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Artistic Ability and Naturalistic Drawing

H. Brent Tilson

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Art Education and Art Therapy

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Master of Art (Art Education)

Concordia University

Montréal, Québec, Canada

September 1988

ISBN 0-315-49066-7

ABSTRACT

Artistic Ability and Naturalistic Drawing

H. Brent Tilson

Two studies examined young adolescent art students' beliefs about artistic ability.

The first study examined four major questions. First, do young adolescent art students have a criterion for artistic ability? Second, what is the standard or criterion used when describing artistic ability? Third, do students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indication of artistic ability? Fourth, do students who believe that artistic ability is realistic drawing ability intend to continue art?

Seventy-five art students with a mean age of 13.7 from four schools of varying socio-economic background were interviewed using the open-ended inquiry approach patterned after Gardner (1975) and Johnson (1982). The findings from this survey show that the majority of students (98%) have a definite standard for artistic ability. Most of these students (79%) see realistic drawing ability as the principal indication of artistic ability. While there was no correlation between students who held this belief and their intention to continue art, the findings show that students who believe they have good drawing ability intend

to continue the art program.

A second study employing picture selection and an interview surveyed twenty students from two Calgary schools with different socio-economic backgrounds. To gain further insight, it examined four questions arising from the first study. First, do students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indication of artistic ability? Second, are there socio-economic influences on students' descriptions? Third, do students distinguish between images of what they like and images they believe are indicative of a talented artist? Fourth, are the students' answers to questions about artistic ability similar to their actual choices of pictures illustrating artistic ability?

The findings reveal that students judge artistic ability in terms of realistic representation. Higher socio-economic students had broader criteria for describing artistic ability. Students' preferences for images tend to be similar to the ones they select as representing artistic ability. High socio-economic status students have a slightly broader style preference, and subscribe to a broader description of artistic ability than students with a low socio-economic status. Students from both groups tend to like images which they also believe indicate talent. Student answers to questions about artistic ability are similar to their actual choices of pictures indicating artistic ability.

Related historical research is provided which suggests

that the nature of the art curriculum itself has placed a strong emphasis on drawing, and on realistic representation.

This study should challenge educators to reflect upon several findings. First, many art students equate the ability to draw realistically with artistic ability. Second, most of the students do not use terms such as "self-expression," "creativity," "imagination," and "originality" when describing what it is to have artistic ability. Third, many of the students desire to draw realistically, but one out of two students lacks confidence in his ability to draw realistically.

This thesis raises questions for further study. First, what role should realistic drawing play in an art curriculum? Second, does the concept of creativity need to be explored in art curricula? Third, would a tolerance for more divergent forms of expression attract and retain more students in the art program?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Stan Horner, David Pariser and Leah Sherman for the motivation and fellowship they gave me during my graduate study at Concordia, and for their assistance with this thesis.

In particular, I would like to thank David Pariser for his many hours of assistance in helping to provide clarity and focus to this thesis.

Thanks to my wife, April, for much proof-reading and patience, and to my boys, Luke and Lane, for giving up their father's company for so long.

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Introduction

The intent of this thesis is to examine young adolescent art students' descriptions of artistic ability; that is, the kinds of skills or attitudes that such students believe are necessary in order to be "good at art." While there is considerable research about children's picture preferences, there is little about their knowledge of artistic ability. Thus, this thesis builds upon students' picture preferences by describing those qualities which some young adolescent art students believe an individual must possess in order to be successful at making art.

Young adolescent art students were sampled for several reasons. First, the majority are quite capable of abstract reasoning and verbal explanation. Second, fewer than ten percent of the student population continues art after grade nine; so, the remainder are nearing an end point in their public art education. Third, Gardner (1980) refers to a "mysterious dissolution of artistry by the age of 12 to 14 (p.64)." It was hoped that the study might begin to explain why such a dissolution takes place.

Research regarding children's picture preferences or style preferences has been extensive and consistent for the

most part in its explanation for the decline in artistic performance. The observation that ten to thirteen-year-old students tend to value lifelike or naturalistic images has been documented by such people as Alschuler and Hattwick (1969), Kellogg (1959,1970), Lowenfeld (1957), and Gardner (1975,1980). In research related to this topic, Gardner (1975) found that young children from four to five chose stylistic features which favored abstract forms, as did some students in the fourteen to sixteen-year-old group. On the whole, however, he discovered that "the replies of all ages indicated first and foremost a concern for realism in paintings and a curiosity about reality (p.71)".

Earlier, art researcher Rhoda Kellogg (1969) noted a similar phenomenon. She believed that children give up and do poorly in art because of the negative influence of adult pictorialism (p.151). Gardner himself offered some possible explanations to the problem of declining interest and ability (1980,p.161). He suggested that it was "our ambivalence whether one should draw, and if so, in what manner, that was responsible in a significant measure for the decline in graphic artistry of our culture" (p.161). In addition, he suggested that a trend for literalism may exist which is universal and that when children know the rules, they will want to follow them.

Explanations for realistic preferences have two main origins: one is based on developmental theory; the other is based on the influence of socialization or enculturation.

Studies which are grounded on developmental theory like that of Gardner, Winner, and Kircher(1975) believe that the child's understanding and production of art is a result of his cognitive development. The underlying model is that of Piaget's developmental psychology. In contrast, those with a socio-culturally grounded position like Nancy Johnson (1982), and Rosario and Collazo (1981) believe that the child's image of art is derived primarily from interaction with others in his environment. Another explanation was offered by Ecker(1973) who suggested that the child's knowledge about art is not derived entirely from innate structures of the mind but is also related to the child's acquisition of language and linguistic competence (1973,p.70). While Ecker's position is not derived entirely from innate structures of the mind, Gardner, Winner and Kircher's position of the child's conception of art is largely a developmental phenomenon with allowances for social influences. Rosario and Johnson's is largely a stance of socio-cultural influence.

These explanations for a child's art awareness and knowledge bear an impact on the issue of the child's preference for naturalism in art. On the one hand, this preference can be explained simply as a natural stage of mental growth in the child. While on the other, the child's value or esteem for naturalism can be viewed as a consequence of family, peer and classroom experience. Art educators are very concerned about this preference for

realism. They believe that an appreciation of style differences within and beyond one's own culture is important. Further evidence, description and understanding of this preference will assist in providing a more substantive base for curriculum development.

Also, if the preference for lifelike and three-dimensional imagery is an unavoidable part of development, then perhaps those involved in art education might consider when and how the curriculum can best meet this need. If such a preference is not an absolute given of development, then art educators have many aesthetic options to consider in program development. In any event, the attraction of realism poses a problem for art educators and researchers.

The fact is that in many classrooms, both past and present, a particular media and style have long dominated the child's art experience. The media is drawing and the style is realism. In the province of Alberta, many art rooms continue to emphasize painting and drawing. From a 70 percent time allocation in the elementary program, instruction in drawing and painting tapers to a 50 percent emphasis by grade nine. Frederick Logan's (1955) chronicle of the history of art education reveals a strong emphasis on drawing from observation in early art training. Parenthetically, it is worth noting that these are two dimensional media; three dimensional media appear overlooked. Also overlooked are the concepts and history of

art and artists.

Nevertheless, descriptions of the time devoted to drawing as well as the kind and nature of drawing in the classroom give rise to the question of whether or not school practice might influence the child's definition of artistic ability and his own self concept in art. Programs emphasizing certain media and stylistic directions, either explicitly or implicitly may be affecting some children's understandings and feelings of artistic competency. One wonders how Lowenfeld's inner-directed "Haptic child" would enjoy the objective realistic world of drawing.

Consequently, this thesis employs two studies designed to shed additional light on the contentious issue of young adolescent preferences in art. This is an age group which Gardner characterizes as experiencing a decline in artistry, and which the Gaitskells (1954) and others describe as losing self confidence in their ability. Study #1 investigates descriptions of artistic ability from adolescents of varying socio-economic backgrounds. It seeks to discover whether specific art media or art styles are used as indicators of artistic ability. The students describe a standard of artistic competence and then measure themselves against that standard. The relationship between a child considering himself "good at" art (by his own criteria) and his willingness to continue with further art experiences in subsequent classes is also examined.

Study #2 builds upon the findings in Study #1. It

compares the students' standards of artistic ability with their actual preferences for images which range from the realistic to the abstract. It investigates whether or not students distinquish between pictures they like and pictures they feel demonstrate artistic ability. As well, it examimes the impact of socio-economic differences on children's aesthetic preferences.

The findings will provide art educators with a description of students' understanding of artistic ability along with student comments about aspects of the art program. When these are known, art educators can consider them in relation to the aims and goals of art programs. Further investigation of these findings may also shed light on what Howard Gardner (1980) characterized as being the central enigma of artistic development: namely, "the eruption of artistry at the age of four and its dissolution by the age of twelve to fourteen (p.64)." These findings may add support to the theory that a preoccupation with naturalism may be affecting the spontaneity, exhuberance and artistic expression of children as they move to the onset of adolescence.

Statement of the Problem

Study #1 has four purposes: 1) to discover whether or not young adolescent art students have a criterion for artistic ability; 2) to describe that standard of artistic

ability; 3) to determine if students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indicator of artistic ability; 4) to ascertain whether or not a student's description of his own ability is related to his desire to continue in the school art program.

Study #2 has four purposes: 1) to examine whether or not young adolescent art students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indicator of artistic ability; 2) to determine whether or not the socio-economic status of the students has an impact on their choices and descriptions; 3) to discover whether or not students distinguish between images of what they like and whether or not someone is a talented artist; and 4) to compare the students' answers to questions in an interview with their actual choices of images concerning artistic ability.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study the investigator has defined or provided definitions for the following terms:

Ability. Competence in an activity or occupation because of one's skill, capacity, means, or other qualification. (Random House, 1979)

Abstraction. A term given to forms created by the artist but usually derived from objects actually observed or experienced. It usually involves simplification and/or rearrangement of natural objects to meet the needs of

artistic organization or expression. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Artistic. Conforming to the standards of art; satisfying aesthetic requirements: exhibiting taste, discriminating judgment, or sensitivity. (Random House, 1979)

Drawing. The act or technique of representing an object or outlining a figure, plan or sketch by means of lines: something that is drawn or subject to drawing. (Webster's Third New International Dictionary, 1976)

Expression. A general term meaning the special characteristics of form which mark the work of an artist or group of artists. The style or manner in which artists attempt to say something about their time in terms of the artistic forms then considered to be of artistic merit. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Expressionistic art. Art in which there is a desire to express what is felt rather than perceived or reasoned. Expressionistic form is defined by an obvious exaggeration of natural objects for the purpose of emphasizing an emotion, mood, or concept. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Fantasy (in art). Departure from accepted appearances or relationships for the sake of psychological expression - may exist within any art style, but usually thought of in connection with realism; unencumbered flights of pictorial fancy, freely interpreted or invented. (Ocvirk and Stinson,1985)

Imagination. The act or power of forming mental images of what is not actually present. (Webster's Third New International Dictionary, 1976)

Naturalism. The approach to art in which all forms used by the artist are essentially a descriptive representation of things visually experienced. True naturalism contains no interpretation introduced by the artist for expressive purposes. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Nonobjective. An approach to art in which the visual signs are entirely imaginative and do not derive from anything ever seen by the artist. The shapes, their organization, and their treatment by the artist are entirely personalized and consequently not associated by the observer with any previously experienced natural form. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Objective. An impersonal statement of observed facts. In art, the exact rendering by the artist of surface characteristics without alteration or interpretation of the visual image. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Optical perception. A way of seeing in which the mind seems to have no other function than the natural one of providing the physical sensation of recognition by sight. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Realism. A form of expression which retains the basic impression of visual reality. In this study, the term is meant to be synonymous with the term naturalism, since this is the meaning understood by the students being

surveyed.

Representation. A manner of expression by the artist in which the subject matter is naturalistically presented so that the visual elements seen by the observer are reminiscent of actual forms previously perceived. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Socio-economic. Of, pertaining to, or signifying the combination or interaction of social and economic factors. (Random House, (1979)

Status. The social position or rank of an individual or group in relation to another or others of a different class, social standing, profession. (Random House, 1979)

Subjective. The personal as opposed to the impersonal; an individual attitude or bias through which the artist feels free to change or modify natural visual characteristics. In this approach, the artist is able to emphasize the emotions or feelings aroused within himself by the characteristics of the natural form. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Visual reality. The objective (insofar as that is possible) optical image; obvious appearances; naturalism in the sense of the physically observed. (Ocvirk and Stinson, 1985)

Rationale for the Study

As mentioned earlier, both art researchers and art educators have noticed a tendency for early adolescent children to prefer naturalistic imagery. Stage development or socio-cultural influences may be major factors which account for this preference. It is self-evident that the art program itself, overtly and covertly plays a large role in the child's learning about what constitutes "good" in terms of art processes and products. As will be illustrated in the following chapter, "Review of Related Literature and Research," the teaching of drawing has been a dominant force in North American art programs. Not only has drawing dominated the art curriculum historically, but even in today's curriculum guides, it can occupy from 25% to 60% of the art activities in a vast number of art programs. Furthermore, such drawing instruction usually emphasizes the accurate drawing of persons, objects, places and things either from observation, or by copying from other images. Consequently, it seems reasonable to conclude that standards of evaluation by pupil and teacher in such drawing programs will involve accuracy of rendering. In such programs, a "good" drawing of a still life looks like the still life. Students like to have "good" drawings. Being "good" in this way is rewarded and appreciated.

An important but unanswered question related to the issue surrounding naturalistic preferences in drawing is

whether or not children link artistic ability with the ability to draw naturalistically. In other words, do students conceive of their own artistic ability in terms of drawing and if they do, is it in terms of drawing naturalistically? Or alternatively, how likely is it that such concepts as "good ideas," creativity, and imagination will be a part of the description of what constitutes being "good at" art?

