

Dr. Edward Mattil Remembers Dr. Viktor Lowenfeld :

An Art Education History in Context

Ann Holt

A Thesis

In

The Department

of

Art Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of “Master of Arts” at

Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

February 2007

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Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-28961-7
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 978-0-494-28961-7

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ABSTRACT

Dr. Edward Mattil Remembers Dr. Viktor Lowenfeld: An Art Education History in Context

Ann Holt

This thesis is rooted in a personal desire to understand the history of the author's hometown and the history of her chosen profession. It is an examination of two decades of art education, 1940 to 1960, with a particular focus on the author's hometown of State College, Pennsylvania where Viktor Lowenfeld established and headed the art education department. This thesis investigates the life and ideas of Lowenfeld and Dr. Edward Mattil, Lowenfeld's former student, colleague and friend, in context of the social, political and educational realities in which their work was situated. The research in this study is conducted through conversations with Mattil and involved thorough consultation of archival materials as well as a range of literature from and about this particular period of history. The thesis demonstrates that factors such as politics, war, social and cultural issues, religion and technology greatly impacted the concepts and ideas that Viktor Lowenfeld held and taught.

Acknowledgements...

Dr. Lorrie Blair for her honesty and encouragement;

Dr. Paul Langdon for the assignment that started this whole process ;

Dr. Elizabeth Sàcca for being on my committee without knowing who I am;

and

Dr. Edward Mattil for his generosity and warmth.

This thesis came to life because of someone very special to me. It is dedicated to the memory of my second grade teacher. She practiced patience, love and understanding. She could make something as mundane as an apple into the most amazing, inspiring and interesting thing around.

Dorothy Margaret Craven Brown

November 29, 1917 – January 21, 2006

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Chapter One

Introduction

“The past shapes the future through the medium of situation, and the future shapes the past through the stories we tell to account for and explain our situation; where we have been and where we are going interact to make meaning of the situations in which we find ourselves” (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988, p.9)

Scholars embark on historical research for many different reasons (Hamblen, 1988).

Sometimes research is motivated by the field and not by anything personal on the part of the researcher; it is based purely on the needs of the field. Others choose to take another stance to their research; the personal, the autobiographical. Diane Korzenik’s paper *Choices and Motives in Doing Historical Research* (1992) helped me to validate my own experience. She writes,

...a person doing the research is haunted by a feeling, a memory, an experience. This autobiographical motive comes from wondering:

Why does this matter so to me? What happened that drives me to want to understand, know, and master this past time? What in that past time resonates with my own personal childhood memories, home life, family values, religious feelings, and conflicts closest to me? (p. 265)

The rationale for this research first stemmed from the fact that although I was raised in State College, Pennsylvania, home of Penn State University (PSU), and was involved in art studies there, I did not know who Viktor Lowenfeld was until I started graduate school at Concordia University. I was unaware of this rich history that my own home

town possessed. I felt that I needed to go back, so to speak, to learn about my art education roots. This thesis is rooted in a personal desire to understand something about myself through the history of my hometown and the history of my chosen profession.

Lowenfeld had significant impact on the field of art education in the United States but his career started in Vienna, Austria where he was a scholar and art teacher of the blind. He was a published Jewish scholar before he fled Nazi occupation in 1938. His first significant teaching position in the US was as a psychology professor (and unofficially as an art teacher offering free evening classes) at the Hampton Institute in Virginia which served African Americans and Native Americans. He held this position from 1939 until 1946 when he was invited to start an art education department at PSU. The art education department was officially established by Lowenfeld in 1955.

At first the questions emerged from the idea that somehow my art education must be connected to this legacy as I was educated in this very place. I then started to explore my own education through the stories of my teachers trying to find a connection to the philosophy and practice of Dr. Viktor Lowenfeld. I assumed that their education connected to their practice and therefore my education would connect to my practice. This turned into a sort of genealogical tree as I explored my own educational experience, then the education and experience of my former teachers from whom I was impacted and finally the education and experience of their former teachers.

Trying to find a connection proved very difficult as each person's background, experience and practice was very different. Though they were influenced by one another and by Lowenfeld, their own individual teaching philosophies were not directly related to any set idea or influence. The seeds had been sown early in their lives for education and art to become their career choices. As they confronted different experiences, they took the positive parts of those and embraced them in their own practices. I feel that I have done the same.

I realized as I went on with this research that the last sixty years have also factored greatly on the kind of education that I had, more so than the fact that my educational roots came from a certain place.

Concepts and ideas that Viktor Lowenfeld brought with him when he established the department of art education at Penn State have, over the years, gone through a myriad of translations, misunderstandings and criticisms as the field of art education has evolved. Also, changes in technology, politics and society were enormous factors to the kinds of experiences and education that each of us lived.

As I went deeper into my study of Viktor Lowenfeld's contributions to art education, these questions took form: Why was he so important? Why did people flock to Penn State to listen to him during the relatively short span of time he taught there? Finally, what changes had taken place to make people later criticize and question his ideas?

As my understanding of the context surrounding his life and work evolved, I started forming assumptions and answers to these questions. Lowenfeld was working in his time like other scholars today are working in their time. I believe that we are, in a sense, products of our experience and our ideas are shaped by this. If scholars are heard, it means that their ideas are ready to be received and proliferated. I am also a product of the time that I am experiencing. My perception and comprehension of Viktor Lowenfeld's ideas are drawn from this moment that I am living. I can't help but try to connect history with the present to be able to make sense out of it and have a deeper understanding.

I was born and raised in State College, Pennsylvania. Both my parents and two of my aunts went to PSU. My father earned his doctorate and was a professor there. I spent my primary and high school years in this place educated mostly by teachers who were Penn State alumni. I, as the researcher, am the explicit instrument of this inquiry. I am particularly interested in the parts of history that seemed tangible to me. Where did my ideas come from? What is my theoretical orientation? What are my personal values and goals? I felt a certain need to investigate this history so that I could get a small sense of the why and how my own story came to be.

My research examines the context of the 1940s and 50s in the United States and how it influenced the art education department at Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania. It is essentially an examination of two decades of art education, 1940 to 1960, with a particular focus on my hometown.

My intentions of doing historical research for my master's thesis are to put into context the social and political undercurrents of an important time in art education history, in order for me to fully understand it. It is not my intention to rewrite a history of art education. There is already much literature discussing, criticizing and analyzing this era (Efland, 1990; Freedman, 1987, 1989; Keel, 1965; Korzenik, 1990; Logan, 1955; Stankiewicz, 2001). Contained in this discourse is discussion about the effects that Sputnik and the Cold War had on education (Efland, 1990) as well as the socio-political influence on art education curriculum (Freedman, 1989). While Kerry Freedman (1989) writes about the influences that government policy and psychology had on the role that art education played in the curriculum, Arthur Efland (1990) describes the influences that science and technology played on art education and how these changes brought specific streams of educational philosophies.

I felt that I needed to examine 40s and 50s culture more deeply in terms of the impact of the advancements of technology, the changes in the social structure in the United States and the effect of global unrest on America's foreign policy. The post War boom of the US economy had a strong impact on American culture and education. It is important to look at this era of art education history in light of the impact of such major factors as television, suburbia, superhighways and the automobile because although these were aspects of American life up to the late forties, they dominated American life in the years that followed. Leisure and culture came to be part of the ever-rising standard of living as families set aside allowances in their budget to accommodate this pursuit. This is also a time of tensions and insecurities stemming from the cold war and the constant threat of

nuclear destruction. The massive return to religion, the importance of marriage and family, as well as harsh pressures to conform so as to not stand out against the mainstream illustrate the tone of this period. These issues help clarify our understanding of the social reality that art educators were living in and how the issues might have shaped their philosophies and practice and therefore the field of art education. I believe that these issues also influenced Viktor Lowenfeld.

There has been much criticism of Lowenfeld's views on the way art should be taught to young children, the reason for art education in the curriculum and how art education serves the individual and society. Because of his early death in 1960, scholars and teachers of art are limited to translations of his ideas through other sources and studying Lowenfeld's own writing from 50 and 60 years ago. I feel that in order to truthfully critique Lowenfeld's ideas, one needs to fully understand not only the climate of educational policy of this period but also how society and politics influenced education. Only then can one make implicit connections with the current situation in education, society and politics.

This study benefits the field of art education by providing a perspective on the cultural influences of these leaders during the decades of 1940 to 1960; how their teaching and learning experience influenced the future of art education as well as how their ideas were re-interpreted by others as the issues changed. Because the leaders that I examined were influenced by other thinkers of this time, this study also sheds light on how this period truly shaped art education in general in the United States.

This research not only gave me a perspective on my own education but also provided a deeper understanding of the current situation by learning about leaders in the field that have helped shape what art education is today. This thesis was not an attempt to prove any underlying theories. It was rather a concentration on a place and the life and ideas of two art educators, who in their own manner were part of a larger context of social, political and educational realities in which their work was situated. The limits of this type of research surface in the interpretation of it because I, as the researcher selected what I thought was significant enough to add to the whole (Hamblen, 1985; Soucy, 1985). My choices therefore had a substantial effect on the process of this work as well as the final result. The study was limited by my concerns, the concerns of the interviewees and other sources of evidence.

Historical research can open up many possibilities of study; it is fruitful to explore one's own history to understand a larger context. It means that as the research continues, sometimes new memories come to light and, with it, new questions. For the reader, the impact can be similar. Historical data can have multiple, though not necessarily contradictory interpretations. These are effective in understanding the history of art education as a changing phenomenon that is subject to the perspective that one has on it.

The first chapter examines the 1940s, dividing the decade into pre WWII and post WWII. The second chapter examines the fifties overlapping the end of the 1940s, dividing it into three periods: 1948-1953 "The age of fear"; 1954-57 "The era of conservative

consensus”; and 1958-60 “The time of national reassessment” (Nowack and Miller, 1977). In the following chapter I give a history of PSU, and draw connections to the larger picture. Afterwards there is the chapter on Viktor Lowenfeld. I give a brief biography of the art educator, looking at his tenure at the Hampton Institute from 1939 to 1946 and then examine his career at PSU until his untimely death in 1960. In the next chapter, I introduce Dr. Edward Mattil, who was one of his first doctoral students, a former colleague and friend. To focus on one specific place and on a well known subject can seem weightless without the response of another person’s interpretation. Relying on interviews with Dr. Edward Mattil, I give an inside account of Lowenfeld’s 14 year career at this university. I used Mattil’s autobiographical account to get a sense of the art department at Penn State pre and post Lowenfeld as well as a sense of what this time period was like in State College. I interviewed him about his recollections of State College art education history as well as his memories of being a student at Penn State under Lowenfeld and later working with Lowenfeld. In the final chapter, I examine the relative historical influences on art education building up to 1940, then discuss the decades of the 40s and 50s within the context of the former chapters taking into account other analysis’ and critiques of this period.

The following pages form a contextual spiral, where I occupy center and where the content are layers that are connected and related. This process of weaving through the layers and building a structure that made sense in which each layer would inform the next, was awesome and inspiring at the same time. I therefore conclude the thesis by bringing it back to myself. I acknowledge and contemplate my experiences in learning

and teaching through what the research revealed to me. I also discuss how my experience is shaped by this history; my own history.

Chapter 2

Method

“There are moments in our lives, there are moments in a day, when we seem to see beyond the usual. Such are the moments of our greatest happiness. Such are the moments of our greatest wisdom. If one could but recall his vision by some sort of sign. It was this hope that the arts were invented. Sign posts on the way to what may be. Sign posts toward greater knowledge.” (Robert Henri, 1923, *The Art Spirit*)

The researcher must be clear about position, history and biography in relation to the study as well as be able to apply knowledge, personal biography, experience, training and talent to the complex process of inquiry. The report must reflect an attempt on the part of the researcher to bring the data under control, so to speak, to create a frame through which information can be understood. (Ayers, 1989)

The frame through which I looked at the information at first was from my own experience and from my then- current perspective. But as my knowledge grew about the time in which I was studying, I was able to draw connections between history and the present situation; my history and my present.

As perspectives of history such as this can lead to new questions or interpretations of history, they can also provoke more valid assumptions that lead to other research on the topic. The first sparks of interest that began the exploration of my thesis was essentially a study of my own education and the historical influences that impacted me as a learner, artist and teacher. As sparks start a fire, the research took shape as new understanding

came to light and eventually, it arrived at a place that burned steady so to speak.

Therefore the strand that I started with was a study of my own teachers that influenced me. I essentially examined four generations of art educators, teachers and students before arriving to my own thesis always considering the research at that time a “search”; a path; in which each part of it informed the next.

The Process...

I interviewed my second grade teacher Mrs. Dorothy Brown, my elementary art teacher Mrs. Tressler and her high art teacher, Dr. Edward Mattil. I also talked in depth about my research with my former high school art teacher Mr. Robert Placky.

I read and documented background information on Lowenfeld’s experience before Penn State and the circumstances with which he was invited to develop and head the art education department as well as the political, social and educational issues during the period of the 1940’s and 1950’s that is relevant to the research. I also read State College and Penn State history to deepen that understanding.

From these conversations, interviews and readings, I became very interested in the period of the 40s and 50s when Mrs. Brown, Dr. Mattil and Mrs. Tressler were students. I interviewed Dr. Mattil when I decided that I would focus on this context and do a historical study of Viktor Lowenfeld and art education. We specifically talked about the period just after the war and the decade of the fifties. He is now retired from teaching

and is living in State College. My interview took place at his residence in State College, Pennsylvania in February 2005 and January 2006, with conformance to Concordia University's policy on the ethical standards for conducting research with human subjects. I transcribed the two interviews of Dr. Mattil which is included in the thesis.

I examined the archives at Penn State relevant to my research spending a total of eight days over two visits to State College at the PSU Pattee library where I consulted Special Collections. There, I viewed the Lowenfeld Archives. Included in it is some of his correspondence written in his handwriting, a copy of his resume, and the manuscripts of *Creative and Mental Growth* written by hand. There were sculptures still in the original package that he had made. These sculptures were made by his blind students in Austria and were transported out of the country with Lowenfeld. I listened to part of an audiotape of one of his class lectures. I also was able to find almost every article that he ever wrote including those that he published before coming to PSU.

I scanned through Penn State's *The Alumni News*¹ magazines from the early forties until the late fifties looking for contextual articles. I also went through the issues of Penn State's *The Daily Collegian* Newspaper that is only available on microfilm.

I watched a film that Dr. Mattil made in 1952 "The Meaning in Child Art" (Penn State Media Center) as well as a television show from a children's art series that Mattil created with Alice Schwartz. This was a tape that Mattil lent to me.

¹ For the purposes of this thesis, *The Alumni News Magazine*, refers to Penn State unless otherwise noted.

I finally outlined the form that my thesis would take based on the data analysis. To analyze the data, I concentrated on Penn State and State College history still situating it in context with the bigger picture. I looked at popular culture attitudes, political and social issues and compared and contrasted these findings to my understanding of the place where I am from and the experiences of Lowenfeld and Mattil. I looked at how these influences contributed to Lowenfeld's teachings and writings in art education.

For other primary source information, I analyzed the Lowenfeld lectures, written words and consulted the autobiographical lectures of Lowenfeld and Mattil to give a foundation to my understanding of the research. Secondary sources included an interpretation of the art education journals of the period as well as historical interpretations of the period in question.

The material that I worked with is a very rich source of first hand information for the contribution to the understanding of art education's past. Mattil's autobiographical narratives are more significant to the field of art education than just descriptions of facts and events. They form a sense of the place and context in which art education was implemented.

The autobiographical narratives of the educator's that I interviewed for my study are more to me than just descriptions of facts and events. They revealed patterns of learning and teaching; they resonated with experiences that I had as a student as well as with my interests as a teacher and artist. In examining my own history, I explored my attitudes

about teaching and learning in relation to the stories of my former educators. William Ayer's (1989) used a form of textual portraiture, researching the personal histories of six teachers in one school. The resulting theme was "teaching as identity" (pg.130); teachers whose work and life are synonymous with who they are. He found that there was no clear line that emerged connecting the portraits but rather what he described as a seamless web.

When studying my former teachers and their historical influences, I felt as well that the line was not clear between them. As Connelly and Clandinin (1988) illustrated, each individual's past experience comes into their teaching according to what is significant. In order for a teacher to be effective, there needs to be the understanding of a history and the students reflecting that history.

This idea of curriculum includes everyone's experience in the educational picture. It fosters a subjective relativity for the learner by linking educational notions to personal experience where concepts and ideas become a part of the learner, and therefore important. The idea that a teacher's past experiences shape their teaching practices is not a new one. However I found that the ways in which these experiences manifest themselves is different for everyone. The influences are chosen according to the individual as they are also dictated by social, political, economic and cultural norms. The following chapters reveal a time and a place in art education history.

Chapter 3

The Forties

“Nobody there looked like human beings. Until that moment I thought incendiary bombs had fallen. Everyone was stupefied. Humans had lost the ability to speak. People couldn’t scream, “It hurts!” even when they were on fire. People didn’t say, “It’s hot!” They just sat catching fire.”

-Excerpt from Howard Zinn’s *Voices of a People’s History of the United States*.
Yamaoka Michiko (survivor of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima, April 6, 1945)
“Eight Hundred Meters from the Hypocenter” (1992) p.363

This chapter touches some of the issues of the 1940s. I discuss the attitudes that shaped American culture before and after World War II in regards to Nazi Germany, Japanese hostilities, American nationalism, and loyalty. I also describe the anxieties that stemmed from the use of atomic power and the post war reaction to Soviet Communist Russia and how this played out in American psyche.

In this chapter, *Age of Doubt: American Thought and Culture in the 1940s*, by William Graebner (1991) served as a background for my understanding of the 40s in the United States, as well as to put into context the kinds of issues to which both Lowenfeld and Mattil were exposed. It is the principal source of all information unless otherwise referenced.

Graebner divides the 1940s into half decades: WWII and the post- war period. During the War, the emphasis was on the group, democracy and war production. On every level

of culture, sentimentality played on Americans who looked to democratic systems of governance and decision-making to draw the line between the United States and Hitler's Germany. Much of this was to demonstrate that American values remained intact despite certain inconveniences such as the military draft of 1940 and government price fixing in 1942.

The reorganization of the lives of American citizens of Japanese descent who, in February 1942, were forced by the Roosevelt administration to be evacuated into detention centers was considered a normal and necessary measure. Without warrants, indictments or hearings, Japanese Americans, of which 75% were children born in the US, were taken from their homes and transported into the interior of the country to be kept under prison-like conditions, even in the instances where families had sons enlisted or drafted in the war effort (Zinn; Arnove, 2004). Yuri Kochiyama described the conditions that she was forced to endure (Zinn; Arnove, 2004). They could only bring with them from home what they could carry and slept on army cots using mattresses of muslin filled with straw. Carton boxes served as chairs. No radios were permitted allowing no contact with the outside world. Most of the detention centers were either fairgrounds or race tracks where families would live in the stables for several months until something more permanent would be offered in the form of an internment camp. Many spent up to three years in these camps.

Even though most of the apparent discrimination of Japanese- American citizens was happening on the U.S. West Coast, evidence of discrimination against Japanese was also

apparent at Penn State. In May 1942, two Japanese students from the University of Washington applied for transfer to Penn State in order to escape the hostility they were experiencing on the West Coast. Impressed by their academic record, school officials assured them that they would not have any problem meeting academic standards. However when the students' admission application revealing their ethnic background was received, they were then told that the out-of-state quota had been met and they were no longer eligible to be admitted. Students and faculty, when haphazardly hearing about this incident, responded by creating a petition to support the ostracized Americans since the two students in question were born American citizens. Even though there was large support for them, no one followed up on what actually happened to these students. There is no record as to whether the issue came up before the board of trustees, whether the students withdrew their applications or even whether they had been sent to relocation camps (Bezilla, 1985).

