of individualism, objects that silently turn the abstractions of liberal ideology into visible and concrete experience" (Ibid.). Obviously, such artistic freedom implied human freedom, particularly human freedom in the Western democratic world. This opportunistic presumption of Cold War politics buoyed up the West's self-image without any threat whatsoever of subversion or reprisal. Clearly, any clout such art could have was co-opted by its immediate acceptance into mainstream art. The idealism and provocative biting edge were smoothed out quickly and quietly with gallery walls and high price tags. Vanguardism produced "few icons to elevate the spirit, emphasizing instead an aesthetic of wit, process, context, and analysis of consciousness" (de Duve, 1984, p. 70). Ironically, vanguardism became another dogma to buttress existing power structures.

Expressing distaste for bourgeois art, the avant-garde intended to confront and democratize, just as the European avant-garde attempted to undermine and transform "institution art," so the American avant-garde struggled against "the entrenched conditions of Modernism and Abstract Expressionism" (Huyssen, p. 31). Though this attempt was made with vigor in the 1960's by the post-

modernists, eventually such art forms as Pop, Concept, Happenings, and Performance Art were co-opted themselves by the culture industry and corporate monopolies to become dogmas in their own right.

The prediction of the "funeral for art" became the new intellectual preoccupation -- Modernism had played itself out (Habermas, 1981) while Post-modernism, likewise, was "the endgame of the avant-garde" (Huyssen, p. 31). Attempts to be continually more progressive within the ever more constricted circumstances of the heightened intellectualization of Formalism exhausted the endeavour. With its ever narrower focus, this art appeared to consume itself. This pessimistic prediction of the death of art is ironical. Conceivably, the only forms of art consistent with the autonomous, linear art historical tradition risk extinction. Taken to its limit, there will be an end to this art.

But, from the feminist perspective, in the "death" of this art presumably one should find consolation if one bears in mind what, in this instance, was being named art. For this is an ever-narrowing, rational, male construction that appeals to and is understood by fewer and fewer people. Increasingly intellectualized, disembodied, and exclusive and dependent upon relations of dominance and denial, it is neither able to, nor does it care to, address what the rest of the world understands to be art. As Tagg argues, painting since 1945

> is fixed in our minds as a great evolutionary tree which somehow manages to feed and fertilize itself, and from which all parasites fall. This is only the Modernist myth which has selected a single stripling from the forest of styles and methods which constitutes the art of the time and which has distorted even the narrow sector which it has presented. (p. 60)

Or, to use a metaphor that is easily embraced by the "feminine" or "minor" arts, this singular, linear interpretation of art is but "a single thread in a complex weft and weave that has lately come to appear as the entire pattern" (p. 62).

Presumably the coexisting artistic styles and forms so blindly ignored by Formalism are spared this intellectualized demise. For other art, whether legitimated or named as such or not, simply continued to be made and exist in its own right without having been distorted by the male premise of uninterrupted progress. As Schorr claims, the death of the vanguard displaces the linear view with the oceanic, eliminating "the view that insists that only new things are worthwhile," and leaving more room for "natural and diverse artistic growth and development" (1974, pp. 55,56).

However the image of an autonomous, historically linear art development is deeply ingrained in our modern concept of art. As Tagg (1976) insists, "to a great

extent, it has shaped and continues to shape the making and teaching of art in this century." So much so "that it is difficult to remind ourselves that it is only an interpretation and a skeletal one at that" (p. 63).

Cockcroft (1974, p. 39) claims that to understand why a particular movement becomes successful and, presumably, why any particular criterion defines what is to be called art, "under a given set of historical circumstances, requires the examination of patronage and the ideological needs of the powerful." This was alluded to in the case of the Italian Renaissance when art came into human experience as a separate, autonomous concept. Tracing how this has manifested itself in the twentieth century, we get a deeper sense of how art has been torn from the grasp of the ordinary in life to become part of the intellectualized, disembodied, polarized experiences that characterize much of life in this century.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the distinctions between the "decorative" arts and "high" art, particularly in the Art Nouveau and the Jugendstil arts and craft movement of the late nineteenth century. Coming out of a socialist anti-industrialist claim for regeneration of humans through handicrafts, it was based upon naturalistic conceptions of decoration. However, it was soon converted into a formalized style. Indeed, the strident avant-garde denial of the strong influence of decorative art on major modernist styles of this century points to the gendered and

cultural bias in this exclusion.

> In order to define and maintain the position of abstract art as "high" art, its supporters and apologists have been obliged literally to fight off the taint of association with so-called "low" art, variously defined as the decorative and often domestic handicraft productions of commercial artists, women, peasants, and savages. (Broude, p. 315)

Though the presence of the decorative arts is blatantly obvious in both the crafts movement and the ensuing abstract art, it has been flatly denied and rationalized to a reverse emphasis: Transforming "the merely decorative into the significantly abstract" (p. 317) elevates the abstract to high art at the same time that it "reaffirms the separate and inferior status of its source" (p. 320).

Further to this, the overtly sexist comment from LeCorbusier and Ozenfant: "There is a hierarchy in the arts: decorative art at the bottom, and the human form at the top. Because we are men!" (p. 315) confirms more than the gendered dichotomy between decorative and "high" art. It probably is not too presumptuous to assume this human form to be female. The reactionary preoccupation of late nineteenth, early twentieth century avant-garde art with the female nude as subject (p. 304) more than suggests the sexual bias that "art originates in and is sustained by male erotic energy" (p. 306). Women, by their very role of

existence particularly their role of nurturing and their domination by the processes of human reproduction, were categorically different than men. Connected implicitly to, indeed, synonymous with, nature, women did not have the transcendental possibilities of men who saw themselves involved primarily in the production of culture. This woman/nature-man/culture dichotomy continues to insinuate itself into contemporary life: Whatever it is that women make and call art is, more often than not, given a baser status unless it emulates in some way male standards.

By extrapolating from the feminist critique of sexual ideology, one gets a glimpse of why one mode of art aggrandizes itself through time while others are pushed into relative obscurity. As a first step toward affirming the possibility of diverse artistic growth and development, we must recognize the distortions that gender bias has imposed both upon the creation and the interpretation of art in our culture. Feminist art historians insist that one can no longer becloud the reality of a limited, elite aesthetic with a shroud of mystery and disbelief. The issue must be dealt with. They have their own perspectives as to how one should proceed.

A Case for Heterogeneity

The very fact of the persistence of the Italian norm

for what counts as art into the present day, rightly caused feminist historians to raise crucial questions regarding the conditions generally productive of great art. Nochlin (1971) has very harsh words for what she terms "the whole erroneous intellectual substructure" (p. 23) which emphasizes the white Western male viewpoint and the myth of the Great Artist, claiming,

> A dispassionate, impersonal, sociological and institutionally-oriented approach [to investigation] would reveal the entire romantic, elitist, individual-glorifying and monograph-producing substructure upon which the profession of art history is based, and which has only been called into question by a group of younger dissidents. (p. 26)

Overturning this substructure will reveal that indeed there are different modes of art that are co-existent but have been pushed aside as inferior through the misconceptions and distortions that one can trace back to the development of this asymmetrical concept of art.

Accordingly, Alpers' (1982; 1983) critique of art history methodology establishes that art is heterogenous, that is, derived of different sources or origins. However, the effects of institutionalization of art according to Italian standards limits our possibilities for having it received or understood as such and sets the stage for compromise and mythology. She points to distortions

within the traditions of art history itself (1992), indicating that, as a discipline, it expresses a point of view that involves choices and exclusions. As such, the methodology of the discipline is based upon Italian Renaissance values and standards and dismisses what does not fit this mold.

Alpers challenges this "deeply embedded tendency . . . to collapse all art making under a general rubric provided for by the viewing of Italian Renaissance art" (1993, p. xxvii). Making a case for the heterogenous nature of art, she contrasts seventeenth century Northern art to Renaissance art concluding their differences in aesthetic view to be based upon social and cultural factors, reflecting how individuals within each culture experienced the world.

That there is a social/axiological basis for these differences seems crucial to the case for heterogeneity. As Alpers emphasizes, it is not a matter of regarding the contrasts between Northern and Italian art as simply "a different way of perceiving or looking at the world." Rather, "it constitutes also a different relationship to the world, a different mode of art" (1982, p. 137).

The visual culture of the Dutch that emphasized being-in-the-world as seeing and knowing, as presence, presumably gave us an art of representation that described and mirrored the world. On the other hand, the textual culture of the Renaissance with its emphasis on reading,

interpretation and reason produced an art that sought meaning and order, a window onto a second world. Out of these different ways of being-in-the-world, these different consciousnesses, these different perceptions of oneself in the world, comes art that reflects these differences. According to Alpers analysis (1982, p. 187; 1983, p. xxi) from a visual culture comes an art of description and from a textual culture, an art of narrative action.

However from the perspective of art history, there would seem to be some difficulty in respecting the status of each of these as different modes of art which require different ways of looking and of understanding. Rather, art was subjected to the one-sided point of view of criteria derived from the Italian Alberti's definition of painting which determined what is art according to a rather partisan set of categories. Infused with pictorial meaning that ordered the world and had power over life, painting was elevated above the skill status to become a privileged mode of knowing. Other approaches to painting and other kinds of art-making such as decorated chests, woven tapestries, painted pottery, or illuminated texts with emphasis on the craft and the making were passed over as feminine or minor arts. As well, the "painted picture" superseded what was considered art in other cultures (1982, p. 185), for example, Egyptian painted walls, Chinese scrolls, Indian illustrations or Byzantian panels.

To this day, with the exception of the divergence of a

few recalcitrants, we are confined to this one concept of greatness which, as Alpers maintains (p. 184), "suggests a certain notion of art, its production and its function in society." Further, "Italian art and the rhetorical evocation of it has not only determined the study of works, it has defined the practice of the central tradition of Western artists" (p. 185). Internalized by the artists and made part of the program of the Academy, it is "the basis of that tradition that painters felt they had to equal (or to dispute) well into the nineteenth century" (1983, p. xx). One might add that much of twentieth century art and art history is derived from the same tradition. As Alpers protests (1982, p. 184), "the rhetoric, the very language with which we talk about a painting and its history is . . . Italian born and bred."

Alpers claim for heterogenous art is confirmed in Lowe's (1982) argument for "the history of perception as the intermediary link between the content of thought and the structure of society" (p. 1), with perception being expanded to mean human experience, that is, how one experiences oneself in relation to the rest of the world:

> The perceiving subject from an embodied location, approaches the world as a lived, horizonal field. The act of perceiving unites the subject with the perceived. And the content of the perceived, which results from that act, affects the subject's bearing in the world. Perception is

> therefore a reflexive, integral whole, involving the perceiver, the act of perceiving, and the content of the perceived. (Ibid.)

From this we are told that "perception as a reflexive, integral whole is the immanent, hermeneutic context in which to locate any content of thought." (Ibid.)

In Lowe's notion of a perceptual field is the possibility for history. This perceptual field is constituted of three interacting factors:

> (i) the communications media which frame and facilitate the act of perceiving; (ii) the hierarchy of sensing; i.e., hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, and seeing, which structures the subject as an embodied perceiver; and (iii) the epistemic presuppositions which order the content of the perceived. (pp. 1,2)

As these factors change over time, so the perceptual field changes: "There is a history of perception" (p. 2), and from this we can delimit the changing content of the known.

Lowe's example of the relations between the changing bourgeoisie and different perceptual fields illustrates how outlook is contained by perceptual field. Thus, in the thirteenth century, Christianity more or less defined and maintained the bounds of the perceptual field whereas in the fourteenth century, the Northern Italian tradition of urban economy and oligarchic wealth was reflected in a shift in perception to focus on the world and thus the

pictured space. Yet Renaissance perception also limited their "economic rationality" to notions of security (p. 25) so that Renaissance burghers, for the most part, were not yet "a conscious economic stratum" (p. 26). Essentially, they were moving into an *en soi* situation but, not being able to perceive this, could not yet perceive of a *pour soi* social formation.

Lowe also illustrates that as the sedimentation and transformation of perceptual fields was occurring, so was stratification. Class structure became a perceived reality as the "bourgeois field of perception exercised hegemony over the perceived realities of the other classes and strata" (p. 28), causing each to alter their own realities accordingly.

What Lowe intends by perception and perceptual field makes an important contribution to the discussion of heterogenous art as well as the hegemony of one reality over another. Out of this we can reach some understanding of not only changing concepts of art but also the suppression of other notions of art by the emerging dominant one.

This discussion also points to the original thesis question which implies that there is a concept of art other than the formalist that is a more appropriate basis for art education. The problem is to uncover this concept of art and to understand what in daily praxis will allow me to eradicate the heavy reliance on the formalist code and

intellectualization inherent in the studio model; to replace the understanding of art as an objectified cultural commodity with a concept of art as a dimension of every person's productive life. Even with the formalist emphasis circumvented, how does one enlarge upon the possibility of everyday life to inform one's aesthetic consciousness and art making? How do I bring my students to understand their own aesthetic? To understand their own aesthetic so that they may enjoy other possibilities for acting in the world that draw upon the sensual and the emotional as well as the intellectual? To enlarge their possibilities to turn round the insidious estrangement of human consciousness that seems to be engulfing modern living? How, in the daily praxis of the classroom do I place the emphasis where it should be: on the students own reflection, reflection upon their own aesthetic, reflection upon their own aesthetic as it reflects their own life-world and experience?

From the analyses of Alpers and Lowe we begin to glimpse the possibility that a legitimate source for both the making and the understanding of art is in the experience of everyday life, and that differences in perceiving or experiencing the world are constitutive of differences in aesthetic view and thus differences in the mode of art making and understanding. What remains, then, is to establish that there should be equity for different modes of art, or that one mode of art cannot legitimately supersede another on the basis of its own perceived value.

CHAPTER FOUR

Obstacles, Illusions, and Concealed Paths

Alpers notion of heterogenous art clearly indicates the possibility of different sources of art making. Feminist writers including Alpers (1982, 1983), de Beauvoir (1974), Broude and Gerrard (1982), Chodorow (1978), Dinnerstein (1977), Elshtain (1981), Fisher (1979), O'Brien (1981), and Spender (1980), point out that men and women do have different realities. At the same time, women are dispossessed. Their endeavours are overshadowed by the presumably more significant cultural forms of our male oriented society. Women are doomed to be understood as inferior, not because they are, but because they have been denied, for one reason or another, access to the production of their own cultural forms.

Twentieth century culture is essentially a male endeavour. It is the male reality that is legitimated and serves as the reference point for most of what we do. "Males have appropriated the means for constructing our world view and the mechanisms for insisting on its legitimacy" (Spender, 1980, p. 231). But such hierarchical designations are not biologically determined. Women and

women's culture are inferior not because of gender but because of culture itself, in particular, the ordering of society according to patriarchy.

Occurring only recently, that is, within the last five thousand of some two hundred thousand years of human history, this self-perpetuating, parochial vision with its dependence on dominance, control and materialism, has polarized and disembodied human experience, bringing us to the very brink of human calamity. (Fisher, 1979; French, 1985) Indeed, it threatens human existence if we do not get at its causes, that is, "the oppressive principle growing out of the relation between man and woman which has mushroomed to be the greatest danger to the world's survival" (Fisher, p. 404).

We have succumbed to a one-sided hierarchical principle of living that threatens imminent destruction, a one-sided principle that refuses to acknowledge the possibilities of gentler, more cooperative and integrative alternatives. The wisdom of Gaia, our most ancient Mother Earth, lies deep and still, a dim memory. It has been displaced by Apollo, "the fountainhead of Hellenic logic and rational thought" (Stone, 1984, p. 365). The gentle voice has been silenced, "the knowledge of earth kept hidden within earth -- kept from the light of day by those who have forgotten the primacy of Mother Gaia" (p. 366). The other side of our being no longer speaks to us. We no longer acknowledge that there is this other way of knowing.

The power of womanness is being suffocated by the realities of sharply delineated male public and female private cultures. Essentially, the feminine voice has no venue for public discourse and, equally dangerous, the male is just as deprived in the private. Though they have within them possibilities for radically altered approaches to living, the images of women's art that confront the dangerous route of male dominant culture, the images that speak of alternative, safer solutions, the images that speak of embracing and embodiment, of healing, mediation, and transformation, are dismissed as inconsequential, as women's work that belongs to the private world of women. Relegated to the privacy of domesticity, there is no framework that will place women's images outside the private and into the public forum. They have no meaning of public consequence. So that though she, her children, mother, sisters and the whole of the world they inhabit risk being annihilated by the engulfing grey poison that spews from the nuclear mushroom, her voice is lost, smothered by the male dominant public culture on which, ironically, she seems bound to remain dependent.

Eagleton has a sobering comment: The message of the women's movement "is not that the world will be better off with more female participation in it; it is that without the 'feminization' of human history, the world is unlikely to survive" (1983, p. 159). Gaia, the Creator, Primeval Prophetess, most ancient Earth, is dying in the cold

phallic shadow of the bomb.