If some students equate artistic ability with drawing ability, then additional light will be shed on the issue earlier identified as the child's declining interest in art and graphic expression. A student who uses the standard of naturalistic drawing to measure his own artistic ability is likely to become frustrated in two ways: first, by his inability to draw realistically, and second, by the lack of alternative means of creative expression.

Questions arise about linking artistic ability with realistic drawing. How do students acquire beliefs about artistic ability? Why do students link artistic ability with realistic drawing? What part does realistic drawing play in artistic ability? Is there a need for more emphasis on realistic drawing skills in the art curriculum?

In art programs where students link artistic ability to realistic drawing, educators might assess the implied values behind various components in their art curriculum. They might also question the role that art concepts and study play in their total program.

In summary, this thesis is looking for the students' definition of "artistic ability." When this is known, it can be compared with the definition of artistic ability held by art educators, educational psychologists or aesthetic philosophers. What "is" can be accepted as it is, or possibly it can be compared to what "should be," and if necessary, curriculum changes can be considered.

Description of the Two Studies

This research attempts to discover what young adolescent art students believe constitutes "artistic ability" and the qualities which they believe are necessary for one to be "good at art." In order to accomplish this, two studies were undertaken.

Study #1

Four major questions were posed in Study #1. First, do art students have a standard or criterion for artistic ability.? Second, what is the standard or criterion used when describing artistic ability? Third, do art students see realistic drawing as the principle indication of artistic ability? Fourth, do students who believe that artistic ability is realistic drawing ability intend to continue in art?

This study examined seventy-five students enrolled in seventh, eighth and ninth grade art programs. Nineteen

students from grades 7 and 8 belonged to a composite high school located in a lower socio-economic district in the urban core of Montreal. Their mean age was 13 and 13.6 repectively. In Calgary, sixty-six students were selected from three schools located in low, middle and upper socio-economic areas. The three schools were selected by the Art Department of the Calgary Board of Education as being representative of Calgary school art programs. The students from grades 7, 8, and 9 had ages of 12.8. 13.6 and 14.6 respectively.

Students were individually interviewed using a sequential series of open-ended questions (Appendix A). Their responses were recorded and categorized.

Study #2

A second study examined four questions arising from the first study. First, do students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indication of artistic ability? Second, are there socio-economic influences on students' descriptions? Third, do students distinguish between images of what they like and images they believe are indicative of a talented artist? Fourth, are the students' answers to questions about artistic ability similar to their actual choices of pictures illustrating artistic ability? This study surveyed twenty students from two Calgary Junior High Schools selected by the Calgary Board of Education Art Department as being representative of high and low

socio-economic areas.

i) Grade VIII - ten students with a mean age of 13 from a high socio-economic area.

ii) Grade VIII - ten students with a mean age of 13.2 from a low socio-economic area. Three students in this group were in Grade VII.

Students were asked to select images of trees (Appendices F,G,H) ranging from the realistic to the abstract, as being indicators of artistic ability. Also, as in Study #1, students responded to open-ended questions concerning talent in art. Comparisons were made with the major findings in Study #1.

Limitations of the Two Studies

The open-ended inquiry approach used in the studies was a combination of Gardner's (1975) and Johnson's (1982) approach, which combines a phenomenological perspective with that of participant observation. Gardner refers to such a method as similar to the clinical method of Piaget (Gardner, p.61). This method has advantages over a closed-series questionnaire in that it allows a child to provide a variety of reasons for his/her response. Such multiple responses can be revealing and useful.

Administering, gathering and processing open-ended responses where students give reasons for their answers, requires more time than closed series questionnaires. Consequently, population samples tend to be smaller, meaning

that statistical tools of analysis are difficult to apply and cannot validate the findings. Nevertheless, because of a basic continuity of approach in art education in Canada today, there is reason to believe that the findings from these studies are probably more general in scope.

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature and Research

Many children give up or do poorly in upper elementary art education. Kellogg (1969) believes this phenomenon may be attributable to the adult's emphasis on realism and the imposition of adult preferences. Howard Gardner (1980) identifies this situation also. He characterizes it as a "dissolution" of "artistry" (p.64). This thesis builds on these researchers' insights by investigating whether or not children equate artistic ability with drawing, and in particular, naturalistic drawing.

The review of related literature and research presented in this chapter forms the background for the study. Information will be reviewed under three sub-headings: the first will review theoretical research related to drawing; the second will review empirical research; and the third will review research related to socio-cultural influences on aesthetic preferences.

Theoretical Research Related to Drawing

A number of art researchers have been interested in the child's preference for realism and its effects on the child's art work. Different researchers have tried to explain this development in terms of mental stage

development or in terms of socio-cultural influences.

Schaefer-Simmern (1948) believes in a sequential order of mental development where a main stage in artistic development is the student's "utmost realization of his visual conception" (p.194). He believes that during adolescence, the student becomes unhappy with his pictorial achievements in self-expression and really wants to render the subject with the greatest clarity. If the child is unsuccessful at drawing realistically, then he loses interest, and thus his pictorial powers diminish. Shaeffer-Simmern concludes that the educational method which aims at self-expression, though it may have psychological values, does not promote the growth of the child's artistic abilities (p.5). Instead, the child should only learn to draw realistically when a more complex visual order is attained.

Victor Lowenfeld (1957) observes that the child first represents the human figure with symbols and then gradually replaces these with representations more related to reality. Lowenfeld concludes that as a child approaches adolescence, he loses his strong subjective relationship to the world of symbols and then develops an awareness of reality and self.

Lowenfeld observes that some children have problems in dealing with realistic imagery in their representations of reality. Lowenfeld (1964) classifies the perceptual orientation of individuals into two main types, which he claims are biogenetically determined. One type is the

"Haptic" child who doesn't analyse the world but projects his inner self or world into the picture. He is subjectively and emotionally oriented; his main intermediary for experience is the body. In Haptic art, the self is projected as the true subject of the picture. The formal characteristics of such imagery are the result of a synthesis of bodily, emotional and intellectual comprehension of shape and form (p.261). On the other hand, the "Visual" type of child is concerned more with an objective analysis of visual detail. He is an observor who is concerned with the appearance of things rather than their subjective meaning. His approach is analytic, that of a "spectator who finds his problems in the complex observation of the ever changing appearance of shapes and forms (p.261)." The differences between the two types becomes more evident at the pseudo-naturalistic stage of development from eleven to thirteen years. According to Lowenfeld, the child is losing his childish way of symbolic representation and is moving toward a stage of critical awareness. However, for art programs to be successful, he believes art curricula would have to be able to accomodate the needs of the "Haptic" child who approaches the world subjectively, rather than visually.

Rose Alschuler and LaBerta Hattwick (1969) suggest that by the time children are nine or ten years of age, they have, as a rule, been so thoroughly infused with the need for reproducing exactly what they see that their own natural

modes of self-expression have been blocked off. The children's earlier impulse to paint and express themselves has very largely been stifled (p.9). Whereas the tendency toward realistic drawing is explained by Lowenfeld (1954) as the result of natural stages of development, Alschuler and Hattwick suggest that the cause is more likely socio-cultural.

Johnson (1972) in a study involving the identification, validation and sequencing of drawing concepts for the junior high art curriculum, finds that the student's need for realistic representation is just as strong in painting as it is in drawing. Like Schaefer-Simmern, he believes that teaching drawing skills is important for the adolescent art student so that the student's needs can be met in several productive areas of art. The problem, however, is that even in 1972, Johnson found that many junior high school art teachers had few, if any, qualifications for teaching art, let alone drawing.

Lewis (1976) further confirms the intent of school age children to make their drawing look real (p.12). She explains this development in terms of Arnheim's theory of development. For Arnheim, progress in drawing consists of the child's rendering ever more fully the structural characteristics of three dimensional objects within the limits of a two dimensional medium. The assumption is that as children mature, their drawings reveal more fully the structure of the portrayed objects.

Howard Gardner (1980) lucidly summarizes what art educators have noticed over the years:

> When drawings made by eight- or nine-year-olds are juxtaposed to those produced by younger children, a striking contrast emerges. There is little doubt about which came from which group: works by the older children feature a kind of precision, a concern for detail, a command of geometrical form which are lacking in the attempts by younger artists. Schemas for familiar objects are readily recognized, and attempts at rendering less familiar objects can initially be decoded. And yet one hesitates to call the drawings by the older children "better" - indeed, most observors, and sometimes even the youngsters themselves, feel that something vital which is present at the age of six or seven has disappeared from the drawings by the older children. A certain freedom, flexibility, joie de vivre, and a special fresh exploratory flavor which mark the childlike drawings of the six-year-old are gone; and instead of being replaced by adult mastery, this loss has merely been supplanted by a product that is at once more carefully wrought yet also more wooden and lifeless (p.143).

"Time and time again," Gardner writes "we find the drawings by the older children increasingly regular, increasingly faithful to their target, increasingly neatly colored in (p.148)." By the same token, their sense of life, power, and vitality, as well as the delight in color and form for their own sake wanes.

Many art educators agree that this trend in middle childhood exists and many regret the change in quality. Gardner points out two contrasting views which explain this trend toward naturalism. One view is that there is too much preoccupation with the photographic aspects of drawing at the expense of the "expressive genius of the graphic medium." The other view is that the appeal of a child's earlier drawings is because of extraneous factors rather

than any genuine gift on the child's part. In this view, the child's increased care in making drawings, and his obsession with realism and accurate spatial relations is a welcome development. Some would argue that the child could draw in the "freer" style of former times but does not choose to do so (p.149). Gardner suggests that these positions are based on value systems: those who value expressive qualities of the media and those who value faithfully realistic renditions (p.149).

Older children's drawings tend to be characterized as being less variable, less idiosyncratic, and comprised of stock characters, stock styles and stock themes. Results from this thesis suggest that art instruction in the classroom, by focusing on realistic drawing, may be hindering the development of creative thinking and expression.

Gardner (1980) outlines seven reasons to explain the child's proclivity for realism. First, interest in realism is found in other spheres of life: words are used in the way they are meant to be. Second, in the area of social activity, games are judged and played solely in terms of their rules. Third, the child of eight, nine or ten relies increasingly upon language as a means of self-expression. "This power of words constitutes a principal reason that most children come to favor language rather than drawing as a means of self-expression (p.150)" - (and perhaps one might add, there is a failure in the art program to provide an

alternative visual mode of self-expression). Fourth, the mores of the school, the premium on getting things right, and the heightened reliance on linguistic sources encourages this profile. Fifth, whereas earlier the child drew what he wished, as he grows older he seeks to embrace the standards of the wider culture, which tend to be realistic ones, except among a small elite. Sixth, with the start of school, the dominance of the left hemisphere may be unambiguiously established and may increasingly dominate the child's behaviour [this Left Brain-Right Brain hypothesis is very controversial and hardly an accepted fact. See recent research cited by Michael Youngblood (1979, p.44-49)]. Seventh, children may simply conclude that their feelings can no longer be captured graphically or that drawing is no longer a suitable means for confronting one's own feelings (p.150-52).

Gardner writes that "for perhaps the first time in our inquiry, a question arises which cannot and will not go away: is our picture of the development of drawing following the initial stages a genuinely general account, or is it rather a caricature obtained through the technologically tinted lens of our own culture?" (p.159). In other words, is our perception of a trend toward realistic drawing colored by the effects of our own culture upon drawing? Gardner concludes that this is a difficult question to answer because there are few longitudinal studies in other cultures.

Gardner cites a few studies which show cultural influences on drawing styles. One study by Alexander Alland (1978), a cultural anthropologist at Columbia University, involves the filming of children in a number of cultures who are given markers and asked to draw. Alland found no ubiquitous elements such as mandalas or circles (Gardner, p.160). In fact, among children eight and nine years old, with no drawing experience, a series of drawing stages passed by in half an hour. Further, Gardner writes that in Bali, children's artistic style appears related to the use of decorative and repetitive forms which occupy space. In Japan, children's drawing features simple elements delicately spread and composed across the page. Realistic drawing is not important to these cultures.

Gardner states that there is no reason to believe that these studies are off the mark. "An uncritical chronicling of stages must be placed into question; the contribution to drawing skill made by explicit models and the implicit tempo of the culture must be taken extremely seriously "(p.160). Through this comment, Gardner places a greater emphasis on the role played by socio-cultural influences than on stage development theory.

In summary then, researchers have observed children's propensity toward naturalism at the pre-adolescent stage, but differ in opinion as to its cause. On the one hand, some suggest that this is largely the outcome of biogenetic factors. On the other hand, others suggest that this is

largely the result of socio-cultural influences. Presently, evidence for either belief appears inconclusive.

A number of empirical research studies have been conducted which investigate and describe the drawing abilities and interests of children, as well as ascertaining why children have the preferences they do. These will now be examined.

Empirical Research related to the Drawing Ability of the Junior High School Student

Some empirical researchers have investigated the drawing interests and abilities of students from twelve to fifteen years old in the junior high school. They have observed students' preferences for realistic drawing and their lack of confidence in drawing.

To determine if there is a natural form of art expression for the twelve to fifteen-year-old child, Lambert Brittain (1968) had a class of forty-two boys and girls meet for a two week period in classes of two hours per day. The forms of expression he observed were largely representational. The boys drew mechanical and technical objects and the girls drew clothes, glamorous portraits and horses. No common techniques existed. While the human figure was the most popularly mentioned subject for drawing at this level, he notes that all students had difficulty drawing it.