Sentimentality of this first part of the decade could be seen in the series of paintings by Norman Rockwell called *The Four Freedoms*, inspired by a speech to Congress by President Roosevelt in January 1941. These paintings were published by the Saturday Evening Post and won such public approval that they served as a centerpiece for a massive war bond drive to explain the war's aims. Freedom served as a sense of identity and united the nation, signifying a brief impulse to create a culture of the whole. This impulse was perhaps triggered by coming face to face with humanity's capacity for violence and destruction as well as a measure of national self interest towards winning the war.

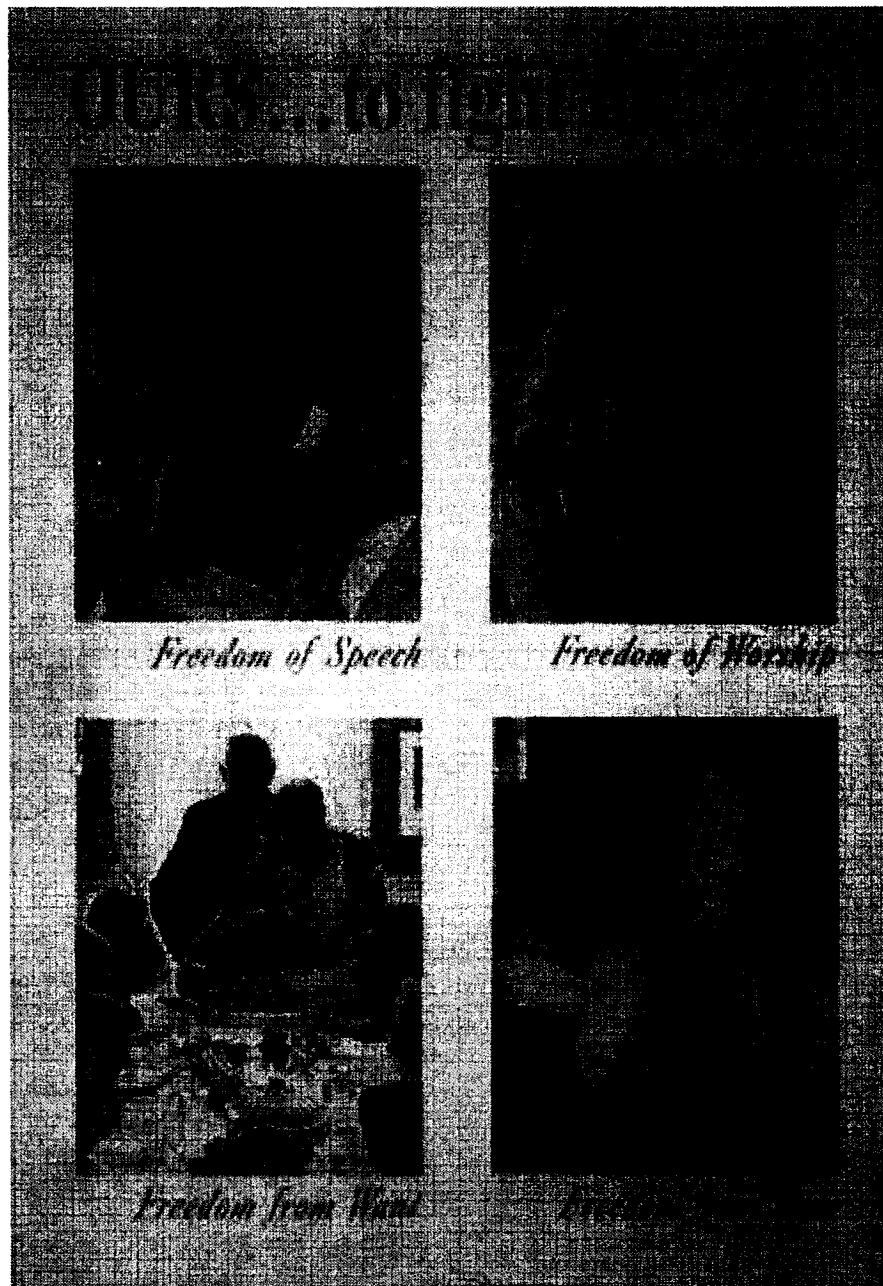


Figure 1: as reproduced from the library of congress website, retrieved February, 15, 2007 (www.loc.gov/.../treasures/images/at0058a.5s.jpg)

Propaganda facilitated the focus on the nation state as America needed to unite for war.

Bureaucracies such as the Pentagon which was completed in 1943 were considered

necessary to centralize power for defeating the Nazis and the Japanese as well as for the containment of the Soviets. The United Nations was also a product of this hope for a new kind of world order albeit a democratic western one. There was an interest in making connections with allied nations and discovering commonalities between subcultures, nations and peoples previously understood as different. The idea of a culture of the whole was described in Wendell Willkie's *One World*, which was written about his forty-nine day tour around the world in 1942. It sold over three million copies making it the second best selling non fiction book in 1943.

Graebner describes the years after 1945 as the culture of contingency. He describes two types of contingency. One was the contingency of existence, being drafted, shot at, witnessing the murder of the Jews; the other was the contingency of, from subjecting others to death, the idea that the possibility of sudden, undeserved death was all around. The unique events of this decade, Pearl Harbor, World War II, the holocaust, the atomic bomb and the cold war gave the sense that everything including individual employment, values, all of life, seemed to be up to chance. Film noir and the existentialist thought of Sartre reflected the coldness and futility of the period of contingency. Graebner's other type of contingency was a moral and ethical one. It was difficult to hold together a stable system of values. The events of the previous half of the decade seemed to prove that humanity was uncontrollably on the brink of extinguishing itself. As information leaked out concerning the truth of the atomic bomb, a bomb designed for civilian populations, Americans experienced guilt. This was more than what most consciences could take. The growing awareness of the horrors of the Nazi regime during the holocaust as well as the horrific destruction from the atomic bombs exacerbated a sense of doubt.

The government made an effort to censor information from the epicentre in hopes of keeping Americans ignorant of the devastating effects of the use of the atomic weapons on Japan. In August 1945 through 1949, the Detachment of Civil Censorship of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in occupied Japan banned information that showed the social, infrastructural and medical aftermath of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The United States' occupation forces censored information that described the consequences of the atom bombs throughout the occupation of Japan, from 1945-1952. The newspaper, *Asahi Shimbun*, was cancelled after it accused the US of war crimes by using the bombs. Domei, the central news agency supported by the US occupiers, was suspended for suggesting that only "barbarians" would use such weapons. Books *Nagasaki No Kane* (Bell of Nagasaki) and *Masako Taorezu* (Masako Does Not Collapse) that described the explosion and results of the blast, were banned from publication until 1949. In addition, doctors were forbidden from publishing medical material about the effects of the bomb until April 1952, when the first pictures of the bombs' aftermath were released in the magazine *Asahi Gurafu* (Source: Censorship, A World Encyclopedia, ed. D. Jones).

Graebner (1991) defines hysteria as a fear of the unknown; a primitive fear; a fear that is not comprehensible or able to be channelled into productive and sane means. Americans recognized that humanity was no longer the same as their awareness about the War increased. Things that were pertinent the day before the bomb were no longer relevant with this new knowledge. People questioned the future of humanity and feared what

might be produced by other less trustworthy nations. The idea of attack from the air or bombs being smuggled in to any building, of any metropolis, just waiting for detonation occupied the minds of many. These fears helped feed other fears. Independent of social reality was the UFO scare. This was a product of foreign policy frustrations and fears of attack in this developing cold war era. There was mass hysteria during the summer of 1947 as within two months, reports of UFO sightings were called in from 35 states and Canada (Graebner, 1991). The preoccupation of sex crimes in the late 40s was also an issue for parents of small children. Some of this was due to the concept of the sexual psychopath in literature, the portrayal of the urban experience as well as the psychological issues that WWII veterans dealt with as a result of their experiences in the war. The veteran was a hero but also in some cases a threat to the family unit. These feelings combined helped emphasize the cold war, individualism, freedom, domesticity and consumption.

As the war against the Communists took hold in different parts of the world, for those at home and especially new citizens, loyalty to America became an issue. Some states enacted obligatory loyalty oaths to be signed by employees if they wanted to keep their jobs. In 1947, President Harry S Truman ordered the FBI to investigate the loyalty of nearly 300,000 federal employees. This phobia against anything seemingly un-loyal to America extended to ordinary citizens who felt justified under the special circumstances to report anything suspicious about their co-workers and neighbours. This fear led to the suppression of free speech, the surveillance of ordinary citizens by the FBI and the jailing

of dissidents. The hysteria created in the loyalty program of Truman was easily generated later what came to be known as the witch hunts of McCarthy.

The post war movement from the good of the group and democracy to the importance of the individual and freedom was within a framework that promoted American political and international policy. Anti-communism replaced the anti-Nazism and Japanese resentment. Democracy was still part of the political jargon throughout the period. However, the face of it changed to contrast communist ideology. Individual freedom was considered the way to uphold American values. The concept of the social whole was to uphold individual rights and freedoms; not to promote totalitarianism. With these sentiments the forties brought in the new decade with more military conflicts and more arms preparation against enemies of freedom and democracy.

Chapter 4

The Fifties

“We wish we might have had the tremendous joy and gratification of living our lives out with you. Your Daddy who is with me in the last momentous hours, sends his heart and all the love that is in it for his dearest boys. Always remember that we were innocent and could not wrong our conscience.”

-Excerpt from the final letter that Ethel and Julius Rosenberg wrote to their children Robert, aged 6 and Michael aged 10 on the day of their execution (June 19, 1953)
Howard Zinn’s *Voices of a People’s History of the United States*.p.388

The 1950s was a decade full of doubts, anxieties, tensions and insecurities. This chapter describes the attitudes and issues of this period. It recalls the parts of history that dealt with the daily reality of the cold war, the intense fear of communist subversion and the subsequent conformity that resulted from these issues. I discuss the developments that shaped American culture after World War II in regards to domestic and international policy and how this played out in American society and culture.

Douglas Miller and Marion Nowack, authors of *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (1977), experienced their formative years during this period and wrote in reaction to the fifties nostalgia that became prevalent in American society during the 1970s. They believed that the 50s revival they were witnessing in the mid 70s had been badly distorted and the nostalgia was highly selective. In their own words, “No one is staging a House of Un-American Activities Committee revival, or longing for the good old days of nuclear brinkmanship and the deadly H-bomb tests.”(pp. 5-6) This book gives an account of this period of history from the authors’ perspective. For my research, it extended my focus

of art education into the social and political realm as well as providing a background to the period at Penn State.

One of the clarifying aspects of Miller and Nowack's book is the way the authors divide the period into three parts: 1948-1953 "The age of fear"; 1954-57 "The era of conservative consensus"; and 1958-60 "The time of national reassessment". I used this structure as a lens for clarifying the period and all the information for this chapter is from their book unless otherwise noted.

The age of fear defines the post war era. By 1948, the war was over and the nation had settled into a feeling of relative peacetime security reassured that there would be no repeat of another economic depression. World War II was over and with it came great economical gains to America's status internationally as her allies were suffering from enormous losses and reconstruction measures from a battle fought at home.

The US was also experiencing a new found superiority due to the demonstration of atomic power that brought WWII to an end. Defence spending, for the most part, sustained prosperity in the post war economy as the government budget for arms ran almost 15 to 20 percent of the Gross National Product. War preparation for Korea, hydrogen bombs, B-52 bombers, a nuclear navy, guided missiles (the basic strength of the nation's economy) rested on death supporting life.

Economically times were good for many, although there were serious differences in the distribution of the wealth. Americans were encouraged to spend money or go into debt for material items that didn't exist in households of their parent's generation.

Obsolescence became the driving force in keeping the markets flowing. Middle class people were feeling that they could tap into the evident prosperity around them with the added stimulation of massive advertising and buying on credit.

There was uncertainty however. Some of this uncertainty was due to the looming international cold war as Russia, an ally of the United States during WWII, became her greatest threat and competitor for global power. The atomic bomb did not really provide the American citizens any security, knowing that Russia possessed the same powers which they demonstrated in 1949. The world was on a perpetual brink of disaster. The US was no longer the leader in the atomic race.

Anxieties mounted when in June 1950, President Truman sent US forces to presumably help the South Koreans defend themselves against the attack of the Communist army of North Korea. This order was made to uphold the rule of law as requested by the UN and to bring peace and stability in Asia. South Korea was under an undemocratic, dictatorial regime. However this did not matter. For America, it guaranteed a military base in Asia where the military could keep an eye on Communist China.

The arms race was gaining strength and with it were many fears. The anxieties over the possible end of civilization prompted many people to react by digging bomb shelters in

their backyards. In 1950, Truman announced plans to develop a “better” bomb than the atomic bomb and by 1953 the United States government developed the hydrogen bomb. The atomic bomb was tiny compared to the hydrogen bomb but both were catastrophic.

Examples in the PSU *Daily Collegian* show a front page article pointing out an H-bomb test explosion in the Pacific that spread radioactive particles 7000 sq. miles, almost the size of New Jersey (*Daily Collegian*, Feb. 16, 1955, pg. 1) and that it threatened the lives of anyone within a 140 by 20 mile downwind belt from the explosion if they had taken no protective measures. Another article (*Daily Collegian*, Mar. 23, 1955, p.3) describes an atomic bomb test explosion which “sprinkled light radioactive particles on Las Vegas but authorities said that there was no danger to civilians or to Marines manoeuvring at the test site.” A further read informs that the marines were only 3500 yards from ground zero. This test was to determine how fast an atomic explosion could be exploited against an enemy. Ten minutes after the explosion, radiation safety teams authorized 28 helicopters, carrying 2000 men forward in a simulated attack on an enemy stronghold.

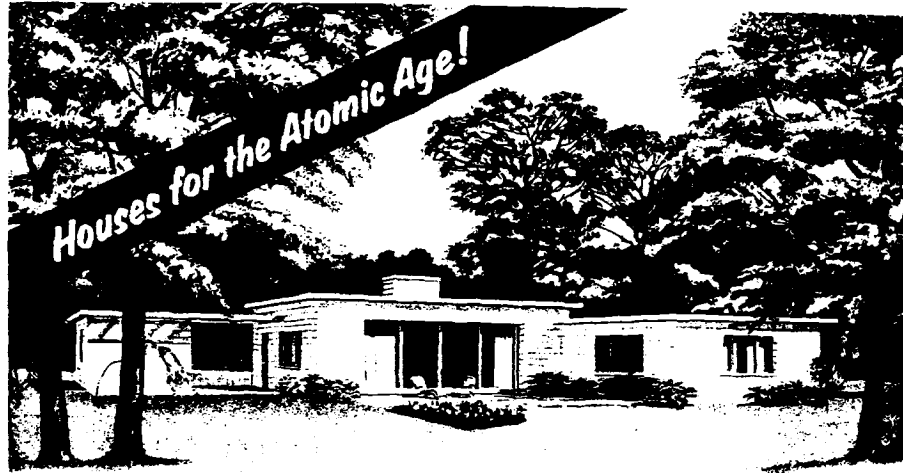
Advertising and popular culture was full of references to the atomic age or the space age in order to change the doomsday face of nuclear power. The bomb became something friendly and fun in advertising in order to calm the fears of total annihilation. Las Vegas hotels advertised rooms with a view on bomb testing sites in the Nevada desert (see figure 5.). Portland Cement Association advertised fire safe, attractive houses built to resist an atomic blast (see figure 6.). Included was a special bomb shelter area in the

basement to protect occupants from blast pressures as close as 3,600 feet from ground zero given that the explosive force would not be stronger than the force of 20,000 tons of TNT (Heimann, 2002).



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Figure 2: Advertisement for Las Vegas Hotel with a view on the testing site as reproduced from: Heimann, Jim. 2002, *50s All-American Ads*. Taschen Gmbh, Hohenzollernring 53,D-50872, Koln.



Now you can protect precious lives with
An all-concrete blast-resistant house

Here's a house with all the advantages of any concrete house—PLUS protection from atomic blasts at minimum cost.

A fire-safe, attractive, low-annual-cost house, it provides comfortable living—PLUS a refuge for your family in this atomic age.

The blast-resistant house design is based on principles learned at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and at Eniwetok and Yucca Flats. It has a reinforced concrete first floor and roof and reinforced concrete masonry walls. The walls, the floor and the roof are tied together securely with reinforcement to form a rigidly integrated house that the engineers calculate will resist blast pressures 40% closer to bursts than conventionally-built houses.

Anywhere in the concrete basement of the house would be much safer than above ground but a special shelter area has been provided in this basement to protect occupants from blast pressures expected at distances as close as 3,600 feet from ground zero of a bomb with an explosive force equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT. This shelter

area affords protection from radiation, fire and flying debris as well. And the same shelter area also can serve as a refuge from the lesser violence of tornadoes, hurricanes and earthquakes.

The safety features built into this blast-resistant house are estimated by the architect and engineer to raise the cost less than 10%.

Concrete always has been known for its remarkable strength and durability. That's why it can be used economically to build houses with a high degree of safety from atomic blasts.

Like all concrete structures, blast-resistant concrete houses are moderate in first cost, require little maintenance and give long years of service. The result is low-annual-cost shelter. Write for folder.

PORTLAND CEMENT ASSOCIATION

Dept. A6-9, 33 West Grand Avenue, Chicago 10, Illinois
 A national organization to improve and assist the use of portland cement and concrete through scientific research and engineering field work.

Interiors of a blast-resistant house have all the charm and livability of conventional houses.



Portland Cement Association, 1955

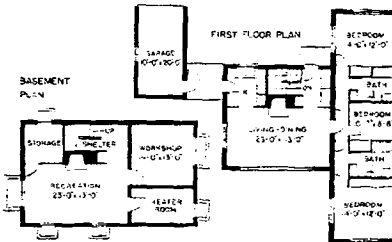


Figure 3: Advertisement for a blast resistant house as reproduced from: Heimann, Jim. 2002, *50s All-American Ads*. Taschen GmbH, Hohenzollernring 53, D-50872, Köln.

This period was charged with the most extreme laws and abuses against human rights in all of American history in the name of patriotism and loyalty to America. Nobody was immune to the pressures of this period. Educators were one of the most targeted groups because the supposed power they had in directly transmitting their own ideas and values to future generations of democratic citizens. Educators had to be careful when expressing their views so that their subject material would not be considered subversive.

Increasing fears of communist infiltration targeted cultural arenas, especially in Hollywood, and was evident at the highest levels of government. When allegations were made that the US government was full of "Combies", the anxiety of this period heightened. Senator Joe McCarthy's voice added weight to the already loud cry of anticommunist witch hunters. McCarthy instigated one of the most notorious waves of censorship the nation has ever experienced. In 1950 Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were arrested and convicted for conspiring with the Communists on the building of the atomic bomb. They were executed in 1953 leaving two small sons without parents.

Many people felt compelled to search out and accuse others of being subversive though most of the people accused simply held unpopular opinions. Conformity was demanded. Teachers, government workers, entertainers and many others who had held loyalties towards the American Communist party when it was popular during the thirties were dismissed from their jobs. Libraries were closed and books were censored.



Figure 4: Movie Poster from the 1949 film “I Married a Communist” as reproduced from: Heimann, Jim. 2002, *50s All-American Ads*. Taschen Gmbh, Hohenzollernring 53, D-50872, Koln.

To list a few examples, in Indiana, the story of *Robin Hood* was removed from school libraries because it taught communist doctrine. Due to McCarthy's 'Red Scare', the post office in Providence Rhode Island barred Vladimir Lenin's *State and Revolution* from entering the country to be delivered to Brown University. McCarthy had classics such as Henry David Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience* (1849), which encouraged citizens to peacefully protest unjust laws, taken off the shelves of the State Department's overseas libraries. It was one of more than 300 titles McCarthy had banned.