Though the "dominance hierarchy" is recognized as the underlying problem in the appropriation of culture, this knowledge, in itself, does not comprise a solution. There is a further need, that is, for a way of looking more closely at "the genesis and actuality of male dominance" (O'Brien, 1981, p.11) and for proposing new human possibilities.

The following will attempt to establish that there is a difference between the private culture of women and the public culture of men, a difference that is indicative of relations of dominance and subordination. Further, the traditional means of looking at these relations are culturally bound and, thus, insufficient to the problem of understanding the conditions that give rise to such hierarchical relations. Finally, it is argued that for the project of human emancipation, that is, the realization of all possibilities for every human being, another perspective, one that includes what we have come to call the female experience, is not only important but essential.

A Lion in the Path: Traditional Exegeses

Traditionally, a critical theory of sociology, particularly as derived from Marxism and the neo-Marxists, is resorted to in a[illegible]alysis of domination. Such

theoreticans as Marx (1961, 1970) and Engels (1884/1970), Habermas (1971) and Marcuse (1964) appear to provide the means of viewing these distortions for what they are; for understanding their underlying assumptions in order to discover possibilities for reinterpreting events and circumstances to indicate potentially new human possibilities and some direction toward that reality. Social analyses based upon the Marxist economist historical model of class struggle abound as do Marxist 'revisionist' feminist theories, for example, Firestone (1970) and Mitchell (1973).

The Marxian notion which suggests the possibility of a discrepancy between how a society understands itself and how the society exists objectively (Marx and Engels, 1970) points to the possibility of discrepancies between ideal intentions and real practices. There exists the possibility of repression and alienation should one set of practices dominate others.

Certainly this is the case in human communication where it is assumed that all language is transparent and inclusive of the experience of both males and females. Yet, as Mary Daly (1994) illustrates so lucidly, in reality, the universal symbols and images are not inclusive. Even God is understood as male. Such words as "fe-male," "wo-man," and "hu-man" are embedded with patriarchal undercurrents. The most they can do is denote man with his counterpart understood. They conjure up

nothing in the consciousness that connects us with ourselves. Our own language, symbols and images that speak of another reality, that conjoin women with the rhythms of themselves, their sisters, and with earth, air, fire, and water, indeed, with the rhythms of the world, have been made strange to us.

Many feminists, most noteably Daly, have illustrated the dangers of this most elemental form of alienation and repression, calling for a renaming of our experience:

> "In Naming/reclaiming passionate Elemental knowing, knowing that is intuitive/immediate, not mediated by the omnipresent myths of phallicism, we call forth hope and courage to transcend appearances. (p. xi)

Daly describes the project as a concern for "Elemental participation in Be-ing." In their commitment to exorcising patriarchy and unveiling "the masters' pseudogeneric and pseudorational language structures" (p. xii), women's struggle, women's passion is for "that which is most intimate and most ultimate, for depth and transcendence, for recalling original wholeness" (p. xi).

A second Marxian notion that consciousness does not determine life but life determines consciousness (Marx, 1961) suggests an investigation of whether certain kinds of structural arrangements are conducive to the development of certain kinds of consciousness, that is, whether the world view or systems of meaning of the acting subject are

limited and shaped by the structural arrangements in which one is located. However, we would have to follow Habermas (1971) and go beyond the more Marxian notion of the purely economic forces and relations of production and extend to the full range of institutional relations that constrain self-realization of human potential. In this context, one would examine whether there is indication of consciousness in the full potential that art can allow at the moment or is consciousness being constrained by a limited notion of art? If there is evidence of constraint, in whose interest or why is such the case? Is it possible, or even desirable, for all of society to have a critical aesthetic consciousness?

Habermas, in his concept of interested knowledge, contests the possibility of neutrality or value-freedom in knowledge, maintaining that "in the power of self-reflection, knowledge and interest are one" (1971, p. 314). He indicates an intellectual construction of social reality wherein the structure of language and meaning is affected by relationships of dominance and subordination in society and the differential location and hence different interests of groups within the social structure. A person's consciousness is viewed in terms of her embeddedness in a context of social and physical resources and restraints.

This relationship between social being and consciousness is viewed as being problematic. Thus, one would draw upon such a notion as Habermas' interested

knowledge to unpack the factors that contribute to relations of dominance and submission or the dominance of an elitist formalist aesthetic in both art and art education. Accordingly, in Chapter Three I have reconstructed the historical concept of art in an attempt to make visible the conditions that are constitutive of the dominating formalist aesthetic, the aesthetic that I would maintain is perpetuated in art education.

Extracting primarily from Marx and Habermas, Sharp and Green (1975) advocate a dialectical exploration of this relationship between structure and consciousness, indicating that there will be "an affinity between consciousness and structure in a sense that given types of structures can only accommodate certain ranges of content for consciousness" (32). They suggest that their particular view of consciousness derives from the fact that resources, in the sense of power and control, are unequally distributed in society generally and have implications for the analysis of social processes. Such unequal distribution of power they see as significant both as a crucial variable in the explanation of the differential contents of consciousness and for understanding the outcomes of action.

Underlying all of this is a particular notion of power, one that goes beyond the ability to define another's reality and points to the distribution of power and authority in the macrostructure which determines the

parameters of negotiability and the conditions under which restraint will or will not be required -- a notion of power which acknowledges that human creativity and freedom imply non-freedom and a notion of force sustaining power to be drawn into play when ideological legitimations are called into question. (p. 34) Thus, they claim the task to be an effort to develop a sociology of situations, their underlying structure and interconnections and the constraints and contingencies they impose.

Giroux (1981, p. 40) also places the constitutive nature of consciousness within a dialectical relationship, in his case an historically changing relationship between power and ideology. Centering his argument around the rise of a culture of positivism, Giroux equates what he sees as a loss of historical consciousness with Marcuse's false consciousness, that is, "the repression of society in the formation of concepts. . . a confinement of experience, a restriction of meaning" (Marcuse, 1964, p. 208). Underlying this is a dominating form of social control that takes place through an elaborate system of norms and imperatives. This framework lends institutional authority a degree of unity and certainty and suggests an apparent universality and legitimation. This is, of course, the point of Gramsci's (1971) ideological hegemony which indicates a form of control which not only manipulates consciousness but also saturates and constitutes the daily experiences that shape one's behavior, and supports

"systems of practices, meanings and values which [provide] legitimacy to the dominant society's institutional arrangements and interests" (Giroux, p. 40).

Giroux's "culture of positivism," Marcuse's "false consciousness," and Gramsci's "ideological hegemony" are endemic to modernity itself. This is apparent in all relations of production and reproduction where the assumption would seem to be that domination and control are "natural." In fact, Marxist analyses indicate that modernism, concurring with the needs of industrialization and technology, perpetuates a materialist system dependent upon conditions of domination and subordination, exploitation and alienation. Transposed to twentieth century culture, the assumption would seem to be that particular cultural forms must dominate others. Nowhere is this more evident than in feminist arguments which illustrate that twentieth century Western culture is essentially a male endeavour.

Ropes of Sand: Marxism

To reiterate, customarily Marxist or neo-Marxist analyses are resorted to in dealing with such questions as raised in this thesis. And, on the surface, that route seems to offer the most potential for making apparent ideological distortions, and, particularly, for putting

right any misconceptions that distort the realities of art-making and art-naming or that contribute to the domination of one aesthetic or cultural reality over another. However, despite the apparent promise of such analyses, more recent scholarship suggests this approach to be shortsighted and problematic itself.

The more subtle relations between patriarchy and capitalism seemed to elude Marx. As Balbus (1982) argues, although Marx correctly located patriarchy as pre-capitalist, he incorrectly assumed that the inner logic of capitalism was antipatriarchal and that capitalism itself would eliminate this condition. Capitalism does erode patriarchal authority but at the same time patriarchy's male-dominated sexual division of labour is necessary to the capitalist mode of production. As Balbus maintains, "Capitalism both feeds off, and reproduces in a new form, the domination of men over women" (p. 68). However, it is not capitalism but patriarchy that determines the sexual identity of those who perform the functions demanded by capitalism. Balbus (p. 79) is correct in claiming that for this reason, patriarchy remains completely unexplained after an analysis of capitalist functions has been completed.

Marxism, with its primarily economic focus, does not allow us to get at the root of the "dominance hierarchy," that is, the dominance-submission ideology that is based upon sex/gender. Rather, everything is reduced to mode of

production. Further, being culturally determined itself, it cannot address the notion of sexual ideology as being culturally rather than biologically determined. As Balbus (p. 169) maintains, Marxism allows us to look at economically determined relations and processes of domination, but, in the case of sexual ideology, there is not within Marxism any framework for addressing the essential question: how and why is the sexual difference between men and women transformed into a hierarchical opposition in which men are in the dominant and women in the subordinate position?

The subordination of women has to be understood as both the precondition and the result of their exclusion from productive labour (pp. 67-68). For instance, the division of labour into the male sphere of work and the female sphere of home means that, for someone's benefit, a large part of the workforce exists as "unproductive" and thus unpaid labour. As well, women themselves and their children provide a constant supply of labour. Perhaps even more important is the fact that women are socialized to provide the source of nurturance necessary to maintain the acquiescence of alienated workers who, should they shed their false consciousness, otherwise might resist. Further, women are conditioned to satisfy their "needs" with the shimmering vapours of "consumerism" while ever-expanding needs are artificially created by the mass media to maintain the stability of the system. Ironically, at

the same time that women are experiencing the illusion of creativity and freedom, by succumbing to commodity fetishism, they are guaranteeing the conditions of their own victimization, unwitting participants in Marcuse's "comfortable unfreedom" (1964, p. 1).

Certainly the women's movement has rejected the narrow economic focus of much of classical Marxist thought, claiming such analyses to be incapable of explaining the particular conditions of women as an oppressed social group, or of contributing significantly to their transformation and liberation. Though the oppression of women is identified as material reality, it cannot be reduced to such factors. Rather, it is a matter of sexual ideology.

Some Marxist theorists have attempted to address the deficiencies of Marxist analyses by making a synthesis with alternative theoretical traditions. Provocative and ambitious though these revisions may be, they suffer from either electicism or reductionism. Either the alternative principle, in the end, proves to be incompatible with the Marxist principle of production or else it is itself dependent upon the very principle of production it was attempting to avoid, the concept of production having been expanded beyond the economic to include a great range of human activity (Balbus, p. 345). There never seems to be the capability to get beyond the dominant concern for production nor to get out of the circular arguments and

deal with the heart of the matter, that is, the psychosexual level that lets one see the conditions that are constitutive of reproduced relations of domination/subordination.

For instance, in neo-Marxist theories that attempt to accommodate the shortcomings of Marxism with psychoanalytic theory (Mitchell, 1973), the necessary transformation of the sex/gender system takes place within another struggle, one that calls for a shift in the mode of production from capitalism to socialism. Women are expected to coalesce their efforts with those of the larger struggle, a struggle which occurs in the public domain where women are least apt to be effective and where the institutions are male dominated (Balbus, pp. 194-195). The real issue, the transformation of the family, is evaded in favour of the male project of political action (p. 196). Thus, the feminist struggle to eliminate patriarchy is co-opted in favour of the presumably more universal and significant struggle to transform the mode of production. The continued reproduction of male domination is more or less guaranteed.

Perhaps one of the most ambitious neo-Marxist endeavours has been Habermas' attempt to link unrepressive communication with a liberatory form of politics. Yet, despite the apparent scholarship of this endeavour, if one scratches below the surface even slightly, it soon becomes obvious that Habermas is not able to get out of his own

bind. First of all, the very notion of a universally communicative competence with its emphasis on what amounts to the highest stage of the particular form of rationality that predominates in modern societies simply smacks of cultural imperialism, and is yet another example of Western ethnocentrism (Balbus, pp. 226,227).

Secondly, Habermas's theory rests on an inadequate conception of language. With complete emphasis on the cognitive basis of his theory, ideal or "pure" human communication pursues speech exclusively as the medium of human rationality and ignores any other communicative action in the quest for truth. However, in recognizing only the rational, and paring off any empassioned, embodied expression, Habermas distorts human communication to fit his theory. He fails to acknowledge that human experience consists of more than the rational and thereby fails to deal with a whole aspect of human communication.

Indeed, Habermas neglects the psychosexual dimension of human communication entirely. This makes it possible for his theory of political liberation to overlook "the profound psychosexual obstacles to unrepressive communication in the very modern age that [he] upholds" (Balbus, p. 334). Following from this, Balbus maintains that the greatest obstacle to the possibility of ideal speech is the prevailing form of mother-monopolized child rearing and the fact that this engenders unconscious needs for political domination. Contrary to Habermas's intention

to make "pure" speech the basis for emancipatory communication, "mother-monopolized child rearing perforce generates the unconscious basis for distorted communication among adults" (Ibid.). The project for human emancipation is slowly becoming visible.

By now it is apparent that Marxism cannot illuminate the conditions constitutive of patriarchy, that the basic assumptions of Marxism are inconsistent with the feminist project. Balbus maintains that "Marxist theory. . . [is] unable to account for the origins and persistence of domination" and neo-Marxist attempts to compensate for this shortcoming "undermine the integrity of Marxism by transforming it into eclecticism" (p. xi). In fact he declares both Marxism and neo-Marxism to be obstacles to the feminist project, that both are inherently patriarchal, that both contribute to the reproduction of the very domination that they purport to transcend (p. 196).

Nevertheless, by historicizing patriarchal ideology, neo-Marxists have been able to show that the conditions that produce a patriarchal form of the struggle for sexual recognition are not universal or inevitable but historically contingent (p. 170) and that to eliminate these conditions would be the project. Accordingly, in order to transcend the patriarchal family, there must be a transformation of the family. However, what is needed first is an approach that treats the formation of sexual identity as problematical and therefore worthy of

independent theoretical attention. In this context, the work of Chodorow (1978), Dinnerstein (1977), and Firestone (1970) is illuminating.

Firestone rightly argues that an orthodox Marxist framework is inadequate to address feminist concerns for women's oppression inasmuch as the economic base of historical materialism cannot get at the grounds for oppression of women and children. She attempts to bridge the gap with a proposal for a materialist view of history based not on economics but on sex itself, denoting the biological contingencies of the human family as the origin of sexual dualism.

Grounding her analysis in the dialectic of sex does not bring Firestone to a very hopeful solution. It is one matter to understand that the reproductive function of women has led to a division of labour based upon sex and further division into economic and cultural classes. It is quite another to propose not just the removal of male privilege but the sex distinction itself, that is, the end of any emphasis on female reproduction and, essentially, the end of family life.

True, the separation of sex from emotion is at the very foundation of Western culture and civilization (p. 63). Certainly, if one seeks embodied experience, it makes sense to end the differentiation of the sexual from the total personality (p. 67). Likewise, it may be argued that the "natural" is no longer natural (p. 10), that humans

have tampered with the natural to alter it beyond recognition. But to disclaim the family is to proceed along the same route. While this may eliminate one source of the perpetuation of the gendered class system, it seems dangerously close to eliminating one of the most profound of human hopes -- the possibility of bonding with other human beings. Clearly this is more toward dehumanization and not a positive contribution to a more humane existence, nor a more whole experience for humans, male or female, adult or child. Not the family but attitudes toward equity of individuals living within family need to be changed.

Revamping Marx to replace economics with sex/gender as the grounds of class gives us a better view of the obstacle but no leverage for its removal. In fact, Firestone's solution in the dissolution of the family, though provocative, seems but a further manifestation of the conditions necessary to the problem: further rationalization, further dependence upon technology, further disembodiment -- that is, enhancement of the technocratic rationality.

In this vein, O'Brien supports Rowbotham's (1973) argument that

> Marxism in general, while providing an adequate historical analysis of modes of production and a valid critique of capitalism, has failed to pursue Engels' view of the socially formative aspects of production and reproduction, or to

> clarify the relationship between these processes and their social manifestations. (O'Brien, p. 77)

What is missing, as she claims to be the case for most Marxist-feminist analyses, is

> a theoretical model which might both comprehend a feminist commitment to Marxism and, at the same time, provide the material basis for the contention that productive and reproductive functions cannot be simply collapsed into the ditch of a problematically dialectical 'substructure.' (Ibid.)

The danger is in sacrificing the feminist endeavour to attempts to make it fit within a framework that can neither ask nor answer the essential questions.

Marxism can illustrate that women's culture is found in the private world, men's in the public, but not why we find a hierarchical opposition between the two. Further, there is no indication of how women's artistic expression is shaped by the experience of this cultural dichotomy. Should we expect some evidence of submissiveness in the face of domination to be apparent in their art forms ? in their content? Or, has women's art making reflected this private/public delineation in other ways?

Balbus concludes that "if Marxist theory is necessary for the comprehension of the forms of domination and the possibilities for their eradication, it certainly is not sufficient" (p. 5). Rather, we must draw upon what is

effective in existing theory at the same time that we look toward creating feminist theory (Elshtain, 1981; O'Brien). While Marx's theory still offers "the most promising basis for the critique of male-stream thought, which is the necessary starting point of feminist theory" (O'Brien, p. 160), Marxism, by itself, "cannot provide the grounds for feminist theory" (p. 161).