Helen Ross and Martin Richards (1967), having observed that a child's critical attitude towards his drawing ability arrives around puberty, set up a study to determine the developmental changes in children's drawings. They collected drawings from twelve hundred children ranging from four to eleven, and from twelve to fifteen years of age. The children were given paper and told to draw cats or kittens. The drawings were scored by the number of colors used, the use of unrealistic color for the cat, the area covered in the drawing, the use of background in the picture, the strips of color used for sky or ground and the use of outlining in drawing the cat. Ross and Richards found that at the age of twelve, more colors were used, more area was filled, more background was included and more realistic colors were used. According to their criteria, there was a peak at the age of twelve followed by a regression to a more childish style. To explain this, they hypothesized that childish forms of drawing are due to the critical attitude which arrives with puberty. They theorized that this critical attitude then depresses the creative ability of the adolescent, but emphasized that there were no data available to prove this theory.

The development of a critical attitude is supported by the results of an earlier study administered by two Canadian art educators, Charles and Margaret Gaitskell (1954). For six years, in order to determine the characteristics of adolescent art, they observed at regular intervals the work

of two hundred boys and girls between the ages of ten and eighteen. They found that early adolescent students lost self-confidence in their work and became more self-critical about it. Also, they observed that these students enjoyed drawing portraits and life studies, particularly the human figure. They seemed to be in a constant search for realism which frustrated them in two ways: 1) they lacked the skill to produce realistic work and 2) the emphasis on realism rarely produced an artistic result. Students attempted to produce photographic drawings of objects they did not understand; design was generally ignored and pupils had a tendency to copy. Consequently, the period of early adolescence in art according to the Gaitskells was one of frustration and deficiency in drawing ability.

Further research in the sixties revolved around this issue. Rump and Southgate (1965) designed a survey to ascertain the pictorial interests and preferences of seven, eleven and fifteen-year-old children and adults. Twenty boys and twenty girls, as well as seven male and eleven female teachers were taken on a tour of a gallery. Their comments regarding seventy-six varied items displayed in an art gallery were recorded. Of interest in their findings to the import of this thesis was that seven and eleven-year-olds preferred pictures which realistically depicted familiar objects.

In the following year, P. Machotka (1966) launched a survey to specify more precise ages for children's painting

preferences. He presented fifteen color reproductions to upper and middle class French boys ranging in ages from six to twelve. He found that the criterion of realism first appears in the child's repertoire at age seven or eight. However, in contrast to some later findings, he found that realism increases in importance until eleven years of age and then begins to decline. He interpreted his findings in the light of Piagetian theory and concluded that the child's development of operational thought affected his choice of pictures. Essentially though, his findings confirm the preadolescent predisposition toward realistic (or naturalistic) subject matter.

In a later study, Broughton (1973) wished to determine if directed observation lessons in figure drawing would improve the drawing ability and satisfaction with drawing of grade seven students. He found a correlation between satisfaction and the level of ability the child was able to achieve in figure drawing. These increases in satisfaction were thought to be stimulated by the higher level of realism in subject's drawings. Broughton suggested on the basis of this finding that students in grade seven should receive directed observation lessons in figure drawing in order to achieve the realism they desired. Broughton also suggested that because drawing is basic to many aspects of the art education curriculum, the skills acquired could benefit students in other areas of art.

Salkind and Salkind (1973) were sceptical about the

validity of determining a child's aesthetic preferences by having him select from pictorial cards. They believed that there needed to be methodological alternatives to surveys involving aesthetic preference tests because of the appeal of color and subject matter in the cards. After reviewing a variety of different methodologies employed in measuring aesthetic preferences, they designed an alternative approach based on five sets of pictures ranging from the realistic to the abstract. Subjects included people, outdoors, portraits, still life and abstractions. They applied their survey to a group of elementary school children with surprising results. Their results were at variance with earlier research. In the Salkind and Salkind study, the children preferred pictures which were at the abstract end of the continuum. Further studies were needed, they suggested, with controls on socio-economic status, sex and educational experiences to see whether or not a changing visual environment, rather than some innate factor may be influencing the child.

H. Lewis (1976) was also interested in why school age children want to make their drawings look real. In her study, she found that children were acutely aware of differences among drawings with respect to the adequacy with which spatial relations were depicted (p.15). Children rarely expressed a preference for a drawing whose developmental level was less advanced than that of their own. They always chose drawings at the higher levels. She

found that this preference became more pronounced at the older ages and among those more advanced in drawing.

In addition, Claire Golomb (1969,1974) has also investigated children's representational development, particularly in terms of rendering the human figure. She found that all children with few exceptions, selected as the best drawing the most detailed drawing of the human figure. The child defined "best" in terms of most complete or lifelike, a finding that was also replicated in a recent study by Granholm (1982).

Taunton (1980) completed an experimental study to build on existing research by seeking further information on the importance of subject matter and realism in preference judgments. She added to the research by sampling a more inclusive age group, selecting objective stimuli and by examining the roles of spatial cues. She used six hundred and ninety color reproductions in fourteen subject matter categories and tested these on four age groups of thirty persons, in ages of four, eight, twelve and sixteen. Neither controls nor manipulations were established for such variables as intelligence ratings, socio-economic backgrounds or environmental influences.

She questioned the subjects individually and recorded their responses on a scale of one to five. The subjects, who were drawn from two midwestern middleclass communities, were questioned about work comprised of still lifes, figure groups and portraits, - all representational. Her findings

for the eight, twelve and sixteen year olds were remarkably similar, with few age related transitional changes apparent, in their preference for "photographic realism (p.50)." Because of high variance components in her study, she cautioned against generalizing and added that further procedures needed to be investigated in order to determine more effective ways of classifying art objects used in empirical research.

Socio-cultural Influences on Aesthetic Preferences

A number of researchers have produced studies which indicate that socio-cultural influences play an important role in the development of children's preferences, once a child has acquired a certain level of cognitive development. They suggest that the child learns to value the aesthetic preferences of his society.

Matchoka (1966) attributed the preference for realism to developmental and cultural factors. He surmised that by age eight the child has had experiences in school, in personal drawing attempts and has been in contact with many types of visual stimuli and with adults. All of these, he stated, could conceivably influence the development of preferences for realism.

Such a cultural influence is suggested by Coffey (1968) as an explanation for preferences for realism. Coffey indicated that older children are aware of the

standards of their peer group and society and use these standards when making judgments.

A study of grade one and six teachers by Marilyn Zurmuehlen (1977) confirms Kellogg's intuitions that adults tend to use a comparison with nature (realism) as the standard for evaluating art work. Zurmuehlen's study compared Kellogg's predictions about teachers' preferences in children's drawings with actual judgments made by teachers of these drawings. She found that teachers tended to use realistic rendering as the standard for evaluating art work.

To illustrate how these values can be transmitted, an observational study by Rosario and Collazo (1981) examined teacher-child interactions, verbal exchanges, uses of materials and other behaviours. The researchers observed a number of overt and covert ways in which naturalistic values were transmitted to children often unwittingly by the teacher.

As well, in a study entitled "Figure Structure, Figure Action and Framing in Drawings by American and Egyptian Children," the Wilsons (1979) examined cultural influences on the imagery in children's drawing. From the results in their study, they concluded that it was difficult to ignore the central role that culture plays in the artistic environment.

As has been shown in the empirical research cited, children from eight to thirteen show a strong preference for

realistic images. This preference is viewed by some researchers as a natural stage of development and by others as something that is culturally induced. Research in this area is particularly difficult because of the wide appeal of varied aspects of visual imagery as well as the fact that the population being researched is seldom isolated from the socio-cultural influence of the school. Nevertheless, a clarification or resolution of the enigma regarding the origins and preferences for naturalism is essential. Once resolved, the expressive and mimetic aspects of the art program can be effectively planned to promote the child's interests and needs in art.

In the next chapter, it will be shown that historically, the emphasis in Canadian art programs has been on the media of drawing, that subject matter has been for the most part real objects, and that the style of rendering this subject has been largely naturalistic. This may help to explain the influence of art curricula on student preferences for realistic drawing and the corresponding lack of art appreciation. Surveys by Sadler (1969) and Ward (1982) will show that the greatest percentage of art class time is devoted to drawing and painting, and that students are either uncertain or unable to distinguish between the artistic merits of works of art and other irrelevant factors, such as the cost of the work, the time it takes to create it, or the subject matter it portrays.

Chapter III

Historical Methods and Values in Classroom Art

If one is familiar with the methods and values of art education in the past, one can better appreciate the context and results of contemporary art educational research. According to the historical literature, most classroom instruction has emphasized the media of drawing and painting and the realistic representation of imagery. The history of drawing itself has focused on three basic themes: drawing by copying, drawing from observation, and the expressive or interpretive function of drawing. The brief historical survey outlined here indicates that comparatively little attention has been given to art studies and appreciation, the depiction of imaginative imagery, or other unique forms of creative expression.

The introduction of art education into Canadian schools over a century ago followed trends similar to those in the United States. Art in both countries was primarily utilitarian, concerning itself with representational drawing and decoration. Its role in the general educational program was to train students in practical drawing skills in order to make the United States and Canada competitive in world markets.

According to Forbes (1951), Canada's first school art program, set up in Ontario schools in 1850, was designed to

develop technical skills such as map drawing. Such skills were needed in a country which was rapidly becoming industrialized. George E. Cochrane (1968) wrote that drawing was taught through a series of exercise books called Collin's Progressive Drawing Books. The sequential exercises in these books were arranged to promote the child's ability to produce neat and accurate drawings. Drawing consisted of rendering objects with rectilinear outlines, drawing simple objects with curved lines, shading flat surfaces and making outlines from models, and drawing plants, animals and people. Further influences were to emanate from the United States and Europe. Nevertheless, in the 1870's realistic representation was the basis on which art work was judged.

By the early 1880's Walter Smith was to become the leading influence of the decade in both the United States and Canada. He presented a series of addresses to the public and to teachers about the role of drawing and how it should be taught (I.R. O'Brien, 1879). Smith identified two distinct branches of drawing, both based on representational drawing. The first was "scientific," and required drawing instruments as in drafting. The second he called "artistic" which meant freehand drawing. "Artistic" or "freehand" drawing was needed to stress the "variety and beauty which comes from the cultivation of taste and the exercise of the free hand in expressing what the sensible eye observes" (p.9). "Scientific" drawing used instruments for geometric

drawing and perspective. "Artistic" or "freehand" drawing was useful for "drawing of ornaments from copies and from objects without the help of measurement and without resort to rule" (p.9).

From 1880 to the 1890s, Walter Smith's Freehand Drawing, and his Primary Manual of Art Education were approved for school use.

Walter Smith's drawing exercises became widespread, partly because the commercial printing companies saw a "good thing" in this movement toward drawing (Gaitskell, 1948). They began to publish books with similar exercises for people interested in learning how to draw. Their drawing books emphasized linear patterns, forms and geometrical shapes similar to those in Smith's books.

In the latter part of the 1880's, opposition began to arise against the methods in Smith's drawing program, although not to the importance of realistic drawing. In the Educational Record (1887), an anonymous author wrote that copying was an excellent discipline of hand and eye when used occasionally. Moreover, the author wrote that children should be taught to draw from the object first and not to slavishly adhere to copying from flat patterns. It was explained that the advantage of drawing from observation was that it showed minute differences between the sides of natural objects which copying could not do.

By the 1890's, McLeod and Taylor's Dominion Freehand Drawing Course replaced Smith's series. In some ways, the

content of the course resembled Smith's. It consisted of

a) subdivisions of squares

b) drawings of cubes, squares, prisms, cylinders, cones and square pyramids

c) drawings of natural flowers and ornamental devices

Both courses promoted the teaching of drawing by copying from their manuals.

From the 1850's until the 1890's art education was really drawing education. As well, art classes were by and large conducted by few teachers and these were poorly trained.

By the turn of the century, debate over two principal methods and purposes of learning to draw had emerged. Regarding methods, some advocated learning to draw by copying; others preferred drawing from observation. For the latter, having students observe details and render them accurately was considered a better way of training the mind. Regarding purposes, two were identified. One was to train the hand and mind to describe in detail objects in a non-verbal way. The other, somewhat more nebulous, was to enable students to record their impressions of things and to cultivate their "innate art impulses." While teachers may have favored one method over another and used both at times, the main purpose for drawing continued to be the development of skills in observation and rendering.

With the introduction of the Prang Course in Drawing for Graded Schools originating out of Boston, drawing from

observation gained more ground. In the 1910's, Prang Drawing Books continued to form the basis of the drawing course in the Protestant schools of Montreal and central Canada. Examples from its exercises were

a) draw an example of plant growth in outline or in tonality;

b) arrange and draw a group of objects;

c) make two drawings of a square plinth, showing its appearance in two different positions (Clark, 1897 p.283).

The course stated that some children could gain from copying, but there was ample opportunity on every page for free, original and different work.

Increasingly though, media such as charcoal, watercolors and constructions were also being used during "drawing" time. From the latter part of the decade, the drawing program incorporated a variety of activities in different media. Drawing was becoming one aspect of an art program.

The Prang Graphic Drawing Books superceded the Prang Drawing Books in the 1920's. In this period, people like Arthur Lismer, a well-known Canadian painter, and an Educational Supervisor at the Toronto Art Gallery were assisting art education by pointing out the importance of the needs and abilities of the child. In terms of drawing, however, an article on "Examination" (1929) in the Educational Record can be an indicator of the kinds of things deemed important during those years. The examination in drawing required the following:

1. Perspectival rendering of an observable, geometrically shaped object - a teacher's desk.

2. Memory watercolour of natural objects such as "sprays of goldenrod," "bullrushes," "dandelion in bud," and a "branch of crabapples and leaves."

3. Use of tonality in rendering "a dark tree against a light sky," or a "snow-covered hillside with dark pine trees in the distance " (p.94).