With the balance of fear and prosperity, voices against the repression were fairly suppressed. Nationalist feelings gave rise to an emphasis on family and religion to give solace from the anxiety. The idea that religious faith could combat communism was reflected at the highest level of government. For example, an article in Penn State's *Daily Collegian* on May 2, 1953 quotes US President Eisenhower, who was not considered much of a religious man before being elected, "Only a people strong in godliness is a people strong enough to overcome tyranny. Today, it is ours to prove that our own faith, perpetually renewed is equal to the challenge of today's tyrant." (p.4).

The Bible was the number one non-fiction best seller from 1952 through 1954, while bible sales between 1949 and 1953 had risen 140 percent. Among other books on the non-fiction best seller lists of this period were *A Guide to Confident Living* by Norman Vincent Peale in 1948 and 1949 as well as his book *The Power of Positive Thinking* from 1952 through 1955. Peale had a popular following with his own television and radio programs. He assured his followers that religious faith would guarantee successful

living. Billy Graham was another very successful evangelist. By the mid fifties the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association had a two million dollar annual budget and used radio and television media as well. Graham also had two best sellers, *Peace with God* (1953) and *The Secret of Happiness* (1955).

If religion was not an answer for anxiety, middle class people found other alternatives.

While drinking was heavy in suburbia, the biggest sellers were the new tranquilizer drugs, Miltown and Thorazine. Sales went from literally nothing in 1954 to \$4,750,000 in 1959. Use of sleeping pills and psychiatric help, for those who could afford it, also increased. (Nowack and Miller, 1977)

The era Nowack and Miller call 'the conservative consensus' from 1954 – 1957 marked an ebb in national fears and anxieties. The Korean War was over, Stalin had died and Senator McCarthy was finally relieved of his government duties in 1954. All this happened during relative economic prosperity which kept most people silent and satisfied as times were good. Advancements on technology promised the public that soon they would have so much leisure time that they would have to decide what to do with it all. In 1955, US President Dwight Eisenhower came to address the graduating class at the PSU Commencement. He ironically asked the graduating class how that time would be spent. "Will it be for the achievement of man's better aspirations or his degradation to the level of a well-fed, well-kept slave of an all-powerful state?" (pg. 2, *Daily Collegian*, June 11, 1955)

Television rapidly united the nation as TV sales averaged about 20,000 a day in 1956. In 1954, the first mass media convenience food, the 'TV dinner', was introduced. Television also helped to influence the middle class consumer culture.

The landscape outside of the cities changed rapidly. For example, outside of New York City, an average of 3,000 acres of green space a day was being bulldozed for new housing units. Housing projects such as Park Forest and Levittown caused the population in major cities like Detroit, St. Louis, San Francisco and Washington to actually decrease, which was unprecedented in the history of American cities. The Federal Housing Administration and the Veterans Administration helped millions of people purchase single family homes with low down payments and long term mortgages and guaranteed loans. At the same time, almost no money was offered to refurbish older houses, especially within the cities. As a result, the cities became poor as the suburbs became rich. Suburban developments became a way of life reflecting the corporate ideal of human individualism immersed in a mass-produced homogeny.

Only the basic nuclear family was acceptable; most of the new suburbs were inhabited by young married couples between the ages of 25 and 35, usually with one child and a second on the way. Incomes averaged between \$6,000 and \$7,000. Suburbanites were tolerant of religious differences so long as one was a Protestant, Catholic or Jew (though discrimination against the latter was not altogether absent). Church attendance was high, but religious affiliation seldom dictated group

relations. Though many of these people were new middle class, they were very middle class. They were white. Tolerance did not extend to blacks in most of these bedroom havens. At no time in American history, with the abnormal exceptions of army or dormitory life, had such uniform one-class communities existed. Singles, childless couples, homosexual couples, extended families, old people, the rich, the poor, non-whites- all were avoided in those sterile environments. (Nowack and Miller,1977 p.135)

Advertising as well as the push to supply jobs to former soldiers underlined the importance of women going back to work at home as “homemakers”. It was considered a patriotic duty to be a good homemaker and to raise democratic, citizens. Girls were instructed early in their home economics courses. From high school to college, one of the objectives of the home economics curriculum was also to educate future consumers. It was only as recent as 1994 that the American Home Economics Association changed its name to the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. In the school classes of home economics, large manufacturers of home products for cooking, hygiene, or sewing produced teaching materials that were introduced to students to use, helping to create early brand allegiances.

An examination of the best selling non-fiction books of this time offers a clear indication of what the role of women in the US was supposed to be. Favorites on the best seller list

in the early fifties included such titles as *Betty Crocker's Picture Cook Book* and many varieties of *Better Homes and Gardens*. As Lynn Peril (2002) described, "It was as if proper homemaking was the only thing standing between Our Way of Life and Godless Communism". (p.56)

One of the most influential products of this period in history and the one that had a huge impact on the culture and the landscape of the United States was the automobile. Cars sold in record numbers. In 1950, a record of more than eight million cars and trucks were manufactured and throughout the decade auto sales seldom fell below seven million annually. Superhighways were constructed to link the cities to the suburbs. As the world's most powerful lobby, the automobile industry was able to pass the National Defense Highway Act in 1956 which authorized the construction of the nationwide interstate highway system. The President's Advisory Committee on a National Highway program approved a national system of interstate and defense highways as a measure of national security. They estimated that at least 70 million people would have to be evacuated from target areas in case of threatened or actual enemy attack. Approximately 41,000 miles of high speed, limited access roadways were built even though studies justified train travel and other public transportation. Traffic was beginning to be a problem as cars were being made and sold faster than the infrastructure was able to support it. For example, as early as January 1952, articles appeared in Penn State's *Daily Collegian* describing the already difficult traffic and parking problems on campus as nearly 2,500 automobiles belonged to students, not to mention faculty and daily visitor traffic.

During this period of repose and prosperity, there were still problems of poverty, racism, sexism and militarism which threatened America but for the most part these issues were subdued as much as possible. Instead, juvenile delinquency became the focus of national discussion instead as it was found that over one million teenagers were getting into trouble with the police annually. Most of these crimes were crimes against property; car theft was number one. Penn State's *Daily Collegian* ran a series of articles on the teenage problem in 1952, and most of the opinions set forth were that youth were the way they were because society itself was delinquent. In comparison to the statistics of those who did not get into trouble, juvenile delinquency was relatively low. The popular emphasis that psychology had on the education and general development of the child contributed to the focus on solving youth problems. For the most part youth values followed that of their parents; education, marriage, job, and children and the baby boomer age ushered in the image of the house in the suburbs with the white picket fence.

In addition to what was different from previous generations was the place that youth possessed in the social fabric. Youth were relatively cut off from reality and did not have their attentions set on the problems of the world. The general affluence of the adults played a part in this phenomenon. During this period of conservative consensus the population preferred to bathe in a pool of prosperity and ease rather than concern themselves with the ills of the rest of the world and the introduction of credit cards started having an impact on what people did with their leisure time. Outside of school time became leisure time. The consumer power of the youth started to become noticeable and

a more important part of the American economy. Corporations saw the lucrative possibilities of creating a separate youth market to target the new status and identity that youth had in society.

When Dr. Benjamin Spock's *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* was published in 1946, it gained instant popularity and through revisions and reissues, continued to be successful for decades after. Many parents who followed Spock's ideas on child-raising felt that it was their responsibility to make their children as perfect as possible. Spock virtually insisted that mothers stay at home to devote their time to the rearing of their children. Spock introduced love into the relationship towards the child and insisted that parents be less strict than their parents. There was a social imperative towards pampering the young. Responsibilities towards parents and expectations that youths had within the family unit before the war by the mid-fifties were much less stressed.

The importance of consumer power and business was reflected in the higher institutions as close to 20% of all college graduates were business or commerce students. In 1953, Penn State along with many other institutions, created separate business schools to allow for the specialization and expansion of enrollment. Before, students enrolled in the department of economics and commerce if they were interested in pursuing business careers and were instructed in the college of liberal arts (*Daily Collegian*, Sep. 22, 1953). By the fall of 1954, Business Administration had become the fifth largest college at PSU,

enrolling over 1,100 full-time undergraduates in eight majors: accounting, business management, economics, finance, insurance and real estate, secretarial science, trade and transportation, and marketing (Bezilla,1985).

The election of Eisenhower in 1952 was also a contributor of the nation's relief from their anxieties and fears. In Eisenhower, Americans saw a symbol of hope and peace. He was popular with both republicans as well as democrats and successful in endearing the nation into a relative national consensus. His popularity continued enough for him to be re-elected in 1956.

Almost parallel to US President Eisenhower's career is the career of his brother Milton. On January 22, 1950, the authorizing committee recommended fifty-one-year-old Milton Stover Eisenhower to be Penn State's president. Eisenhower was the first of the College's presidents to be well-known outside the academic community, and the fact that he was the younger brother of World War II hero and US President Eisenhower made him popular among students, faculty and townspeople. Penn State affiliates were happy with the incoming chief executive and looked forward to the decade of the 1950s with an optimism that they did not possess during the previous decade.

Eisenhower gave the university the kind of publicity and prestige that it had not known before. US President Dwight Eisenhower made several visits to the campus to visit his brother and for more formal engagements as well. The most important was to deliver the

commencement address in June 1955. Many former graduates including my parents remember this special event. As the two brother's careers coincided, the public views of the close working relationship between these two men gave the university national exposure. Milton had been a formal advisor to his brother dating back to the thirties when Dwight was attached to the office of the Army Chief of Staff and Milton was with the Department of Agriculture. During his presidency at Penn State, he flew to Washington almost every weekend to meet his brother at the White House and to work in his own set of offices of the State Department nearby. As far back as the United States involvement in the war, Milton was chosen by then President Roosevelt to head the War Relocation Authority directing the evacuation of Japanese- Americans from the Pacific coast (*Daily Collegian*, Oct. 27, 1954).



Figure 5: The two Eisenhower brothers as reproduced from Bezilla, M. (1985) *Penn State: an Illustrated History*. (www.libraries.psu.edu/speccolls/psua/psgeneralhistory/bezillapshistory/083s09.htm)

The Time of National Reassessment from 1958-1960 was a wake up call from the relative quiet of the recent past. On an international level, foreign relations were stressed as anti-colonialism was rising in third world countries. There were also growing social and racial problems at home that were contrary to the rhetoric of democracy so prevalent of that period.

The unveiling to the world of the racist attitudes in the United States was revealed in the school integration crisis in Little Rock, Arkansas. Eisenhower sent troops to take care of the situation and the ugly scene was diffused in the media for the world to see.

Eisenhower said in his address to the nation concerning the crisis:

At a time when we face grave situations abroad because of the hatred that Communism bears toward a system of government based on human rights, it would be difficult to exaggerate the harm that is being done to the prestige and influence- and indeed , to the safety- of our nation and the world. Our enemies are gloating over this incident and using it everywhere to misrepresent our whole nation. We are portrayed as a violator of those standards of conduct which the peoples of the world united to proclaim in the charter of the United Nations. There they affirmed “faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person,” and they did so “without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.(from Cohen 1974, p.3011)

The fifties was not a simple, consistent decade. Attitudes and issues changed throughout the period and were reflected in every facet of American life.

And so, despite a growing national doubt, the decade ended economically as it began- spewing forth an ever-increasing volume of bombs, bazookas, bubble gum, cars and tanks, deodorants, crying dolls, hula hoops, pillows and pollution. They called it people's capitalism. In reality it was a precarious prosperity maintained by cold war spending, highway and automobile building, sprawling suburbias, overeating, overbuying, forced premature obsolescence- always plagued by waste, unemployment, poverty, inequality, misuse of the environment, lack of public services, and the threat of annihilation.

(Nowack and Miller, 1977,p.123)

Chapter 5

Penn State History

McCarthyism and the obsession with proving one's loyalty discouraged independent thought and encouraged conformity in academia. Many faculty and students hesitated to state their opinions on controversial issues or to join organizations that could in any way be interpreted as subversive. They had seen what McCarthy and others like him had dredged up from peoples' earlier lives to use against them as evidence of disloyalty. Men and women who had participated in left-wing causes in a naive, almost dilettantish fashion as undergraduates in the 1930s were twenty years later being scrutinized as security risks. There was also talk on the campus about the Federal Bureau of Investigation recruiting students to spy on liberal professors, and about college administrators circulating blacklists of left-wing instructors whose employment could prove embarrassing to an institution; but like the rival allegations of the McCarthyites, most of these claims lacked proof. What was indisputable was that America's institutions of higher education were caught between two conflicting forces. They were expected to remain bastions of freedom of expression and yet were supposed to nurture patriotism, not disloyalty. (Bezilla, 1985)

This chapter on Penn State history is divided into four sections. The first describes the events and attitudes of students leading up to World War Two. The next section describes how the war affected the university and how attitudes changed during and after. Afterwards there is a section that illustrates how the faculty was affected by loyalty oath issues and McCarthyism. Finally, I describe how 50s culture and attitudes about marriage, religion and war were manifested on campus through the building of two important and contrasting structures on campus.

The website of special collections at the library of Penn State contains an essay published by Michael Bezilla (1985) titled, *Penn State: an Illustrated History*.

(www.libraries.psu.edu/speccolls/psua/psgeneralhistory/bezillapshistory/083s09.htm)

This essay chronicles the founding and growth of the institution from its identity as The Farmer's High School in 1855 to its current status as The Pennsylvania State University.

The information that I searched for included general descriptions of society during the 40s and 50s was like for faculty and students on campus, how the war affected life on campus, the McCarthy era and how the society influenced the university. The essay served as a context to Dr. Mattil's experience as a student and then later as a faculty member at Penn State by describing events and how they affected the town of State College where he lived from 1931.

The World Wars

Bezilla's (1985) description of the atmosphere on campus during the 30s portrays a period of social awareness and seriousness, and a strong measure of conservatism.

Students were concerned with the impact of the depression, the rise of totalitarianism and subsequent threats to world peace in Europe. There was a general disillusionment with the result of World War I as the world seemed to be preparing for another major confrontation. Students who were most likely going to be called to arms were becoming concerned and anxious.

By the mid-30s, demonstrations against the war were common on university campuses.

April 12, 1935 was the first organized student rally for peace at Penn State.

Approximately 1,500 students joined 150,000 students nationwide demonstrating in favor of disarmament, anti-imperialism, and a strict policy of neutrality for the United States.

The Penn State President Hetzel offered a place for students to gather indoors and directed faculty to excuse from their classes any student who wished to participate in the demonstration. Students called on congress to spend more money on education than on defense and to pass a law prohibiting educational institutions from obligating students to participate in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), a branch of the military that is trained and ready to mobilize in the event that they are needed. In order for male students to obtain their degree, this service was compulsory. About two hundred students took the American version of the Oxford pledge, an anti-war protest begun several years earlier at England's Oxford University: "I refuse to support the government of the United States in any war which it may undertake." This marked the height of the student peace movement at Penn State as the years following showed less and less participation in anti-war activities.

In 1938, the American government set up a House Committee on Un-American Activities, most commonly known as HUAC to investigate "subversive activity" on the part of individuals and organizations. Not knowing of what the future would bring, many of these people who had joined organizations such as labor unions or left-leaning organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

(NAACP) would later be negatively perceived of as Communist threats to the American government.

That students were given permission to protest by the university president as well as a facility for the demonstration seems to illustrate a very liberal and tolerant political climate. However, the Penn State environment was not a favorable one for the more radical elements among the student movements that sprang up across the country in response to the economic chaos of the Great Depression. The university had no student branches of the Young People's Socialist League, National Student League, the Liberal Club, the Veterans of Future Wars, or similar activist groups that flourished on other campuses. In fact, there was no student government until 1939.

Bezilla (1985) notes two important factors that accounted for the conservative mood of the student body. Students on campus were isolated from the most severe effects of the depression. They were well fed and focused on studies. Secondly, the university's population was made up of students from middle-class families. As students usually accepted the attitudes and values of their parents, their own attitudes were shaped by their parent's beliefs.

Generally, Pennsylvania during the 1930s had been a stronghold of conservative Republicanism. It was one of only six states won by Republican Herbert Hoover in the 1932 presidential election. Penn State undergraduates gave Hoover nearly three times as many votes as they gave challenger Franklin D. Roosevelt which was the second highest

total vote (after Ohio State University) that Hoover received among the forty-eight schools nationwide that had participated in the poll.

When WWII started and news from the frontlines started coming in, few Americans felt that it was morally possible to stay out of the war. The peace movements of the mid-1930s had done nothing to stop the spread of totalitarianism and many felt that stronger measures would be necessary. Most Penn State students felt that the United States should assist Great Britain and her allies with supplies rather than troops but they did not rule out going to war if the need arose.

In September 1940, Congress enacted the first peacetime military draft of all eligible twenty-one year old males in American history. This was disconcerting for many as war had already broken out abroad and it was most likely going to include the United States as well. At first, students reaching the draft age while in school would be allowed to complete the academic year before serving duty. However, when war demands increased, the draft age was lowered to 18 and allowed no educational deferments.

Penn State was very much involved in defense-related activities for the government and as a result was deemed an essential industry by the US government. This meant that it could avoid certain rationings and shortages in terms of material goods. The new status also promoted the campus police force to military police. Penn State contributed to the war effort through offering various types of civilian courses to aid the war effort as well

as later expanding involvement through particular military training. Defense agencies relied on universities to do intensive, short term research in hopes that the fruits of their efforts could be turned into military use. Penn State, as a land grant institution² with agricultural capacities, was also relied on to boost food production for export.

Mandatory military service soon became acceptable as many on campus believed that it was necessary. Over 1200 students enrolled in Army ROTC in 1941 making Penn State one of the largest military contingents east of the Mississippi and the largest of any institution in the Northeast (Bezilla, 1985).

The end of the war saw an enormous influx of new and returning students in the spring of 1946. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act or GI bill made it financially possible for soldiers to continue or start an education. Because of extreme housing shortages and the difficulty of meeting building needs as private sector building was booming, the university started using outlying teacher colleges and schools for incoming freshman. Penn State even built a trailer park to house veterans with families to deal with returning GIs. The university accepted veterans as 75% of their total new enrollment. The remaining 25% were recent high school graduates.

² In 1862, Congress passed the Morrill Land-Grant Act which enabled the states to sell land and invest the profits which would be used to support colleges. The objective was to teach agriculture and engineering, not excluding scientific and classical studies to industrial classes. The Farmer's High School was started in 1855 and the name went through a few changes until finally in 1953 it became the Pennsylvania State University.



figure 6: Cover of the October 1943 *Penn State Alumni News* as reproduced from Bezilla, M.1985 *Penn State: an Illustrated History*.
(www.libraries.psu.edu/speccolls/psua/psgeneralhistory/bezillapshistory/083s09.htm)



Figure 7: Windcrest trailer park for veterans with families as reproduced from Bezilla, M.1985 *Penn State: an Illustrated History*.
(www.libraries.psu.edu/speccolls/psua/psgeneralhistory/bezillapshistory/083s09.htm)

The pressure to get married and have children was strong in the 40s and 50s. Women did not have many career choices, but getting an education was still important for middle and upper class. Many married students who exchanged vows before leaving for duty, had difficulties in their marriage after the war

Home Economics

The Home Economics Department at Penn State offered a course in marriage adjustment. According to an article in the *Daily Collegian* (September 14, 1945) marriage courses were offered to students in an attempt to reduce the country's divorce rate and to "serve as an antidote for the many unfounded ideas concerning sex which many students have" (p.4). Conferences were held on campus dealing with topics such as "Wartime Problems and the Home" and "Women's Place in the World Scene".