The Lacunae: Women's History

It has been well established, particularly by the work of the Frankfurt School, that we need to transcend the Marxist preoccupation with class struggle as the only operative field of praxis. Accordingly, feminists recognize that class analyses "cannot wholly comprehend the genesis and actuality of male dominance" (O'Brien, 1981, p. 11); that "sex struggle is part of but separate from the historical movement of class struggle" (p. 7). They argue that sex and class are not the same, that "the oppression of women differs . . . from class and race because it has not come out of capitalism and imperialism. . . . [It] predates capitalism" (Rowbotham, p. 117). In fact, it is more realistic and productive to regard class struggle in the same light as other dominance/submission relations including sexual ideology and ecological control, that is, not as the basis of domination but as further indications

or manifestations of the dominance hierarchy.

Elshtain (1981, p. 302) maintains that no one theory can offer a coherent understanding or interpretation of human life in all its diversity. Rather, different theories may be necessary for different purposes, for different requirements or understandings. Thus, while we can draw little for an explicit political vision from Marx, we can learn much about linkages "between diverse social spheres and the pervasive force of ideological distortions which justify the exploitative and inegalitarian social relations" (p. 343). But more is needed than simply understanding how sexual dualism or asymmetry is perpetuated. For this one must root political action in the sources of domination and the feminist experience itself, that is, the ordering of society according to patriarchy.

In human history, patriarchy and the subjugation of women occurred when foragers began to settle down on the land. In this early matricentric society, before there was consciousness of the relationship between sex and reproduction, woman, as bearer of children and forager of food, was revered as the giver of life. However, with newly developing agriculture and animal breeding came changing attitudes toward property rights and awareness of the male procreationary function.

> Animal breeding set off a chain of events, an unhappy and augmenting combination of

> psychological and economic elements, with the result that civilization was based on an economy of scarcity in the same wise that the pyramids were built on the backs of slaves, of laborers forced or convinced to donate their time. (Fisher, 1979, p. 265)

Women came to be designated as a possession to be exploited as a producer of children for labour and conquest, a thing for the aggrandizement of male others.

By the third millennium, certain biological fallacies spawned a changed understanding of any hitherto mutuality between men and women. In particular, the erroneous analogy between semen and the seed attributed to men the magic of creation. At the same time, to woman as the metaphorical mother earth, was assigned passivity -- not as a fertile being equally necessary to generation but as receptor of the fertile seed, as gestator and child bearer. Henceforth, there is the confused distinction between "fertility as generation-creation and fertility as fecundity-production" (p. 235). Embodied sex, as erotic pleasure and mystical transcendence was appropriated toward individual wealth in the form of progeny. This marked a shift from fulfillment to exploitation, a transformation of the sensual and affective pleasure of maternal sexuality into the brutal institution of forced breeding, "the beginnings of the materialization of sex and the objectification of the female" (p. 259).

According to Fisher (p. 252), limitations in the area of male-female sexuality "led to the overdevelopment of maternal sexuality, and this in turn led to the subjugation of women as it is practiced in the historical Western patriarchy." Implicit in this is a trade-off of dubious equity: loss of woman's autonomy in matters concerning her own body in return for worship of fertility, subjugation in return for recognition of reproductive function. What was in one sense a gift to women was in actuality dispossession. "When woman is worshipped for her 'natural' powers, woe betide her humanity. Forced breeding and sexual repression go together" (Ibid.). Fisher quotes Adrienne Rich, "Male domination has been founded on male control of female sexuality and reproduction, on institutionalized male ownership of women and children" (Ibid.).

Contemporary women theologians (Daly, 1978; Goldenberg, 1979; Ruether, 1979) indicate that the shrinking status of earthly women corresponds with the displacement of mother goddesses with a single male god. Stone (1976) maintains that such cultural evidence of the time as the images painted on vases and evoked in hymns, references to the king's antecedents, and changes in personal names suggest a decline in the status of the mother goddess and women in general. Fisher (pp. 295-96) cites the evidence of cylinder seals which depict the fertility goddess Inanna in ritual mating, indicate a

change in the position of the female in sexual intercourse. Whereas in the third millennium, the goddess is on top, later illustrations show her facing her consort; eventually, she is dominated by him.

With the power of mother goddesses waning, and the prominence of one male god ascending, the early polity disappeared. According to Fisher (p. 293), the struggle for male supremacy, symbolized in the myths depicting constant antagonism between gods and goddesses, ended when the gods assumed precedence and established a pyramidal organization. Matrilineal egalitarianism, and, eventually, female public power, disappeared. Woman's new image was contradictory, wavering between the embodiment of loving and life-giving qualities and wilful sexuality synonymous with betrayal, cruelty, and destruction. "She represented procreation through intercourse" (p. 283). The status of woman declined from the all-giving, creating mother goddess to the irritating but necessary whore.

Curiously, history makes little reference to the shift into a male dominant culture; it seems as if history begins when male dominance is in place. Thus, we are left with the impression that classical Greece was the first major culture. In fact, there is a large gap between the prehistoric period and classical Greece which history tends to portray as dark and chaotic, mysterious and evil, ruled by pagan religions. Presumably, what occurred during this period has been obscured by the built-in prejudices of

patriarchal ideology particularly in the English language which was the medium of many interpretations of this period.

Though there is no one story to fit every society, archaeology seems to confirm that during these thousands of years of unwritten history, most likely from the Upper Paleolithic but certainly from the Neolithic period, not only was society matricentric, but also the Goddess was revered as wise counselor and prophetess, the supreme deity. It was a time of cultural richness, a time of development in all spheres of social living: "the earliest law, government, medicine, agriculture, architecture, metallurgy, wheeled vehicles, ceramics, textiles, and written language were initially developed in societies that worshipped the Goddess" (Stone, 1976, p. xxiv).

As Neolithic women's roles shifted from gatherers to planters, there was a further differentiation in their activities. At the most basic level, their lives centered around the needs of an agricultural village, in particular, the processing of food and religious cult life. Later, the subsistence crafts -- basketry and pottery for containers, and ornaments for worship, expanded to include such new forms as jewellery and decorated homes -- painted walls and floors and woven mats, and plates and bowls. Eventually, the agricultural and craft wealth produced by women contributed to the surpluses necessary for later trading possibilities. However, as extensive trading developed,

women's differentiated social participation tended to vane.

Boulding (1976, p. 132) describes the activities of village women as falling into three spheres -- the hearth, the courtyard, and the fields. Implicit in this is a constant engagement in childbearing and childcaring. The hearth, predictably, accommodated the preparation of food. In the field women, women gathered fruit and nuts, cleared, cultivated and harvested food, tended small animals, and collected fuel and building materials. The courtyard, as a component of women's culture, however, is less predictable. Evidence suggests that these activities involved both production processes, that is, crafts --sewing, weaving, basket and pottery making, stoneware and implement making, jewellery, production of cosmetics, and building activities and social organization, -- council meetings, ritual and ceremonial preparations, teaching and general administration of the village.

What other special qualities of women's culture developed in the courtyard leaves much to one's imagination. Boulding maintains the courtyard is woman's "administrative base as well as the scene of much of her productive activity" (p. 133) It is here that women organize work routines and teach, or arrange for the teaching of, the girls and young boys. "What is taught? Geneologies, songs, dances, herbal medicine lore, and tribal rituals" (Ibid.), as well as domestic crafts and agricultural knowledge. It is in this teaching that one

can speculate on the possibilities of the breadth and depth of women's culture. It is in the activities of the courtyard that one gleans some inkling of possible relationship between the power of women and goddess worship.

Despite the questions that center around the issue, it does seem that the goddess worship definitely figures in human history. However, it would be impossible to determine the extent of this religious cult. Certainly, archaeological findings of numerous goddess figurines, particularly in and around what appear to be religious shrines, substantiate claims that there definitely was a mother goddess, "that she was worshipped, and that her worship declined, not to say disappeared, with the rise of patriarchal religion, though it was never possible to stamp it out completely" (p. 282).

Equally controversial is the issue of matriarchical society, that is, political rule exclusively by women. However, in this case there would seem to be little evidence for such. What seems to be a more adequate explanation is that early interpretations confused the evidence of women's public power in a rather egalitarian society with complete female control. On the other hand, given the possibility of goddess worship and the understanding of women as creators of life and providers of food, and the strong public role of women in village life, there is every reason to assume that the cultural context

of this society was matricentric, that is focused around the activities of the female. Following from this, it is likely that a matrilineal organization -- the tracing of kinship through the mother (Boulding, 1976, p. 155), was characteristic of these early societies. Further, that this was the case until patriarchal society emerged at which time village life was transformed by such phenomena as new understandings of procreation and the trading of surplus goods.

Prior to written records, evidence of Goddess worship is found in the art of the period. For instance, the discovery of numerous clay goddesses in and around major prehistoric cultures dating as far back as 25000 BC, not only supports the argument for a prehistoric matricentric society but also confirms goddess worship throughout this whole "lost" period; it is assumed that in early cultures where women were understood to be the givers of life and the providers of food, there is a link between Goddess figurines and the emergence of agricultural societies. In this context, Stone (1976, pp. 14-18) suggests a very strong relationship between the Paleolithic female figurines and the later emergence of Goddess worshipping societies in the Neolithic periods of the Near and Middle East. Evidence of this in the Paleolithic period, certainly in the Neolithic and down into the Chalcolithic period -- again from the art, the paintings on a ceramic vase and the evidence of shrines containing Goddess

figurines, suggests that early religion was closely related to women's roles. Further, the apparent association between goddess statuettes and women's role in agriculture indicates women's extensive power in public life.

Certainly after the emergence of writing about 3000 BC, there is evidence of Goddess worship in every area of the Near and Middle East. Though, undoubtedly, the religion was transformed over the centuries, Stone (p. 18) maintains that worship of the female deity survived into the Classical periods of Greece and Rome and was not totally suppressed until about 500 AD when Christian emperors closed down the last Goddess temples.

Changes in Sumerian religion suggest the shift from matrilineal to patriarchal society to be between the fourth and second millennia during which time "there was the gradual disappearance of the mother goddesses and the elevation of the gods in hierarchical order" (Fisher, p. 282). Religion of the earliest known time, the fourth millennium, was "a celebration of fertility and production." During the third millennium there was a period of "struggle between the diffuse mother goddess image and the ruler god, between loose authority . . . and pyramidal hierarchy." By the second millennium, "the male god prevailed over the female." Mother goddesses were supplanted by "a daughter god, who owed her existence to a father" (p. 283).

It is also in the second millennium that Fisher (pp.

233-84) locates the translation of the autocratic ruler god into the powerful but caring father and the formation of the extended family wherein the father derived his authority from the model of the king, the family being the state in miniature. At the same time, Fisher maintains that it is only our cultural bias that causes us to see monotheistic religion as superior to other religions; rather, "Monotheism is authoritarianism. The worship of a single male ruler is simply a cultural projection of specific historical events" and in no way constitutes "progress over the earlier beliefs in immanent and transcendent natural forces" (p. 284).

The fact that history dismisses matrilineal society and goddess worship as a time of darkness and pagan worship merely points to the fact that what actually occurred in this long and distant period has been obscured by patriarchal ideology. From archaeological findings, particularly the art of the period, we are beginning to appreciate the extensiveness of early women's presence in public discourse, obviously for her role in regeneration and provision, perhaps most importantly as the symbol of the supreme deity. Clearly, the real lacuna occurs not prior to but after the shift into patriarchy, after one half of the human population has been silenced of their public voice, denied the power of their public symbols and images, dismissed to the private domain of domesticity. It is only after the trade-off of public power for domestic

security, that is, after the shift into male dominance, that women become visibly absent in public culture and are omitted from history.

After women had enjoyed such a long period of presence and power in public life, it would appear that the older, intuitive ways were supplanted by more rational, hierarchical ordering. However, one has to bear in mind that contrary to what written history proclaims, all women did not disappear entirely from public and religious cult life. Matronymic identification -- as sons of their mothers rather than of their fathers, peaked in the eleventh century AD (Boulding, p. 399), and continued right up to the industrial revolution. Likewise, as Boulding (Ibid.) illustrates, there is ample evidence of very visible economic roles and community status for middle class European women particularly as owners and administrators of property.

Medieval women religious -- nuns, prophetesses, women of the Beguine movement, contributed significantly to the intellectual life of the time and enjoyed considerable public recognition (p. 423f). However, their status plummeted with later persecutions. Ironically, the Renaissance and later the Refomation mark a shift toward exclusion of women from education and public culture. The Renaissance interest in the individuality of the human being was an interest in the male human being; the insights of humanism did not apply to women (pp. 526-27).

Though it much predates capitalist society, women's final descent into economic dependency, intellectual inferiority, and cultural appropriation occurred in the transition from subsistence to capitalist modes of production. In fact, seventeenth century Europe marks the critical transition point in the perception of both women and nature; this against a background of many transformations occurring in culture at large including the scientific and industrial revolutions (Keller, 1985, pp. 61-2). A new social order was being carved out, one that depended upon and reflected certain ideological changes that were in the interests of an improved and civilized society. At the ideological core of this emerging economic and scientific order were the concepts of passivity and control in the spheres of production and reproduction (Merchant, 1983, p. 149).

This new social order perpetuated extreme polarities. For example, in gender ideology, "A new kind of wedge was being driven between the spheres of women and men" (Keller, p. 61), one that required the construction of a new ideal of womanhood and manhood. The ancient blurring of gender role that previously had made a multiplicity of male and female roles acceptable was subtly displaced over several hundred years by sharply drawn gender distinctions. Definitions of female and male were becoming polarized in ways that were eminently well suited to the formation of early industrial capitalist society, that is, in the

growing division between male public and female private spheres, between work and home -- as men's public lives were expanding, urban women's were contracting into domesticity.

Over a period of several hundred years, the economic, political and social options available to women of all classes were severely reduced, particularly to women of the middle and upper classes. In time, married women lost control over their property, their persons, their children and their beliefs. Women's culture was now located in the private domain, in their households, boudoires, and salons. Whatever influence they held was in what Boulding (1976) refers to as underside, in contrast to overside -- power in the socially hidden activities and movements. This contraction and redefinition of women's productive and domestic roles was consistent with the changes in the ideology of sexuality that accompanied all aspects of industrialization (Merchant, p. 150).

As women were being reduced from economic partners to dependents, so were they losing control of their own reproductive functions. Midwives were losing credibility to the exclusively male medical profession and its technology of forceps. Science was reasserting the female's passive role in biological regeneration. As late as the seventeenth century, in England, the prevailing sexual ideology based on current natural science reaffirmed the earlier theory of the man as parent and the woman as

incubator (Merchant, p. 157). Indeed, the whole of the female cultural role with its principles and symbols was changing.

> The female world soul, with its lower component, Natura, and the nurturing female earth had begun to lose plausibility in a world increasingly influenced by mining technology essential to commercial capitalism. The older organic order of nature and society was breaking up as the new mercantile activities threatened the ideology of natural stratification in society. (p. 155)

The evidence of natural science ruled against such symbols of the female in culture as the witch and the midwife. Then women lost not only control over their own bodies but also a form of power by which they could "retaliate against social injustices, and a source of healing through the use of spirits and the regenerative powers of nature" (Ibid.). In this way, culture, like science, was gendered and entered the male sphere of domination. As an ideology, science would keep women in their place in the interests of industrial capitalism.

The male misogynist attitude that came out of Renaissance humanism and later, the Reformation, essentially banished women from the public sphere. Guilds were squeezing women out. Civil responsibilities were being denied to them. A general contempt for women also informed attitudes toward voracious and disorderly nature

-- both needed to be controlled. As her sexuality was being repressed, woman's power in economic life and reproduction was gradually being obliterated. And nature, purged of the spirits of witches, was succumbing to the experimental method and technological advance. Thus, as woman's sexuality was being devalued, so was nature being deanimated, desanctified, and increasingly mechanized (pp. 63-4). Relegated as feminine, both were made submissive in the face of more dominant masculine qualities of rationality and objectivity that resided in the newly institutionalized conception of male being and science. Squeezed out of economic and civil responsibilities, women accepted voluntary unemployment and eventually entered the world of "conspicuous consumption" (Boulding, p. 539).

Functions that were historically women's were now being assumed by men. For instance, when the Reformation reduced the need for embroidered church vestments and national prosperity created a need for domestic embroidery, women's relationship to embroidery was drastically changed. Collaboration between men and women embroiderers ceased. Embroidery guilds shifted completely into the hands of men. Women's needle work was moved out of the public world of the professional into the private world of the anateur (Parker and Pollock, 1981, pp. 60-61). By the eighteenth century embroidery became synonymous with women, the embodiment of the stereotypical feminine, a pastime intended to produce only for domestic use, particularly the

decoration of the home, as evidence of refined taste and domestic virtue. By the nineteenth century, as inculcator of femininity and source of starvation wages, embroidery was both symbol and instrument of female subservience (Parker, 1984).