Even at this time, there were a number of common approaches related to the Smith drawing books. Freehand geometrical forms of objects were required; memory drawing continued, and drawing plant forms from observation were part of the skills taught.

The 1930s marked an extension and recognition of the fact that what went on in drawing classes included a lot more than just drawing. Paints, crayons, charcoal, constructions, lettering and design were recognized as being part of the curriculum. In Montreal, W.P. Percival (1931) recommended in a report that the term "drawing" be replaced by "art" and that pupils should be taught both to "express" and to "appreciate" (p.4). He believed that the word "drawing" signified too much the "copying of a model" and that it lacked the "purpose" of art as a means of "appreciation." His recommendation was approved. Drawing classes became art classes.

Four key points implicit in his comments bear reiteration. One was that art classes were still basically drawing classes. Second was that even until the 1930's drawing was still strongly associated with the copying of

objects. The third implied that a purpose of art was to provide a means of appreciation. The fourth, more subtle, implied that the "purposes" of art could not be met by "drawing" classes.

In 1934, the Graphic Drawing Books were replaced by the new School Art Series (Armstrong, 1934) which were to remain the authorized provincial course of study until 1956 in Quebec. Each book contained a number of art lessons, including picture studies of coloured reproductions of well known artists. Some of the tasks encouraged pupils to copy from the drawings in them. This was defended by Frayne (1936) as helping to "clarify the image in the mind of the pupil who otherwise would never be able to put anything down on paper" as well as to allow others to "acquire or improve techniques" (p.226). The advantage to drawing objects from observation, on the other hand, was that they impressed their shapes more on the mind. Regarding accurate representation, Frayne wrote

> ...at the first, too great an insistence on accuracy is decidedly unwise .... one point to be stressed is that infinite detail is neither necessary or desireable; general effect is what is wanted and not minute detail (1936, p.225).

Nothing was said about "imaginative" drawing. There was a comment that a ten minute memory painting could ensure a spontaneous and lively representation indicating a quality of feeling for expressive forms. Drawing was seen as serving two purposes; namely, to teach children to observe forms accurately and to "impress" shapes upon their mind.

In the 1940's, the School Art Series continued to be the authorized drawing series, so one can conclude that little change occurred in so far as the approach to drawing was concerned.

A flourish of literature in the 1940's influenced directions for art education into the 1950's. While drawing had consisted largely of drawing from observation, copying and memory, it was during the 1950's that the concept of self-expression was introduced into the art program. Subject matter was supposed to be spread over diverse areas, from the imagination and fantasy to the world of museums, community events and history. The shift from a program based on drawing from observation and copying, to a program incorporating one aspect of drawing which was imaginative and expressive, took over half a century. Yet the degree to which such imaginative and expressive practices actually occurred in the classroom remains open to question.

In 1953 the Handbook for Teachers replaced the School Art Series. In this Handbook, the general aims for new elementary art courses were described. The emphasis was on the development of the child's "intuitive modes for expression," his "natural understanding of art forms" and his "sense of design." From kindergarten to the third grade, it was suggested that the child be given daily opportunity to

a) express his ideas visually;

b) express his own ideas his own way without being handicapped by adult samples;

c) freely use materials;

d) be introduced to basic media of visual expression;

e) have his thinking and memory stimulated through discussions;

f) select subject matter from his own environment, experiences, community events, and seasonal and historical interests (1953, p.25).

These were to be achieved in drawing, painting, modelling, construction and paper cutting.

In the fourth and fifth grade, the emphasis was on "imaginative expression" with what appeared to be an implicit fostering of naturalism contained within the text of the outline. Below are some of the key points:

a) The subject matter is to reflect the child's experiences and environment with an increasing use of fantasy, story illustration, geographical and historical material.

b) The child's "symbols" become more realistic. "Realism can be fostered in indirect ways, but should never become the primary aim of and activity" (p.26).

c) The technical aspects of drawing, painting and construction are to be given increased consideration.

d) Source material can be gathered by visiting museums and plays.

e) Techniques and media are broadened to include sculpture, costuming, mural painting, stage scenery and crafts (pp.26-27).

The teachers of the sixth and seventh grades were to emphasize the pupil's interpretation, experiences, feelings and reactions to the environment. The child should be able to appreciate and criticize all forms of creative work. Key

points in the program related to drawing were to

a) introduce the pupil to art terms and the recognition of form, color and design;

b) gradually introduce drawing from observation and memory;

c) have students use source material based on notes and sketches obtained from field trips,

d) provide a study of pictures and artists from various periods according to the interests of the pupil (1953, p.27).

In the authorized curriculum of the fifties, formal drawing instruction began to play a less important role. In the art curriculum at least, subject matter started to come from such diverse areas as imagination and fantasy, the world of museums, community events and history. This was the first decade of self-expression in the art program. According to the curriculum guide, the child should be free to express his own ideas in his own way. In Grades 5 and 6, realism should be fostered in indirect ways, and by Grade 7, students should be learning to draw from observation and memory.

The history of art education in Alberta paralleled that of central Canada. Forbes' (1951), after tracing the history of art education in Alberta schools, concluded that art education in the public schools of Alberta began as map drawing during the first decade of the twentieth century. Colour was also included as an area of study by many teachers who felt that art was more than learning to draw. In addition to map-drawing and color, children were taught to draw geometric forms and countless variations of these

forms. Art meant imitation, the learning of skills and techniques and the memorization of rules and theories. Emphasis was placed on the product rather than the process and realistic representation was the basis on which an art work was to be judged. There was little reference to aesthetic qualities. He wrote that creativity was one of the aims of art education, but in actuality it was not put into practice in the schools, despite several revisions of the existing art programs.

Forbes, who was an Alberta Inspector of Schools, expressed his disappointment with the art program when he stated that

> in spite of the intent of the revised course in art to stress the appreciation of art in our everyday lives and surroundings, a large number of teachers have not changed their procedures from the actual drawing and painting of the traditional sets of "plates " (Forbes, p.65).

In the following statements, Forbes sums up the actual state of art education in the public schools of Alberta up to 1951

> The students approach art ... in a stiff, stereotyped and unimaginative way. Also they are burdened with a defeatist attitude that only points to an art program that must ignore, indeed must discourage free expression and aesthetic values.
> (Forbes, p.34).

Concerned about the curriculum of the Alberta art program, Sadler (1969) used the Eisner Art Information Inventory to determine the amount of class time devoted to art production and art appreciation activities in Grade 9 in sixty-two schools in Alberta. Of sixteen art activities, she found that the greatest percentage of art time in all of

the sixty-two participating schools was devoted to drawing and painting. Fifty-eight of the sixty-two schools ranked drawing and painting as the first order of priority (p.40). Twenty-eight of the sixty-two listed design elements and principles as a second priority. Art history was mentioned in only two schools as a priority. She summarized her survey by saying that teachers viewed a good art program at the Grade 9 level as one which was production oriented. Sadler concluded by stating that there was a need for art appreciation and that it was the responsibility of the art teacher to teach students to understand the creative expression of each culture of the world according to its unique form of artistic expression, particularly with the advent of transportation and communications technology.

Barbara Ward's (1982) research for the National Assessment of Educational Progress revealed similar findings in art education in the United States. Her observations are interesting since they summarize the effects of art programs much like those in Canada. As Senior Public Information Editor of the Educational Commission of the United States, she published the results of the most recent nationwide sample of 32,000 students. The assessment set out to measure the art skills, knowledge and attitudes of students with ages of nine, thirteen and seventeen. Nine out of ten of the students sampled attended schools offering some sort of art instruction.

Of these, three-fourths of the thirteen-year-olds had

taken an art course in either the seventh or eighth grade. By the age of seventeen, one student in six was taking an art course, indicating a sizable drop. Although 17-year-olds with four to six art classes of experience generally did somewhat better than their contemporaries, Ward wrote that their advantage was primarily on design and drawing tasks and on items concerned with valuing art (p.17). They were no better than other students in their ability to perceive and respond to works of art.

She wrote that art activity appeared to peak at age thirteen. Then it dipped as students moved through high school (p.13). Of a list of ten activities drawing was the most popular. It was pursued by 53% of the population at age nine, 76% at age thirteen, and 58% at age seventeen. Unfortunately, while interest in drawing was most popular, the declines for the teenagers was most marked on items which investigated the extent to which they valued art.

She found that students' knowledge of art history was sparse. She believed this lack of art history and appreciation affected students' judgments about works of art in terms of cultural and stylistic differences. They had difficulty in going beyond the subject matter of a work in order to make broadly based, reasoned judgments of aesthetic quality (p.15). When students were asked to choose which of two Picasso sketches of a horse was the better and to give two reasons for their judgment, only one-third of the thirteen-year-olds and one-half of the seventeen-year-olds

could give at least one acceptable reason for their judgment, - reasons that dealt with either the relationship of parts and unity of the drawing or the feeling or mood created by the drawing. In many cases, Ward reported, students appeared to use appropriate and inappropriate criteria almost indiscriminately. Approximately 60% of the thirteen-year-olds and seventeen-year-olds used an unacceptable mimetic standard as a basis for judging a work; that is, they used the basis of how "true-to-reality" it seemed(p.15).

> Other items reinforce the view that students are often overly influenced by representational qualities. Shown an advertisement for wigs that was jumbled and unexciting in design, most students were aware that the overall effect was not very good. But at least 70% of the students at each of the three ages praised the drawings included in the example, drawings of female heads that were appealingly "cute" and realistic, although not artistically complex (p.15).

In terms of drawing and design skills, students have difficulty in producing coherent and vivid organizations of their ideas and in including novel images in their designs. In addition, they have trouble in depicting emotions. Ward wrote that art educators such as Laura Chapman, art education consultant, Cincinnati, Ohio; Ronald Silverman, professor of art education, California State University, Los Angeles; and Brent Wilson, professor, School of Visual Arts, Pennsylvania State University expressed dismay at the trends revealed in the art assessments, "particularly the declines in teenager's acceptances of a broad range of art forms, their slight knowledge of art history and their tendency to

judge works of art on the basis of subject matter or "realism"(p.17). Also seen as troubling were the drop in teenagers' participation in artistic activities outside of school and the decline in numbers that collect works of art.

Summary and Conclusions

In the 1870's, Walter Smith's "artistic" or "freehand" drawing program was based on the student's ability to draw, design and ornament forms which could be observed in the world. By the 1950's, drawing in theory at least had become "artistic" in another sense. The student was expected to be able to deal with imaginative, expressive and subjective forms from his/her own inner self as well as being able to render the observable world.

For the most part, the elementary curriculum in Canadian schools appears to have centred on drawing realistically from observation. The methods to attain realism have varied. Prior to the 1900's and even until the 1940's, many art educators preferred copying as a way of teaching drawing skills. Since the 1940's however, drawing from observation has remained the principal method for drawing instruction. Yet even today, the relative advantages of both copying and drawing from observation are still being discussed in research literature.

Even though realistic drawing skills remain a major part of the art program in today's schools, their

acquisition has been somewhat jeopardized by the inclusion of numerous other media which have had to share the same class time. What once was a "drawing" class had evolved into an "art" class by the 1930's. This was due to both the general influx of other media and the incorporation of the imaginative, experiential and expressive movements of art. Given the same class time for other media, the acquisition of drawing skills would necessarily be affected.

From the research cited in this historical overview, it seems that there has been difficulty in focussing on the "expressive" and "appreciative" components of the art curriculum. Perhaps art teachers have been reluctant to forego the standard studio production components of the art program. Perhaps teachers are not sufficiently trained themselves to teach these things. Or perhaps art teachers have not found a supportive environment for these components in their schools. Results from one of Zurmuehlen's (1977) studies indicated that elementary teachers of art generally prefer realistic representations.

An issue which is constantly mentioned in the art educational literature is that art teachers are inadequately prepared. Louis Shore (1957) stated that few elementary teachers have studied art beyond the grade 8 level. In addition, he added that teacher training in the colleges in art is inadequate in light of this fact. The problem is compounded by the high turnover of teachers in the elementary years and the resultant loss of art learning

experience. What could these poorly trained teachers offer their classes, given a curriculum which emphasizes expressive drawing techniques and creativity?

As with Ward's (1982) findings, it has been my observation as an art teacher that students have sparse knowledge of art history. They have trouble developing novel images and depicting emotions, and they tend to judge works on the basis of how "true to reality" they seem. One cause for this situation may well be that the content of art classes themselves, for over a century, have emphasized realistic drawing and accurate representation of the objects observed. Given these kinds of emphases, one might expect that when students are asked to define artistic ability and creativity, they might well talk about realistic drawing as an index of artistic ability. Study #1 and Study #2 in the succeeding chapters investigate whether or not students do talk about artistic ability in these terms.

Chapter IV

Four Major Questions in Study #1

Art teachers and art researchers alike have observed children's preferences for naturalism at the pre-adolescent stage. Despite considerable theoretical and empirical research, opinions differ as to its cause. Some researchers suggest biogenetic factors; others suggest socio-cultural influences. According to the historical literature presented in the previous chapter, classroom art activity itself may be a contributing factor, because of its emphasis on drawing and realistic representation. Very little attention has been given to art studies and art appreciation, or for that matter to other art media and forms of artistic expression. Given the classroom emphases on realistic drawing and the accurate depiction of objects observed, one might expect that students would define their own artistic ability in these terms.

To examine student beliefs about artistic ability, two studies were designed. Study #1 surveyed students in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades to discover how they described artistic ability. Study #2 posed the same questions, but examined the influence of socio-economic status on picture preference. Study #2 also gave students a chance to choose from actual pictures as opposed to answering the questions about ability and preference in the

abstract. This chapter will deal with the first study.