There were some experts that believed that a college education would make for bad-mothering. A Cambridge psychologist, Mrs. Frederick Wyatt, who studied in Vienna under Sigmund Freud and practiced at the Cambridge Children's hospital stated that "non-college women make the best mothers because American college women lack emotional warmth and love for children and are frustrated when they become burdened with the arrival of children in their lives" (Jean Alderfer, *Daily Collegian*, April 18, 1947, pg.3).

For those students who were looking for some pointers, a child development course, Home Economics 429, was offered primarily to give students experience with young children and secondly, to educate prospective parents and parents. According to Mrs. McDowell, who was head of the nursery school in Penn State's Home Economics Department, 90 to 95 percent of the students enrolled in the course would marry and have children of their own (*Daily Collegian*, August 8, 1942).

Lynn Peril (2002) mentions that Penn State had a unique program where senior home economics majors spent a semester living in a special home management house with a faculty advisor and a baby. The baby would be on loan from a foundling home and kept until the end of the school year until it would be taken back to be put up for adoption. An article in the *Daily Collegian* from September 29, 1944 describes Hillcrest, one of the three home management houses, where for half a semester as part of the home economics curriculum, eight women students would "learn the fundamental problems of managing a home and caring for an infant to prepare them for their future roles as wives and mothers" (p.3). Each week the tasks were divided by the eight women; meal planning and preparing, baby care, house cleaning, laundry, table setting and budgets. One can only speculate how much of a "real-life" experience the women received considering the number of hands that were available to do all the work. Another article from the *Daily Collegian* describing the program appears on February 6, 1949. It states that "When the grown-up 'babes' leave these houses, they should make better housewives than ever appeared on a radio quiz show" (p.13).

In the 50s, marriage issues were not quite the same as the previous decade. However, it was in fashion to get married as soon as possible. Penn State's Eisenhower Chapel hosted annual marriage conferences with professors of home economics and sociology who talked about topics such as "Marriage Standards", "Mate Selection", "Dating" and "The beginnings of Marriage". Dr. Clifford T. Adams, at a marriage conference on Mar. 8, 1955, advised young people 19, 20 and 21 years old that it was the best time to get married because "younger people are better to adjust and adapt themselves to new situations"(p.5). This same professor concluded with some advice for the men by saying that they should select their wives from the home economics majors because these women will have spent four years learning to be good wives and homemakers and were more interested in getting married than women in other colleges (*Daily Collegian*, Mar. 9, 1955, p. 5).

Penn State offered courses in home economics as early as 1907 with the main service to train teachers for secondary school. In 1949 Home Economics became a separate college as the need for graduates increased. At Penn State, women constituted three-fourths of the graduates in the College's Department of Home Economics, and half of them worked in their chosen profession less than two years before leaving to become full-time wives and mothers (Bezilla, 1985). The department needed to attract more students to fill the job market and make up for the high turnover rate of jobs that were normally filled by women. There were also a large number of graduates that would not go into the workforce but would stay at home raising children and taking care of a home.

Loyalty Oaths and Communism

Even though the US president's brother, Milton Eisenhower, was heading Penn State, it was not immune to the extreme anti-communist activities hosted by the House of Un-American Activities Commission. Pennsylvania was one of the states that had laws encouraging the termination of employment of educators who failed to answer questions about their political opinions or membership in political organizations. There were several episodes relating to matters of subversion and anti-communism that drew unwelcome attention by authorities to Penn State.

Bezilla (1985) mentions two cases in which University employees were fired for reasons concerning loyalty. On April 1, 1950, 34 year old assistant professor of mathematics Lee Lorch, having joined the faculty the previous September, was informed that his contract would not be renewed for the following year. Lorch was a member of the Progressive Party of Pennsylvania, a left-leaning political group. He was also co-advisor to the University NAACP chapter. Lorch believed that his refusal to answer questions about his former association with the Communist party and with his activities on behalf of racial desegregation were the reasons why he was being let go from Penn State. He had already experienced the same treatment from his previous employer, the City College of New York. In New York, Lorch had worked to open Stuyvesant Town, a new urban housing project, to black residents. Lorch had been dismissed without stated cause from his CCNY position in 1949 shortly after having been recommended for promotion and tenure. He said in an article in the *Daily Collegian* (July 5, 1950, p.6) that his racial and political views were the cause of his contract not being renewed and his lawyer Benjamin

Zelman added that he was being discriminated against for his being Jewish (*Daily Collegian*, May 23, 1950, front page). While at Penn State he had allowed a black family to occupy his Stuyvesant Town apartment free of charge. He said that the decision against renewing his contract had ultimately been made by the department head, Provost A. O. Morse, who allegedly told the math professor that his crusades for equality in housing for blacks and his past affiliations with leftist political groups would damage the College's public image.

Acting President Milholland issued a statement denying that Lorch had been refused further employment on account of his racial or political views and stating that the professor "does not have the personal qualifications which the College desires in those who are to become permanent members of its faculty." Lorch eventually left to join the faculty at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. There, he was again discharged (in 1953) for refusing to answer questions from the HUAC about his involvement with the Communist party. Once one was investigated, it became difficult to find or to keep employment and this was also the case for the spouse of the person in question. This is evident in an article by Lynn Ward that appeared in the *Daily Collegian* (Nov. 8, 1957, p.2) published seven years after the incident at Penn State. She quoted from an article in *Newsweek Magazine* describing how Mrs. Grace Lorch was questioned by the Senate for having ties to the Communist Party in Boston. According to the article, Mrs. Lorch felt she was being investigated because of her involvement in the Little Rock Crisis in September 1957. The article concludes with a description of the experiences that her husband dealt with from his three previous employers.

Whether or not Provost Morse and other administrators were worried that Lorch's retention would damage Penn State's reputation, they could not have been happy with the public attention the institution had received. According to Bezilla (1985), even the *New York Times* ran several stories and a mildly critical editorial about the incident.

In July 1951, the 23rd District of the Pennsylvania Department of the American Legion passed a resolution claiming that Penn State tolerated un-American activities on its campus. District representatives introduced a similar resolution at the state wide legion convention. This did not pass, however. The result was to enact a motion demanding that the General Assembly investigate state-aided colleges and universities in the Commonwealth for evidence of communist infiltration. In December 1951, the General Assembly had passed the Pennsylvania Loyalty Act named after its sponsor Senator Albert R. Pechan.

The law obliged all Pennsylvania employees to take an oath of allegiance to the state and federal governments or face dismissal from their employment. This legislation was part of a trend as teachers nationwide were under pressure to conform to the nation's domestic policies. Those who opposed the bill were labelled by Senator Pechan as "subversives and pinks" and he spoke for his government saying that "we don't want anyone on the payroll that thinks that any other form of government is better than this one." (*Daily Collegian*, May 2, 1951, pg.4)

Most people opposed the government's interference with the administration of the University. They felt that the trustees could do the job of cleaning up their faculties if need be. The all-college cabinet, which was the student government, officially opposed the bill stating that their teachers had the right to academic freedom and that the Pechan bill would destroy that.

Time To Fight

AN EDITORIAL

This is the time for us to stop and think about our freedoms.

IT IS THE TIME for us to examine our feelings on freedom and if we believe in it, to take a stand and fight.

The Pechan bill would force faculty members at Penn State and other state-supported Pennsylvania colleges to sign the so-called "loyalty oath." The bill already has passed the state Senate.

If approved by the House and the governor, the Pechan bill would be a shattering blow to academic freedom at Penn State.

Freedom, as the Collegian remarked editorially in September entails the right to be wrong in a political situation without fear of reprisal. The oath provides a means of reprisal, not only against those who are wrong, but also against those who don't happen to agree with the preconceived notion of American democracy held by the backers of the oath.

THE OATH HAS WREAKED widespread havoc throughout the United States. It has been particularly disastrous when applied to colleges. The University of California got into a good deal of trouble when the oath was made mandatory for its faculty, many of whom quit their jobs. As a result, U of C got into trouble with the American Association of University Professors and its academic rating has dropped considerably.

No college is really a college if its faculty is not allowed to hold diverse views and to present those views for consideration by the students. Under such an oath, the teacher would be afraid to teach the truth as he saw it for fear of being held suspect. He would be hedged about with fear and his course of study would become patterned into a sterile mould of conformity—devoid of searching inquiry.

Freedom is always a precarious thing—it cannot be safeguarded by restricting freedom. The Pechan bill, by restricting freedom, would destroy the reason for which freedom exists.

The Pechan bill uses totalitarian methods in the name of combating totalitarianism. It cannot be condoned either by teachers or students, for it will affect them both by lowering the quality of education and impairing the freedom we espouse.

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS should unite in voicing their protest against this bill which is contrary to American principles and traditions.

—Dean Gladfelter

Figure 8: reproduced from the *Daily Collegian*, March 30, 1951, front page

On September 25, 1952 the *Alumni News* (vol. 39, no.2) published an article headlined “College Cited for keeping Program Free of Subversives”. There had been a meeting on Feb. 10, 1952 in which representatives of the National American Legion, The Pennsylvania State Department of the American Legion and the 23rd District of the American Legion met with a special committee of the board of trustees of Penn State to show evidence of alleged subversive activity on campus. There were six sections of evidence dating back to 1934. Evidence that was deemed suspicious included causes which required funding drives for groups considered suspicious, alumni no longer connected to the University who belonged to organizations cited as subversive by the US Attorney General or the HUAC, the diffusion of plays, motion pictures and concerts that contained communist or fascist propaganda or whose performers were cited as subversives, student organizations considered as fronts for communist activity, student events considered questionable such as the protest against militarism in education in 1935, and guest speakers who were alleged to have ties with organizations cited as subversive by the US Attorney General or the HUAC.

Another incident involved the firing of a Penn State employee named Wendell MacRae, publications manager in the Office of Public Information. In May 1952, MacRae refused to sign a form pledge of his loyalty to the US government. He returned his questionnaire unsigned and asked for a hearing before a review board on the assumption that such a hearing was an alternative method of ascertaining the loyalty of a college employee and the board could, on receiving other evidence of loyalty, certify the loyalty of that person

without requiring that he answer the college loyalty questionnaire or take a loyalty oath. MacRae, a 52 yr. old Marine veteran of World War Two thought that the idea of a loyalty oath was "absurd and insulting. To fail to resist such efforts at thought control," MacRae wrote, "is to court further and worse legislative encroachments on intellectual freedom."(Bezilla, 1985. *An Illustrated History*, section MacCarthyism Resisted)

Employees who could not or would not sign the oath could ask for a hearing before the Loyalty Review Board. On August 26, MacRae became the first and only person to take his case to the board. The purpose of the hearing was to find a way to meet the legal qualifications for which he could be certified as loyal so that Milton Eisenhower could then swear that Penn State did not employ subversives. However, at the hearing MacRae refused to answer questions about his loyalty, instead he spoke about his personal record, citing previous service in the Marines and memberships in the American Legion, Republican Party, and Presbyterian Church. The review board was unsatisfied based on the evidence offered and thus refused to certify MacRae's loyalty. He was immediately dismissed. The president had no alternative but to fire MacRae because otherwise Penn State could not meet the requirements of the Pechan Act and risked losing its state accreditation. To certify the loyalty of the College's employees without dismissing MacRae was to set Penn State up as a target for those who supported McCarthy.

After lengthy discussion and investigation MacRae was eventually reinstated to his job and after careful study President Eisenhower was able to announce that certification procedures were being changed to allow department heads and supervisors to affirm the loyalty of their staff. The MacRae affair illustrated the adverse effects of a mandatory loyalty program. Most of the people affected by these attempts to uncover "subversives" were invariably idealists or nonconformists. They were, however, stubborn enough to withstand the system in hopes of justice. In 1954, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Pechan Act, and it remained on the statute books until 1975.

Cold War- Nuclear Power and Religion

With the advent of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the federal government continued to utilize the technical resources of colleges and universities to maintain a strong national defense. By 1950 the federal government was spending 50 million dollars a year on research that largely served defense interests for the military.

Penn State was selected by the US Navy to conduct top-secret torpedo research and development because of Dr. Eric A. Walker, a Harvard-trained engineer and scientist.

Walker had accepted an offer to head Penn State's Department of Electrical Engineering as soon as the war was over. He was influential in the development of one of the first electric computers in 1956 as well as the leader in constructing a nuclear reactor on campus for research and instruction on nuclear engineering. Penn State became the first institution of higher education in the United States to be licensed by the Atomic Energy Commission to own and operate its own nuclear reactor. In 1956, when Eisenhower retired, Walker succeeded him as University president.

Because nuclear weapons were also in the hands of the Soviets, information concerning the truth about the danger of nuclear explosions was being made public. The Atomic Energy Commission believed that the American people wished to be informed. However, information was rather vague as to what the dangers were. Evidence of the novelty of atomic power during this time is clear because as to the possibility of endangering the community by placing a reactor on the campus, "No one even questioned it," recalled Dr. Walker. "We explained it to the townspeople. We said we would not build a dormitory within a certain radius of the reactor. That's why we put tennis courts out there, because you can scam tennis courts if anything happens" (Bezilla, 1985 *An Illustrated History*, section: Curricular and Research Diversification).

On the University's 100th birthday observance, there were two important and symbolic celebrations. There was the inauguration of the nuclear reactor on campus as well as

ground breaking ceremonies for an all-faith chapel dedicated by President Milton Eisenhower to the memory of his late wife Helen Eakin Eisenhower. The editors of the *Daily Collegian* on February 2, 1955 made their comments on the irony of building a symbol of faith on one hand and a symbol of destruction on the other. It was common during this time to diminish the seriousness of the word “nuclear”. It was more profitable to view it as one of creation for a future full of promise and power despite the evidence was showing the reality of what this technology could actually do to the entire planet. The editors called for a re-education of the public to the positive uses of nuclear energy. They urged the public and the critics to understand that Penn State was performing two duties simultaneously; re-educating the public and supplying a symbol of faith.

Religion appears to have been important to Penn State students. For three consecutive years, the graduating classes from 1953 to 1955 bestowed their class gifts to the University chapel project. As was discussed in the previous chapter, the trend toward religion started in the early fifties as cold war fears rose. Religion was important in giving relief as well as justifying the behaviour of Western civilization. Communism and atheism were considered forces against Democracy, Capitalism and godliness. In a discussion on what America’s universities should do about the current crisis, Harvard president Dr. Nathan M. Pusey said that the university’s obligation is “to confront the evil idea current in the East with the ideals which have been fundamental in the growth of Western civilisation” (Oct. 6, 1955, *Daily Collegian*, Jackie Hudgins editorial, pg.4). Religion therefore was vital to the growth of Democratic capitalism. Hudgins felt that

American universities should lead the trend toward religious intervention in intellectual thought.

On June 10, 1955, US president Dwight Eisenhower gave the commencement address. It was broadcast nationally by five major radio networks and television cameras were there for re-broadcasting at a later time. His brother Milton Eisenhower opened in his address:

The only power that ultimately can safeguard the value of the human personality against the ravages of the Communist ideology is the moral power, the kind of belief in man's relationship to his Creator that the Bible proclaims.

He continued,

If we are to cope successfully with Communism's challenge to freedom- if our Judaic-Christian faith is to hold firm and grow in this, it time of testing- then we need to know something about the historic validity and contemporary relevance of the chief instrument of that faith, the Holy Bible.

Eisenhower stressed the importance of atomic energy research and expansion, shrouding it in a cloak of godliness.

While we design bombs that can obliterate great military objectives- because we must- we are also designing generators, channels and

reservoirs of atomic energy so that man may profit from this gift which the Creator of all things has put into his hands. And build them we shall!(*Daily Collegian*, June 11, 1955 p. 2)

The Penn State University during the decades of the forties and fifties went through many changes. It began as a school to instruct farmers in more scientific and efficient ways to raise crops and livestock but by the end of the fifties was much larger in size and scope. The times called for expansion in certain areas of research and Penn State was in a position to deliver. Milton Eisenhower's tenure had great personal impact on the University. He expanded teaching and research at the institution bringing it national recognition that was part of his own prestige and popularity.



Figure 9: as reproduced from www.pbs.org/.../photos/subjects_lowenfeld.jpg

Chapter 6

Lowenfeld

This chapter starts with a brief biography of Viktor Lowenfeld up to his arrival in America as a Jewish refugee fleeing the Nazi regime in Europe. It briefly describes the experience of Jewish refugee scholars in the U.S. and an aspect of the connection between Jewish and Black communities during this period. I describe Lowenfeld's tenure at the Hampton Institute in Virginia which was at the time a segregated college for African Americans. I discuss the beginning of the art education department at PSU and his influence. Then finally, I discuss Lowenfeld's textbook *Creative and Mental Growth* and taking a contextual look at his philosophy within society and culture.

In the summer of 1945, when Viktor Lowenfeld came to PSU to serve as a visiting professor, art education was housed in the department of Home Economics. The next year he was invited again, and by the end of that second summer he was asked to organize and head a department of Art Education.

Lowenfeld's ideas had a wide influence and were subject to much criticism and varied interpretation for many years since his death in 1960. Freedman (1987) claims that he was responsible for taking the discipline of art out of art education and replacing it too strongly on a therapeutic model that simply served government policy during World War II. Others claim his approach was too laissez-faire or a form of recess at the desk (Fehr, 2004). Nevertheless, his ideas received a strong following and have been supported for many years since; the impact of them has been far reaching as well. There are many testimonies of Lowenfeld's influence (see *Studies in Art Education*, November 1982, vol.35, no.6).

Lowenfeld was not only a great art educator and advocator; he was a genuine humanitarian, who touched many types of professionals with his strong convictions on the ethical principals of education. Having seen the rise to power of Hitler and the indoctrination of the Nazi youth, he was aware of the power that teachers can have on the development of young people and society (Michaels, 1982). He was also aware of the contradictions in Western culture and their bearing on art education particularly along the lines of racism, consumerism and materialism (Michaels,1982). For Lowenfeld, the freedom to become an individual was a political right and the foundation to a good education. He spoke to all teachers about the cultivation of the sensibilities as being a cultivation of all aspects of human development. It was his intention to make all educators understand that the insights gained from artistic activity would contribute to the whole person (Lowenfeld, 1947). He believed that the focus of education should be on

the needs of the whole child as opposed to a focus on the subject. His philosophy was one that was centered on the social and spiritual development of the person based on a strong individual sense of identity.

After a thorough study of Lowenfeld's work one needs to look at the context that would have shaped his thinking to understand more clearly why he would have been so seemingly single minded in his philosophy. Where did he come from? What was his social environment like and what did he think about American society? What was he reacting to? Why did his writings emphasize art education contributing to the well being of society or even to the survival of mankind?

Lowenfeld's biography

Viktor Lowenfeld's biography is found in many sources (Michaels, 1982; Michael & Morris, 1985; Raunft, 2001; Saunders, 1960, 1961, 2001; Smith, 1987) but I chose Ralph Raunft's Autobiographical Lectures as what I felt was the closest to a primary source. Indicative of the title, the book is a compilation of autobiographical lectures given during the careers of a chosen group of art educators. Viktor Lowenfeld was born March 21, 1903 in Austria. He describes his family as being very poor, but that he was fortunate to be the son of poor parents because "financially they did not have much nor did they have

anything to waste” (pg.2). He had a brother and two sisters and remembered having many responsibilities in order to aid his mother. When Lowenfeld was eleven years old, his father was drafted into the army at the start of the First World War. Due to the war, the family lived in conditions of poverty and malnutrition. Lowenfeld believed strongly that all of his experiences, good and bad, were equally intense and part of a great fortune which eventually contributed to who he became (Raunft, 2001).