Now women had to contend with denial of the worth of any contribution they might make, and negotiation or manipulation to participate in any aspect of the external world, what amounted to the lack of any legitimate forum for public expression. Essentially, there was an ever deepening sense of isolation, of being on the periphery or not being there, and the loss of identity as a group. However, that is not to say that women's abilities and contributions simply dried up. More often they went unacknowledged or their successes were assumed by husbands, fathers, brothers or other significant males, often as not to protect women's reputations from the predominant societal attitude which discriminated against conspicuous female public endeavour.

Though, for the most part, they were confined to the private domain and not taken seriously as thinkers, during the seventeenth century there is evidence of ever widening spheres of influence, "a steady increase in the thought and activities of women, a gradual emergence from the anti-feminist Renaissance, a readiness for new fields of action" (Boulding, p. 566). Certainly the Roman Catholic church provided a type of public-private space that accommodated

women's capabilities. Women of all classes either sought or were forced into by their families a lifetime of spiritual devotion that was often accompanied by public service, either teaching or caring for the poor. As well, the salons were a source of a cultural rebirth for many gifted women, suggesting a kind of delayed Renaissance (p. 528). Though "primarily a man's stage, set by women," here women could articulate their ideas and claim a measure of intellectual, if not fully political, presence (p. 572). This gave women a degree of influence, what amounted to the private creation of public space.

Another phenomenon that gave women opportunity to articulate ideas, particularly dissent, was the bluestockings. Though not committed to social reform, these upper middle class intellectual women set the stage for women's political strength in the next century (p. 556). Women's influence was spreading but these possibilities pertained only to middle and upper class women. Poor women, for the most part, continued the agrarian practice of working side by side with their male counterparts, and, despite the drudgery of their labour, in some respects had greater access to power than their well off sisters.

Although societal pressures kept women's endeavours in the relative obscurity of the private domain, women artists, writers, and musicians flourished in this period. In fact, we are only beginning to appreciate the extent of

women's involvement in painting, sculpture, writing, and music, not to mention scholarship, in the seventeenth century. For instance, in the Lowlands, women excelled in glass etching, poetry, and scholarly pursuits. As well, many women were outstanding painters of genre scenes, flowers and portraits (p. 574). Of course one must put this into proper perspective. As was discussed in Chapter Three, all Northern European painting of this time including that of men, was dismissed as feminine by dominant Italian standards.

The eighteenth century was marked by constant dissent and revolution. Though as civic beings women were still practically invisible in the public spaces of society, some did begin to articulate a public will particularly toward problems of the poor and the oppression of women and children. In England, this is the time of the industrial revolution, and of Hannah More, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Mary Anne Radcliffe, women of differing social classes who took it upon themselves to alter the inequities of society. This is also the century of the French revolution; a period of extreme inequality and poverty for the peasantry, the high point of the salonieres, and the telling moment for the lower-middle-class and labouring women who were the heroines of the revolution; they rallied, rioted, and marched but, in the end, were denied political participation (pp. 589-92).

The outstanding exception to the privatization of

women's roles was within dissenting religious sects, particularly in the Quaker-Anabaptist tradition. These women were trained for community responsibility and assumed a public character not unequal to their male counterparts.

By the eighteenth century, women's economic function was reduced to not just wife but housewife. In the middle and upper classes the household as craft workshop was displaced by the centre of family living with a new emphasis on child rearing, living and recreation. Women, with the assistance of domestic labour, attained sufficient leisure to indulge in non-task oriented aspects of family life such as reading, writing, conversation, and play. In the meantime, the lot of working class women became even more difficult with longer working hours and no provision for the care of their children.

This focus on domesticity led to the decline of status and opportunity for women and, eventually, restrictive legislation concerning their rights regarding property and children (Boulding, p. 604). At the same time, the emphasis on domesticity and its attendant features led to frustration. Women with excesses of competence and energy either became intensely involved in social injustices, principally as volunteers, or else increased their productivity as intellectuals, artists, writers, religious leaders, and social activists (p. 606).

This was a period of prolific women painters and scholars, again particularly in Italy but also in Germany,

France and England. Though there was a slight tendency toward the Italian practice of moving out of the confines of the family circle to exercise their artistic talents, for the most part, women's artistic work remained within the private sphere in other European countries (Boulding, p. 602). Of the women artists we know, most were trained in the workshops of their artist fathers. Presumably countless others worked unknown in family workshops with fathers and brothers.

Since it was still inappropriate for women to be present for the study of the nude figure -- the foundation of legitimate and public as well as the most lucrative art making, generally they were cut off from oil painting and sculpture. Women had to content themselves with activities within the home such as miniature painting, shell work, wax modelling, embroidery, and paper mosaic, (Parker and Pollack, p. 63) or else circumvent conventional formal training. Generally, they became masters of such subjects as flower painting and portraiture. In Germany, for instance, besides their large canvasses of the royal families and the aristocracy, women were miniaturists, makers of medals, and increasingly, gem cutters (Boulding, p. 601). On the other hand, in England, the Swiss historical painter, Angelica Kauffman, and the painter of flowers, Mary Moser, became significant enough to become founding members of the British Royal Academy (Harris and Nochlin, 1981, p. 174).

With the domestication of female power, the overt misogyny of earlier times could safely give way to "sentimental regard and protective solicitude" (Keller, p. 62). Now "male and female were separated by ascribed nature and by function, with woman reduced to new forms of dependency and the positions of men bolstered by new sources of authority" (pp. 62-3). Eventually, "the fearful devourer, with her insatiable lust, had given away to the 'angel in the house'--a chaste, desexualized, and harmless dependent" (p. 62) with the sole function of upholding the values of the new age. However, it was well into the nineteenth century before this new ideology came to full flower. By then, other ideologies that were essential to industrial capitalism were equally well entrenched, those of manhood, nature, and science.

By the Victorian era women's public power was completely removed. The state "had passed 'to the control of parliament composed of men and elected by men'" (Boulding, p. 617). Officially, women's culture was entirely private and centered around child care and support structures for men, in the "underlife" (p. 619). Even after active participation in nineteenth century revolutions, they were denied access to public culture. However, the many social movements of the century saw women actively engaged in reform movements. By the end of the century women were again balancing public and private activities in preparation for the constant twentieth

century demand for egalitarian conditions.

Despite rising waves of feminist efforts since the seventeenth century, women's autonomy still is subject to dubious status. Although biological knowledge has long since corrected the fallacy of the semen and the seed, the attitudes spawned by this misplaced analogy persist for one reason or another. It has spread from its Near Eastern locus throughout five continents "by a process of diffusion and conquest and in varying forms" (Fisher, p. 252). It has been " superimposed on earlier traditions . . . with contradictory beliefs surviving or peering through the earlier scheme" (Ibid.). In the twentieth century, evidence supplied by "scientific" authority continues to justify outdated assumptions about the male-female hierarchy with women's intellectual inferiority and economic dependency being determined by reproduction, that is, hormones, menstruation, and pregnancy.

It is ironic that at the same time that capitalism has eroded the patriarchal foundations of social life it has managed somehow to retain domination of men over women in society, a domination which "continues to pervade economic, legal, social and sexual life" (Rowbotham, p. 122). Early in industrialization the shift of women into a domestic role and the emphasis on private family life permitted the concept of the "social relations of production" to extend and be reproduced in husband-wife relations. The family unit provided cheap child care and domestic maintenance

work, exclusively at the hands of women, to be appropriated by fathers in oppressive monogamous family structures.

However, by the nineteenth century, private family life gave way to women's need to participate in the public sphere. Technology had not led to equal distribution of goods. Women were required to work outside the home. The excessive hardships that grew out of industrialization made an issue of men's responsibility in child care and domestic maintenance. Finally, although contraceptive technology and wage labour have severely limited male control over female productive capacity -- the basis of patriarchal authority, women's autonomy in this, the latter part of the twentieth century, is still subject to variations of ancient ideological myths.

Rowbotham (1973, p. 122) contends that propaganda about the feminine role perpetuates the current state of affairs. Elements of middle class Victorian values permeate our culture with Cinderella-like images of women who are transformed by romance, fashion, possessions, and social status; women who are grateful for and deserving of the security of wistfully a gallant, but certainly a solid and successful male; women who submit to the "gentle tyranny" of subduing and being subdued by a loving oppressor (p. 34). Our understanding of what is "feminine" is derived from the same ideology that conveniently implies that submission is natural. Simone de Beauvoir (1974) argues that it is completely unnatural for the female human

being to make herself a feminine woman, that the requirements of femininity belittle and mutilate women. The question is, how do women dismantle such myths? How do we end such implicit but subtle forms of domination? How do we go beyond our own situation to transform the social structures that reproduce relations of exploitation and oppression in all spheres of human life?

One might ask similar questions of art education. How do we, as art educators, go beyond the studio model and its reproductive code? How do we break away from the myths of the predominate formalist aesthetic and infuse some notion of the personal aesthetic? How do we develop consciousness of art in everyday life? A critical consciousness? How do we make our students aware of the possibility of everyday life to inform art making? Or of the power of art to sublimate everyday experience? How do we bring to them experiences of transformation and transcendence in art? The formalist aesthetic has so insinuated itself into the fibre of art education that it is difficult to envision our breaking every last thread. Yet if we are to avail our students of more of the possibilities that lie in art, one must try to imagine art education freed of this estranged abstract aesthetic.

CHAPTER FIVE

The High Road: Feminist Mediations

Contending that "political theory justifies male supremacy" (p. 7), O'Brien maintains that "we will never liberate ourselves as women until we develop a systematic theoretical analysis of the roots and grounds and development of male history and male philosophy" (p. 3). Further, women need to demonstrate "that male dominant culture and the male-stream thought which buttresses and justifies it are both . . . prejudiced by the very fact that they are masculine" (p. 5). O'Brien points women to begin by regarding "male philosophy as an ideology of male supremacy" (Ibid.). Male hegemony conceals the very fact of male-dominated culture and the acceptance by women of such a culture. From the particularity of such a world view, the dominant group appears indistinguishable from civilization (Rowbotham, 1973, p. 39). At issue is the knowledge that <u>any</u> theory is culturally determined, that any question of what culture is, and how the relations between person and culture work is hindered by the fact that the culture which should provide the tools of understanding is, itself, the same male-dominant culture.

One point is clear. Women's culture is colonized. Generally, we have been conditioned since we were little girls to view ourselves through a male lens, to be feminine, domestic, silent in public. By nature bound to the nurturing role, women are caught in "a rather gentle tyranny" (Rowbotham, p. 34), where woman is "the other in a totality of which the two components are necessary to one another" (p.35). So much so that regardless of external endeavours, they tend to be defined in the context of the private world of the family. On the other hand, when women do participate in public culture commonly it is not through expression of their own womanness but in male terms. Otherwise, it is with the expectation of failure and inappropriate behavior or refusal to be heard. Always there seems to be the struggle for both the possibility of making public women's culture and for giving women access to public culture.

Further, public culture is male defined. It is the male experience of body, health, family, sexuality, politics, indeed most social relations that is sanctioned as the norm. Women's experiences of even such intimate concerns as body, illness, menstruation, menopause, birthing and sexuality are translated into frameworks determined by men, to be subsumed as male non-experience. Invisible and unacknowledged, we remain unable "to find ourselves in existing culture as we experience ourselves" (Ibid.).

Certainly the power that resides in language is at issue here. The language that we use -- whether it be text or image, and that we assume to be transparent is very much a male construction and part of the ideology of male supremacy. As such, it is the source of a particular kind of power; it is exclusive to the understanding of those to whom it applies and impervious to any others. As Rowbotham argues, "It is not a question of being outside existing language." We can't enter and change it from within. "We can't just occupy existing words. We have to change the meanings of words even before we take them over" (p. 33). Though men and women use the same words, these are not inclusive of the experience of being female. A woman is not a man and no matter how universal the claim, if language is not formed in her consciousness, it does not illumine. It does not speak for her.

It is this exclusion from all existing language that demonstrates "our profound alienation from any culture [that would proclaim to] generalize itself" (p. 34). The source of women's expression is, as men's, derived from everyday experiences. In women's case, more often than not this is located in her role of life giver and nurturer, in her relationship to those around her and, particularly, in her perception of the relationship between women and nature. Women's imagery often has to do with transformation, what amounts to a "re-evaluation of nature -- our own and the world's" (Lauter, 1984, p. 18).

Herein lies the problem of regarding women and nature in the same instance. As Lauter (p. 17) illustrates, traditional male dominant Western belief or mythology tends to separate nature from culture and exempt women from culture. In either case, culture remains male leaving little possibility of public acknowledgment of either nature or women in the images that women would use to communicate their experiences. Even blatant attempts to intrude their images into the public world, for instance Judy Chicago's Dinner Party and Birthing Project, have met publicly with criticisms of male aggressiveness and overt sexuality. The power of what is being expressed in the imagery is left to the appreciation of women's private culture.

Without access to the power of ones own signs and imagery, ones own means of communication, what possibility is there for political discourse and political action? How does one arrive at transformative knowledge, at truth grounded in reality and not abstractions, truth as spoken of by Elshtain (1981), "that active creation of meaning between two or more people" (p. 310)? Or reach truth "from, by, and for the subject-herself, but within a social frame of uncoerced communication"(p. 311)? How does one go about constructing new meanings or becoming more intelligible to oneself? There is that place that nurtures truth, that "arena in which human speech or discursive reflection is undominated, uncoerced, unmanipulated"

(Ibid.) that Elshtain tells us is necessary to political discourse? With neither words nor images to fit that experience, there can be no transformation, no liberation in the sense of seeking meaning and purpose. Without her own means of communication, there is no access to authentic political action, no autonomy.

In the context of women's exclusion from public culture and being maintained within private culture, Dinnerstein (1977) argues that male domination/female submission is the consequence of mother-monopolized child rearing. That is, inasmuch as in the period of early nurturance there is a difference in how male and female children experience the mother who is both the initial love-object and authority figure for the child. The fact that the primary care-giver is also "the will's first, overwhelming adversary" (p. 166) in frustrating the child's needs is essential to the child's differentiation of self. But, as Chodorow (1978) concurs, the difference in this preoedipal relationship between mother and daughter and mother and son forms the basis for the emotional grounds of domination.

The adult male responds to his childhood experience of the power of the mother with a generalized dread of women leading him to hold all women in positions of dependency lest he himself be controlled again. Thus women must be kept out of the public domain, excluded from the enclaves of male domination and he must disguise his emotional

dependence on women and be in control. The female transfers her dependency needs first onto her father and later, onto the man who symbolically replaces him. She already understands that the public world is not intended for girls, that her security is to be found in the private world of the care giver. And so the cycle of male domination/female acquiescence is perpetuated. Unless, that is, the cycle is broken by a "reorganization of parenting, so that the primary parenting is shared between men and women" (p. 215). Chodorow claims that such reorganization is essential to any "strategy for change whose goal includes liberation from the constraints of an unequal social organization of gender" (Ibid.).

Certainly the traditional family communicates and reinforces the public male/private female hierarchy from early childhood on through adolescence. Though one might wish otherwise, there is plenty of evidence of these differences being manifested in children's play. All their art forms including the visual arts and language suggest internalization of adult roles at a very early age. Perhaps this indicates the need to give even greater consideration to the enconscientizing role of children's creative play in pre-school and elementary classrooms as well as the home, particularly as it relates to possible shifts in role definition. Gilligan's (1982) work illustrates that the apparent differences between preadolescent boys and girls is not due to differing

maturity levels but to the contrast between the preadolescent girl's "insights central to an ethic of care" and the boy's preoccupation with "the logic of the justice" (p.30). In light of this it would seem that interpretation that would include the girl's line of thought would be necessary in comparing children's endeavours.

Spender (1980) argues the basis of domination is in the construction of patriarchal order itself, that is, the symbolic sex-class system into which we are born and give substance, however implicitly, and which, as a frame of reference, patterns our existence in keeping with the myth of male supremacist social arrangements.

> It is a symbolic order into which we are born and as we become members of society and begin to enter the meanings which the symbols represent, we also begin to structure the world so that these symbols are seen to be applicable: we enter into the meaning of patriarchal order and we then help to give it substance, we help it to come true. (p. 4)

Out of the myth comes the reality of male power which is so deeply engrained in every aspect of our existence that it continues to validate and perpetuate the mythic claim for male supremacy/female subordinance.

Claiming that male-stream thought "misrepresents one level of reality in the need to give expression to another level of reality" (p. 6), O'Brien argues that there is such

a thing as a feminist perspective and that it must "carve out its own subject matter" and in so doing "can provide new and illuminating reappraisals of the more encrusted tenets of male-stream thought" (p. 12). At issue here is the male public/female private hierarchy, already much discussed in this chapter, and the need to acknowledge that women's private culture is not subordinate. In every respect it is as valid an expression of human endeavour as men's culture. However, since it finds its source in different experiences, it is based upon different premises. Ideally, each is part of culture per se, each share the premises of private and public.