Study #1: Research Design and Procedures

This chapter deals with the four major questions posed in Study #1. First, do art students have a standard or criterion for artistic ability? Second, what is the standard or criterion used when describing artistic ability? Third, do art students see realistic drawing as the principle indication of artistic ability? Fourth, do students who believe that artistic ability is realistic drawing ability intend to continue in art? In doing so, this chapter describes the population, the procedure, the instrument used, the treatment of the data, and the findings.

Information for Study #1 was obtained from children in one Montreal and three Alberta schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years respectively. The survey was conducted during the latter part of the academic year: in March in Montreal, and in June in Calgary.

The Population

Study #1 examined seventy-five young adolescent art students enrolled in grade 7, 8, and 9 art programs. Though age and grade are not primary concerns of this study, the student sample comprised the following:

a) Protestant School Board, Montreal, Quebec for the 1982/83 school year from one composite high school

in a lower socio-economic area:

i) Grade VIII - nine students with a mean age of 13.6

ii) Grade VII - ten students with a mean age of 12.8

b) Calgary Board of Education, Calgary, Alberta for the 1983/84 school year from three junior high schools in lower middle class and upper class areas:

i) Grade IX - seventeen students with a mean age of 14.6

ii) Grade VIII - thirty-four with a mean age of 13.6

iii) Grade VII - five students with a mean age of 12.8

Table I

Distribution of 75 art students by grade and program

Program		Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 9	Total
Montreal	L	10	9		19
Calgary	L	5		8	13
	M		22	9	21
	H		12		12
Total		15	43	17	75

Socio-economic status: L = low, M = middle, H = high.

The Montreal school was suggested by a colleague because of its proximity to the researcher in Montreal and the Calgary schools were suggested by the Calgary Board of

Education Art Department as being representative of city school art programs. There was not enough data to justify making distinctions between the two cities.

Procedure

The researcher was introduced by the art teacher as "someone who was doing a study about students in the art program." Interviews with each student were then conducted by the the researcher either in adjacent storage rooms or at the back of the art room. This afforded some privacy for the student. Notes were made as the student replied to each question. Students eagerly called others to participate in the survey when their interview ended.

The questions listed in Appendix A were sequentially ordered to achieve the following purposes:

i) to help the student feel comfortable,

ii) to encourage the student's reflection upon previous art experiences,

iii) to have the student make judgments about the art abilities of peers,

iv) to subsequently have the student identify the criteria for those judgments,

v) to have the student specify his/her own strengths and preferences in the art program,

vi) to have the student indicate his/her intentions to continue on in the art program in subsequent years.

Treatment of Data

An open ended method of inquiry was used in order to collect all responses offered by the student. Possible student responses were neither preconceived nor limited. The approach to this inquiry resembles that of Johnson (1982), Ulbright (1976), and Winder (1981) who use qualitative methods of research related to work done by some ethnographers and persons involved in field research in the social sciences (Spradley, 1979; Bruyn, 1966).

Percentages were tabulated for some responses. For others, statistical correlations were based on individual data. Responses were analyzed in terms of grade level and students' criteria for "artistic ability." Because of the size of the population, differences in responses between cities were not considered.

Table 1 shows the number of students interviewed in each grade and city

Findings

The conclusions from Study #1 apply only to the students surveyed. A larger survey using statistical tools would be necessary before broader conclusions could be reached. The conclusions to the questions will be discussed in the order they were presented in the research design and procedures.

Findings, Study #1, Problem 1: Do students have a standard or criterion for artistic ability?

Question 4 asks the student whether or not he/she has classmates who are "good at" or especially artistic in art? (See Appendix A). Asking the student to make such a judgment reveals both the existence and the application of a criterion. The student is required to employ a criterion of what it is to be "good at" art without realizing that in the next question, he or she will be asked to define that criterion. Moreover, the question does not involve any introspection or self-judgment on the part of the student; the criterion is being applied to someone else. The majority of students answered the question immediately, taking little time for thought. For a few, the question was rephrased or was simply not understood at all.

The first finding from this question is that virtually all of the students (97%) surveyed have a definite standard for artistic ability. The others (3%) were unable to provide a specific answer.

However, another finding arose as well. Students assume a universality in the concept of artistic ability. They feel no need to clarify terms. They are confident about the meaning of artistic ability and in its mutual understanding. Yet, as the findings of Question 5 reveal, some of these students have conflicting standards and ideas about artistic ability.

Findings, Study #1, Problem 2: What is the standard or criterion for describing artistic ability?

Question 5 of the survey asks students to describe how other students are "good at art" or have "artistic ability." The answer reveals the student's own description of what it is to be "good at art" after the student has just employed his/her criterion in the previous question.

Students understood and answered the question quickly. An important point to remember is that all questions in the survey have pertained to the general topic of art. This makes the results of the findings more surprising.

The majority of art students (79%) surveyed in the three grades referred to artistic ability in terms of drawing. (See Table 2). To describe how someone is "good at art," they used such phrases as "making things look real," making an object look three-dimensional," "including the details on flowers, people and things," "they could look at a drawing and do it the same," "you could know who the person was that they drew," "it looks really real, - as though it's coming out at you," and "can draw in all the muscles and features."

Some students (8%) believed that artistic ability meant being able to "do things well" in clay, painting, or other media. Others (6%) thought artistic ability meant "having a good imagination." The student with artistic ability was the one who "thinks about things," "has good ideas," "is good at a variety of things," or "is creative,"

or "has a good imagination." A few students (2%) described artistic ability in terms of design or aesthetics. In their view, the student with ability was one who could "decorate" and "shape pictures so that they come out beautiful." For the remaining students (5%), being "able to draw cartoons," doing "practice and hard work," or having "neat and tidy work" characterized artistic ability.

A comparison of grade level differences with respect to descriptions of artistic and drawing ability is outlined in Chapter V.

TABLE 2

Most frequent criteria used by young adolescent art students, in %, to describe artistic ability

(N=75)

Criteria	Percentage
1. Drawing ability	79
2. Do things well in media	8
3. Imaginative/creative	6
4. Can decorate/design	2
5. Practice/Work hard	2
6. Are neat and tidy	2
7. No response	1
Total	100

Findings, Study #1, Problem 3: Do art students equate artistic ability with realistic drawing?

The answer to this problem is contained in the answers to the first two questions. Most of the students (79%) surveyed, described artistic ability in terms of realistic drawing.

In terms of drawing ability itself, most students (89%) cited realistic representation as the major characteristic indicating ability.(See Table 3).

TABLE 3

Most frequent criteria used by young adolescent art students, in %, to describe drawing ability

(N=75)

Student descriptors	Percentage
1. Realism	89
2. Good imagination	3
3. Practice/work hard	3
4. Has a "flow"	3
5. Cartoons	2
Total	100

Findings, Study #1, Problem 4: Is there a correlation between student belief about artistic/realistic drawing ability and the intention to continue art?

Three correlations were made. The first correlation compared those students who believe that artistic ability is the same as realistic drawing ability with those students who do not, in terms of their intention to continue in the

art program. From the population sampled (Table 4), sixty-one students fit clearly into these two groups. Of the fifty-three students who equate artistry with realism, fourty-three intend to continue; five do not. Of the eight students who do not make this equation, seven intend to continue; one does not. The phi (0) coefficient formula was applied to give a mathematical indication of the nature and degree of correlation between the findings. The resulting coefficient of 0.05 indicates that there is no relationship at all between a student's equating artistic ability with realistic drawing and his/her intention to continue art.

TABLE 4

Table showing the number of students who believe artistic ability = realistic drawing and who intend to continue art (N=61)

		Plans to continue art	
		Yes	No
Student believes that	Yes (53)	43	10
artistic ability = drawing ability	No (8)	7	1

phi 0 coefficient = .05

A second correlation was made to determine if a relationship exists between a student's belief in his/her own artistic ability (as defined in terms of realistic

drawing) and his/her intention to continue in the art program (See Table 5). In the group of eighteen students who believed they had good "artistic ability" most students (88%) intended to continue. In the group of fourteen students who believed they had poor "artistic ability," many students (71%) intended to continue.

TABLE 5

Table showing the number of students who believe they have good or poor "artistic ability" (as defined in terms of realistic drawing) and who intend to continue classes (N=32)

		Plans to continue art	
		Yes	No
Student believes that artistic ability = drawing ability	Good	16	2
	Poor	10	4

phi 0 coefficient = .2

Applying the phi coefficient to the figures resulted in a figure of .2 indicating a positive, but weak relationship between these beliefs and the desire to continue in the art program.

A third correlation was made to determine if a relationship exists between a student's confidence in

his/her realistic drawing ability and the intention to continue in art. From the population sample (Table 6), thirty-four students believe they have either very good or poor artistic ability. Of these, twenty-two believe they are "good at drawing," while twelve believe they are not. Of the twenty-two who believe they have talent, the majority (90%) intend to continue; the other two (10%) will not. Of the twelve students lacking confidence in their drawing ability, some (58%) will continue; five (41%) will not.

TABLE 6

Table showing student confidence in their realistic drawing ability and their intention to continue in art (N=34)

		Plans to continue art	
		Yes	No
Student believes that he/she possesses realistic drawing ability	Yes (22)	20	2
	No (12)	7	5

phi 0 coefficient = .4

A correlation of the data in Table 5 reveals a phi coefficient of .4, indicating a moderately significant relationship between a student's confidence in his/her own drawing ability and the intention to continue in art. Also, the data reveals that nearly all of the students who believe they have drawing talent intend to continue in art.

However, even for those students who consider their drawing skills to be poor, more than half intend to continue in art.

Twenty-seven students in the survey believed their drawing ability was average. Most (70%) intended to continue art; some (30%) did not.

In summarizing, the findings reveal the following points.

1) Students do have a definite standard for artistic ability, and this standard is realistic drawing ability.

2) This standard is assumed by the great majority of students to be the standard held by other students.

3) Students who are confident about their own drawing ability are more likely to want to continue in the art program.

4) Whether or not students equate artistic ability with realistic drawing ability appears to have little bearing on their intention to continue in art.

The next chapter will address other findings contained within the survey.

Chapter V

Grade Differences and Other Questions in Study #1

In this chapter, the following two aspects of Study #1 will be examined: 1) grade level differences in responses to the main questions in Study #1; 2) interesting responses arising from other questions in the survey. (See Appendix A).

Part 1: Grade Level Differences Related to the Four Problems of Study #1.

Study #1, Problem 1: Do art students have a standard or criterion for artistic ability?

Nearly all of the students (97%) in the three grades had a standard for artistic ability.

Study #1, Problem 2: What is the standard for describing artistic ability?

For most students (79%), the standard for artistic ability was the ability to draw realistically. There were some grade differences. These will be discussed in the next problem which concerns the linking of artistic ability with drawing ability.

Study #1, Problem 3, Do art students equate artistic ability with realistic drawing?

Over the three grades, there was a decreasing tendency

to describe artistic ability solely in terms of drawing. This trend saw an approximate drop of 10% with each advancing grade. In Grade 7, the majority of students (86%) spoke of artistic ability in terms of realistic drawing. In Grade 8, the percentage dropped to eighty-one, while in Grade 9, seventy percent of the students described artistic ability in terms of drawing (Table 7).

As well, student confidence in drawing ability increased with each grade level, from twenty percent in Grade 7, to forty-seven percent of the students in Grade 9.

In all three grades, however, many students rated their realistic drawing abilities as poor.

TABLE 7

Student descriptors for artistic ability, in %, by grade (N=75)

Student descriptors	Gr.7	Gr.8	Gr.9
1. Drawing ability	86	81	70
2. Imaginative/creative	7	5	6
3. Do things well in media	0	5	18
4. Can decorate/design	7	0	0
5. Practice/Work hard	0	0	6
6. Are neat and tidy	0	5	0
7. No response	0	4	0
	100	100	100

Study #1, Problem 4: Is there a correlation between student belief about artistic ability and the intention to continue art?

Because of the limited sample in each grade, no statistical comparisons were made. However, information from Question 8 in Study #1 was analyzed to determine student reasons for continuing art at the different grade levels. These reasons are listed in Appendices B,C and D.

Regarding the number of grade 7 students who intended to continue art, the majority (88%) who classified their artistic ability as average or better said that they intended to continue art. Of those students who rated themselves as poor (40%), some (17%) said that they would not continue art. (See Table 8).

Grade 8 seemed to be a indecisive year, with nearly half (47%) of the student sample in the "maybe" category. Other options and career intentions figured into student decisions about subject choices. By Grade 9, the majority of students with low self-concepts about their artistic ability, intended to leave the art program.

In comparing the three grades of students (Table 8), more grade 9 students were certain of their intentions to continue the art program than students in the other grades. In this survey, Grade 8 appears to be a significant year with a higher percentage of students deciding not to

continue, or expressing reservation about continuing in the art program.

TABLE 8

Comparison of students' belief in their artistic ability, in %, with their intention to continue art, in %, by grade (N=75)

Artistic ability		Continue art		
Grade 7 (n=15)		Yes	Maybe	No
Good	27	75	25	0
Okay	33	100	0	0
Poor	40	33	50	17
Grade 8 (N=43)				
Good	14	83	0	17
Okay	52	63	17	20
Poor	34	62	30	8
Grade 9 (N=17)				
Good	29	80	20	0
Okay	48	100	0	0
Poor	23	35	0	65

Part 2: Interesting Responses Arising From Questions 1,2,3,& 8 of Study #1

Study #1, Survey Questions #1 & #2. "Have you had art before in any of your classes?" "For how long or for how many classes?"

The first two questions were developed to determine how long students in the survey had studied art. It was assumed that students in higher grades would provide more sophisticated answers to questions about artistic ability. However this was not the case.

In this study, as can be seen from Table 8, all of the grade 7 students had previous art classes. The majority (66%) have had art classes every year. The others (33%) averaged 4.6 years of classroom art. In all, the average number of years in the art classroom was 6.2.