Lowenfeld did not consider himself a scholar (Raunft, 2001). He said that basic knowledge was not found simply from ‘penetrating’ into an intellectual field or gathering knowledge from books. He felt that awareness and knowledge was also derived from the penetration of experiences. This practice, he believed guided his whole life (Raunft, 2001). He was quite a prolific student, receiving degrees from the *Kunstgewerbeschule* in 1925, the Art Academy of Vienna in 1926, as well as the University of Vienna in 1928 (Michaels,1982). He began at the Art Academy in Vienna, which he described as “very dry and academic” (Raunft, 2001, p.6), and shifted to the more contemporary *Kunstgewerbeschule* where he met Franz Cizek. Lowenfeld had worked with Cizek and was acquainted with his theory and methodology. During the *Kunstgewerbeschule* period, Lowenfeld was introduced to a sculptor teacher named Eugene Steinberg. He described how this teacher promoted blindfolding one’s eyes during the process of sculpting. The theory behind this practice was that sculpting is a purely tactile experience and “all visual influences in modeling are extrinsic to the values of modeling” (pg. 6). An object’s appearance can change depending on the light meaning that

perspective is an illusion. However the feel of an object will always remain the same.

Steinberg believed therefore that because of this, tactile experiences were the most valid.

The blindfold was particularly frustrating for Lowenfeld because he felt that in the creation of art, all the senses should be stimulated as much as possible.

Visual and Haptic

This experience was the beginning of Lowenfeld's research concerning visual and haptic art expressions. He decided to explore this concept deeper by going to the Institute for the Blind. After surmounting several obstacles (Raunft, 2001), he became involved there facilitating clay sculpture with blind children and near-blind children. He studied children making masks and heads and repeating the exercise over a period of time. He found that with the proper motivation and stimulation, the children used their tactile senses which were highly developed to create their own works of art and that they were especially strong in their renditions of facial expressions. Lowenfeld described visual and haptic art expression as involving the way one is aware of one's environment and how this is translated through one's art expression. A person who is visually minded will be more aware of the visual elements that make up a person's surroundings (perspective, space and proportions) where as one who is haptically minded will relate more to one's environment on an emotional level placing oneself in a value relationship to it. Haptical space tends to be more subjective to judgements of value and visual space tends to adhere

to laws of perspective and proportion. These values change according to one's psychological state and he believed as well that it was possible to be both haptic and visual at the same time (Lowenfeld, 1944).

American Experience

Lowenfeld (1934;1937;1938) was established in his career and had already published before coming to the US. When Hitler invaded Austria, he went into hiding and wrote *The Nature of Creative Activity*. Soon after, he fled the country with his wife and son. He managed to carry with him sculptures from the Institute of the Blind, photographs from this work and the manuscript of his book which today can be found in the Special Collections of Penn State University as well as at Miami University in Ohio. By December 1938, he arrived in the United States, and moved into a temporary refugee dormitory in New York City.

I have not found any written material on the Lowenfeld family's experiences under Nazi occupation nor their flight out of Austria. Some survivors describe this generation as keeping silent; that at first they did not wish to talk about what they saw or experienced because it was too horrible. They also did not want to subject others to it and some even feared that nobody would believe them (Batemann, 2006). There is however evidence that the Lowenfelds lost several family members in Nazi concentration camps as I will illustrate later.

Soon after arriving in New York, Lowenfeld began to look for a way to support his family. He visited the Museum of Modern Art during an exhibition of Children's drawings and eventually was introduced to Victor D'Amico (Raunft, 2001). D'Amico had established the Young Peoples Gallery at the Museum of Modern Art which offered art classes and exhibition space. He also was head of the art department of the Fieldston School in Riverdale, NY and taught part-time at Teachers College, Columbia. Since Lowenfeld was in dire need of employment, this meeting with D'Amico was a turning point for him because he was fortunate to be introduced to prominent figures in the field of art education and psychology who were interested in his work. His career in North America started with a lecture series at Columbia University. This led to a short appointment at Harvard University and a brief teaching contract at the Institute of the Blind in Watertown near Cambridge. He also worked for a short time in an institution for emotionally and mentally disturbed children and as a consultant psychologist at Lochland School, Geneva, NY (Raunft, 2001; Hollingsworth, 1990).

Jewish Experience in Academia

Like many Jewish scholars, Lowenfeld's first important permanent employment in academia was at an all Black institution (Freedman, 2000). At the time, these institutions were ignored by the vast majority of white American professors. Many refugee scholars who had fled Nazism with little more than the clothes on their backs hoped to continue their academic careers in America. Here they found themselves in a strange country,

forced to learn a new language. The US was still reeling from the Depression and the War and there were anti-German, anti-Jew and extreme racist sentiments. Liebman (1979; p. 425) describes the increase in anti-Semitic attitudes from the late 30s and early 40s as it was suggested that they were one of the major groups pushing the United States into an unnecessary war. Public opinion polls in 1938 on the question, "Do you think that Jew have too much power in the US?" showed 41 percent affirmative. In 1942 this figure went up to 51 percent and in 1945 rose to 58 percent. These were the conditions that the Jewish refugees encountered along with horrendous experiences that they had witnessed in their former countries. Anti-Semitic attitudes caused many Jews to be discreet about their personal and social beliefs at work (Coser, 1984). Some refugee intellectuals who chose, (or not, but did for lack of other options) to teach in small Southern colleges serving both Black students and White students were often the first distributors of European scholarship and culture in these parts of the country. In the Black institutions Jewish professors were given the opportunity to contribute their talents to their faculty as well as to witness a side of America that few white academics got to see. One could draw the connections which these professors and students shared: a common history of oppression and perhaps the feeling of what it is like to be despised and persecuted against based on race.

On other levels connections were made between the Black and Jewish communities as well. Joel E. Spingarn, Arthur Spingarn, Henry Moskowitz, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Lillian Wald, and other Jews were prominent in the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP, whose membership had

increased during World War II, was essentially the voice of Black opinion. It moved towards the position of W.E.B Du Bois, the first editor of their magazine *The Crisis* and eventually lobbied for the creation of a Jewish Nation-State at the United Nations. Du Bois cared deeply about what was happening to Jews in Europe at the time. He refused to ignore the stark realities of the genocide. As quoted from Brackman (2000), in September 1943, Dubois estimated the mounting toll of millions of victims to his readers of the *New York Amsterdam News*:

Of the seven and a half to eight million Jews, resident in Germany and her conquests at the beginning of this war, three million are already dead and the rest are being slowly exterminated by torture and starvation. We rightly shrieked to civilization when American Negroes were lynched and mobbed to death at the rate of 400 to 500 a year. Today in Europe and among peaceful Jews, they are killing that number each day...The present plight of the Jews is far worse than ours. Yet it springs from the same cause; and what is happening to Jews may happen to us in future. The United States and Great Britain could rescue from death and worse than death the three or four million surviving Jews. There is room for them a-plenty within their borders. They stand dumb, however, because many Americans and British hate Jews with the same reason and lack of reason that they hate Negroes, Indians, Chinese and indeed most of the people who live on earth. This is inherited, unreasoned prejudice...Unless it is destroyed, rooted out, and absolutely suppressed, modern civilization is doomed (p.87).

In his book *Color and Democracy* (1945) which was a call to action for peace and equality in the world, DuBois included the Jews as well.

Beyond the colonies and the free nations which are not free, is the plight of the minorities in the midst of both the great and minor nations. There are the Jews of Europe, the Negroes of the United States, the Indians of the Americas, and many other smaller groups elsewhere, They form often little nation within nations, who are encysted and kept from participation in the full citizenship of their native lands..... The greatest tragedy of this war has been the treatment of the Jewish minority in Germany. Nothing like this has happened before in modern civilization.... Considering the cultural accomplishments of this group of people, the gifts they have made to the civilization of the world, this is a calamity almost beyond comprehension (pg. 70).

Lowenfeld at the Hampton Institute

“The innate love of harmony and beauty that set the ruder souls of his people a-dancing and a-singing raised but confusion and doubt in the soul of the black artist; for the beauty revealed to him was the soul-beauty of a race which his larger audience despised, and he could not articulate the message of another people” W.E.B Du Bois , *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)

Viktor Lowenfeld and the Racial landscape of Hampton Institute during his Tenure (1939-1946) by Charles Hollingsworth (1990) is a Penn State dissertation that specifically addresses the racial issues that Lowenfeld faced as a newly arrived professor in an all-Black institution in America's south. It contains three transcribed interviews with Lowenfeld's wife, Mrs. Gretl Lowenfeld, a Professor Gilliard who was a student of Lowenfeld and then later colleague at Hampton and Ms. Mary Godfrey, who was Art Supervisor of Virginia when Lowenfeld hired her to come to Penn State in 1957. Incidentally Godfrey was the first full-time black professor hired at Penn State however, a look into her file in the library reveals only that she retired after 22 years. There is nothing else about her.

At Hampton, Viktor Lowenfeld (with a recommendation from Albert Einstein) was hired by the Institute's President Howe to teach psychology (Hubbard, 1985; Hollingsworth, 1990) He was also to act as an art curator for the growing collection of African Art that the Institute received as donations from missionaries and other wealthy donors. Although Lowenfeld wanted to teach art, his letter of acceptance in 1939 mentioned only possible volunteer art classes (Smith, 1987). Traditionally, these schools functioned to teach skills for the industrial arts as opposed to the fine arts (Hubbard, 1985). Gilliard, as quoted by Hollingsworth, describes Hampton as...“involved with the business of training highly educated, underpaid, Black technicians or skilled maids to work for the big white contractors and that was supposed to be the limit for black achievement” (pg.187). Godfrey in the same interview said that Lowenfeld was discouraged from teaching an art class because “some of the community—including the faculty—had suggested that he

should not get involved with the idea of trying to teach those Negroes anything about art, because they weren't creative or talented enough to care about finer qualities of aesthetics. They told him it would be a waste of his time "(Hollingsworth 1990, p.203). After a year at Hampton, Lowenfeld offered a non-credit night class in drawing which essentially transformed the industrial art department into an art department because on the first evening, 700 of the 750 students who enrolled came to class (Hubbard, 1985). By 1943, the number of students enrolled was reported to be 165 (Smith, 1987).

In his art class, Lowenfeld used the collection of African Art to teach African history and culture as well as to promote self-awareness. John Biggers, who had come to Hampton to learn to be a plumber, was one of the students enrolled in the evening art class. He is quoted in Heyd (1999) as saying that at first he could not understand why Lowenfeld wanted them "to look at the ugly stuff"- but he started to see art as... "a responsibility to reflect the spirit and style of the Negro people- I realized that I had a heritage, and inheritance that I was entirely unaware of before." (p.10)

Professor Viktor Lowenfeld (1944) described the experience of showing African art to his students. "During my four years experiences in the Hampton Institute Art Department I have not had one student who voluntarily wanted to study African Art. Most of the hundreds of students I had were rather ashamed and felt uneasy when confronted with the 'primitivity' of African Art" (pg.21). In *Design* (September 1944) and *The Madison Quarterly* (January 1945), he wrote about the problems that Afro-Americans faced in the United States and his beliefs concerning Afro-American art. He

listed three psychological factors he believed influenced the art of the Afro-American:

“1) the heritage of the Negro 2) the special social status of the Negro within America and, 3) the influence of Western Civilization and culture on the Negro” (*Design* Sep.1944, pg. 21). He believed that Afro-Americans had lost their direct relationship with their African ancestors because they were unaware of their own cultural identity. The dominant culture inhibited the development of a genuine Afro-American art expression because of unequal social conditions. He insisted that the unequal conditions caused a longing for everything which members of the majority group have achieved and that this longing fostered imitation of European traditions instead of pure expression. Lowenfeld held that the response was different for oppressed people who had come into a certain self-knowledge in that they were able to “digest” all the influences and create out of their own conditions an art that depicted their own environment (p.21). Lowenfeld posited that this act of expression needed a tremendous amount of ego, self centeredness or self awareness...“the self grows or diminishes both in size and in importance according to the strength of the experience” (p.21)

Here Lowenfeld’s study on visual and haptical characteristics came into another context from the studies of blind artists. He believed his students at Hampton were naturally haptic because their relationship to their environment was one of restrictions. “An individual without any restrictions does not know boundaries and his eyes easily can rest on the horizon. The horizon of the sharecropper is his cottonfield, the horizon of a laundrywoman her tub” (*Design* Sep.1944 p. 29). As their self awareness grew, they

gained a conscious emotional and intellectual approach toward the outside world and were able to express it through making art.

Lowenfeld's work with the students at Hampton was not without critics.

An exhibition of student artwork was held at the Young Peoples Gallery of the Museum of Modern Art in October and November of 1943. It was called "Young Negro Art: An Exhibition of the Work of Students at Hampton Institute". In *Art News* in the section of passing shows (1943, November 15-30) it was written...

Young Negro painters who have been working at Hampton Institute learnt here (if we may judge from the show at the Museum of Modern Art) a form of race and social consciousness utterly incompatible with sincere artistic expression. In one picture only- that of Junius Redwood- do we find the great gifts of color, dignity, and sincerity which are the Negro's natural heritage. Of the screaming propaganda of John T. Biggers' picture the less said the better. One cannot help feeling that this is the work of heavy-handed teachers dealing with over-plastic material.(p.22)

Teacher/ Student influence

Professor Gilliard mentions several artists in the interview with Hollingsworth (1990) who were discovered by Lowenfeld such as John Biggers, Samella Lewis, Joe Mack, Annabelle Baker, Charles White and Elizabeth Catlett. Lowenfeld developed strong

relationships with some of his students and his impact on them has been chronicled. For instance, John Biggers and Lowenfeld developed a close artistic and personal relationship which could be described as reciprocal based on mutual understanding (Heyd, 1999). Lowenfeld encouraged Biggers to become an artist instead of a plumber and to pursue studies in art. Biggers eventually followed Lowenfeld to Penn State to pursue graduate studies and became an important artist, art educator and a professor of art. When Lowenfeld received the letter from the State Department informing him that his family had died in the concentration camps, he confided to his friend and read him the letter. Biggers stated (Heyd, 1999):

Now this was- this was one of the- again one of the most horrendous experiences I've ever had because a human being was telling me that his family- and he named them- were victims; they had been burned... And I had heard of neighbors whose- members of the families had been lynched. But I realized that race and color might not have any meaning at all when it comes to terrifying experiences in this world... I always felt a relationship with Viktor because he had shared this with me. I felt the relationship had truly crossed all country and racial barriers, so that those barriers were crossed now. (p.10):

A painting by the artist, *Crossing the Bridge* (1942), evoked commonalities across differences between the experiences of African-Americans and European Jews.

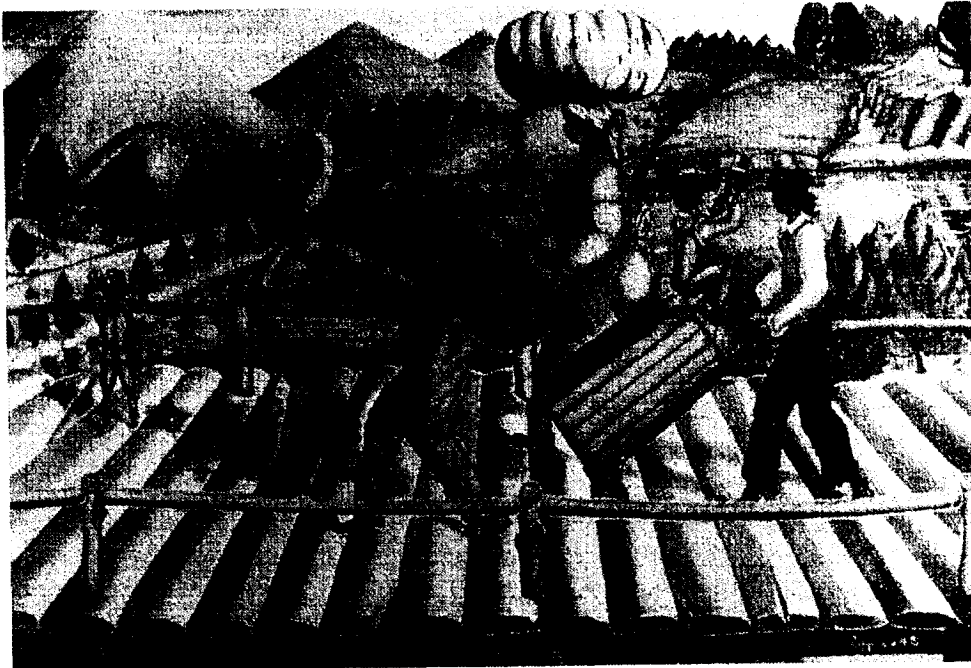


FIG. 2. John Biggers, *Crossing the Bridge* (1942), Oil on canvas, 30 1/2 x 45 1/2. Hampton University Museum, Virginia. Courtesy of John Biggers.

Figure 10: *Crossing the Bridge* artist: John Biggers as reproduced from Heyd. M. (1999). *Mutual Reflections: Jews and Blacks in American Art*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, p.11

Samella Lewis and Lowenfeld had a relationship based on mutual respect and caring.

Samella stated: "Viktor Lowenfeld was one of the most outstanding teachers, but I didn't acquiesce to everything he said. He allowed me to be combatant".

(www.stellajones.com/html/artists/slewis/lewis.htm) Lewis mentions that Lowenfeld selected twelve of his top students and focused on them. She recalls among the group besides herself were, John Biggers, Annabelle Baker and Persis Jennings. She said that most of his students went on to develop radical ideas about art and its purpose.

(www.stellajones.com/html/artists/slewis/lewis.htm)

Lewis completed a Bachelor of Science at Hampton in 1945. After a short time as instructor at Hampton, she went on to do a Masters and later a Ph.D at Ohio State University. From 1953-1958, she was chair of the art department at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) where she became a member of the NCAAP. Troubles started for her after designing a Christmas card for the group where she underlined the word "all" in the phrase "Peace on Earth, Good Will to all Men". She was accused of being a communist by the State of Florida. When her advisor from Ohio State University came down to give a lecture, he rode in the front seat as a passenger in Lewis's car while she was driving. Because it was a crime in the State of Florida at the time for a white and non-white person to sit together in the front seat, the police tried to serve Lewis with a subpoena. They could not find her and served her husband instead, who was subsequently fired from his job. The troubles affected her family through job and community and the Lewis' felt they would need to leave Florida. Lowenfeld, who was at Penn State at the time heard of her troubles and helped find her a position at the University of New York in Plattsburgh where she taught art history and humanities from 1958-1968. (www.stellajones.com/html/artists/slewis/lewis.htm)

Manuels for illiterate Navy Sailors

In one of Lowenfeld's boxes in the Archives at PSU, I found some documents that led me to believe that he was engaged in teaching illiterate African American servicemen at the U.S Naval training school in Hampton, Virginia. The assumption that the students were exclusively African American stems from the fact that the military practiced segregation.

The first of these publications is called *Seven Day Leave* which was for recruits who could speak English but were not able to read it. The books used the method of superimposition or placing the word on a transparent sheet directly on the object in order to facilitate the visualization of the word/symbol. Along with this manuscript was another titled *We Also Learn to Write*. This workbook contained examples of how to write a letter home. Another, *Bootie Mack*, was designed as a reader for sailors who had mastered the first steps of reading. Finally, *Boot Leave* was designed for sailors who had advanced beyond the first steps of reading and writing. All the manuals contain stories and illustrations that dealt particularly with sailor life and recruit training. These workbooks were prepared under the supervision of Miss Lilian Stevens, Dr. Viktor Lowenfeld, Dr. Arthur P. Davis and Samella Sanders (which was Samella Lewis's maiden name). Anna Belle Baker aided in the preparation of the booklet for publication, and John Biggers who at the time was one of the enlisted men who contributed ideas and illustrations.



THE BARRACKS

THESE ARE THE BARRACKS.

THIS IS BOOTIE MACK'S HOME.

HE LIVES IN THE BARRACKS.

HE STUDIES IN THE BARRACKS.

HE SLEEPS IN THE BARRACKS.