Accordingly, O'Brien indicates the need for a theoretical framework, "a theoretical component for a feminist praxis, a unity of our thinking about what we must do with our methods of doing it" (p. 7). She asks for a transformative feminism which includes female experience, that is, the integration of women into the productive process, and the reintegration of men on equal terms into the reproductive process. This entails a relation of cooperation, "the harmonization of people with nature, and the accompanying transformation of consciousness" (p. 210). In terms of art this suggests giving validity to art forms that dare to move out of purely detached, cerebral expression to deal with transformative human experiences, art that dares to encounter and confront us with reminders of our own humanity and possibly suggest strategies for

survival.

As a first step toward eliminating the male/female hierarchy, Spender advocates that women dismantle the patriarchal order and create their own reality:

> Some of us, however, have decided to stop. . . . We have begun to codify the meaning that woman is an autonomous category and we are beginning to make this version of the world come true. We are gathering our own evidence which disproves male superiority and which unmasks the many mechanisms which have helped to sustain this unfortunate and inappropriate reality. (pp. 4,5)

Her methodology involves "unraveling" the many linguistic means by which patriarchy has been created.

Spender's proposal suggests that enconscientization has already taken place. For a large group of women this is not the case. Those caught up in the security of middle class society for one reason or another do not reach out to the threat of enconscientization. Though in many cases already enconscientized, working class women, especially single mothers, often lack sufficient time and energy to unravel the linguistic basis of patriarchy. Nevertheless the project already has begun by such scholars as Mary Daly. Another, Estella Lauter (1984), makes an important contribution to dispelling the mythology of male domination by showing that in women's imagery there is indication of a change already occurring. Lauter's work illustrates that

in the imagery of women's art, both poetry and visual art, there is indication of an entirely new myth that concerns the place of humankind in nature.

Fisher (1979), like O'Brien, calls for integration but, in her case, as the incorporation of sexuality into human experience.

> Only when the power nexus is removed, when the whore issue disappears from attitudes and language, can we hope for approximation of equality between the sexes. An approach must be made toward seeing sexual meetings as equally body and mind-spirit, toward valuing active female and male sexuality, toward achieving a holistic philosophy. (p. 404)

The hope for humanity lies in the discovery that patriarchy and its accompanying hierarchical ideology of domination "are not inherent in the nature of either civilization or the species" (p. 406) and in the knowledge that we have sufficient incentive for change as well as a natural proclivity for adaptation.

Social structures, particularly the family, however, are changing and with it women's understanding of themselves in relation to the world outside. We are becoming visible to ourselves, self-conscious. As our historical consciousness begins to emerge, we are beginning to see what we could not see before. We are beginning to recognize our own cultural creations, our actions, our

ideas, our organization, our history, and our own theory. We are beginning "to integrate a new reality" (Rowbotham, p. 28). We are beginning to know ourselves in a new relation to one another. Our individual self-consciousness is at the same time transforming and being transformed into the solidarity of a collective consciousness (p. 29). We are beginning to use our self-consciousness strategically as we begin to recognize that women's culture is an entity that has its own reality, its own social and political possibilities; that women's culture grows out of experiences that necessarily differ from those of men; that being different is not synonymous with being inferior. Finally, we -- both men and women, are beginning to acknowledge that our differences offer more possibilities than otherwise would be the case.

In the same way, women are discarding the old mythologies in art making. They are dismissing any notion of externally imposed criteria -- male or female, for what counts as art and are entering a new realm of art making, one that encourages them to find their sources in their own experiences. They are feeling the power of what they have to say in the images they create, a power that speaks for women's experience in a way that, until recently, was unlikely.

All in all, what seems to be implied is that indeed there are differences between males and females but that difference cannot be equated with inequality; that

differences are not constitutive of grounds for domination. Indeed, differences are 'natural' but hierarchies of dominance/submission are not. Our biology necessarily points to sex/gender distinctions but not inferiority. What is reached for is the possibility of equal value as human beings, or equity.

Predicating their position on a similar rationale, feminist art historians argue that it is both unnatural and inappropriate for one cultural form or mode of art making to dominate all others. They insist that we can no longer becloud the reality of a limited, elite aesthetic with a shroud of mystery and disbelief. We must deal with the issue. We are called upon to recognize and make it known that there are different modes of art which require different ways of looking and of understanding; that notions of what a work of art is, how it functions in society, and how we understand it be reconsidered.

This attitude must be reflected in the endeavour of all humans beings. It is not enough simply to reconsider equity from a women's perspective. Conceivably, the result could be a feminist aesthetic elite competing with the male dominant one. Rather the issue centers around art in everyday life: the possibility of art to critique and sublimate everyday life; the possibility of everyday life to inform one's art. I would maintain that just as important a part of the project lies with males if human beings are to overcome the bi-polarity between female-male

experience. Obviously transformation and transcendence should be as accessible to males as to females. Apparently they are just as elusive since it would seem that, for the most part, men's experience of art is no less alienating than women's, with their own limitations on the possibility of relating to everyday life.

CHAPTER SIX

Inward Journeys: Reclaiming the Rhythms of the Cosmos

The original question of this thesis sought to reveal a concept of art that would be more inclusive of human experience, a concept that would form the grounds of a more authentic art education. Thus far I have attempted to trace how society has created and perpetuated the domination of one cultural form over others. From the perspective of art, domination presents itself as a singular or predominate emphasis on a formalist aesthetic. This aesthetic comes out of a tradition which Alpers describes as "a sequence of individual masterpieces making contributions to a definable stylistic sequence" (1982, p. 183), a stylistic sequence which, for the most part, excludes any contributions made by women. Not only has women's art making been devalued, but also our understanding of art has been distorted by its institutionalization according to white male Italian standards, standards that can be traced back to misogynist attitudes of Renaissance culture. In fact, the whole of female expressivity has come to be considered a mark of women's inferiority.

Various reasons may be cited for the persistence of this "Italianate-masculinist" preference (Broude and Garrard, p. 8), many of which are derived from the nature of the institutions of an androcentric culture that perpetuates white male domination. However, at this point in the discussion, perhaps it is sufficient to point out that the feminist critique indicates that our art history may not be as it appears or is acknowledged to be, and that our understanding of what we take to be art may be distorted by particular interpretations of our traditions in art. Then the task here would seem to be to explore what else art might mean, to unearth what else it might include, and possibly propose the recovery of what is valuable in what has been lost. That is, if one accepts that there co-exists a parallel, "non-Albertian" art (Alpers, 1983, p.xx), what constitutes it? And, further, what is its source?

Recovery of Lost Meaning

Anthropologists, trying to situate where art came into human experience, point to the Upper Paleolithic period and that moment when brute flesh transcended its preoccupation with shelter and food to reach for something more radiant, something beyond the material world. The setting down in ochre and sienna of images of everyday reality -- bison, horses, handprints, human-like figures, and the pressing or

scraping of marks into various surfaces has left us with mysteries inscribed on stone, bone, and clay that puzzle us to this day.

Initially, art did not stand outside of life as it tends to today. Rather, it was part of human spirituality. As was religion, it was integrated into all aspects of daily living, an inseparable aspect of collective life. As Lippard (1933) maintains, art in this context was created to be communicated. The symbols were mutually understood not, we are told, so much as the imitation of nature as the presentation of ideas, presumably ideas about religion and politics. Having sprung from the integration of culture and nature, possibly it also expressed human fear of addressing nature directly. Perhaps, as Lippard suggests, it served as "the concretizing vehicle that permitted the abstract ideal of religion to be communicated and thereby survive" (p. 10).

Likewise, in women's traditional arts, as in almost all cultures that predate the the invention of "fine arts,"

> The desire to refine and improve, enrich and elaborate designs of useful things -- whether quilts, cathedrals, earthenware bowls, or chalices -- proceeds from a reverence for the dimension of life that these things serve and the impulse to enhance these experiences aesthetically, the better to celebrate them. (Broude and Garrard, p. 13)

Art was conceived of not as something that was higher than, or separate from life, but as a functional part of life itself. Indeed, art was such an integral part of all of life's activities that there was no word set apart to describe it. Not named, it simply was.

Accordingly, in Peter Fuller's (1983) development of Marcuse's argument, the "aesthetic dimension" is a potentiality of the human species that includes "instinctive aesthetic sensations; and imaginative and physical work on materials and stylistic conventions as given by tradition" (p. 13). Elaborating on Winnicott's explanation of the human being's constant attempt to relate inner and outer reality, Fuller illustrates the importance of "potential space" -- that unchallenged, intermediate area between inner reality and external life, to mediate between the individual and the insult of the Reality Principle. It is here in this potential space that is located the "cultural experience" (p. 16) inasmuch as one "plays" in this transitional realm, informed at the same time by both one's subjective and objective reality. Thus the constraints of everyday reality are softened by "the persistence of a creative, imaginative, and aesthetic component" (p. 17).

In this context, art was a dimension of everyone's productive life until such point as the "potential space" was "effectively sealed over" (p. 19). He locates this loss of the aesthetic dimension in eighteenth and

nineteenth century Industrialization when the "division of labour severed the creative relationship between imagination, intellect, heart and hand" (Ibid.). "Potential space" was displaced by the Reality Principle in the form of technology and economics. In this century, the "aesthetic dimension" has been further betrayed by the rationalism of Modernism (p. 18). Consistent with the evolution of the fine arts tradition, "fine" artists now emphasize superficial decoration and sensuous manipulation of materials and objects, thereby renouncing their capacity to create illusory worlds (p. 27).

Feminist art historians rightly question the "fine" arts being judged "higher" in any important historical or social sense than the traditional arts and crafts. They point to the artificial barriers between abstract or fine art and the traditional arts, claiming that the devaluation of the minor arts and their exclusion from art history in favor of the privileged fine arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture are the result of artists who controlled art academies and thus defined their values. In addition, subsequent art historians have "selected out and emphasized the achievements of those in positions of cultural authority" or, in some instances, those rebelling against such authority (p. 12).

Ironically, to make art is, stereotypically, often considered a feminine act yet it is women's expressive activities that are often devalued. Questioning this fact

of women's expressivity being a hallmark of inferiority, feminists note that women's art making is regarded almost exclusively within the personal context, implying lesser art or craft. Women create needlework, make quilts and clothes, and decorate homes and cakes. In fact, they "turn their hand" to whatever is required of them, knitting and sewing, and arranging and embellishing, transforming all that is around them. This remains private art.

Women who pursue art externally do so at the risk of either being unacknowledged or else being subjected to rather odious forms of criticism. In fact, until recent feminist undertakings, most women artists could anticipate neither the history books nor the galleries. On the other hand, some, such as Frankenthaler, reach the pinnacle of accomplishment but under the criticism of doing so in male terms. Others, including O'Keefe and Chicago, are reproached for preoccupation with sexuality. However, there are others who simply proceed with the project of making art in the interest of an improved humanity -- Kollowitz did not dwell upon oversight and neglect. She was too impassioned with what she had to say with her images about the world in which she found herself.

These same critics condemn the hierarchy of values in art, these

> artificial categories devised by men and imposed upon women for social purposes that ultimately have little to do with our conception of a

> 'universal' art, an art through which we express and fulfill 'our' highest aspirations" (Broude and Garrard, pp. 14,15).

They deplore the ways in which particularly masculine interests are mistaken in our culture for universal concerns, particularly stylistic progression and individual artistic innovation as benchmarks of value, and the association of art with ownership of property.

They challenge our standard responses to the question, "What is art?" They reject the traditional distinctions between "high" and "low" or between "meaningful" and "abstract" as opposed to the "merely decorative." They challenge aesthetic values and bring "new tests of use, relevancy, and significance to bear upon our evaluation of what constitutes a work of art" (p. 14). As Broude and Garrard maintain,

> in the broadest historical sense, when the small trickle of "high art" activity that has occurred in a few centuries at our own end of the historical spectrum are measured against the endless millennia in which weaving and potmaking were the world's principal forms of art-making, one may conclude that it is not the crafts and traditional arts, but the fine arts, that are history's aberration. (pp. 12,13)

The point is well taken. Increasingly, as the aesthetic has been eroded from the functional pursuits of everyday

life, "Art" with a capital "A" has become elevated to a more and more exclusive space.

Feminists point to the need for "a critical framework, freed of sexist hierarchies, that will accommodate both the fine and the traditional arts" (p. 12). They impel us to demythologize art history, to remove cultural preconceptions and "experience in new ways the images and objects of the old art historical litany, . . . to experience them more nearly as they were originally intended to be experienced" (p. 14). They claim the challenge raised by women's traditional art is to expand our definition of art, giving a larger place to "those forms of art that serve life in un-self-conscious ways" (Ibid.), and to place in balanced perspective the contributions to and the definitions of art that have been introduced by "white males over a five hundred year period in a small section of the world" (Mainardi, 1982, p. 344).

It is this balance that must be regained. From the feminist argument it is apparent that we have lost the fullness and richness of art, that our blind acceptance of purely rational ordering and hierarchical valuing has moved us toward a more narrowly focused, intellectualized art that is self-conscious and exclusive. Clearly the task is to restore balance, to discontinue the practice of placing excess value on some modes of art while dismissing others, to reinvest art with meaning and context, to restore its fullness and, at the same time, all else that this implies.

Alpers recommended strategy:

> not just to insist that women be written into art history, but that art history itself -- specifically its notions of what a work of art is, how it functions in society, and how we understand it -- be rewritten. (1982, p. 198)

Mainardi (p. 345) insists upon this rewriting of art history to acknowledge the fact "that art has been made by all races and classes of women," that art, in fact is a human impulse and not the attribute of a particular sex, race, or class."

The project seems to point to Alpers notion of the co-existence of different modes of art which require different ways of looking and of understanding. Already we see the beginnings of a demystification of the definition and of the making of art -- many kinds of activities and many different functions for images are being taken seriously.

The inference here is that what the individual calls art has to be given some value in determining "What is art;" that the individual, or personal aesthetic has to be given place in art. On the other hand, to claim that all that is intended as art is art provokes the perennial complaint of pluralism, of adopting an "anything goes" attitud... But need we be so fearful of this criticism? It may be that within the criticism itself lies the possibility for what is most hopeful, that is, the possibility of always having mediation between what is the

personal aesthetic and what is taken to be the public aesthetic; that there will never be a fixed naming of what will constitute art; that therein is the possibility of avoiding the domination or authority of dogma.

Schorr's (1974) argument for a radical transformation of art deals with this dilemma very convincingly. Negating art as a definable, honorific category, he argues on the basis of a more fluid concept that equates art with service, that is, with satisfying human needs and interests, old and new.

> The term art was and is used to include a great many disparate things that have no one quality or function to which the term might point. . . . Paintings and sculptures are good, not in that they are art, but in that they are responses to and fulfillers of diverse personal and societal needs and interests -- that is, good for us. (pp. 48,49)

This accommodates a number of art forms from the high art of the gallery and museum to such deviations of traditional form as anti-, or nonart, to varieties of art-in-life practices, all potentially valid and necessary.

Since there is no way to arrange all human needs hierarchically, likewise one cannot ascribe more value to one art form than another (p. 53). Rather, Schorr prescribes a way of thinking that enables us "to consider the various old and new art-act options and art-life relationships justly -- that is, with appreciation of their

merits and faults and without undue theoretic privilege to any" (p. 12). Thus, Schorr is able to claim virtue in high art and in what he refers to as "revolutionary, extended, aesthetic practice" (Ibid.).

Jauss's (1982) aesthetics of reception counters the Formalist position and expands Schorr's notion of art. Drawing on Husserlian phenomenology in his description of an horizon of expectations, he indicates that one can impute aesthetic value to a work according to its reception and influence. The determining feature is aesthetic distance, that is, "the disparity between the given horizon and the appearance of a new work" (p. 25). It is the reception of this disparity that "can result in a 'change of horizons' through negation of familiar experiences or through raising newly articulated experiences to the level of consciousness" (Ibid.).

This distance between the "horizon of expectations and the work, between the familiarity of previous aesthetic experience and the 'horizonal change' demanded by the reception of the new work," distinguishes between "'culinary' or entertainment art" and -- presumably more demanding, more progressive, art. This art demands a shift "from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic norms to a new production that surpasses them" (p. 19).

In the same way, Schorr disclaims any proclivity

toward an "anything goes" attitude because "anything" is not identical with "°things right and sufficient to be responsive to the actual needs and interests of persons and communities,' which is what the arts are" (p. 54). This attitude points toward a more inclusive understanding of art, one that includes a whole field of practices rather than one exclusive and obscure notion that we choose to refer to as fine art.

Such an attitude will require much of us: that we transform and reintegrate public and private in every sense so that we liberate both women and men from the alienating circumstances of their lives; that we overcome the restrictions on being that we have built into our symbolic code; that we see ourselves as part of many interwoven forms of life, as different from but akin, as equal but not superior to, nature. Indeed, such an attitude will require nothing less than we re-image the world. From the women's movement particularly but also from the ecological movements, there is growing evidence that already this is beginning to happen.

Re-imaging the World

A new mythos is emerging. Women are beginning to draw upon a new perception of themselves, a new consciousness, what Starhawk names immanence -- "the awareness of the

world and everything in it as alive, dynamic, interdependent, interacting, and infused with moving energies: a living being, a moving dance" (Starhawk, 1982, p. 9). In their art, which often comes out of the dailiness of life, is the sense of connecting, "connecting the parts of one's life, and connecting to other women -- creating a sense of community and wholeness" (Hedges and Wendt, 1980, p. 5).