In Grade 8, some students (18.6%) had not had previous art classes, so that the average number of prior years in these art classrooms was less than in Grade 7.

By Grade 9, (Grade 9 is the final junior high school year in Alberta) all students in the program have had previous art classes. However, fewer students (17.6%) than in the other grades stated that they had studied art in all years. Most of these students (82.4%) averaged 3.4 years so that the average for all students was 4.75 years, less than the figures for Grade 7 and Grade 8.

Referring to Table 9, the findings suggest that higher grade levels contain two substantial population differences from earlier grade levels. First, each successively higher grade level contains fewer long term art students, -

students who should know more about art. Second, the general population of each higher grade has a lower mean average of art class experience. One interesting conclusion is that the the grade 9 senior art class comprises students whose sum of art knowledge, skills and experience is proportionately less than the two feeder grades of 7 and 8.

TABLE 9

Number of years, by grade, in %, that students have taken art classes

Grade	All years	Some years	No art	Mean
7	66.6%	33.3%	0%	6.2
8	57%	24.4%	18.6%	5.2
9	17.6%	82.4%	0%	4.8

Study #1, Survey Question 3: "What do you like about art?"

In addition to examining what students like about art, this question also encourages them to think about various aspects of the art program in order to have a repertoire from which to answer the succeeding questions in the survey.

Students' reasons for liking art varied. (See Appendix B,C,D). Some reasons centered on specific media, while others centered on activities and feelings.

The majority of students in all three grades described their likes about art in terms of art media. Their favorite media was drawing, with clay and painting being a distant

second (Table 10). For whatever reason, other art media were not mentioned. In terms of drawing itself, grade 7 students liked it considerably more than grade 8 and 9 students.

TABLE 10

A comparison of what adolescent students like about art, in %, by grade (N=75)

Student descriptors	Grade 7 (N=15)	Grade 8 (N=43)	Grade 9 (N=17)
Drawing	60	34	34
Clay/painting/sculpture	6	15	6
Creating things	0	18	6
Making different things	14	15	0
It's fun	20	15	12
Learn lots of stuff	0	0	12
It's easier	0	3	12
Like everything about it	0	0	12
Freedom to do what you want	0	0	6
	100	100	100

The second reason for liking art at the grade 7 level was an affective reason, "it's fun," which was of lesser importance to grade 8 and 9 students. These students, particularly those in Grade 9, had a broader range of reasons for liking art. These reasons involved the "making"

and "doing of things," "learning lots of things," "it's easier than other subjects," "liking everything about it," "freedom to do what you want," and reasons involving "creativity," and "using your imagination." Surprisingly, none of the grade 7 students mentioned the last category involving creativity, nor did many of the grade 9 students for that matter.

Summary

In summarizing Part 1 and Part 2 of this chapter regarding grade differences, these are the main points.

1) Most students in all three grades use realistic drawing as a standard for artistic ability.

2) Whereas, nearly ninety percent of grade 7 students use realistic drawing as a standard, only seventy percent of the grade 9 students use realistic drawing as a standard for artistic ability.

3) Grade 9 students have slightly more confidence in their artistic ability in terms of rating their ability average or better.

4) The grade 9 classes studied have an aggregate of students with less total experience in art than the lower grades.

5) Reasons for liking art are primarily media related, drawing being most popular, but there is a decline in the popularity of drawing from Grade 7 through Grade 9.

6) Grade 9 students have more diverse reasons for liking art

than those in grade 7.

7) Reasons involving creativity are mentioned by a minority of students, and reasons involving the expression or communication of ideas or feelings, or the study of art in the past are not mentioned at all.

8) As for continuing art, Grade 8 seems to be a significant year, with a large number of students expressing uncertainty about continuing the art program.

9) By Grade 9, if a student does not have confidence in his/her drawing ability, there is less likelihood that he/she will continue art.

While the findings from Questions 1,2,3 and 8 in Study #1 were interesting, they were secondary to the main purpose of the thesis which was to examine students' descriptions of artistic ability. After responses to the interviews in Study #1 had been examined and described, a few additional questions arose. One involved the possibility that socio-economic influences might play a role in students' descriptions of artistic ability. The second concern was that perhaps students might respond differently to the concept of artistic ability, if they were able to choose from actual pictures, rather than talking about art in the abstract, as it were, during an interview. Consequently, Study #2 was developed. A description of this study, along with its findings, will be examined in the following chapter.

Chapter VI

Ability and Picture Preference Survey, Study #2

Study #2 was developed to determine if there are socio-economic influences on young adolescent art students' descriptions of artistic ability. Also, by using actual pictures as indicators of artistic ability in this study, comparisons could be made with the major findings in Study #1, and between images of what students like and what they believe are indicative of artistic talent.

Thus, Study #2 has four major questions. First, do students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indication of artistic ability? Second, does socio-economic status influence the students' descriptions? Third, do students distinguish between images of what they like and images which they believe are indicative of a talented artist? Fourth, are students' answers to questions about artistic ability similar to their actual choices of pictures illustrating artistic ability? This chapter describes the population, survey methods and answers to the four research questions.

The Population

This survey examined twenty art students in two Calgary schools during June of 1987, at the end of their academic year.

The composition was as follows:

a) School from a low socio-economic area (characterized by small homes, low tax base, and industrial workers)

i) Grade VIII - ten students with a mean age of 13.2

i) Gender - 6 boys and 4 girls

iii) Years of art experience - 3.3

b) School from a high socio-economic area (characterized by very large homes, high tax base, and professional workers)

i) Grade VIII - ten students with a mean age of 13

ii) Gender - 4 boys and 6 girls

iii) Years of art experience - 4.3.

The grade 8 students participating in the study were randomly selected by the art teacher in each school.

Procedure

The researcher was introduced by the art teacher as someone who was doing a study about students in the art room. The interviews for students with low socio-economic status, took place in the staff conference room. Interviews with students representing a high socio-economic population, were conducted in a storage area at the back of the art room. The interviews with individual students consisted of three main parts.

First, students were asked to rank ten pictures of tree studies ranging from the highly realistic to those which were essentially abstract, having little resemblance to trees. The students used a five point scale to indicate their likes and dislikes. The order of presentation was different for each of the twenty students. None of the students recognized, nor were told, that all ten pictures were by the same artist, Piet Mondrian.

In the second part of the interview, students were asked open-ended questions about artistic ability. These questions are identified later in the section on "The Instrument."

In the third part of the interview, students were asked to look through the ten pictures, to pick the ones that showed a person was "good at art" or who had a lot of talent in art, and to explain their choice. The first choice was considered the most significant.

Students took the time needed to choose from the pictures and to answer the interview questions. The time varied from five to ten minutes per student.

The Instrument

For Part 1 of this study, ten 4"x6", black and white photographs of Piet Mondrian's tree studies (Appendix E,F,G) re presented randomly to each student. The photographs of the tree studies varied from the "very realistic" to the "highly abstract." The "very realistic" picture in this

study was # 4. Objectively, it most represented the actual structure and appearance of a tree. The "moderately realistic" pictures were pictures numbered 5,8,1,7 and 9. These were essentially stylizations of a tree, still retaining basic structural and appearance characteristics. The "highly abstract" pictures were numbered 2,3,6, and 10. These portrayed the structure of a tree organized into positive and negative areas of lines, shapes, textures and values, but in so doing, bore little resemblance to the appearance of an actual tree. The student ranked the pictures he/she liked on a five point scale. The student did not recognize, nor was told, the fact that the tree studies were all done by the same artist.

The questions used for Part 2 of this study were the following:

i) How many years have you been taking art?

ii) Do you have classmates you feel are "good at art", or who have talent in art?

iii) Why are they "good at" art? What is it that they do? Why are they talented?

These were open-ended questions about artistic ability, not drawing ability. The answers were recorded on tape to be categorized later.

For Part 3 of this study, students were asked to select from the ten photographs of tree studies those which best illustrated artistic ability. These answers were recorded on tape.

Treatment of Data

Information concerning the questions is discussed in terms of percentage. Because of the size of the population, no hard and fast statistical conclusions could be made although some phi 0 correlations were made. As well, conclusions from the findings apply only to the students surveyed.

Findings for the Four Problems in Study #2

Findings, Study #2, Problem 1: Do students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indication of artistic ability?

In terms of picture selection to show artistic ability, most of the students (75%) in this sample selected the "most realistic" picture #4 as the one that best illustrated artistic ability. Typical reasons given to support their choice were that it "looked the most realistic," "it looks more like a tree," and "it's hard to draw."

The "highly abstract" pictures #3 and #6 were selected by ten percent of the students. Picture #6 was selected because it was different ... all filled up and has background," while picture #3 was chosen because "it was creative."

TABLE 11

Ranking of pictures which indicate artistic ability, by number of students within each group

	Hi S.E.S.	Low S.E.S.
Very realistic (#4)	6/10	9/10
Moderately realistic (#5,8,1,7,9)	2/10	1/10
Highly abstract (#2,3,6,10)	2/10	0/10

S.E.S. = Socio-economic status

The remaining students (15%) chose the "moderately "realistic pictures" #5 and #8 because these "made good use of space," and "were different but you can still see the tree."

Student answers to the open-ended questions confirmed these findings, though with slight differences in figures. A comparison of both answers is made in Problem 4 of the findings.

Findings, Study #2, Problem 2: Are there socio-economic influences on student's descriptions of artistic ability?

There were socio-economic differences between the two groups. Ninety percent of the low socio-economic group chose picture #4 as the best indicator of artistic ability, while fewer students (60%) in the high socio-economic group selected this picture. As well, only members from the high socio-economic group chose "highly abstract" pictures #3 and #6 as indicators of artistic ability. (See Table 11)

Responses to the open-ended questions also showed that high socio-economic status students tended to use drawing and realism as criteria for artistic ability slightly less than the other students. The corollary was that the high socio-economic status students also used other reasons involving "good ideas," "good use of space," and "creativity" more. (See Table 12.)

Table 12

Comparison of high and low socio-economic status criteria for talented classmates, in %, by group (N=20)

		Hi S.E.S.	Low S.E.S.
What is so good about talented classmates	Drawing (N=7)	40%	30%
	Realism (N=7)	20%	40%
	Other (N=6)	40%	30%

S.E.S. = Socio-economic status

Findings, Study #2, Problem 3: Do students distinguish between images of what they like and images they believe indicate talent?

In this sample, most students (75%) preferred realistic images, some (15%) preferred moderately realistic images and a few (10%) preferred the highly abstract images.

After examining the data, there appeared to be a stronger relationship between picture preferences and pictures as indicators of artistic ability, for students who prefer "very realistic" and "moderately realistic" images. Referring to Table 13, most students (86%) who preferred the very realistic image of the tree also selected the same image as an indicator of artistic ability. Seven percent of these students favored moderately realistic images, and seven percent selected highly abstract images as indicating artistic ability. All of the students who preferred moderately realistic images selected moderately realistic images as indicating artistic ability.

For the students who favored the highly abstract images, one half chose highly abstract images as indicating artistic ability; the other half chose realistic images.

Although with a number of twenty students, a statistical test may be pointless; nevertheless, a correlation using the phi coefficient was used to compare students who favored the highly realistic and highly abstract images with their choices of pictures indicating artistic ability. The resulting phi coefficient of .46

indicates a moderately significant relationship.

TABLE 13

The relationship, in %, between a student's picture preference and choice of picture indicating artistic ability (N=20)

		Choice of picture indicating artistic ability		
		V.R.	M.R.	H.A.
Student's picture preference	Very realistic (N=15)	86	7	7
	Moderately realistic (N=3)	0	100	0
	Highly abstract (N=2)	50	0	50

V.R. = Very Realistic; M.R. = Moderately Realistic;
H.A. = Highly Abstract
phi 0 coefficient = .46

Findings, Study #2, Problem 4: Are the students' responses to questions about artistic ability similar to their actual picture choices of artistic ability in Study #2?

From the interview part of Study #2, all of the students knew of talented art students. When asked to describe how they were "good at art," most references (65%) were made to drawing and realism. Forty percent of the

students in both high and low socio-economic groups referred to drawing directly using such statements as "they draw good," "the way they draw," and "they're good at drawing." The only other media referred to by students (10%) were clay and painting.

TABLE 14

The relationship, in %, between students' criteria for artistic talent, and their choice of pictures indicating artistic ability (N=20)

		Choice of picture indicating artistic ability		
		V.R.	M.R.	H.A.
Student's criteria for artistic ability	Drawing ability (N=7)	100	0	0
	Realism (N=6)	100	0	0
	Other (N=7)	50	33	17

V.R. = Very Realistic; M.R. = Moderately Realistic;
H.A. = Highly Abstract

Thirty-five percent of the students cited other criteria for artistic ability. Students from the low socio-economic group spoke of "having good ideas," "understanding art ... the artist doing what he wants," and "the way they concentrate and work from background to

foreground." Students in the high socio-economic group spoke of "getting ideas through better," "using space well," "spending time at it ... the work is complicated," and "being creative ... having good ideas."

The criteria which the students had provided for artistic ability were then compared to the pictures they had selected indicating artistic ability (Table 14).

This resulted in the following findings:

1) All of the students who used drawing as a criterion for artistic ability selected the "very realistic" picture as indicating artistic ability.

2) All of the students who used realism as a criterion for artistic ability selected the "very realistic" picture as indicating artistic ability.

3) Fifty percent of those students who have "other" criteria for artistic ability selected the "very realistic" picture as indicative of artistic ability.

4) Seventeen percent of the students who have "other" criteria for artistic ability selected the "highly abstract" pictures as indicative of artistic ability.