BOOTIE MACK MUST KEEP THE BARRACKS CLEAN.

HE CLEANS THE BUNKS.

HE CLEANS THE BULKHEAD.

HE CLEANS THE DECK.

BOOTIE MACK HAS FINISHED CLEANING THE BARRACKS.

HE IS TIRED BUT HE IS PROUD OF THE BARRACKS.

HE WILL KEEP THE BARRACKS CLEAN.

Figure 11: Page 1 as reproduced from *Bootie Mack*, Lowenfeld archives. Penn State Special Collections, date unknown

Problems at Hampton

According to Hollingsworth (1990), Lowenfeld experienced certain difficulties with the administration of the Hampton Institute who insisted that he respect and conform to the traditions of the school. As these traditions were based on the society of the time, Hollingsworth posits that Lowenfeld was under pressure to work within the constraints of a Jim Crow system that he did not believe in. This meant that he maintained a balance between jeopardizing his job and giving his students opportunities of learning. Professor Gilliard is quoted by Hollingsworth (1990) saying that Lowenfeld was asked to resign from Hampton because the board of trustees did not approve of him wanting to start an artist-in-residence program or as Gilliard describes it, a “one world of art” (p.183) which would bring in well known professional artists to work with his students. He mentions that Lowenfeld personally knew such artists as O’Keefe, Steiglitz and Falkner. According to Gilliard (Hollingsworth, 1990), this idea created controversy and Lowenfeld’s motives were questioned. Gilliard believed that “people felt threatened by him” (pg.183) and so the trustees encouraged Lowenfeld to leave Hampton Institute. However, other literature (Hubbard, 1985) suggests that Lowenfeld, after numerous requests for better housing and supplies for the art department finally left.

During his tenure at Hampton, Lowenfeld continued his research on visual and haptical, developed his philosophy on child art and wrote the first edition of *Creative and Mental Growth* which became the most popular textbook on art education ever written. The book dealt not only with child art and stages of development but also with the psychoanalytical aspects of child art and human development. He taught at Hampton six years before eventually going to Penn State University where he established the first major center for doctoral study and research in art education.

Lowenfeld probably found a more relaxed and tolerant atmosphere for African Americans at Penn State but there were still racial issues in the town of State College. Relations between Penn State students and the local population were upset by the racial discrimination practiced by town barbers. As early as 1899, African Americans had attended the university but did not arrive in major numbers until after World War II. Town barbers adamantly refused service to African Americans claiming that they would lose business from their white customers (*Daily Collegian*, Feb. 21, 1947, p.2). This provoked resentment of a significant number of students, especially ex-GIs, nearly all of the African American students were veterans. The American Veterans Committee on campus started a campaign to resolve the issue but it continued to be a problem for many years.

To the Students and Faculty Of Penn State:

A World War II combat veteran, wounded in action in Northern Italy, walked into a State College barber shop last Saturday afternoon and asked for a haircut. HE WAS REFUSED. The barber explained that, WHILE HE WAS NOT PERSONALLY OPPOSED TO CUTTING NEGROES' HAIR, HE COULD NOT DO SO UNTIL THE OTHER BARBERS IN TOWN AGREED TO DO THE SAME.

This is NOT the first time such an incident has occurred. Last year the State College Council on Racial Equality made several attempts to convince the barbers that they should make NO discrimination against Negro customers, but the effort was in vain. Even with a petition signed by almost 2,000 local residents and students promising to patronize shops that permitted Negro patronage, the barbers STILL REFUSED.

HOW DOES THIS SITUATION SQUARE WITH YOUR INTERPRETATION OF DEMOCRACY?

**THE STATE COLLEGE COUNCIL
ON RACIAL EQUALITY**

Figure 12: State College Council on Inequality as reproduced from the *Daily Collegian*,

February 17, 1948 p.3

The administration at Penn State was progressive on policies concerning black students³ but they had no official jurisdiction concerning the townspeople. Therefore standing as private citizens, a number of faculty joined non-racist town residents in forming the State College Council on Racial Equality in 1947. They in turn united with student groups to take legal action against the barbers but their action proved futile. Barbershops were not included under the Pennsylvania law which forbade racial discrimination in public places. After accompanying protests including a newly formed chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) the council raised funds to lease a space and hire their own barber but whether or not this worked is unknown. One of the complaints raised by Professor Mary Godfrey whom Lowenfeld had hired in 1957 was that she had to drive two hours to Harrisburg to get her hair done (Hollingsworth, 1990).

Lowenfeld at Penn State University- *Creative and Mental Growth*

The department that Lowenfeld created at Penn State consisted of professors of art education who were teachers, scholars, and artists simultaneously (Wilson, 2001). In Wilson's study of the history of the types of inquiry undertaken by art education graduate students, he found that in the beginning of the doctoral program most of the inquiry

³ They had already refused to have the College participate in several intercollegiate athletic contests, including a football game with the University of Miami, because Penn State's black athletes were not permitted to participate. Penn State became the first school in Cotton Bowl history to field a team that included blacks.

related to topics that conformed to Lowenfeld's conceptions of art education. He encouraged students to engage in quantitative research while, at the same time, impressing on his students to be sensitive to the whole child; this he believed was the central phenomena in studying children and their art. Research was conducted concerning children's artistic development, factors affecting art program outcomes, and the nature of creative abilities and processes. There were also some early doctoral candidates, such as John Biggers, who created murals as a part of their doctoral study.

The publication of Lowenfeld's book *Creative and Mental Growth* in 1947 had a major impact on the emerging field of art education. Lowenfeld believed the title of his book was characteristic of his contribution to art education (Raunft, 2001). He felt that it is very important to relate the child as an individual to his creative efforts, and that this relationship was what differentiated and distinguished the Fine Arts from Art Education. "Education implies that we educate through art; therefore the relationship between creative and mental growth is very important (Raunft, 2001; pg. 15)". The success of this book prompted several later editions; Lowenfeld (1947) revised two more editions; 1952 and 1957, then several other editions were written posthumously by a former student of his, Lambert Brittain.

Lowenfeld's research contributions empirically grounded the developmental stages of children through their artistic activity. In the book, this development is explained in detail from the scribbling stages of preschoolers up to the realism of adolescence.

Lowenfeld believed that the drawings and sculptures of children could be indications of

the strengths and weaknesses of a child's awareness of themselves and their environment; and that continued motivations towards discovery could aid in the development of other areas of growth. Lowenfeld offered ways to motivate art production so that growth on several levels could be made and assessed. Each stage in the child's development had qualities that were evident in the artistic activity that the child engaged in through motivated artwork.

The book gave art teachers and general teachers several concepts. It is important to note that Lowenfeld was especially writing to general teachers because he recognized that it was often general teachers who were teaching art in the classroom. Of these concepts were the child as an individual in his or hers own growth; expectations of different age and development levels; and how art production, children's perceptions and concepts change through their individual development. For some teachers, they were given legitimacy; the right to accept their student's artwork as legitimate processes of their whole educational development. By taking away the pressure on art specialists to create "good" art products, the book gave art teachers confidence that their field's contribution towards the whole educational process was important, demonstrating the contribution of art education to education as a whole.

Lowenfeld's philosophical concerns

The Lowenfeld Lectures (Michaels, 1982) is a compilation of thirty-one class lectures that former student Ruth Abell recorded during the summer of 1958. It was edited by John

Michaels of Miami University in Ohio and then published by Pennsylvania State University Press. This valuable work is an insight into the classroom of Dr. Lowenfeld and quite intriguing when following along with his textbook *Creative and Mental Growth* because the reader can try to imagine what it might have been like as a student sitting in his class. The tapes are available for listening at the PSU archives.

These lectures provided me with an idea about the kinds of issues such as religious, racial and social that provoked Lowenfeld's opinions. One can see the undertones of his attitudes toward American society and the role he felt that education and art had to offer in response. They reveal a person who is democratic in his outlook and very concerned with the freedom of the individual. Although the rhetoric of freedom and the individual is constant throughout this period on many levels of culture, I suggest that there is a possibility that Lowenfeld in his philosophy of art education might have co-opted this jargon to advance the cause of art education of which I will discuss later in the chapter.

There are some consistent themes that run through the dialogue of practically all of Lowenfeld's lectures: The unfolding of creative abilities according to one's individual differences; Medium- the difference between procedure and technique; Self identification- mental health and mass experience; Fostering sensibilities-the concern about materialism; and, The components of growth that make up the whole person.

Unfolding creative abilities according to one's own individual differences

Lowenfeld argued that the art educator's most important contribution to the world was to unfold creative abilities according to one's own individual differences. He said it was necessary for art education to be recognized as important to the development of the whole person. Art education, he wrote, had a special role in this development and if it was not included as an integral part of the curriculum, it would suffer. He posited that an education that restricted individuality went against the tradition of what a democratic society was supposed to be fostering. He made remarks about not understanding children as unique individuals; a form of discrimination much like the discrimination of Jews, Negroes, and Catholics that was a part of his era. He made references about the regimentation of communist and fascist regimes on the education of their young people; that when teachers promote a regimentation of stereotypes, they actually engage in fascism by indoctrinating towards one way of thinking and excluding the individual and their differences. One point that brought much controversy was Lowenfeld's opinion that workbooks and coloring books were also a form of fascism because they forced children into a sameness of expression and thus disregarded one of the most important principles of democratic teaching; that is to give the child an opportunity for individual differences and an opportunity to express himself as an individual (La Porte, 1997). Materials such as this give the child no choice but to blindly obey and fill in the regimented outlines. This, he claimed, were the conditions of a totalitarian existence and that adults were unwarily conditioning children to be dependent by using these practices. The unwanted result was that when children would be faced with the opportunity to use their freedom or

creativity, they would become frustrated and helpless (Lowenfeld, 1950). This idea of freedom, a popular concept at a time when wars were being fought to protect it, runs throughout his class lectures. Lowenfeld held that the interference of the adult's will on a child's creativity would in the end prove meaningless to the child's development inhibiting the possibility of meaningful learning and individual growth.

Procedure and technique

This was not to say that adults should not interfere at all in the classroom. Lowenfeld stressed the difference between procedure and technique. Procedure was defined as something that should be developed and taught. Technique on the other hand, was considered individual and personal. Each individual develops procedure according to a unique and personal technique. This approach he claimed fostered sensitivity to the medium used to create, allowing the child to identify with it and be comfortable with it on a personal level. Developing these sensibilities would eventually result in a desired quality of art and aesthetic in the product but this was not a means to an end. The most important in the child's discovery was through the process. Productive interference was accomplished in a way that discovery could be facilitated; ideas were introduced to the child so that he or she could make relations and connections with their own experiences; social, sensory and emotional.

Therefore, although Lowenfeld valued the aesthetic and art history, for him it was not the first priority for the field at that point in time. He said, "If we do not now take into our

hands what society actually provides for us- namely, the opportunity to promote creativeness in our students- I believe we have failed in our own profession. So, we may promote the aesthetic experience; indeed, we should now be very, very active in telling and showing the world how, by means of aesthetic experience, we can help to unfold creativeness in general.” (Michaels, 1982; pg.335)

Self identification for a peaceful society- mental health and mass experience

Lowenfeld stated that in education the most important component of teaching was to be able to self identify with the needs of one’s students and to teach students to self identify with the needs of each other. This idea of teaching with empathy and possessing empathy runs through his entire philosophy. By educating future teachers to promote this awareness of the self in their teaching, they would develop individuals who would be sensitive to others and their environment. According to Lowenfeld, individuals who were free to explore their own sensibilities became adults who were balanced, caring and responsible citizens. He remarked that at the time, the United States had the largest percentage of emotional and mental ill of any nation in spite of its high standard of living. As mentioned before, this phenomenon is reflected in the sales of prescription tranquilizers that were popular at the time. He held that this was a time in which education needed to provide meaningful experiences to children so that when they became adults they would not seek other negative means to satisfy themselves; means that were not conducive to their mental health. He said that art education could promote self confidence and inner security which he claimed were the major factors that gave

people the ability to live together in peace. “If we are to evolve socially into a peace loving world community, the individuals of this world community must first of all be well-adjusted in themselves.”(Lowenfeld, 1949; p.75)

Lowenfeld (1951) often commented on the negative effects of mass production and mass education on the ability for self identification. He made comments about the effects of mass experiences, how television was replacing creative leisure activity, and suppressing the individual. He stated,

One of the great difficulties responsible for the internal confusion under which our world suffers is that the people who live in this world to a great extent have lost their ability to identify themselves with their own experiences and also with those of their neighbours (p.1).

He saw the reason for this increasing lack of ability for self-identification in certain trends that were becoming apparent in industry and education at the time. He faulted mass production and mass education for not stimulating or contributing to individual self-identification. Lowenfeld claimed that people’s lives and their ability for self-identification had become almost identical with the ability to live together in a peaceful society. He was convinced that for the well-being of the individual, there needs to be an ability to identify with one’s actions and that the ability to understand the needs of other’s is essential for good cooperation and the well-being of the whole. The ability to have empathy for others- identifying oneself with their work and the needs of others- was in Lowenfeld’s mind the ultimate key to the survival of mankind.

Developing sensitivities-materialism

Lowenfeld firmly held that the art educator had an important position within this construct.

One of the most important things which art educators should do for man is to make him more sensitive- sensitive to his own problems and sensitive to the environment... An art education which does not promote these sensitivities is not an art education. It just makes sure that someone is promoting materialistic values, which is against everything in our philosophy... We must be sensitive to our sensory experiences; we must use the senses to refine them in their usage. Sensitivity to a sensory experience is called sensory perception. This means perception also to environment, especially to nature... Social sensitivity is sensibilities that we should develop concerning the needs of others. This also comes strongly into the teaching profession ((Michaels, 1982; pp. 331-339).

He claimed that one of the major concerns of art education should be its effect on both the individual and society. He stated that “On its promotion the very future of our youth depend, for nothing less is at stake, but its ability to live as well-balanced human beings, cooperatively in their society (1951, p.1)” In regards to the importance of aesthetic and the value with which education policy was showing art education, he firmly believed that

art education needed to respond to society at that point in time in order to secure an important place in the curriculum. He stated:

We have something much more important to give; an opportunity to unfold creative abilities according to one's own individual differences. The most important sensitivity is the sensitivity towards one's own needs. Many of us bury this sensitivity and surround ourselves with meaningless other things (Michaels, 1982; p. 332).

He saw the evidence of materialism in American culture and felt that it was detrimental to the education of the individual. Lecture 26 (Michaels, 1982) opens with the scholar saying:

Art education should not involve using a theory of education which emphasizes our standard of living, no matter how high it may be. We should look at our standard of living from a different angle. Our standard of living is what we get out of life, and this is something entirely different, independent of the material wealth and value with which we surround ourselves. (pg.331)

He repeated constantly in his lectures the opinion that society's values were based on material values. He was against the urgency that people expressed in accumulating wealth and material items because he held that these were becoming replacements for meaningful experiences and meaning in life.

This was indeed a time of intense consumption. Americans were encouraged to spend on luxuries that before were considered frivolous compared to earlier generations who had lived through the depression years and after during the frugality of the war years. This activity was to stimulate the economy and was important for its well being. Economists were concerned that the end of WWII would result in the same way as the First World War, with an enormous recession and finally another depression era. For many, this caused great anxiety. This rise in materialism was of great concern for Lowenfeld because this consumer behaviour was a relatively recent trend and actually one that would not have been part of his experience, having grown up poor and experiencing two World Wars. Perhaps he saw the implications of such activity on the attitudes and behaviours of the culture.

Components of developmental growth

Lowenfeld listed several components that were necessary in the development of the whole child. His analogy of this make up was that if one would put all of these components in a bottle, much like ingredients and then shook it up, one would find differences much like the kinds of differences that make up a person. He felt that the neglect of the educational system to focus on developmental components such as ability for emotional growth, the ability to use one's senses (perceptual growth), the ability to organize things harmoniously (aesthetic growth), and the ability to cooperate and live in a society so that one could make contributions and recognize the needs of others (social growth) was evident in the current social ills of the time. The contribution that art

education could make to the educational system would be to develop these components of growth for a better society.

One can only speculate how Lowenfeld would have evolved in his thinking as the culture changed.

However, time would not give Lowenfeld the opportunity to change. Apparently he suffered from a chronic heart condition because according to Hollingsworth's (1990) interview with Mrs. Lowenfeld, her husband suffered his first heart attack at the age of 36 while teaching at Hampton. He had at least two more during his Penn State tenure. One at home which is described later in Chapter 6 and then finally in March 1960 he collapsed while addressing the University Senate regarding the importance of art education courses as a requirement for elementary education teachers as these requirements were in jeopardy of being eliminated. He went into a coma and never spoke again. Ten days later he died at the age of 57.

Impact and charisma

After learning more about Lowenfeld, who was quite young to live with such a condition, I came to the assumption that as he knew that his life was so tenuous, he knew that he needed to live it fully. He was so impassioned about appreciating one's sensory experiences. This intensity was especially reflected in his lectures. I believe that this

information is important to the type of person Lowenfeld was as well as the intensity with which he gave to his work.

There are many accounts given on the impact of Lowenfeld (see Beittel; Hausman; Madenfort; Mattil; Saunders; Edwards; Michaels, 1982). That Lowenfeld was like a magnet for the art educators and teachers to Penn State the first summer he came on campus in 1946 is told by many.

In 2002, Kenneth Biettel (<http://www.sova.psu.edu/arted/program/historical/beittel.htm>), on the occasion of receiving the Alumni Achievement award at PSU reflected on his years at Penn State.

I met Lowenfeld when I heard him lecture on the murals that had been done under him that summer. Included was one by John Biggers, who followed him up from Hampton Institute, where Lowenfeld taught. Immediately I fell under Lowenfeld's charismatic intensity and deep sense of mission. It was then that I was certain I was making the right career choice. In the ministry, they would say that I "got the call" (Beittel, 2002).

LOWENFELD, Dr. Viktor , Professor of Art Education (Appointment effective in 1946)

818990

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL STATUS:

Name and address: Viktor Lowenfeld
Hampton Institute 1014 S. Atterton Str.
Hampton, Virginia State College.

Date of Birth: March 21, 1903, at Linz, Austria, (married)

Citizenship: American

EDUCATION:

Schools: Matriculation at Secondary School, 1921,
Viennese "Kunstgewerbeschule" (College
of Fine Arts) 1921-25.

University: Art Academy of Vienna (University) 1925-26
University at Vienna, Philosophical Faculty
1921-28, University in Technical Science.

Degree: Diploma of Academy of Art, 1926.
Degree of "Professor der Kunsterziehung"
(Professor of Art Education) from the
University of Vienna, 1928,

PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCES

1924-28 Instructor in Art Education at
Chajes-Real-Gymnasium, Vienna,

Teaching: 1928-1938 Professor of Art and Chairman
of Art Department at Chajes-Real-Gym-
nasium, Vienna.

1924-1938 Director of Art at the "Vienna
Institute for the Blind", "Hohe Warte".

1938 Research at Perkins-Institution for
the Blind, Watertown, Mass.

1939 Consultant Psychologist at Lochland
Institute, Geneva, N.Y.

1939-1942 Associate Professor of Art at
Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia.

1942-¹⁹⁴⁶ Professor of Art, Chairman of Art
Department, Hampton Institute.

1943 Vice-President of Board of Trustees
of Virginia Art Alliance, of the state of
Virginia.

1946 - Professor of Art Education
the Pennsylvania State College

Continued

LECTURED AT:

Columbia University, New York.
Harvard University
New York University
Smith College
Worcester State Hospital
American Association on Mental Deficiency.
Childhood Education Association.
Eastern Arts Association
Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond
Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences.
Fogg Museum of Art, Cambridge, Mass.
Fine Arts Club of Teachers College,
Columbia U., Etc.