Women are assuming a new attitude. Not only are they moving out of their stereotypical limitations, but also they are turning in to the positive joy of their true selves, of their own strength and self-determination (p. 167). They are "choosing to take this living world, the people and the creatures on it, as the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, to see the world, the earth, and our lives as sacred" (Starhawk, p. 11). They are extending their vision from the personal into the public realm, moving from a sense of responsibility for the self to a sense of responsibility for others (Hedges and Wendt p. 237). They are taking this attitude into their daily lives, making it the basis of their praxis in all matters of living. Perhaps the most overt instance of this is the recent struggle of women at Greenham Common, England, to force a peaceful resolution to the possibility of nuclear war. Women' culture is forming a counterworld.

For centuries men have suffered under the illusion that male culture is inclusive of all experience and, as

such, speaks best for all. Little thought is given to the damage done by excluding women's experience or subsuming exclusively female experience as male non-experience and thus not [illegible] any specific or unusual consideration. But women [illegible] not men. Their experiences are not the same. Though there is no underlying feminine nature or masculine nature, "there is the reality of what we experience, in our differing bodies, in he differing impact that culture has on each sex" (Starhawk, p. 74). Thus it has become women's resolve that their own culture must be acknowledged as being a valid expression of women's place in the world, the source of their aesthetic and political expression.

No longer is women's place so clearly defined, however. Distinctions between male public/female private roles are beginning to blur, as, for example, in the family unit and the role of women in public endeavours. So much so that presently most women find themselves in one of two situations: either clustered around the edges of patriarchy subsumed by the private, interior world or else living in two worlds at once, precariously bridging the private and the public. In either case, women's aesthetic is dominated by the legitimate public culture. On the other hand, some women proceed with confidence, stridently dismissing the stigmatism that is attached to being female or anything that is feminine, no longer feeling the need to cling to the security of their private world, feeling free to express themselves with creativity and integrity.

As has been indicated, from an art perspective domination points to a formalist aesthetic. From a larger, more general perspective, domination points to the institutions of an androcentric culture which find their source in patriarchy and are upheld by the needs of industrialized, technocratic society. The recounting of our pre-patriarchal past illustrates how matricentric societies were shaped; that in such mother-centered societies, women's public and private presence merged. The culture was characterized by harmony with nature and cooperation with each other, an interrelatedness of all aspects of living.

However, once the patriarchal form emerged, these ideals were abandoned. Now it was appropriate that man should and could control other people and nature. Women, being tied to reproduction, soon came to be placed with nature. This marks the beginning of 3000 years of struggle for "power-over," for transcendence of nature and the beginning of the separation into what we have come to accept as "feminine" values of the private, and "masculine" values of the public, world. Their public representation now being through "included interest" (Boulding, p. 677), women's necessary preoccupation with their private world placed them in a second class situation and ghettoized their culture. Left unchallenged, patriarchal interests tended to relegate women exclusively to the private domain and anoint the public domain as the exclusive right of men.

Justifying domination as "natural," the assumptions of patriarchy intruded into all spheres of life.

Domination is not natural; it is not inevitable. Certainly it is not conducive to an improved human situation. Rather, the underlying assumptions of such thinking create problems at all levels of human endeavour, from the personal to the global, from subtle coersion to explicit force. As such, domination comprises a significant factor in the possibility for our survival. It has brought us to the point of experiencing life in terms of polarities, of such either/or relations as poor-rich, black-white, peace keeper-annihilator, public-private, male-female; polarities that always incur the imbalanced relations of domination and subordination and all the ensuing problems. Yet we have so internalized its values that it is almost impossible to perceive how and to what extent domination has distorted and disintegrated human life.

Feminist attempts to get at the roots of domination point to the need to reach an understanding of the ethical basis of relations between men and women. At issue is the equality of woman with man, but the idea of equality is far from clear, ranging from identical conditions to equity. What is being claimed is that in respect of their common worth as free persons, that is, their fundamental worth, there is no difference between men and women. There are not male beings and female beings, only human beings or

persons. Essentially, the nature and value of persons is independent of gender. We are all free beings, individuals who are capable of directing ourselves to ends of our own choosing. And, in respect of this capacity for self-direction, women and men have the same worth.

But the most difficult question is yet to come. How is this capacity for self-direction to be realized? How is equal value to be realized in a society that accepts domination as natural, a society that depends upon a belief in hierarchy, in this case white male power over the whole of the human race and nature? a society that assigns value to male and female persons and public and private endeavour hierarchically?

Bound to the nurturance of others, women are apt to know very little about themselves. What they do know, that is, what have been women's experiences of privitization is ghettoization and, given their second class status, a perception of their culture as inferior to the public culture of men. Likewise, patriarchal myths preclude woman's perception of herself as a fully integrated human being, artist and woman; given the traditions, the one is exclusive of the other. The female artist must struggle with the recognition of herself as female in a society that denigrates the serious artistry of women. Derision accompanies whichever role she might pursue. Either she is a deformed woman or a restricted artist. Always, the omnipresent Dark Angel sits on her shoulder ready to

quicken the guilt -- when she is care giver, she ought to be art maker; when she is art maker, she is negligent of care giving. Even in her own consciousness the one precludes the other.

To reiterate, it is not necessarily the nature of women that causes them to see the world differently but that they experience the world differently. Essentially women have experiences that are particular to women, first, because of their biology but even moreso because of how culture has bound them to their biology. Women's consciousness is derived in the context of their everyday experiences. It is the nurturing and the female experience of the human body "as a permeable form whose boundaries expand and contract to take in or deliver other bodies or beings" (Lauter, p. 162) that informs women's consciousness of themselves. This against the backdrop of a society "built on the idea of competition among separate egos, striving to define themselves in terms of their differences from others of their kind and other kinds of life" (Ibid.).

For such reasons women artist's attempts to create self images bereft of patriarchal myths seldom have been successful. And when theye do make the attempt, they fall short. As inheritors of patriarchal myths, "female artists continue to fall victim to society's buffeting, to create the female dragon, or to abort the self in one form or another" (Stewart, 1981, p. 178). Often they end up creating "a freak, . . . a dybbuk, a Medusa," or, as in

Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, a monster. Their artistic creations, moreso than those of men, tend to "give visual form to the fear of self, to hold anxiety up to the Gothic mirror of the imagination" (Ames in Stewart, p. 173). Their attempts to make the journey inward to create undistorted self-images present images of alienation from society, of isolation, of entrapment, of flight, and of rebirth, always depicting a split between not only personal and social being but also between sexual and personal identity (p. 175).

But there is something in the attempt itself. There is the recognized need and the willingness to make the journey whatever the outcome. Even moreso, there is its "focus on the new mythos: a myth of the birth of the artist . . . and a recognition of the offspring, no matter how ugly or weak" (p. 178). There is no longer need to miscarry, abort, or self-destruct. In this artistic rebirth, a woman can be an artist and a woman, courageous yet retain womanliness. She is free to dismiss our patriarchal heritage of myths with their restricting roles, to acknowledge her own capabilities, to express her power-from-within through her own feelings and emotions. She can live in and act upon the world with integrity.

Such a mythos is already emerging. Women are beginning to believe in their own experience. They are recognizing that it is not simply the exclusion from male-dominant public culture that is damaging but also the

inferior status given to their own. They are concerning themselves less with this exclusion and more with the validity and value of women's private culture. They are becoming less apologetic, less defensive about their necessary preoccupation with the interior world as feminist research confirms that the devaluation of their role is based upon distorted assumptions and unjustified claims. They see the futility of approaching the world through the male experience, that it is neither productive nor desirable. Rather, they wish to see themselves, and to be seen, constructively, in terms of their own experience. Women are acknowledging the power and authenticity of their own culture.

From the mythic patterns and images that occur in their work, it is apparent that the female artist already differs somewhat from the traditional pattern, that she is depicting women's new world. Lippard delineated such recurring elements in women's art as central-core imagery, uniform density or overall texture, layering, fragmentation, collage, and autobiographical content, all of which suggest women's emerging consciousness of themselves (1976, pp. 49, 81).

Lauter's (1984) exploration of women's creative expression uncovers what she calls a network of related images or clusters of images, essentially a collective vision of the relationship between women and nature, a vision that is expressed in symbols of rebirth and

transformation.

> On one level, the pattern involves explicit images of transformation: the mask, the seed pod, the veil, the shield, the magic box, the shadow, flight, metamorphosis. On another level, it involves the investigation of our relationship to animal life and the creation of hybrid forms, which are not restricted to the animal realm but spill over into the vegetable and mineral as well, as nature is remythologized in female forms. On a third level, it involves appearances of "The Goddess," by which is meant the vision of power and energy incarnate in female form, which seems to have preceded the Greek division of it into multiple goddesses and the Hebrew attempt to nullify it. The most expansive cluster concerns nature and its "cosmic" guises -- the stars, the planets, the galaxies, the gases, the tides, the clouds, light itself. (pp. 132-3)

Such images of transformation dispel myths of supremacy and boundaries, and speak of humanness, continuums, and affirmation of the female capacity for knowing and speaking. Such images are given shape by women's private life and bodily experiences. Similarly, men's images should be shaped by their own life and bodily experiences.

Obviously these images do not point to models of a new society. Rather, they suggest visions of a profound change

in the human psyche, essentially a re-visioning of culture and a "re-evaluation of 'nature,' both our own and the world's" (p. 132). These images blur the boundaries between mind and matter and express embodied experiences; they suggest a reconnecting of human life with the natural cycles of nonhuman life; they suggest the possibilities of interpenetration in form, content, or perspective (p. 222), of "shapeshifting" (p. 215). These are images of permeable boundaries and cosmic light. Images of the light that we share, female and male, if we choose to participate in reality as one among equals. (p. 223)

This brings us back to the question of art in everyday life. What has women's capacity for equality and self-direction to do with the making and naming of art? Women who choose to live as free and equal beings claim that what really counters domination is not simply the power of women's culture as such but the merging of the private with the public world (French, 1985; Lauter, 1984; Starhawk, 1982). These women use their "power-from-within" to subvert "power-over," that power to control or dominate. Power-from-within becomes "power-to," power to direct their lives as they see fit, power to transform the world as they see need. In this special form of power there is the possibility for inward journeys to find self-images freed of patriarchal mythology, for living as an integrated being. When one's lived knowledge, one's private experiences -- bodily and otherwise, inform one's public

expression, when one's public expression speaks from and is inclusive of one's own experiences, then there is possibility of authenticity in one's action. When one's personal aesthetic and everyday life inform one's public expression, then there is the possibility of authenticity in one's art making.

Authentic action on the part of integrated beings is the claim of feminist morality (French; O'Brien, 1981). Basic to such an attitude is the expressed need for a revised attitude toward nature, and out of this, science. The premises of modern physics suggest that there is a side to science that we cannot objectify and enumerate; that in addition to empirical reality there is the possibility of another reality that exists outside human experience. In keeping with Bookchin's (1982) vision, this presents nature as having a telos, an intentionality, that includes human with other forms of life. Then, rather than accepting it as the mindless mechanism that must be controlled, we must look to nature as a system of interrelating parts of which we are but one, one that is only equal to all others. That we are part of we must live in harmony with, we must nurture and protect.

We must begin to see ourselves again as part of nature. And we must pull together these fragmented aspects of our human nature, what we have come to accept as distinctly masculine or feminine qualities, and live as integrated human beings. This we must do ourselves, but

just as importantly, we must teach our children to do likewise. We must strive for a world where love and compassion and sharing and nutritiveness share equal value with control and structure, possession and status. This we must live if the greatest of possibilities can be realized for all life on this earth. Indeed, if life is to continue on this earth.

But simply giving equal value to female and male qualities is not sufficient to the problem of male dominant culture, or more specifically, inferior female culture. Rather, what is sought is the possibility of life that honors the inherent value of self, of self living in community with others, of self giving shape to and being shaped by that community. The possibility of life that recognizes human needs and emotions and feelings, that thrives on the diversity of human endeavours, that is in balance. Balanced in every respect, life with death, self with community, and seeing oneself in context in "a society and a culture that in turn are part of the biological/ geological community of planet earth and the cosmos beyond" (Starhawk, p. 49). Essentially, a life that has integrity.

Likewise, what is sought in art is the same possibility of integrity. To paraphrase Keller (1985) and Levine (1975), what is sought is the reclamation of art as a human project and the renunciation of the division of emotional and intellectual labour, the private and the public, that maintains art as an elitist, male preserve.

This calls for not simply the complementarity of male and female perspectives but for the transformation of the very categories of female and male, and correspondingly of nature and mind. What is sought is not an androgenous art but an art that "allows for the productive survival of diverse conceptions of mind and nature" (p. 178), an art that responds to and nurtures the interplay of diversity and richness of life in its fullest expression.

To live with integrity, to live harmoniously, we must enter into and celebrate the creativity of nature and the spirit of the universe. Then we will draw a line not simply to mark boundaries but also to show where edges meet, where forms merge. We will spread our paint within these forms, feeling from the depths of our woman's knowledge how the pigment is staining the ground, how the edges are blurring as wet meets wet. And should these forms become images of flowers, we will sense within the depths of our primitive knowledge that we are celebrating not just our own sexuality but also an original first moment in the history of the universe when the presence of flowers assured that there would be sustenance of life. Indeed, that there would be life. And, as we recognized in the flower our fruitfulness, our youth, so in the fruit and in the seed that dwells within it, we will acknowledge our maturing strength and self-determination, our possibilities to join in the cycles of continuity within our universe. It is then that we will dance the rhythms of the cosmos.

Yet the problem remains: How do we present in art education a notion of art that speaks to the feminist concerns for freedom and equality, for balance and integrity, for a new relationship between humankind and nature? What should we teach our children if they are to dance the rhythms of the cosmos?

The point is that to teach art implies that one does so based upon a certain set of assumptions about, or understanding of, art. Already I have indicated that much of public school art education is derived from formalist assumptions; that formalism and its consequent hierarchical structuring of value is an inappropriate basis for art education; that formalism is only one of a number of different modes of art making; and, that the valuing of formalism over other modes of art making is based upon very flimsy arguments when one looks at it from outside its own narrow perspective. Then the next task would be to make more explicit an understanding of art that would be appropriate to public school art education, indeed to all art making.

To reiterate: the problem of this study is to reveal a concept of art that is more inclusive of human experience out of which can emerge the grounds for a more authentic art education. The question is, in the relationship between art and society, what understanding of art should form the basis of art education? Further, how would this concept of art be reflected in praxis?

CHAPTER SEVEN

Journey's End: Evoking the Transcendent Light

The path that we have followed throughout this journey was in search of a richer, more authentic understanding of art, an understanding that allowed for reflection and for one's personal aesthetic and conscious choice. En route, we encountered some of the ambiguity that surrounds the concept of art itself and the difficulty of using traditional analyses to reach any understanding of why hierarchical valuation continues to be perpetuated in so many aspects of our lives. We also experienced aspects of the feminist project, an endeavour that seeks to restore balance by proposing new visions of human life. Throughout, we pursued the question: is there a concept or understanding of art that is inclusive of more of human experience? That encourages the integration of public and private experiences? That puts us in a more balanced relationship with the world in which we live?

Feminists, and those of like mind, would say so. Their research exposes the myth that the whole of human experience is included in what we have come to accept as legitimate art. They claim that women's art evidences the

fact that there are other modes of art making that speak for other experiences; that these other modes of art making not only exist but are thriving whether they are called art or not. They also maintain that women's art making may be the source of an alternative vision of human life (Lauter, p. 163) whereupon we are called to reconnect human life with the natural cycle of nonhuman life.

Women's experiences in art making are consistent with Schorr's (1974) understanding of art as inclusive of "a great many disparate things that have no one quality or function to which the term might point" (p. 43), a variety that is less well described by art than by the term "arts" (p. 53). In fact, there are not only many arts but also many art-life relationships coexisting. Then art is synonymous with service, that is, "reflective of and responsive to human needs and interests" (p. 51). In this context, both high art and extended aesthetic practice enjoy equal value since both types of practices are of potential service to people.

Schorr raises a provocative notion of what should be claimed as art. However, there are many proposals for what should constitute art. For instance, one of the most promising and practical possibilities comes from Gowans' (1981) elucidation of the social purposes of art wherein art acquires meaning according to the function we attribute to it. On the other hand, Wolff (1983) argues for the "specificity" of art, the assumption being that given the

particular social and historical conditions, it is possible to identify the specific characteristics of art. Then, presumably, one would know for once and for all just what it is that art is supposed to be.

The Specificity of Art

Wolff's work (1981, 1983) indicates the need to break with the formalist tradition. While emphasizing the error of reducing the aesthetic to the ideological or social (1983, p. 141), she clearly demonstrates that art is a social product and that the import of a sociology of art is in its critique of the "ideology of timelessness and value-freedom which characterizes art theory and art history in the modern world" (p. 143). There is no such thing as a "pure" value-free, [context-free] objective aesthetic experience (p. 142).