Observations and Conclusions

Problem 1 in this study questioned whether or not art students see realistic drawing ability as the principle feature of artistic ability. The findings resulting from the ranking of pictures which show artistic ability indicate that the majority of students in both socio-economic groups

use realistic rendering as the principal indicator of artistic ability. As well, in response to the open-ended questions in Part 2, realism and drawing were the principle indicators of artistic ability. These findings confirmed those of Study #1.

Problem 2 in this study was developed to determine if students from different socio-economic backgrounds had different descriptions of artistic ability. The results show that there were slight differences between the two groups. More students in the low socio-economic status group selected realistic pictures as illustrative of artistic ability. Only a few members of the high socio-economic group selected abstract pictures as examples of artistic ability, citing reasons involving ideas, creativity, and design. The implications from this finding are that students in wealthier families, neighbourhoods and schools are more likely to develop criteria other than drawing or realistic rendering for judging artistic ability. Perhaps this is because such students are likely to be exposed to a variety of artistic values. This finding also suggests that socio-economic, rather than developmental factors play a role in students' understanding of artistic ability.

Problem 3 in this study queried whether or not students distinguish between images of what they like, and images they believe indicate artistic talent. The findings suggest that students' preferences for various images are similar to

the kinds of images they select as representing artistic ability. The majority of students who preferred very realistic and moderately realistic images chose similar images to illustrate artistic ability.

Problem 4 investigated whether or not students' answers to questions about artistic ability are similar to their actual choices of pictures regarding artistic ability. The findings indicate a strong congruence between students' criteria of artistic ability when responding to open-ended questions and their actual choices of pictures illustrating artistic ability. This is particularly true for those students who use drawing ability and realism to describe artistic ability. However, students who use criteria other than realistic drawing to describe artistic ability, tend to select realistic and moderately realistic images to illustrate artistic ability.

There are two other findings from Study #2. One is that actual picture selection may be more effective and reliable than open-ended questions in assessing student beliefs about artistic ability. The other is that findings in Study #2 corroborate those in Study #1 regarding the tendency for students to use realistic drawing as a standard for judging artistic ability.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 7, will discuss the broader implications and recommendations arising out of Study #1 and Study #2 for educational practice.

Chapter VII

Implications and Recommendations for Educational Practice

In this chapter, the implications of the findings pertaining to Study #1 and Study #2 will be examined in the following order: first, those related to the major questions in Study #1; second, those related to the minor questions in the survey interview of Study #1; and third, those pertaining to additional questions in Study #2. While the findings may be more general in scope, a broader sample using statistical tools would be required to validate them.

Implications Related to the Major Questions in Study #1

Question 1 and 2: Do students have a criterion for artistic ability? What is the standard or criterion used when describing artistic ability?

The findings indicate that the the students interviewed have a definite standard for artistic ability, which is realistic drawing. Second, the standard for the majority of the students is assumed to be universally understood, although, in fact, some students had different standards.

Though students have formed definitions of artistic ability, it is unlikely that their definitions have evolved from studying the history of art movements and artists, in

terms of their purposes and explorations. Otherwise, student definitions of artistic ability would not be so narrow.

Question 3 (same as Question 1, Study 2): Do art students see realistic drawing ability as the principle indication of artistic ability?

The majority of young adolescent art students in Study #1 (79%), and in Study 2 (75%), saw realistic drawing ability as the principle indicator of artistic ability. The reason for such a link was not investigated in this research, although the historical survey of art education in Chapter 3 reveals a strong emphasis on realistic drawing in the classroom.

If the emphasis in their art classrooms has been similar, then one might expect the students to think of art and artistic ability strongly in terms of drawing. As well, one might expect the students to value a particular style of drawing which portrays observable subject matter realistically. Such are the findings in these studies, with the exception of higher socio-economic students who defined artistic ability in broader terms. Nevertheless, being imaginative or being personally expressive in subject matter, style or personal statement are seldom mentioned as criteria for artistic ability. Neither are aesthetic qualities, harmony, or the creation of mood mentioned by the majority of students.

This definition of artistic ability may pose a problem

for those students who are not "good at drawing" in the valued naturalistic style. This study shows that four out of ten students in the seventh grade, six out of ten students in the eighth grade and five out of ten students in the ninth grade believed that they had little or no artistic ability. If these findings hold up on a broader scale, then one implication is that the present art program is not successful at instilling student confidence in their drawing accomplishments. Another implication is that students may not feel very good about their artistic abilities. Indeed, as Eisner (1979) hypothesizes, "the larger a discrepancy between the child's preference and his or her performance, the greater the likelihood of antagonistic feelings toward art and the lower the child's estimate of his or her ability as an artist" (p.31). Thus, one prescription for current art room practice would be to teach realistic drawing skills to students in order to boost their self esteem, particularly in programs where realism is preferred. Within the context of the current art curriculum being assimilated, most students would feel more successful in art if they acquired the techniques of drawing and painting objects so that they look three dimensional and accurate. Not only would students gain more confidence in realistic drawing, but also, in terms of their own definition, they would feel better about their artistic ability.

As an alternative, or in conjunction with teaching realistic drawing skills, teachers could increase students'

understanding of art through art appreciation, art criticism and studio methods. By exploring concepts with a broad variety of styles, media, and subjects, students might learn that artists are not defined or confined by their ability to draw naturalistically. Indeed, as the findings in Study #2 indicate, it is possible to broaden students' views. We noted for instance that students in a high socio-economic environment had broader concepts of artistic ability and image preferences than those in a low socio-economic environment.

Many great artists express their ideas in styles ranging from realistic to abstract and in media as varied as stone, clay, fibers and metals. Yet, such artists are reputed to have artistic ability regardless of their ability to draw naturalistically. Members of other cultures, like Kenoujuak of the Inuit people, or Norval Morrisseau of the Western Plains Indian peoples, create images admired by many in our own culture. Some artists choose to borrow from the forms found in other cultures, as Pablo Picasso and Max Ernst borrowed from the folk arts of Africa. Students can be taught through art appreciation and art criticism that artistic ability is not confined to any one media, culture, or style of expression. Students can learn that tastes vary. The western art world has at various times admired the art of the Rennaissance, the Impressionists, the Surrealists, the Abstract Impressionists and others, - all quite different.

These students, the future consumers of art can be taught a greater appreciation for the work of twentieth-century artists who are exploring the frontiers of artistic expression. Students might come to understand the artists' exploration of the visual and psychological aspects of colour, and the artists' inner-directed subject matter. Unless students learn to appreciate diverse art styles, the widespread antipathy toward non-realistic art will likely remain. To judge by what is shown in print sales and shopping mall displays, the majority of the "lay public" prefer the skills of naturalistic form rendering which are valued by school, parents and society. As the review of drawing and art education in Chapter 3 has shown, most people from one generation to the other have shared the same basic grade 8 art experience over the past decades.

Also, the findings from this study lend further evidence to Kellogg's (1969) belief that pictorialism is valued at the expense of aesthetic values for the great majority of children. The historical emphasis on realistic drawing, outlined in the third chapter, may also explain Gardner's observation that "Time and time again, we find drawings by older children increasingly regular, increasingly faithful to their target (Gardner, p.148)." In addition, the findings indicate that many students consider the ability to render "faithful to the target" a sign of "artistic ability."

Another implication to be considered is that some

students in grades 7,8 and 9 may find the preoccupation with realistic drawing in art class unrewarding. Instead, they might derive more meaning and personal satisfaction from art courses which encourage and support diverse styles and forms of expression. Otherwise, these students may be frustrated into "giving up on art," because the program does not satisfy their expressive or creative needs.

It is also possible that art courses which emphasize the development of creative thinking and alternate forms of expression could eventually lead to greater art class enrollment and financial support. A public educated in these ways might empathize more with the needs and purposes of art education.

Question 4: Is there a relationship between student belief about realistic drawing/artistic ability, and their desire to take more art.

In this study, the belief that artistic ability is drawing ability is not a factor in a student's decision to continue in art. Nor does there appear to be a correlation between a student's having good or poor artistic/drawing ability and his or her intention to continue art. As the findings show, students (88%) who feel confident in their artistic ability intend to continue in art. However, even for the students who do not, most (71%) intend to continue in art. There is a stronger relationship between students who believe they have good realistic drawing abilities and their intention to continue art. Ninety percent of the

students who believe they are competent at drawing intend to continue; whereas, fifty-eight percent of those who believe they are "poor at drawing" intend to continue.

An implication from these findings is that art students are more likely to choose art as an option if they believe they have some ability in the subject. For whatever reason, the artistic ability these students are talking about largely involves realistic drawing. Thus, given the present situation, if more students gain drawing confidence, more students would probably continue in art programs which value this activity.

Given the present understanding of artistic ability identified by the majority of students in this survey, students classified by Lowenfeld (1964) as being "Haptic" are likely to lack self-confidence and to be frustrated by such a restricted avenue of artistic expression. These students tend not to analyze the world objectively, but are rather subjectively and emotionally oriented. In Haptic art, the self is projected as the true factor of the picture (p.261). If a broader approach to art and artistic ability is pursued, then more students will have opportunities to be successful using various approaches which support their own creative inclinations.

A paradox arises. An emphasis on teaching realistic drawing skills seems to contradict an emphasis on encouraging more abstract forms of expression. There may be several ways of confronting this dilemma, although it cannot

be solved easily as Chapter 3 has shown. For decades art educators have been concerned about effective drawing instruction and creative art expression. Nevertheless, some points can be made. First, if values are not altered in programs which emphasize realistic representation, there is little hope for promoting alternative forms of expression, and for promoting the abilities required to produce such forms. The point can be made that once students have satisfied their urge to draw realistically, they then will become more receptive to other forms of expression. Alternatively, there is the possibility that realistic representation and other kinds of representation and expression could be taught together. Such a program would have to center on concept development, choices of art subjects (from the external or internal world), varieties of media and representation, art studies and individual preferences. Presumably, such offerings would have greater appeal to larger numbers of students.

One aspect of the art program continues to attract students, including those who believe they have little artistic ability, and this is the "fun" and "enjoyment" that is associated with art room activities. Such an atmosphere is seen as a desirable one by the majority of students surveyed. By the ninth grade, however, this aspect by itself is not attractive enough to keep students who believe that they lack talent.

For those students who stop studying art, one has

to be concerned about their understanding of artistic ability and drawing ability. It would appear that the nine out of ten students who do not continue in art classes leave art study with a very limited understanding of artistic purposes and expression.

Implications Related to the Minor Questions in the Study #1 Survey

Question: Have you had art before in any of your classes?

In terms of total classroom experience, the findings suggest that with each succeeding year from the seventh to the ninth grade, the art classes interviewed have fewer experienced students as well as a lower mean class average of experience. If this trend is true for all art classes, then there are several implications.

First, art teachers may not be aware of this trend, and may believe the opposite: that higher grades have more experience and perhaps more knowledge of art. If it is more generally true from grades 7 to 9 that this is not the case, as these findings suggest, then art teachers will need to examine their curriculum more closely in order to better accommodate those students entering the program who have less art learning and experience. This situation continues into grade 10 as well since that art program does not require a grade 9 prerequisite.

Second, this trend offers a possible explanation as to

why some educators in Calgary see little progress in visual art expression from the early to the later grades. One reason may simply be that the sum of grade 9 student experience in art is less than in grade 7. This would be an interesting matter for further investigation.

Third, grade 8 seems to be a decisive option year in the Alberta school system. Ways and means should be developed to attract and retain students in the art program.

Question: What do you like about art?

Students' answers to this question indicate that art educators need to emphasize other aspects of the art program, such as those involved in creative thinking, self-expression and the role of art in society. Very few students mentioned that Art affords the opportunity to express ideas and feelings or that it teaches one to invent, to think, to create, and to appreciate art and art in society. Instead, students' replies to this question concentrate on drawing or other sorts of activity. The student is mainly learning to make representational images.

A further implication pertains to these students' selection of drawing as the favorite art activity. Drawing has played a significant part historically in art education and continues to occupy a prominent part in daily classroom art activities. In light of the findings in this research which indicate that drawing for all three grades is the most liked activity, perhaps drawing instruction should be

encouraged and developed so that students can gain a greater sense of accomplishment. However, it may be that drawing is the most liked art activity in this age group simply because it is the most familiar and valued component of their art experience.

A concluding implication resulting from this question pertains to the atmosphere of the art classroom. Art, in these classrooms was "fun," "enjoyable," and "liked." These affective responses arise out of situations where the student is able to make things and do activities with a certain degree of freedom. Art for a number of students is a pleasant change from other subject areas.

Implications Related to the Major Questions in Study #2

Question 2: Are there socio-economic influences on students' descriptions of artistic ability?

The findings from this study indicate that there are socio-economic differences in students' descriptions of artistic ability. Members of the high socio-economic group tend to use more diverse criteria when describing artistic ability, criteria which do not link artistic ability with realistic drawing. An important implication from this finding is that culture or environment plays a role in helping young adolescent art students formulate opinions about artistic ability. Students' preferences for realism appear not to be developmental, but to some extent social.

Students in wealthier neighborhoods and schools have more exposure to art pieces, art values, and enjoy more diverse art programs. Accordingly, if teachers can enrich their art programs through visuals, art studies, discussions, and varied studio methods, students will develop appreciation for a broader range of art forms and processes.

Question 3: Do students distinguish between images of what they like, and images they believe indicate artistic talent?

Most students prefer images which they believe illustrate artistic ability. Thus for most students, what is liked and what is seen as competent artistry are often one and the same. On the other hand, a few students preferred more abstract images, but still chose realistic imagery to indicate talent in art. These students would likely enjoy richer art programs.

Question 4: Are student criteria for artistic ability similar to their criteria for pictures which illustrate artistic ability?

In most cases they were. This finding helps to confirm the major findings of both studies. Paradoxically, some students who used criteria other than realistic drawing to describe artistic ability also selected realistic and moderately realistic images to portray artistic ability, perhaps indicating some uncertainty, or lack of commitment to their concept.