EXHIBITIONS:

1926-1938 of own work in Vienna and Paris.
1940 Creative Activity of the Mentally
Handicapped. Arranged for the con-
vention of the American Assoc. on
Mental Deficiency.
1940 Visual and Non-Visual Art-expression
in Museum of Modern Art, New York.
1941-1943 Same Exhibit circulated by the
American Federation of Arts, and shown
at:
San Francisco, Museum of Art
Kansas University Gallery
Art Gallery of Smith College
Fogg Museum of Harvard University
Columbia University
University Gallery of Minnesota
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond
Norfolk Museum of Art
Mint Museum at Charlotte, etc.
1943 The Arts in Therapy, partly arranged
for Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.
1943 The Meaning of Visual Test--Shown
at Museum of Modern Art, N.Y.

TESTS:

Integration of successive impressions Test.
A series of tests designed for the U.S.
Air Forces.

Tests of Visual and Haptic Aptitude.
American Journal of Psychology.

PUBLICATIONS

See other pages.

CRITICAL REMARKS

See other pages.

- Plastische Arbeiten Blinder. Die Entstehung der Plastik. Published by Rudolf M. Rohrer. Vienna, Leipzig, 1934. 216 pp. with numerous illustrations.
- Blindenplastik. Published by Blindenjahrbuch, Berlin, Charlottenburg, 1937. 96 pp. with illustrations.
- The Nature of Creative Activity. Published by Kegan Paul, London, 1938. 272 XIII pp. with numerous illustrations also in color.
- The Nature of Creative Activity. American Edition. Published by Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1939, New York. 272 XIII pp.
- Self-Adjustment through Creative Activity. American Journal of Mental Deficiency. Vol. XLV, 1940 18 pp. with illustrations.
- The Meaning of Creative Activity in the Education of the Deaf-Blind. Published by the American Foundation for the Blind. 1940. 5 pp. with illustrations.
- Sculpture by the Blind, Art Education Today. 1939. Teachers College, Columbia University, with illustrations.
- The Experience of Haptic Space and Shape. Outlook for the Blind 1939, American Foundation for the Blind, New York. 4pp.
- Education for the Handicapped. The Harvard Educational Review March 1940. Harvard University.
- Provision for the Adequate Expression of Ideas and the Growth of Individuals. Bulletin of the Eastern Arts Association April 1940.
- The Crisis of Adolescence to be seen in Creative Activity. Bulletin of Eastern Arts Association. January 1941. 4pp.
- Modelling as a Means of Self-Expression in Schools for the Blind. Editorial in the Harvard Educational Review. Jan. 1942. Harvard University.
- Creative Activity of the Mentally Handicapped. Exhibition arranged for the Convention of the American Association on Mental Deficiency. 1940 in Atlantic City.
- Visual and Non-Visual Art Expression. Exhibition arranged for the Museum of Modern Art with own material. New York 1940. Since that circulated by the American Federation of Arts; shown in: San Francisco Museum of Art; Kansas University Gallery; Art Gallery of Smith College; Fogg Museum of Harvard University; Columbia University; The University Gallery of Minnesota; The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; Norfolk Museum of Art; Mint Museum at Charlotte; etc.

List of Publications Cont'd.

2.

Integration of Successive Impressions Tests. Designed for the U.S. Air Forces. 1943.

The Arts in Therapy. Exhibition partly arranged. Museum of Modern Art.

Art Especially designed for disabled soldiers, sailors and marines. New York 1943.

The Meaning of Visual Tests. Arranged for the Museum of Modern Art. New York 1943.

The Blind Make Us See. October 1943. Magazine of Art. Published by the American Federation of Arts.

Modern Negro Art. "Crisis" May 1944, New York. 2pp.

New Negro Art. "Design", September 1944, 3pp.

New Negro Art Expression in America. Published by the Madison Quarterly. January 1945.

Tests on Visual and Haptic Aptitude. 12 pp. Published by American Journal of Psychology. January 1945.

*"Art Psychology Applied". A Textbook on Art Education
in preparation with The Macmillan Company
N.Y. (probable date of publication Spring 1947.)*

Critical Remarks on the work of Viktor Lowenfeld

THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN March 2, 1939 - "Lowenfeld's work breaks new ground. Its importance is not, however, restricted to the newness of its special material. It has far reaching implications."

Dr. Herbert Read in THE LISTENER, April 1939 - "The significance of Lowenfeld's work for aesthetics or the science of art is fundamental and should cause something like a sensation in the learned world."

THE TEACHERS' FORUM November 1939 - "Professor Lowenfeld has made a contribution of the utmost importance to the psychology of the arts and the field of child creativity..."

PARNASSUS November 1939 - "Lowenfeld's analysis has great importance for general psychology as well as the psychology of art. This serious and fundamental research on a basic aspect of art is one which deserves careful study not only by aestheticians and psychologists, but also by teachers of drawing, painting and sculpture..."

THE HARVARD EDUCATIONAL REVIEW May 1940 "Lowenfeld does for the drawing of children what Piaget has done for their thinking..."

THE NEW YORK TIMES February 11, 1940 - "The distinctions between impressionism and expressionism have been endlessly discussed and one theory has followed another. The real solutions to such problems entail experimental evidence--the type of data which Dr. Lowenfeld presents..."

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH BULLETIN May 1940 - "This important work should be available to every art teacher to express creatively their developing relationship to the world about them. Art teachers, who teach children to make pictures that suit adult criteria of tests - well we hope that they see it too."

THE PSYCHOLOGY BULLETIN June 1940 - It is a fascinating collection of material, quite apart from the sound and stimulating interpretation which accompanies it..."

OUTLOOK FOR THE BLIND April 1939 - "The Nature of Creative Activity could have been written only by an artist with exceptional psychological insight, originality, and depth of thought..."

ALBERT EINSTEIN writes - March 1939 - "In Lowenfeld's work a fine sense of understanding, systematic spirit and unprejudiced research are combined..."

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA NEWS January 11, 1941 - "Lowenfeld's results are extraordinary and stimulating. Blind individuals in their art products show a conviction and strength that is superlative..."

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR October 23, 1941 - "The Fogg Museum Exhibition deepens the understanding of artistic enterprise, and provides an answer to critics who fail to grasp the solvent characteristics of the intuitive, creative, fanciful effort. The exhibition is carefully arranged and documented by Viktor Lowenfeld."

Figure 13: Viktor Lowenfeld's Curriculum Vitae as reproduced from the Lowenfeld Archives. Penn State Special Collections

Chapter 7

Dr. Edward Mattil

In April 1960, when Viktor Lowenfeld passed away, Dr. Edward Mattil took over the position as department head. Mattil's career is long and rich with information. Perhaps one of his most significant contributions to the field of art education was in 1965, when he organized the Penn State Seminar in Research and Curriculum Development (Mattil, 1965; Stewart, 1986). This seminar was to stimulate research in art education by bringing in recent graduates with seasoned professionals to talk about research interests and possibilities.

This chapter contains a fairly brief biography on the life and career of Dr. Edward Mattil, a look at his philosophy from his book, *Meaning In Crafts*, as well as the contents of the two transcribed interviews.

Biography

Mattil was born November 25th, 1918 and grew up in the Central Pennsylvania area. He moved to State College at the age of junior high school. His older brother, upon graduation from high school, had received a 50\$ scholarship to go to Penn State in 1931. This was a good opportunity for the family as the stock market crash that preceded the depression caused, as in most other households nationwide, dramatic changes in the family's situation. Mr. Mattil (Edward's father) was jobless like many other men and

was often on the road searching for any work he could find. When the older son received the scholarship, the whole family benefited from the opportunity and chose to move to State College where they rented a large house in which Mrs. Mattil opened a boarding house. A room plus three meals a day, seven days a week cost \$8.50. Mattil remembers his mother cooking for 60-80 people a day with one full time helper and students washing dishes and waiting on tables (Raunft, 2001). The success of her boarding house most likely stemmed from the fact that Penn State was experiencing its most severe student housing shortage ever at this time and due to the economic depression, budgets for building more housing were unstable.

When Mattil was a sophomore in college at Penn State he enjoyed working with kids as an assistant director at the local playground in the summer before classes started. By the third year of school, he was firmly committed to becoming an art teacher. At the time, the art education program at PSU had no full time faculty and they were situated in the department of Home Economics. The university would bring in specially qualified people from the profession to teach during each summer session. He completed his undergraduate degree as well as the required teacher training. In Mattil's biography, he mentions that the first year that he was out of college and looking for a teaching position, he could not find one. When he realized that he would be unemployed with no money to continue studies, he knew that he could at least live with his parents. He described the situation in a speech:

I went to the Supervising Principal of the State College Schools and made him an offer he couldn't refuse. I would work for no pay if he would allow me to teach in the Junior High School. The only thing that I asked was that if a job opened up anywhere during the year, he would release me to take it, and that if I did a good job, he would write me a letter of recommendation. I decided that I would compete through experience to get a job. He agreed and I began under the guidance of my former high school art teacher, Kathryn Royer (Raunft, 2001, pg. 160).

He finally was offered a position in Cumberland, Md. which he described as horrible because of discipline problems and horrendous budget issues (described in the interview). This lasted one year when he was thankfully offered a job in Wallingford, Pa. which he enjoyed thoroughly. This appointment however was cut short. Due to the draft, Mattil was one of those young men called into the US Army at the end of the spring term of 1942. In the Army Mattil spent three and a half years, first as a drill sergeant and then as an artist making textbook illustrations and operating a silk screen shop. His remaining time was spent trying to help rehabilitate badly wounded soldiers at a large general hospital (Raunft, 2001).

At the close of hostilities, with a wife and son to support, Mattil returned to Penn State on the GI Bill devoting his summers to complete a Master's degree in Fine Art. During the school year, he was able to teach at Wallingford. The GI Bill allowed returning soldiers to pursue studies as long as they started not later than four years after the date of

discharge or the termination of the War, whichever came last and that the studies do not go beyond nine years after the termination of the War. The Bill provided for tuition and subsistence including extra for soldiers with families.

During the summer of 1945 Mattil took an elective class with the visiting professor, Dr. Viktor Lowenfeld and decided to stay and continue studies with him. When Lowenfeld lectured, he wanted the students to just listen rather than take notes. Then at the end of the class he would dictate the notes (Raunft, 2001).

In 1947, Mattil was offered a position as head of the art department of the State College area schools. He taught art at the high school as well. He was also in charge of the art programs in the outlying schools as the district had just absorbed five smaller school districts that were adjacent to the borough. During this time, he concentrated primarily on establishing good art programs in the one room school houses outside of town.

In 1951 Mattil went full time to Penn State because of the growing demands on his time. He started the children's art classes on campus for ages 5 to 16. All the art education students worked as teachers during the semester prior to their formal student teaching assignments off campus. There were usually eight to ten groups of about ten to fifteen children with three student teachers per group. One teacher presented the assignment, another assisted and the third made careful written observations based on specific assignments. Each Wednesday they had a planning session and an evaluation session after each Saturday class. In 1952, Mattil did a short film *Meaning in Child Art* based on these Saturday classes. This film shows how relationships of children to themselves and

their environment can be developed in children's art classes. It stresses how the process through which they go is more important than the final product. Growth of sensitivity to themselves and the environment allows children to become involved with their own expression.

In 1953, Mattil was one of the first to earn a doctorate in art education at Penn State for his thesis "A study to determine the relationships between the creative products of children, ages 11 to 14, and their adjustment". He was then asked by Lowenfeld to join the faculty on a full-time basis. In 1960, when Lowenfeld died from complications resulting from a stroke, he left Mattil to head the department. Mattil describes the years that he studied and worked with Lowenfeld as the highlights of his professional life.

Meaning In Crafts

In his book, *Meaning in Crafts*, Mattil (1959;1965) shows examples of craft ideas that suggest ways to develop a strong crafts program. Addressing mostly general teachers who would be stepping out of their element in doing art, he encouraged them not to be intimidated by introducing crafts in their practice. His book explains the benefits of doing crafts based upon an understanding of the historical relevance and meaning of crafts in elementary education. It was written at a time when the importance of creative thinking was in the minds of leaders in all fields. This was mainly due to the scientific and technological advancements that Russia had made in their space program.

For Mattil, creative development was very important at the elementary level because it allowed for more exploration, discovery and invention when the individual was older, more skilled and knowledgeable. He remarked that the word art has many meanings and in the spectrum of elementary education and he contemplates the notion of substituting the word “art” for “creative activity” (p.1) because Western adult notions of art are product-based and focus on individual technique. Mattil believed that the creative activities of young people are focused on procedures and choice-making and that when the teacher implements technique, it inhibits the developmental process because it becomes a product of the teacher’s making. He thought that technique was impossible to teach because it simply grows out of the child’s need for self-expression. He stresses the importance of an elementary program that is process based instead of product centered because he felt that the product is simply a record of that process. Mattil believed that projects should be open-ended with room to work independently to develop the child’s own skills and to express themselves in an individual way. However, the teacher must take an active presence in stimulating the child’s thinking and to engage the child to reach new levels in their exploration. He felt that the best programs were ones that allow the child to think freely and to work independently and that the preservation and fostering of creative thinking and working in children should be the most important goal of education, not just art education.

The underlying philosophy of the book was that crafts give opportunities for growth by the originality of ideas and choices. Socially, crafts help in the ability to work in collaboration with others at times or in cooperation with others. Physically, crafts teach

by increasing motor skills and hand eye coordination. Emotionally, it fosters the ability to identify with one's own work, and aesthetically, in the increasing sensitivity to ideas and feelings through materials.

Influences and Philosophy

In Mattil's autobiographical lecture and in the interview, he mentions a professor that he had before Lowenfeld named Dr. Leon Loyal Winslow. Winslow, he says, wrote one of the first art education texts that included research (Raunft 2001, p.159). Winslow believed that all lessons should be balanced between what he referred to as directed activities and creative activities. The teacher gives directions on the use of the media and then the children create to their individual motivations. Mattil stated that he also taught like that. "I never piled materials on a table and assumed that by some miracle the children would "create". I always try to prepare my classes by offering background information, instructions in the use of whatever materials we are using, and then I try to stimulate their imaginations so that they will dig into their own minds and experiences to create something very individual and personal". He goes on to say that, "I am not of the school of thought that thinks that a child will be damaged if a teacher shows him or her how to hold a brush or apply some paste. Damage to children is more likely to occur through allowing them to fail time after time because of a teacher's unwillingness to intercede at the time a child needs help or guidance" (Raunft 2001,p.159).

Mattil was very pragmatic in that he strongly connected his theory with practice. One does not get the idea that he safely tucked himself away in the ivory tower of Penn State. His testimony of his experiences as a teacher shows that he was very “down to earth” in his approach. This came through in his ability to secure materials with which to run his programs, his ability as an art supervisor to fill in for the teachers that practiced in the one room school houses that were still a part of the State College School District where he worked. In his book, he claims that an arts and crafts program is not solely dependant on money; it can be put together with simply a teacher’s wish to have a worthwhile program because materials can be scrap if there is no other source. Some art teachers might scratch their heads at a statement such as this however, judging from the following interview, Mattil lived it.

Conversation with Dr. Edward Mattil February 23, 2005 at his residence in State College

[Myself] One of the things that- just going back to where we were- it’s about teacher’s being significant and how it sort of formed... I mean, we learn by experience also but there are figures that come by that are-

[Mattil] Well, I think one of the most significant experiences that I had was... The first year that I taught was a nightmare and I thought if I have to go back to that, I wouldn’t stay in teaching. It was so awful. We had a budget of 25 cents per year per child, no materials and classes that were so over-sized; it just was dreadful.

That was outside of State College right?

That was in Cumberland, Maryland. And a man came in one day- I had just finally gotten order in the class and they were great big kids that were twice as big as me that scared me half to death and nothing to work with but I had finally gotten control where they were listening to me and a man came in the back of the room and I thought, Oh my gosh! He’s gonna discipline me for something, for being tough on the kids or something and at the end of the class he said, “Would you like to come to work for me?” And I said, “Where”? And he said, “Wallingford, Pennsylvania.” And I said, “Well, I sure would like to look at it”. And so the following weekend, I hitchhiked to Wallingford from Cumberland and

was hired for the following year. But the summer before I started to teach at Wallingford they asked me if I would conduct a playground for all Black children, African-American children. And I said, "Yes, I would do that"; But again, with very little to work with.

Conduct a playground-

It was a playground in Media, South Media. And the children were all Black children. I started scrounging. I had an old 1934 Ford and I would use my weekends to go into Philadelphia or suburbia, find factories where I could get scrap felt or scrap yarn or anything that was throwaway and bring it back. And that's where I learned to do a lot of crafts.

And were you already, at that point when you started teaching there, had you just done your bachelors at Penn State?

I had done my bachelors at Penn State.

Okay, so that was pre-Lowenfeld right?

That was pre-Lowenfeld. And when I got, I had a year there before I met Lowenfeld and when I was finishing my masters degree in fine arts I took a class with Lowenfeld in 1946 and it was after the war. I had been in the army for 3 1/2 years thereabouts and Viktor was so inspiring. I tell you he just- we hung on every word he spoke. He was just...

Yeah I've been reading the Lowenfeld lectures and I really feel that there is something about his social conscious that speaks to me. I can almost imagine him sitting at a table with Martin Luther King.

Oh, he could. And he would be comfortable with anyone. And really, he could hold his own with anyone too. But always if they differed, he always said, "We may differ but we always part with a hug". He was a wonderful, wonderful man. His book when it hit, it just brought art education alive to people. People doing very good art education and I think I was doing very good art education. But I didn't understand a lot of things that Viktor opened my eyes to and to everybody else. He would go to speak with any group who asked him. If it were only four people, he would do it. And he didn't put the profession in shock, but he enlightened them so much with that book. And he was off to California, off to Washington, off to Europe lecturing.

One of the boxes I went through at special collections was the correspondence with the people that were inviting him to speak and also, there was even a sculpture; one of the sculptures that he brought back from when he worked with the blind children in Europe. There were also the letters that you had to write to people when he had his stroke in April of 1960. I also listened to one of his lectures. I listened to his voice just because I wanted to hear it. You can read something but to have the- to just hear the tone of his voice...

Oh, he was an absolute charming and very kind and loving man. And if he were to meet you for the first time and if you wanted to talk with him, he would be all ears. He wouldn't be trying to sign papers and look at his watch and shuffling. He gave you a hundred percent, a hundred and ten percent of his attention.

Do you think that you taught differently because of him?

No, no I was on the right track but he helped me to understand a lot more about myself and my teaching.

Like what?

Well, I was able to observe things that I hadn't observed before. I paid attention as particularly with the children's art classes and where we could watch, not a sequence necessarily, but if we had the kids for 10 or 12 weeks in a row, we would watch to see and look to see where they came in and kept a record of and how much growth and change that had taken place and how much more observant they were and how much more attentive they were. And I wasn't research oriented like Ken. Ken was really a research person. I wasn't, but I think that Lowenfeld opened my eyes to a lot of things that otherwise I might not have observed. But I was always I feel a good teacher and I got good results. Cause what you said earlier on, when people make mistakes those are learning experiences or so-called mistakes. And we learn from the things that the people think are mistakes contrary to the people who want to keep inside the lines always or make sure that we cut everything the way it is supposed to be cut. I am going to recommend two other books that are very old ones that you should just read- they are easy reading both of them. One is Natalie Cole. Do you?...

Yeah I took out one of her books and right now am trying to remember the title of it. You had mentioned her when we were on the phone.

And Cizek...

She (Cole) was in L.A right? In California? Is that the book

Lowenfeld didn't like her at work and he didn't agree with her at all.