Wolff sees the project to be an attempt to identify the specific characteristics of art which she claims need not be either historical or trans-historical (p. 90). She proposes a sociological aesthetics and, to this end, identifies three "major contenders for a theory of aesthetics within a sociological or materialist framework" (Ibid.) These are discourse theory, the philosophic anthropology of art, and psychoanalytic theories of art (pp. 90, 91), all of which attempt to identify the specific

characteristics of art.

Wolff sees discourse theory as "potentially compatible" with a sociological theory of art: "Discourse theory offers us a notion of the specificity of the aesthetic in terms of the particular discursive practices which constitute it, while leaving open the possibility of relating the aesthetic and its discourse to extra-aesthetic factors. . . . The specificity of art is identical with the discourses of the aesthetic" (p. 94).

As a means of conceptualizing the specificity of art, Wolff draws from Foucault, Laclau, and Pollock to illustrate the formation of various aesthetic discourses including the discourse of painting and the discourse of art history. She maintains that discourse theory offers the wherewithal to avoid a reductionist sociology of art and culture since it posits the aesthetic as relatively autonomous of its social and political determinants (p. 93). At the same time Wolff herself avoids the question of who generates the discourse. The shortcoming of discourse theory would seem to be its inability to address the problem of aesthetic pleasure which, depending upon one's perspective, may not in the end pose a problem since it is possible "that questions of 'subjective experience' or 'aesthetic appreciation' are wrongly formulated" (p. 95).

Wolff's work on the philosophical anthropology of art is derived primarily from the work of Sebastiano Timpanaro (1975) who argues for the reinstitution of materialism.

However, Timpanaro's materialism includes the biological as well as the social and economic and manifests itself as "constant dimensions of human experience" (Wolff, 1983, pp. 96,) which he claims to have greater stability than historical or social institutions.

These biological constants also are argued for by Raymond Williams (1977) and Peter Fuller (1980c), the latter of whom claims,

> The material basis of the 'spirituality' of works of art is not so easily dissolved. I think that it may lie in their capacity to be expressive of 'relative constants' of psycho-biological experience, which, however they may be structured culturally, have roots below the ideological level. (pp. 29-30)

Wolff points to the difficulty of dealing with "human constants" (p. 98) particularly the problem of essentialism and the necessity of a theory of human needs.

For the psychological theory of art, Wolff pursues Fuller's argument which is based on Kleinian psychoanalytic theory (pp. 99, 100). Here the "'relatively constant' features of human experience are recast in terms of psychological processes founded in biological needs and instincts" (p. 100). Wolff dismisses this theory on the basis of its own limitations: "There is still an absolute and essentially human set of such factors prior to and determining of their specific historical manifestations"

(p. 101). In an attempt to overcome these shortcomings, she examines Lacan's work on the gendered subject to dismiss it as well on the basis of its universalizing tendency (pp. 102, 103).

Wolff concludes her analysis of these three possible materialist theories of the aesthetic:

> It appears that to identify the specific features of the aesthetic is either to postulate human universals, whether anthropological or psychological (which, I have maintained, is unacceptable), or it is to necessitate a historical-materialist theory of aesthetic gratification, in which psychoanalysis finds its place within a broader analysis which does not subsume the concrete and the particular within an all-embracing universal theory. (p. 104)

Obviously Wolff has not been able to resolve the issue of the specificity of art without giving rise to further problems. However, the fact that none of the three positions offered seems entirely adequate does not lessen her contribution to the realm of possibilities for art inquiry. Possibly Gowans' (1981) historical analysis will lead us toward the insight that Wolff was unable to provide.

Gowans' Historical Analysis

Schorr (1974) maintains that there is no lowest common denominator in art, no one thing that can be called art. Rather, he points to an overlapping of historically differing understandings of the term, understandings which may have occurred without either the most scrupulous of arguments or impartiality. He states, "The decisions on this overlapping, and hence the inclusions under the heading art, were made by mere social elites, and not through their perception of or response to any art quality" (p. 48).

Likewise, Gowans (1981, p. 4), using historical analysis as his methodology, makes a case for what he terms the "democratization of art history." He insists upon the necessity and inevitability of expanding art history to include popular and vernacular arts, past and present. He claims that by investigating how the popular/commercial arts carry out the social functions of prehistoric arts we can acquire knowledge of how historic arts worked in and for society since presumably they both arose as responses to the needs of their own society. Ultimately, by understanding the principles by which older art was invested meaning, we should be able to seek the possibility of creating something similar for "our convictions" (p. 408).

He makes a distinction between the so-called "avant-

garde" and "popular/commercial" arts, where the popular/commercial arts carry out the four historical social functions of substitute imagery, illustration, beautification and persuasion while the avant-garde carries only one, artistic expression. They co-exist as different activities but both as activities that we recognize as 'arts' historically.

By interpreting the social functions as hierarchical, he makes a case for both human and artistic development. Each succeeding social function assumes the presence of the appropriate mental capacity or level of creative growth: substitute imagery - conceptual; illustration - analogical; beautification - analytical; persuasion/conviction - abstract causality. (p. 478) Thus the arts of persuasion/conviction were only possible when we had acquired as our mode of thinking, abstract causality which implied "relating facts to abstract systems of ideas, reducing them to principles, then re-introducing them to material contexts" (p. 367). Also implied was that all earlier levels of thought were "employed and subsumed" by this abstract causality. It should be noted that even in its most abstract form, art was always located within the context of everyday life, with everyday life informing the principles and, in turn, the principles enhancing everyday life.

Gablik (1976) supports a similar structuralist thesis of progress in art at the same time acknowledging that her

of his whole proposal. Historically, these arts deliberately styled artifacts that drew to mind the ideologies or convictions of all the social institutions, thereby transmitting the accepted values and belief systems (p. 19). Accordingly, the arts of persuasion/conviction have two characteristics: The full meaning is derived only from an abstract body of ideas; the forms shift in style according to such ideas or ideology (p. 364). In the modern arts, they are represented by advertising, political cartooning and popular/commercial architecture (p. 371).

It is in this more highly evolved or recently developed social function that we find the possibility for a new form of thinking, abstract causality, and the impetus for the great movements in art history universally. As Gowans claims, "Henceforth abstract causality governs major arts and persuasion/conviction is the social function which provides the deep motivation for those sweeping changes in 'artistic taste'" (p. 495).

The arts of persuasion/conviction represent our artistic maturity in the sense that we have not yet derived another social function for art out of the crisis that is the art world today. It may be that our thought processes are only approaching that new capability. At any rate, it does seem ironical that it is the resolution of our highest achievement, so to speak, that has given us the potential to be in the dilemma we find ourselves presently. That is,

the working through of the function persuasion/conviction and the facility of abstract causality has, in a sense, given us the capacity to reflect upon and present the more convincing argument for or against, to consciously develop a style that reflects an ideology or world view, and thus the possibility of what Gowans refers to as avant-garde art. In a sense, the signifier of our artistic maturity has led us to decline; that is, if we agree that, at the moment, formalism is the dominant aesthetic and, if we concur with Clark (p. 25) that formalism denies the proper relationship between art and its cultural content.

Persuasion/conviction is very much a part of the avant-garde art, however obtusely. In the traditional arts of persuasion/conviction style and content imply one another whereas, with the avant-garde the style is evident but the content is "by the artist's own admission" (Gowans, p. 368). The real intent of the avant-garde is self-expression, not communication. The forms are private and the system closed.

But, we are now to make our deductions from style and this presents a problem since style is a private language, a "secret" between the artist and the art. "It follows . . . that this kind of art is not merely potentially ambiguous, . . . but necessarily solipsistic. It means what you choose it to mean" (p. 370). To those who will never know the "secret," it is not just "potentially ambiguous," it also is not understood. Only those who know the secret,

those who share the private language will be persuaded. This would seem to be a very elitist representation of this social function but undoubtedly the case for much of art if we believe that the formalist aesthetic dominates. As Gowans states, "Painters may call their works 'love letters to the world.' But if they won't speak the world's language, their love letters must go unrequited" (p. 36).

Gowans reminds us of the vested interest in maintaining and perpetuating this ethically relative art and in so doing indicates wherein the challenge might be:

> Needless to say, arts with such an ethically relative outlook as this have been welcomed by authority at all levels. Funds and friends have poured in upon the art world ever since 1955 when this kind of art became dominant. All threat of subversion is gone from it; governments all over the world can subsidize art with carefree minds, knowing that nothing that artists do will disturb any important State enterprise. But that is also why popular/commercial arts of persuasion . . . are so much more effective as persuasion. Whether or not qualities of traditional High Art may be claimed for them, their effectiveness as Low Arts of persuasion/conviction is beyond question. (p. 370)

So we are left with a dominant aesthetic that is essentially powerless. Certainly we must address this

entrenchment of the formalist avant-garde. But, and perhaps more importantly, we must, as Gowans indicates, recognize this strength of the popular arts of persuasion/conviction.

Gowans claims that all twentieth century art suffers from separation from function so that effectively we have two arts: "one, the avant-garde, all aesthetic sensibility and form, the other all banality and content. They need to be put together if meaningful and fulfilling art is to be restored to our society" (p. 464). However, we have already witnessed the failure of such an effort in the attempts to merge Pop with popular culture (Huyssen, 1981). But maybe that was too superficial an attempt. Perhaps there is another approach to bringing them together?

This style-content problem of modern art then brings us to conclusions not unlike those of Clark, Fuller, and Lippard. With historical analysis Gowans is able not only to substantiate what, for the most part, seem to be informed assumptions; he is also able to suggest what might be missing inasmuch as he points to what gives the popular arts of persuasion/conviction their potential power, this style-content integration, where expression and communication are balanced, and likewise, that they lose their power when either dominates.

Could these social functions in Gowan's analysis be re-introduced? Could we come to understand art as substitute imagery? As illustration? As beautification?

Or as persuasion? Could we again understand that art has social purposes that are revealed in the work itself? To have an art that speaks to us -- would cognizance of these social functions give us an art that speaks to us?

Is there potentially a new function that needs to be formulated to accommodate the ever changing needs of humankind? Gowans does not really tell us whether he intends his developmental model to include future stages. Or are we, in the Piagetian sense, at the optimum level of formal operations, and henceforth it is more a matter of enrichment than restoration? Is it sufficient to re-unite style and content, thereby potentially putting cultural context and the presence of the human back into art? What form would this renewed art take? What would be the nature of an art that addresses commitment and ethics, the humane and the ecumenical, the ecological? Or, the nature of art education?

Feeling the Light in Us and on Us

Lippard (1983), in a speculative work, juxtaposes prehistoric images and contemporary art in an attempt to bring back what we have forgotten about art. Acting on the premise that "art has social significance and social function" (p. 5), she suggests new models for the communicative function of art. By looking back to times

and places where art was inseparable from life, she paves the way for the reintegration of art into social life.

Lippard's concept of art points to a more personal sense of body and earth, of time and space, of being. Implicit is a quest to understand nature -- nature as inclusive of humankind, and the relationship between nature and humanity. What she calls for evokes the aboriginal perception of all objects as art because of their organic and useful relationship to the rest of life (p. 229). Thus she debunks the perception of nature as a neutral material whose use is "value-free" claiming that this concept "parallels the rejection of content in the modernist notion of 'art for art's sake,' where only the material nature of the medium is significant" (p. 229). She questions the separation of art from life where art is simply supposed to be about art with the separation validating the making of art, asking, "If there is no separation, what have we lost? Or gained?" (Ibid.).

Maintaining that art is supposed to affect consciousness of life, she cites the struggle of the "reclamation artists" to intervene in social interaction with nature given the power of the multinational giants with whole governments and mass media at their disposal. The stakes are high for either side since "an art which resists commodity status also resists the abuse of natural resources to provide these commodities" (p. 230). In what has to be one of the most powerful and positive portents

for the future, Lippard cites ecological artist Sherk's "hope for richer humanity and positive survival lying in the integration of the human creative process --art-- with those of other life forms" (p. 233).

To fulfill such hope will require certain commitments from us. Obviously, we must remove ourselves from the apparent enslavement to commodification and its conquest of the natural world. At the same time, we must rise above other demeaning and dehumanizing derivatives of twentieth century technocratic rationality and turn toward the task of recovering who we are and what potentially we can do for ourselves and each other. We must become sufficiently critical, sufficiently enconscientized to recognize that we must each assume some responsibility for living well and harmoniously among others who have the freedom to do likewise.

But to fulfill such hope will require other, more elemental, changes in the psyche itself: we must create an alternate vision of human life, one that connects human life with the natural cycles of nonhuman life. We must perceive nature with new metaphors, ones that suggest re-integration, interrelatedness, and interdependence. That is, we must perceive ourselves as part of the order of the universe and recognize that to be either dominant or subordinate in whichever context destroys the balance, the rhythms of the cosmos.

Essentially, this means that we must debunk the

formalist emphasis in art and recognize it for what it is, one style among many -- no more, no less, with no greater claim to validity than any other movement in art. Further, as one approach to art making, it satisfies the needs of a certain constituency, but, at the same time, it excludes the possibilities for the richness and fullness of an art that integrates human creativity with that of nature. For that very reason there is no justification for allowing formalism to be the basis of art education.

To rephrase Lippard, without formalism, what have we lost? Or gained? It would seem that art has most to contribute to humankind when it dismisses preoccupation with commodification and its precious objects, with individualism and its stars with hierarchies of valuation. When its form is meaningful in terms of present struggles and dreams and hopes and fears; when it is an expression of life that is understood collectively; when it confronts people with the nature in themselves, then art has the possibility to touch and enrich our lives. There is no "high" art, "low" art and "almost" art, that is, craft. There is simply the intended expression of creativity communicated to those who receive it. This is the concept of art that is worthy of our children, our students.

Authentic art issues from the art makers experience. It may be expressed in many forms and many styles but never assume precedence over other art making with a claim to greater validity just because a particular constituency has

decided so. Indeed, art may be expressed as abstraction but whether the form be large, flat paintings or more functional quilts intended to cover beds, there is no way to claim more validity for one form over the other, particularly on the basis of separation and purely intellectual engagement. To pursue the purely intellectual may have no relevance to the needs of many and dismisses so many other possibilities. The intent to create can not be rendered less because it is derived from a particular need or a particular set of experiences, as is often the case when the need is of a more functional or mundane nature. This, too, is a concept of art worthy of our children.

Art is an intellectual but not moreso than a bodily experience. Indeed, knowing with the intellect is only one way of knowing -- there are more holistic and more elemental ways. Art conjures up and comes out of many experiences, out of memories and sensations as well as the head. In the fullest and richest understanding of the term, art is perceived with body and mind, with heart and hand. This, also, is a concept of art worthy of our children, our students.

This, then, marks the end of the journey, an end that takes us back to the beginning. But it is not the same beginning. To quote T.S. Eliot,

> We shall not cease from exploration
> And the end of all our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time.

We have enriched our understanding of art with new realities and mythologies, with unfamiliar images of shapeshifting and permeable boundaries and cosmic light. We have come to understand that there are other ways of knowing, ways that embody the possibilities of interpenetration in form, content and perspective, ways that let us understand ourselves as other and equal. The light is both in us and shines upon us. We are part of the cosmos.

Now we can say, "This is the concept of art that must form the basis of art education." This is the art that our students must experience if they are to live as integrated beings and honor what it is to be human; if they are to acknowledge their own aesthetic and be free to make conscious choices. This is the understanding of art that they will need if they are to enjoy a harmonious, balanced relationship with the world; if they are to perceive themselves as part of nature and to uncover nature in themselves. This is the art that they must know if they are to dance the rhythms of the cosmos.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Art Education in Light of the Journey Taken

The prevfous chapter illustrates what art in everyday life might mean. However, what it does not make explicit is how this is to be translated into the everyday praxis of the public school classroom. For instance, what are the practices of the classroom teacher who would nurture the personal aesthetic or raise consciousness of art in everyday life? How does an art teacher help her students overcome the numbing effects of a deluge of mass art or the alienation of elitist art? How does she go about encouraging a critical aesthetic consciousness in her students? Or see to it that her students experience the authenticity and transcendence that is possible in art? One approach to resolving this dilemma of praxis draws upon the integration of three different layers of experience: autobiography, historical analysis, and rediscovery of the interdependence and inter-relatedness of all aspects of our world -- a recalling of the ancient wisdom of Gaia, a reenchantment with the world which we inhabit.

Autobiography: Journeying Inward to Reclaim Authenticity in Artistic Practice

In order to be authentic, art making must proceed from one direction, from the inside out. In this respect the claim is for art making as an existential act,

> the state in which a subjective consciousness -- aware of its own existence in itself (Jaques Maritain) and of its relation to other existences, human and natural, outside itself -- seeks to express the truth of its awareness through materials viewed, not as material per se, but as an expressive medium" (Rochberg, 1984, p.5).

Understood is that this expression comes from not simply the rational, the head, but from a particular kind of knowing, from a bodily knowledge of self that spills over onto other experientes evoking a knowing with all of one's being.