One implication from this finding that may help additional research is that a study using actual picture selection is effective in determining actual student preferences. As well, such studies would be efficacious in surveying large numbers of students and applying statistical tools of analysis.

If the findings of these two studies are supported by studies involving larger numbers of students, then additional questions arise concerning the equating of artistic ability with realistic drawing: How much influence does the art teacher and the actual curriculum have upon the aesthetic, and stylistic values of the student? What are the influences of the family, the community and socio-economic status on students' understanding of artistic ability? How, when and to what degree do adult preferences affect student preferences? What role should realistic drawing play in an art program, and at what level should such drawing techniques be taught and with what degree of emphasis and appreciation? If there are limitations to drawing realistically, what are they? Should we place more emphasis on teaching students to draw realistically, or should we encourage creative, innovative and expressive student processes and products? Should one emphasis precede the other and to what degree?

Other questions arise in light of the research and literature pertaining to art education. To what extent do art educators and art researchers evaluate art programs in

order to determine the implicit values and understandings which students acquire? How can teachers assess the impacts of realism on the total art program, and how can they handle its accompanying influences on the student's belief in his or her own worth as a creative person?

Recommended Research

There are a number of areas for further research related to the research discussed this far. First, students in grades 8, 9 and 10 who select courses other than art can be surveyed in order to determine and prioritize the reasons behind their decision. This could help art educators determine deficient aspects in the art program. Also, it might further elucidate students' self-concepts about artistic ability.

Second, a survey could be conducted both with art and non-art students in other grades in order to compare their understanding of artistic ability.

Third, an ethnographic survey of junior high school art students could be undertaken in order to determine what these students view as "fun" and "enjoyable" in an art classroom.

Fourth, an educational criticism of an art classroom in the manner prescribed by Eisner (1976) could be used to provide additional evidence about the development of students' understanding of artistic ability.

Fifth, one could investigate those aspects of drawing which students particularly like. One could examine student responses, and categorize them into such areas as subject development, style exploration and personal statement.

Sixth, an investigation could be directed toward determining and describing students' understandings of artistic and drawing ability at various grade levels.

Seventh, an experimental study could be designed to compare teacher influences on artistic and drawing ability in enriched and traditional programs.

Eighth, one could develop a survey which examined beliefs about artistic ability among adults in general and those in art schools. In this way, one might better understand socio-cultural or educational influences on the formation of attitudes and perceptions.

Ninth, cross-cultural surveys with countries like Japan or China could be arranged to compare conceptions of artistic ability and drawing ability.

Tenth, an important and unexpected finding should be studied further; namely that ninth grade art classes have fewer experienced students and a lower mean class average of experience than grade seven and eight art classes.

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APPENDIX A

Questions Asked of Students

Age_____ Grade_____

1. Have you had art before in any of your classes?

_____

2. For how long or for how many classes?

_____

3. What do you like about art?

_____
_____

4. Do you have classmates who are "good at" or especially "artistic" in art?

_____
_____

5. In what way are they "good at" at art? Or, what do they do that shows they are "good at" art or that they have artistic ability?

_____
_____

6. a) Do you consider yourself to be "good at" art? If yes, in what way? If no, why not?

_____
_____

b) What kinds of subjects do you like?

_____

c) What do you feel you are best at?

_____

7. Are you "good at" drawing? If yes, in what way? If no, why not?

_____
_____

8. Will you take more art courses in school? Why or why not?

_____

APPENDIX B

Percentages of Grade 7 students intending to continue art, in terms of their perceived ability in %, with their reasons

Category	Sample student reasons
Good at art (27%)	
75% will continue	to get better at it
	like drawing
25% may continue	it's difficult
0% will not continue	
Okay at art (33%)	
100% will continue	like to draw
	to learn more about drawing
	enjoy it, free time
	better than other subjects
Poor at art (40%)	
33% will continue	enjoy it, it's fun
50% may continue	it's fun
	it's relaxing
	like more ceramics and drawing
17% will not continue	like other subjects better

APPENDIX C

Percentages of Grade 8 students intending to continue art, in terms of their perceived ability in %, with their reasons

Category	Sample student comments
Good at art(14%)	
83% will continue	its worth it can make a career out of it its important to know for culture learn how to make stuff it's fun; I like it
17% may continue	it's fun there's no homework
Okay at art (52%)	
63% will continue	like it; it's fun like to draw get good marks can take things home gain more knowledge can use your imagination get to work in ceramics to keep it going
17% may continue	it's fun don't need brains can create things don't know what I want to be
20% will not continue	going into commerce, law, etc. don't like it
Poor at art (34%)	
62% will continue	like it; it's fun learn about colours and stuff can be with friends like art media like photography it's interesting
30% may continue	want to become a better drawer like a fun period use your mind learn how to draw and paint
8% will not continue	don't like it it's boring taking other subjects

APPENDIX D

Percentages of Grade 9 students intending to continue art, in terms of their perceived ability in %, with their reasons

Category	Sample student reasons
Good at art (29%)	
80% Will continue	a break from regular school gets the creativity out plan to go into art in the future challenge getting the right images enjoy it
20% May continue	to make a hobby of it
Okay ar art (48%)	
100% Will continue	enjoy it; its fun learn new stuff work with different paints become more artistic learn about different forms perfect things we are weak in it's a good side order thinking of becoming a commercial artist want to get into special effects
Poor at art (23%)	
33% Will continue	like art like the challenge to get better
67% Will not continue	prefer other options

APPENDIX E

Picture References Used in Study #2

Pictures used were photographic reproductions of trees rendered by Mondrian. They can be found in Frank Elgar's book Mondrian, published by Thames & Hudson in London, 1968. (p44-60)

Picture 1 "Tree," 1909-10

Picture 2 "Oval Composition, Sketch," 1919.

Picture 3 "Trees, Composition #1," 1912

Picture 4 "Tree," 1911

Picture 5 "Tree," 1911

Picture 6 "Composition with Trees," 1912

Picture 7 "Tree," 1911

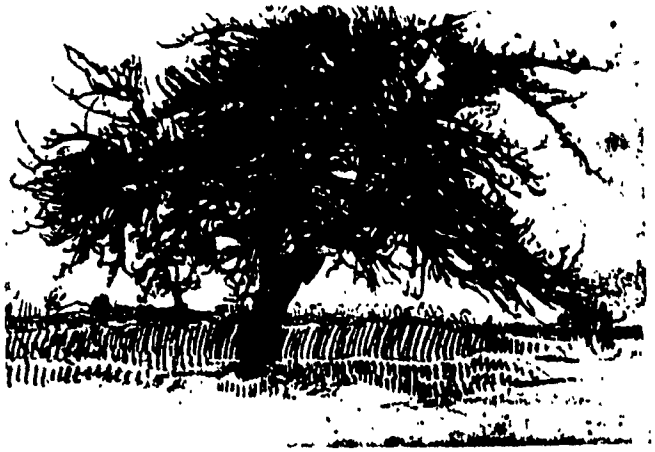
Picture 8 "The Grey Tree," 1912

Picture 9 "Tree," 1911

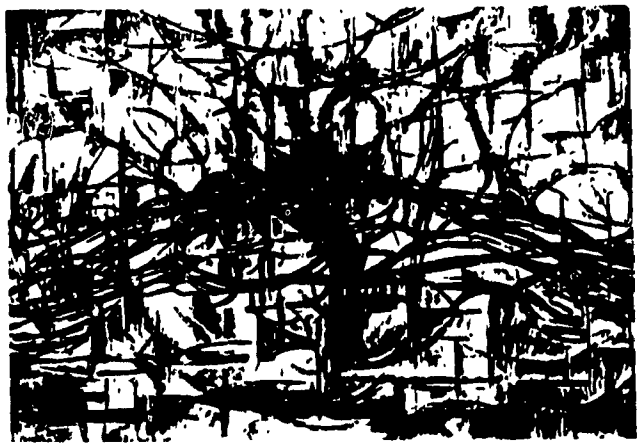
Picture 10 "Tree," 1912

APPENDIX F

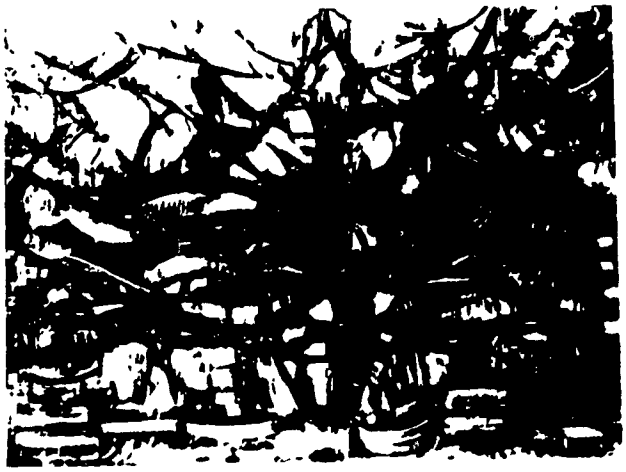
Copies of photographs reduced 50%



Very realistic #4



Moderately realistic #5

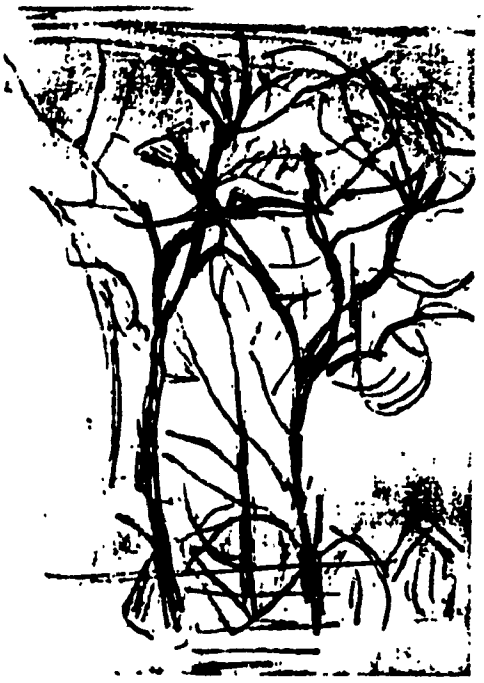


Moderately realistic #8

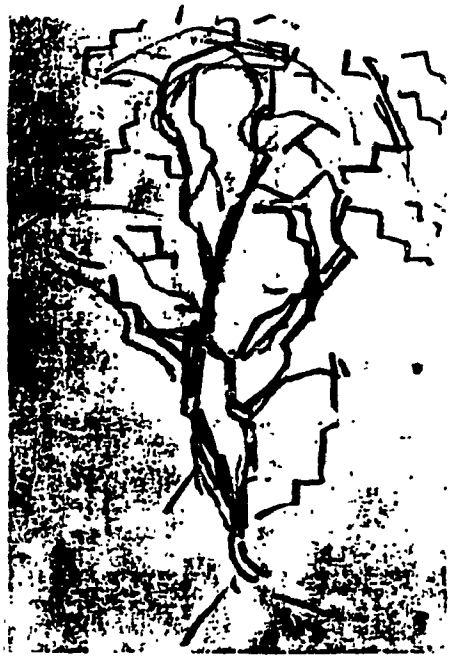
APPENDIX G

Copies of photographs reduced 50%
Moderately realistic

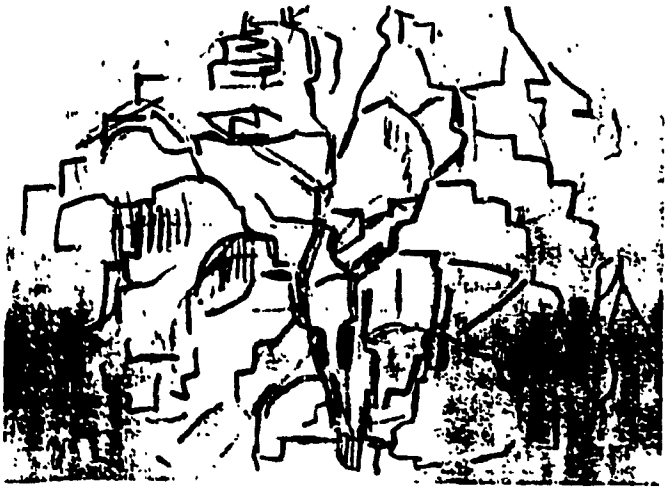
#1



#7



#9



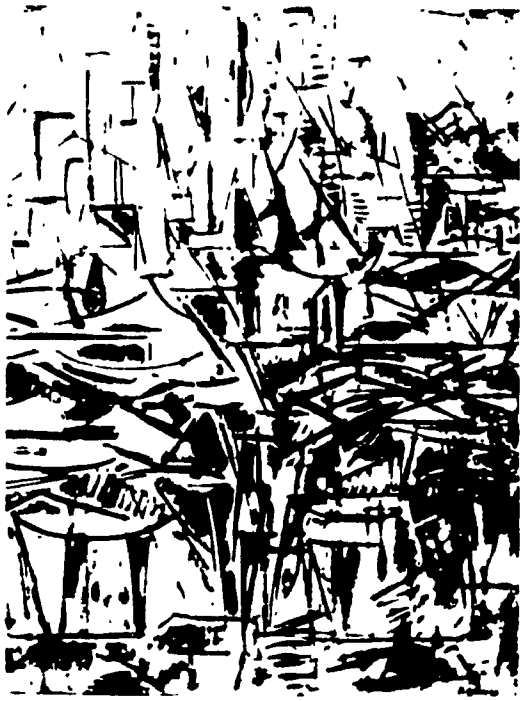
APPENDIX H

Copies of photographs reduced 50%
Highly abstract

#10

#6

#3



#2