This is the starting place for the art teacher. It is here in the existential act of art making that the student explores her subjective consciousness and communicates through her particular use of materials her awareness, her knowledge of herself and her world in the form of an aesthetic practice or object. Autobiography as a teaching method is particularly appropriate to the needs of this approach to art making.

Autobiography, grounded in psychoanalytic theory and phenomenological thought, details the students experience of the aesthetic in an attempt to transform that experience. In its first phase, autobiography asks the student first to journey inward, to free associate, or as Grumet so lucidly describes, to engage in "a reflective process that allows the mind to wander but notes the path and all its markers" (Grumet, 1991, p. 142). It is here that the student experiences "the relation between the knower and the known (and to the unknown) that is manifested in the concrete images of lived worlds" (Ibid.). Reclaiming her experiences of the aesthetic, she notes the specific associations that represent her experience of it.

On my own journey inward I reflect upon my experiences of art as a child. The Saturday morning "private art classes" that my grandmother struggled to afford. The pungent odour of the soured tempera paints that greeted me every week. Every Saturday my grandmother's two quarters passing from her worn hands into mine and then, not without hesitation, into Mrs. Tweed's. Learning to paint birch trees when I was nine; the flaking dried newsprint that I tried to tape together when I discovered the painting many years later.

Recollections of my grandmother's handwork is flooded with other images. The sheen of the embroidery floss on the velvet patchwork cushion that was always on my

grandmother's rocking chair. The hooked rugs -- scenes for the wall, abstract jewel-like patterns on the floor, patterns carefully drawn onto burlap by my grandfather, woolen scraps dyed and hooked by my grandmother. The worn smoothness of the handle of the rug hook that now rests in a drawer in my studio. The lace tablecloth wedding gift.

In free associating the student selects out particular experiences to be called aesthetic. In the second phase, as the student analyzes these experiences she uncovers "interests and biases we rarely see because they are threaded through the thick fabric of our daily lives" (p. 142). It is this phase of reconceptualizing that illuminates the ways she organizes and interprets her experiences bringing into awareness her personal aesthetic and what informs it.

Much of what I call aesthetic seems to come from childhood experiences with my grandmother. My grandmother, soul mate, first woman friend, the strong sensitive individual who understood the power of her womanness and nurtured my own, whom I bribed into letting me take "art" by promising to practice my music. Emmaline, Emma in my private musings. It occurs to me that I have no images of any pieces of her handwork without seeing also her present. Deft fingers gloriously turning out something else that she felt was needed, she set aside part of every day except Sunday to attend to this part of her work. There was art in all that she did but never once was she so pretentious;

as to suggest that what she did was art. Except for the lace tablecloth. Everyone knew that she intended that to be art.

Mrs. Tweed, artist, my art teacher, lived aesthetically in the midst of her framed gallery art. To her belonged the wonder of making "art" and the dread of criticism. Only if you were polite and showing promise could you continue classes. Always the fear as, one by one, classmates were invited not to return. When would she announce that I couldn't continue? We ended up a class of two. Cyril, shy, obliging Cyril, who always was praised and I, self conscious and in awe.

Always the past is pulled into the present and reworked as the student attempts to "become the active interpreter of her past as well as heightening her capacity to be the active agent of her own interests in a present that she shares with her community" (p. 144). Throughout, the teacher maintains the role of mediator of the process, questioning, requesting information, and drawing out particular details that appear to need to be made visible as the student recalls, interprets and orders her experiences.

Was I self conscious because I was caught between these two notions of art even before I was able to know that there were different meanings of the term, all these grey areas? Did I sense in this breach an undercurrent of hierarchical valuing with connotations of power, control,

and dominance? Did I ever wonder if what Mrs. Tweed made was called art, what should I call the undertakings of my grandmother? It occurs to me that the source of my thesis question is located in such experiences of art. The coming to consciousness of these differing conceptions of art, of this hierarchical valuing of art, the working through of my own self-consciousness about the naming of what I understood to be art.

The student becomes aware of the body of practices that, for the moment, she calls art. She also is confronted with the contingency of this understanding: what she now calls art makes sense but this is not the definitive nor absolute meaning of art. Rather, as Lowe (1982) and Merleau-Ponty (1973) indicate, our experiences are always perspectival and new perceptual experiences are constantly rearranging our understandings to lead us to yet other meanings.

In this reflexive analysis there is at the same time the possibility for regained power. The student is called upon to reflect upon not only the experiences she selected out as aesthetic but also upon why she made these particular choices and in what way she interpreted and attended to her recall of them. She is free to select whichever experiences she wishes and to embellish and order them as she feels need or desire. Such choices, "which when embedded in the activity of our daily lives seem obligatory and unavoidable, stand as expressions of our

freedom" (pp. 142-143). In making these choices she reclaims her own power, her power that has been disclaimed by the institutionalization of the school.

Though autobiography is a worthy project in itself, it is not sufficient to the project of addressing art in everyday life. By making apparent one's own aesthetic and offering the possibility of a transformed aesthetic, reflexive analysis enables one to reclaim authenticity in art practices. The source of the student's art making is now her own aesthetic. However, authenticity by itself does not account for the relationship between the individual and the collective nor does it provide any means for looking at the concept of art itself. Alone, autobiography would leave ones activities in immediate, linear time and limit one's options for proposing new possibilities for the future.

Critical Reflection: Reclaiming Meaning in Artistic Practice

Though authenticity is an elemental concern, what is needed also is a vantage point for reflection, indeed critical reflection, upon one's place as an individual within the collective, upon the many possible interrelationships and interactions between oneself, others and nature, upon one's place in the universe. On the one

hand autobiography does involve an element of critical reflection in the phenomenological sense of scrutinizing one's reflections. However, one has to be able to place oneself in the context of history, one's own and that of humankind and the universe, if one is to reclaim the sacred, the transcendent, for art making.

Then in art education the project becomes more complex. Linear thinking and "human time" must be supplemented with the more organic concepts of radial thinking and what Roehberg refers to as "earth time" (1984, p. 236). One's understanding of one's own aesthetic needs to be supplemented with an awareness of the aesthetic of others, with some sense of the historical notion of the aesthetic. In other words, students should have opportunities to examine this phenomenon we call art if they are to have an understanding of its significance in their daily lives. For instance, students should be encouraged to ask, "Disregarding for the moment what I call art, what do others call art? What in the history of humankind has been named art? What is the source of art making? Why is it that we create art at all? What is the function of art? How does our art speak for our place in nature, for our relationship to the cosmos?" Questions such as these raise consciousness of the place of art in daily life. Such questions should be addressed in art education. Autobiography alone does not include this type of questioning.

From personal experience, I have found that the most satisfactory conceptual framework for addressing the questions that surround the phenomenon of art is Gowans' (1981) historical analysis of the social purposes of art, already discussed in Chapter Seven. Essentially, Gowans argues that by understanding the principles by which older art was invested meaning, we should be able to create something similar for our contemporary practices. He extends art history to include popular and vernacular arts, past and present. Then by distinguishing between the so-called "avant-garde" and "popular/commercial" arts, he illustrates how the popular/commercial arts carry out the four historical social functions of substitute imagery, illustration, beautification and persuasion while the avant-garde carries only one, artistic expression. Gowans claims that by investigating how the popular/ commercial arts carry out the social functions of prehistoric arts, we can acquire knowledge of how historic arts worked in and for society since presumably they both arose as responses to the needs of their own society.

By engaging in such an analysis, students come in touch with our accrued cultural history. They are called upon to recognize their intersubjective relationship; not only to [their] present lived reality, but also to [their] past, to other [people] in other ages, with whom [humans] have a common bond. This is always "through the agency of [humans] in the present" (Bien, 1973, p. xxix). At the

same time that they are exploring the art practices of other times and circumstances, they are acquiring a means of addressing their contemporary culture, hopefully a means of looking critically at what is called art around them and examining how this fits with their personal aesthetic.

As they examine the objects and practices that have been selected out over time to be named art, they also become aware of the ones that have not been selected as well as those that have been discarded along the way. They come to appreciate that art is not located in materiality itself but in the expression through materials and practices of whatever the person intended to communicate; that art making corresponds to the needs of the art maker; that there is no one practice that has exclusive right to be called art so that the claim of the wildlife illustrator, the conceptualist, and the quilt maker all have legitimacy; that the term art is inclusive of so many varying practices that it may not be sufficient to the project. They also become aware of the power of media directed mass art to influence the dailiness of life and of the need to confront this monolith. Such analyses and reconstructions lead to an awareness that art making finds its source in different needs and thus the necessity of recognizing differing modes of art making. Further, it leads to an understanding of the capability of art to sublimate the dailiness of life and to communicate our expression of desire.

Whereas with autobiography the student was searching out her own aesthetic in an attempt to name what she maintains to be art, with historical analysis, there is a different project informed by different questions. Here the interest is in what was and is called art in other times, from other perspectives. Whatever the art practices of the moment -- art appreciation, art history or art making, questions from an historical orientation would inform the endeavour. For instance, to address the theme of women in art, autobiographical questions would search out the student's own experiences with and understanding of the relationship between women and art. What are the early and more powerful aesthetic moments in your own life that you remember? How have women figured in the development of your aesthetic? Then? What women artists do you regard highly? Are there daily practices of women that you would regard, in one way or another, as art making? From any perspective, what in your experience of art evokes a feeling for the presence of women? Does being a woman inform art making in any particular or significant way? What in your own art speaks to you of inner power, of "power to" (French), of inner forces that would guide or influence your endeavours? Through your art making can you invoke the power of archetypical goddesses, of "the Great Goddess [who] still exists as an archetype in the collective consciousness" (Bolen, 1984, p. 21)?

On the other hand, in the interests of historical

analysis, the questions would search out a different understanding. One might ask, historically, what has been the role of women in art from the perspective of the subject? From the perspective of the art maker? Has there ever a time when women were acknowledged publically as art makers? What circumstances led to the devaluation of women's art making? What practices in art are traditionally associated with women? Why are many of women's art making practices referred to as craft? Does the term art include craft? Indeed, is the term "art" sufficient to the project? Further, what is the view of women that is projected by magazines? By television, video, and film? Is there a difference when women are the producers of this material? Is there a feminine aesthetic? A feminist aesthetic? What would constitute feminist art? Could men make feminine or feminist art? Likewise, could women make "masculine" art? Is there any point in distinguishing between feminine and masculine art? Really, does any of this matter?

Framing the endeavour with such questions as these causes the student not only to reflect critically on art, past and present, but also to enrich her own aesthetic. In the process of such an enquiry she uproots assumptions about art, discovers ways of looking critically at the art that fills her everyday world, and uncovers the power of art for her own life.

Reenchantment: Reclaiming Our Place in the Cosmos

Underlying autobiography and historical analysis as approaches to art education are certain premises, premises that could serve to inform a richer, more integrated, balanced, harmonious and organic way of living on this planet. First, in addition to the measurable, there is the fuller, richer inexplicable way of knowing that is within one, within the human body, within the central nervous system and the senses, within memory, embodied, immeasurable so that I know, remember, imagine with all of my body not just my head. Authentic art expresses this knowing, indeed comes out of this knowing. It is this that gives art energy, passion, integrity -- since it comes from within myself it is what I believe, what I intend.

In one way or another this consciousness or way of knowing is informed by the traditions of our collective history so that I am all that I have ever been. In art making, the individual reworks these traditions within her consciousness, her bodily knowledge, and her imagination, transforming the past, transcending the present. Art is a sign of this knowing, a mark of human consciousness, the individual's senses, memory and imagination reworking our collective past, our collective imagery, myths and symbols. In this way the past lives on in the present with a steady

"infusion of private vision into the stream of public consciousness" (Rochberg, 1984, p. 230). By contributing to and partaking of "the transcendent collectivity of [humankind] and its experiences," the individual "transcends our individual egos and histories" and shares in "a totality which, however mysterious its sources, dimensions, and ultimate fate, sustains us" (p. 240).

In art there is the possibility of transcendence, the possibility to rise above the dailiness of life, to sublimate the terrible and to recognize desire. Within the individual's consciousness, memory and imagination, the confusion, anxiety, tensions of everyday are given clarity and order "to gain not a permanent certainty . . . but a momentary insight into how it is possible to resolve the chaos of existence into a shape or form which takes on beauty, perhaps meaning, certainly strength" (p. 241). As students reflect on their own aesthetic and rework themes that are as old as humankind, they will express through their materials and practices the human need to imagine, to place one's individual expressive mark upon our world possibly to improve it, the human need to create whether we call it art or something else.

Also in art there is the power to change the world. Agreeably, not alone, but nevertheless there is in art a powerful and potentially subversive tool of consciousness. Our most potent experience of this quality in art may be negative in the sense of deluding us into believing we have

choices. For example, our being swayed unconsciously by the seemingly innocuous values of television's prime time entertainment bonanza, values that insinuate themselves into the very fibre of our lives and lead us to aspire toward a similar artificial existence buoyed up by a diet of sensationalism and consumerism. However, this aspect of art also may draw us out of the comatose postures we have assumed in the face of dreadful events. It may point to a way to communicate the need to transform our vision of the world, to create new realities that speak of resuming our long history of "enchantment with the world" (Berman, 1981) and our integral place in it.

Berman points out that for the greater part of human history the world was "enchanted" and humans saw themselves as an integral part of the cosmos. However, the evolution of the modern scientific world view and its intrinsic disenchantment completely reversed this perception, destroying "the continuity of the human experience and the integrity of the human psyche. It has very nearly wrecked the planet as well" (1981, p. 23). For Berman, hope lies in "reenchantment " of the world. Rochberg asks for a balance between modern rationality and our earlier cosmology claiming that we must "reconnect ourselves with the alpha language of the central nervous system which is itself, . . . a secondary derivative of the alpha language of the cosmos" (p. 231). He asks that we "bring the two into correspondence again, into direct connection and

relationship with each other" (Ibid.). We need to get back "to an awareness of the mysterious creatures we are -- a secondary, living, organic 'language' of the alpha-language of the cosmos" (Ibid.). So do our students. If we are to improve life on this planet, indeed, if we are to survive.

It is important for art teachers to re-introduce the notion of enchantment, to discuss the possibilities of reenchantment. Not in the sense of romanticizing alchemy and animism, but in the sense Berman implies of some type of holistic, or "participating" consciousness which "involves merger, or identification, with one's surroundings, and bespeaks a psychic wholeness that has long since passed from the scene" (p. 16). One aspect of this part of the project is historical analysis, looking at the world view prior to the sixteenth century and comparing it to the progressive disenchantment that came out of the Scientific Revolution to permeate the modern epoch. The other aspect involves making enchantment part of one's intuitive, immeasurable way of knowing, part of the student's "language," part of her way of experiencing and communicating. To do this, it is essential to experience oneself holistically, as part of nature, as part of the rhythms of the cosmos. In the process the student begins to integrate her autobiographical explorations with the historical analysis and to let this inform her own aesthetic. Depending upon the creativity of the art teacher, the possibilities of this experience are

limitless.

Reflecting on human history and our pre-science relation to the cosmos provides us with a key to human survival. To adjust Rochberg (p. 231) in order to be in keeping with the spirit of this thesis, humans have survived

> not through rational knowledge or science and technology but through cosmology which peopled [their] imaginations with myth and symbol, poetry and metaphor, image and story and song. [They] ritualized [their] existence, propitiated the gods, surrounded [themselves] with magic. [They] developed the arts of language, music, dance, painting, sculpture. [They] learned the rhythms of the world and fitted [themselves] into them (p. 231).

We too can learn these rhythms and, through our art teaching, we can make them available to our students.

We can do this by seeing time more organically, by perceiving large chunks of time "as unities which create a vast physical-mental-spiritual [illegible] enfolding our individual lives, actions, and feelings," and by seeing the past "as continuously viable and alive in our 'present'" (p. 240). We can do this by seeking a world in harmony with the ancient wisdom of Gaia, by recognizing the interdependence and inter-relatedness of every aspect of the cosmos, by reflecting upon our relationship to nature and the cosmos,

by seeking the nature that is in us, and by valuing the immeasurable ways of knowing. We can also do this by looking critically at art and the purposes it has served in human history and its function in contemporary culture.

It is this in art, this possibility of restored balance within ourselves, this possibility of reintegration of human beings with the rest of the cosmos, this possibility of authenticity and transcendence, that expresses the power of art to transform our daily lives and suggest hope for human survival. This is the art that is worthy of humankind. This is the concept of art that should inform our daily praxis. This is the concept of art that should form the basis of art education.

To nurture this concept of art, art educators will be required to cast aside many of the more traditional practices that necessarily accompany a formalist aesthetic, in particular, art that is grounded in artificiality and alienation -- in practice the almost complete emphasis upon the manipulation of materials according to the values of adults. In their place we will be called upon to provide for our students art experiences that nurture the personal aesthetic and encourage an understanding of art within the context of human endeavour. In other words, we, as art educators, will be called upon to base our art programs upon a concept of art that speaks of authenticity, transformation, and transcendence.

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