He felt she was too directive in her approach. I liked her because I could learn from her the kind of warmth and humanity that was part of her make up that could draw things out of children. He didn't like the fact that she wanted things big or wanted things to 'bump the edges' - those were terms that sometimes she used, "Now let's make sure that our picture bumps the edges!", and he felt that it was a little too directed but I have watched her teach and the warmth and humanity and the kind of love that she exuded in her teaching. And, that is part of good teaching too.

And Cizek, now he was a predecessor of Viktor in Austria and his work was really quite directed too. But, he got wonderful work from the children, and I believe that there are times in your teaching that you have to give some directions and have some expectations

that help to guide them and move them through whatever the process is that you are attempting to do.

So did Viktor agree with the way that you taught?

I guess so. He used to come in and watch when we had our children's classes and we never had any disagreement. In fact, he was always coming in. I shouldn't say always, but frequently coming in, and seeing a finished piece a child had done and "Oh I'd like that for my book!", and take it away. We did good things and it was a great learning experience for our young people and it was a good learning experience for me. No, Viktor was never in any way critical of my teaching.

So where did you learn all the processes that you have in your book?

It started with that Black playground and then enlarged. I tell you in the beginning of the chapters of the second to the last book I have, there is always a little bit about whatever medium we are going to work in. For instance, look at the chapter on masks, for example. I haven't looked at that book in so long I wouldn't know what is in there anyway.

Okay Chapter 8...

And, what I tried to do in so many ways was, I looked upon the art and crafts that have been kind of universal. Painting, sculpture, masks and all sorts of things, and tried to relate- give the teacher some background that this is not necessarily something new that we are going to do. We are continuing a process which civilized people have been doing for thousands of years. They have been making masks. They have been making sculptures but we... and try to give them something to wet their appetite, to look at the significance of what masks had- where they had meaning in Africa or Indonesia or Japan or wherever. Then, I sought out illustrations from museums of pieces like that to show and, I just feel that art is a continuity. Although, sometimes I think we are dropping off the edge with some of the stuff I have seen.

Like what?

Well, when I see an installation in Dallas museum where someone brings in a truck load of sand and piles it in the corner of a gallery or wheel two wheelbarrows full of broken glass or laying stepping stones across a gallery floor and calling that an installation. It doesn't turn me on. Art has to speak to me somehow and, by the way, while you are here. Did you know the Palmer's?

I didn't know them personally, no, but I did see the show up at the museum now?

You saw the show? Isn't that a good show?

Yeah, I was extremely taken by the "Devil as a Tailor,"... The Witkin. Yeah, they have a beautiful collection.

Well, it is a very well thought out collection. And I just wrote to Barbara yesterday and told her how much I thought about it and that collection really spoke to me and it is a pretty wonderful collection. That isn't all of her collection. She has much, much more. She has Ashcan school, almost everyone in that. They have been very generous to share that.

So you believe that there has to be a certain aesthetic that has to be put forth to the kids They have to understand that they want to make something that means something to them, that has a certain... that speaks to them.

That is how I have collected. By the way, I have given my collection to the museum and not a lot of it on display at any one time. But from time to time, if you have been through the museum, you have probably seen pieces that I have given them. In the first gallery there is an icon, 18th century icon. And, a lot of the African stuff I gave them. And, the African gold weights and a lot of prints, a lot of good prints, contemporary prints and some old prints. Quite a number of WPA pieces too. So I gave them, well this piece belongs to them, this tapestry but I borrowed it back from them recently, because I felt I'd like to see it again. And they let me have it back.

When I went up the other day, I just went in and I saw the Palmer collection and then I left because I was going to sit in on a class. It was sort of between going to Special Collections and going into the class. I thought, "I just want to go in and peek."

What class did you attend?

The Art Education history class; Mary Ann Stankiewicz's class.

Did you enjoy it?

Yeah, I did enjoy it. I talked to her because one of the things is that I feel... is that I am fairly new to this. And, one of reasons why I wanted to pursue this question was because I wanted to fill in the holes that are present from having not done a bachelor's in art education. So, I thought that I am going to start with my own education.

Well, you can do that quite quickly and with some reading.

I can do it with reading, it is obvious. I am reading your work but it is another thing. I am from State College. It is another thing to try to talk to you personally, to meet with Marcile Tressler, as an adult, she knew me as a child but... and Mrs. Brown, I have always kept in touch with her. I have tended to keep in touch with the teachers.

That is very nice. Well now, my book, with the sophisticates of art education, who a lot of them are wordsmiths in my opinion. It has been so long since they have really been in

touch with a child and that has always bothered me that they can write these profound documents and they would consider that group invisible. Probably an awful book, but and to tie my rope, we didn't have art supervisors or very few in the public schools and I think that was written in 19...

The second edition or the first one?

The first one. It was about 59. It was a very simple, old book. But the teachers, oh my gosh! It was adopted widely and I think that it was, I think very, very helpful to elementary teachers, who didn't have any supervision. And they were working on their own. Now, I think that there are more art teachers for the elementary school by far than there were at that time.

Yeah, But even for art teachers its, what I love about this book is that you don't have to have a lot of money. The ideas in it are such that it is so easy to do something- to work in materials that are serious materials but its not that you have to go to an art store. You don't need money to do it.

Well, I used a lot of material that I could find. I was going through some old pictures the other day of the little Palmer boy; the folks that gave the museum. And on that particular day, I was at children's classes, Saturday classes. And the students gathered up cardboard boxes and brought them in. And, my gosh! Those kids had more fun making things out of cardboard boxes you know, make a train or a car or something, and get inside of it. I had to do that at the outset because the materials weren't available and so I learned to use all kinds of stuff.

So you basically in a sense pioneered- you just did it by experience. Did you look in books or did you have art teachers that taught you certain methods?

We didn't have any good books that; The only book that was in art education at the time, when I was a student was called..., by Leon Winslow from Baltimore. And he was about the first textbook I ever saw. It was very stiff and stodgy. Leon came up one summer and I took a class with him. He was a very nice gentleman but he was so stiff and not uncomfortable, but I couldn't see him getting down on his hands and knees like I used to do. Or, being relaxed in the classroom. He was a directive- It was called "creative or directive activity". But there were a lot of good art teachers though.

Did you have art teachers in elementary and high school?

No. Just in junior high school.

When you came here?

Yeah. I had one or two.

Where was the school?

The one at Fairmount.

That was the high school?

Yeah, I came here when I was 13 yrs. old and my brother had just graduated from high school and he had just turned 16 and he was a very bright student. He skipped grades and he was small for his class, socially undeveloped, and still wearing knickers. He got a fifty dollar scholarship. That fifty dollar scholarship! My father was out of work. They just packed up whatever they had and went to State College and opened a boarding house.

Where was the boarding house? I have read your autobiography.

On West College Avenue; on the 500 block; on the south side. It is the second house; 506. Its a big old house and we survived. I regret that I had one job that caused me a problem. We were poor and I wanted some spending money. I got a paper route first and I worked; I started out at the Corner room and went to Metzger's store, which you don't remember, which was down a half a block, went to the Nittany Lion.

Metzger lived out near us where I grew up. I grew up out Whitehall and Fred Metzger right? Well, that is probably one of them. He owned all the land around our house. We lived on Meadows Farm in Pennsylvania furnace. So Metzger, I know the name but I didn't know they had a store.

Well, his father had the store. Then, I'd go to the Nittany Lion, then out to, it was West Park avenue, and then worked my way all the way through College Heights, out to Holmes Street, the end of Holmes street. Up Schlow's, which was Fairmount avenue and then in and out of town, and I ended back at Homes Foster park. That was a good paper route. I made three dollars a week on that.

Far. And you did that everyday.

Yes. Six days a week. And I made three dollars a week and that was good. But then Jack Harper offered me a job and I was so proud that they would want me to work there. And he gave me one of his old suits and I got 20 cents an hour.

Harper is...Is that the clothing store?

Yeah, but I think that this is where I made a mistake in my life.

How old were you then?

I was in high school.

When you were working for Jack Harper?

Yeah. I was a sophomore or a freshman and I guess my pride overtook me there. I wanted to look nice and well dressed.

Well yeah, if you are with beautiful clothes all day!

And I was in debt up to my ears, all the time in there, which kept me from doing anything, or having any social life. I didn't participate well while I was in college- I was working all the time, trying to get out of debt from this place I worked at!

But you looked nice!

That's right.

I think we all fall into that trap.

So anyway,

So you did high school and then you did your bachelors in...

In art education but we didn't have a faculty.

Was it in Home Ec?

No, well no, it was in, at that time, engineering and then it moved to Home Economics and then it moved to education. And, now it is in Visual Arts. So I was in three of the four places.

But basically who started the department? You started the department or did Lowenfeld start it?

No, Lowenfeld started the department and when he came, we were in Home Ec at that time, and Amy Gardner brought him here for the summer to see if he liked it, to see if he was good. And that was the summer I took a class with him. I was going to go to Penn, University of Pennsylvania, to study art history. But when I took that class from Viktor Lowenfeld, I thought that's where I'm going to go to study. I changed and came here.

Your family must have been happy because your family was here right?

Oh yeah, they were happy to get me back in town.

What made you decide to get a bachelors in art education?

Well, I worked in the playgrounds one summer as assistant director one year and then director the following year and I liked working with kids. I liked art. I wasn't very good at it but...

What made you choose to work with kids in the first place? I guess what I am getting at is what brought you to that...

Well, I used to go to that playground to play when I was 13 yrs. old.

When you say playground...

Holmes Foster Park... that was the only playground in State College at the time and it was Dick Detweiler, was the director. Richard Detweiler, very nice man. He committed suicide.

I went to school with some Detweilers.

He was a very nice man. Subsequently, I would go there to play softball or shoot baskets, whatever, and met some kids. And I had the chance to become, when I was a sophomore in college, assistant director to Howard Parsons working with the kids. And I liked working with the kids and got along well with them.

Was there an art program going on?

No, we didn't have anything like that. They just came there to swing on the swings, play in the sandbox, or see-saw, or play softball, or shoot baskets. And that's what we had. One basketball, and get a lot of boys to come, cause we had a base and soft ball, a little place there where we could play. And then, John Lotter bought the lot where we played our baseball, and built a house on it. We were in desperate straights.

John who?

Lotter, he was the Penn State basketball coach. And well, that was building up out there and we were in desperate straights, cause that's what the kids came for to play. And, it's a long story. We used some psychology. I went to the mayor, was Wilbur Lightsel at the time and said to Wilbur, "We lost our baseball field. We have to have a place to play baseball. What do we do"? He said, "Oh I'm going to hire a couple of guys and we'll chop down some of those oak trees". Well, those trees are precious and we couldn't have cut down those trees to make a baseball field but we went over closest to the two residences, Dr. Shively and Dr. Anderson's homes. And we had access and we banged around and made a lot of noise. And they came out and wondered what we were doing. And said we were going to cut these trees down and make a baseball field. Well, they gathered all the neighbors right away and went down to see Mr. Leightsel and I get the orders not to cut any trees down. And then, what was his name, he just died a couple years ago. He owned the farm land down below the park where it's called Green Tree area, where the Catholic Church is. They let us go down there and flatten it out as best we could and put four bases down, and we played our softball mound there.

So when you started working in the playground did you do any art program?

No, it was all sports.

So you still, even with that you decided to go into art education. Why not education?

Well, I thought I could do art education.

You liked art?

Yeah, I liked art. I had some ability, I guess, but not a whole lot.

Where did that ability come from- Just, you wanting to; just, self taught?

I was always drawing on the back of tablets when I should have been listening to what the teacher was teaching and I was always drawing something. In those days we didn't have all the toys and resources, television and radios, and all the distracters that children have now. You wonder how they can get interested in anything when they have all the games they play and televised games and all that kind of stuff. For me, if I had an old piece of cardboard from the back of a calendar or something I could draw on, I could spend a lot of time doing that and enjoy that. Yeah, even as a child, when we had rainy days and would have to stay in my mother would give me a needle and thread and some pieces of cloth and I would sew things and do stuff like that. I just like to build. My father would always bring home scraps of wood- he was a carpenter- nice, soft wood. I was allowed to use his tools in the basement and bring the other kids, neighbourhood kids and we would make boats or airplanes, swords or anything like that. I was always building something so it was kind of natural inclination.

I wasn't gifted like. I saw a little girl on television the other day. She's a phenomenon.

Oh I saw that last night. Well you know what though? It was maybe a few seconds that I saw but her father is very much behind her telling her what to do. That was one of the things that they commented on. "Paint the red, paint the red".

A lot more than they are willing to admit. It is just exploiting a child. I have no confidence in what they are doing, and you know, they are selling. Also, when elephants, they put a brush in an elephants mouth, they paint some pretty nice murals and I imagine they sell pretty high too.

I know I saw that too and said to my boyfriend maybe I should just go to Thailand and teach elephants! So, was your bachelors in art education, was that a good experience with the teachers that did come in- was that in the summer?

It was bad.

So, why did you stay with it? Did you think, "I can do better than that"?

Well, I tell you what... where the problem started is, at the time, I was in public schools, we didn't get any counselling and the kids, whose parents were educated, and were professors, they got a lot of guidance from their parents and had a lot of experiences on campus. In my case, my mother probably went to 5th or 6th grade. That was as far as she went. My father, at 10 yrs. old, was working in a factory sanding furniture and we didn't have a book in the house. We had a bible, but I never saw anyone reading it and so my brother read. He used the library, and he read anything that was printed. And, I just didn't have the kind of support that a lot of kids have. And, I was more for playing around and doing things, running around, hiking the mountains- doing anything that you could do that was physical. He was a student. He was a better student. I often say that I tried to emulate my brother, went through high school and he only got one B. And, I tried to do that too. And, I did. I got one B and all the rest were C's and D's! And that's about the way we were different, as day and night. Good scientist. Some things, advantages that kids have today we didn't have. And, my generation just finished college. The most of us, State college kids, or a high proportion, went to Penn State because you could get in then if you could breathe. Since we got out, we were ready, for the war was on. And so, didn't turn out lawyers and there were very few people beyond their bachelor's degree in my class.

So, you went to the war right after your bachelors in art education?

I had one year. Our class met every five years and very few of them got degrees beyond their bachelors because of the army.

So what did you do?

Well, the first year I couldn't find a job. So, I took a semester at the university and then found a job. And it was an awful job. So, I took the next semester. That was at Cumberland, Maryland. And, then when I got the job at Wallingford and then went into the service, that was the difference between day and night. That was a wonderful, wonderful place to teach. And, I really regret sometimes that I ever left, because it was the most ideal that any teacher could ever dream of. My classes were all small. And, if I wanted a kiln or a potter's wheel, or whatever, I walked into the office of the superintendent and said, "I wonder if I could have an electric kiln". Sure, just order one. And, once a potter's wheel, yes, I could get one. And everything I asked for I could have. This was in 1941. I had a potter's wheel and a kiln, looms.

Wow, so you taught yourself how to use them.

Yeah, I taught myself how to use them because I had never had one. So, I said I just have to teach myself how they work. When I ordered brushes, I didn't have to order school paint brushes. I could order brushes that were sable brushes.

This was a private school?

No, it was a public school. It was a tiny school, in a wonderful neighbourhood.

Where? Outside Philadelphia?

It's outside Media and outside of Philadelphia. Now, it is one of the largest high schools in the State and I know that because they are always one of the number one football teams in the state of Pennsylvania. Now, in those days, when they entered art teachers, they would ask, you know, "Can you play a musical instrument?" and, I said, "No." And, they like to hire teachers that can play a musical instrument because they needed them to play in the band because the school was so small, the teachers played in the high school band with the kids.

That's fun. What a great dynamic.

Oh, it was a great school and such a wonderful family feeling of the faculty there. What I was going to say was that, a large proportion of the children there were from my Black playground, which was very unusual.

Especially when you hear how much money they were given because mostly you hear that they don't really fund.

Well, we were an integrated school

And, no problems...

No problems.

Beautiful.

And, in our community, we also had an orphanage and there was a Quaker area there. And, I don't know if it was a Quaker orphanage or not, but these children were the loveliest children. And, they were on my basketball team. I was a basketball coach; Just the loveliest kids from the orphanage. There was one little guy that he was so tiny and he was on the team and when we would get way behind, I'd let him go and play because we weren't going to win anyway and it wouldn't make any difference. We weren't going to win anyway. Or, if we'd get way ahead, I'd put him in. And, he was so tiny on the floor. One day, I was back in State College. We were living in an apartment down on Atherton Street, where the Atherton hotel is now. There was a little diner down there. Probably you remember the diner on the corner. There was a house next to it. We had an apartment on the second floor. I heard a rap on the door one day and this big, tall, good looking boy is standing there. He had red hair and I said, "Nole! Nole Baby! My gosh! You're so big!", and he said, "I took stretching exercises!" He came to see me. He was visiting up here. I had fun being the basketball coach. And that school...

You only did one year?

No, then I went off to the army and then I came back there and they called me and asked me to come to State College and head the program here in the public schools.

So they just out of the blue called you or were you putting the feelers out...?

No, they called out of the blue. Called during the school year and asked me if I could come and I said I would come. Partly because my parents were here, and I thought that this would help me get my doctorate. One of the wonderful parts of my experience is that when I came back here, State College had gone into what they called a jointure and the townships around here like College Township, Pine Grove Mills, they all became part of State College Area School district. And, we had five one-room schools and since I was the art supervisor and I had five people on my staff, I chose to go to the one-room schools. I taught classes at the high school too.

At Fairmount? Is that when you would have had Marcile Tressler? Do you remember?

Yes. I had her. And then I went out and taught one day a week at the one-room schools and there were five of them. That was wonderful because I said, "Now, whatever I can do in a classroom, I can do out there no matter what it takes." So, I had the same program.

You would teach art there?

I taught art and I had a jeep station wagon. And, before I'd go out, some of the schools I had to do this; well virtually all of them. I'd put two buckets of water, because they didn't have any water and bring newspapers that we had too use for paper towels for cleaning up, and always take a sponge or scrub brush for cleaning up or something. One was for washing, and the other for water color or for using liquids. We did everything there that I did in the classroom, like paper-mache, or modeling. And, if we were going to do clay, I'd take clay out and we'd model it. I'd take it back and fire it.

Do you remember what Ferguson township school was like? Did that exist?

Yes. My father helped to build that school. That would be in 1931. That was an easy one because that was a school that had heating, and electricity, and water, but the one-room schools were Stormstown, Waddle, Boalsburg and they were really awful schools. Sometimes Mr. Hazel would call and say, "Miss Gray is ill and has called in. Will you go out and take over for the day?" And so, I'd drive out to Stormstown. And, when it was the worst weather; when it was as cold as can be and I'd have to build a fire in the big old stove that they had. And, haul out the ashes and haul in the wood. Some days it would be so cold. You couldn't get it warm in there. So, we'd do Phys. Ed. all morning! Play games...

There would be how many kids?

Oh, probably twenty.

And, all ages?

Well, they would be up to 6th grade. That was nice. I enjoyed that. Then I would, on my day that I do one school, for whatever time we were allowed. And, I'd go to another one, and another one, and make the rounds of the five of them in one day. I had fun doing that. I have pictures of that someplace. Then I would take my students out when I was working part time at the university and have them in the public school. Some days I'd take my college kids out with me so that they could observe the teaching in a tough situation like that.

You really kept practice and philosophy together. There was no in a sense "ivory tower" or whatever they say.

No... I remember taking my class out when we did puppet shows. The kids made puppets and I built the contraption with the help of my dad, I am sure. Where we took the three panels about this big and about so high, so that they would fit like this way and would stand; Put an opening in there, and we painted it all up with the stage. We did paper-mache puppets that the kids put the middle finger in and use the other fingers as arms. We'd do little plays and I took my college kids out to watch it.

Was this before Lowenfeld had arrived at Penn State?

No, he would have been here.

Would he go also to these?

I don't think he ever went with me. I should have taken him out.

Why wouldn't he have wanted to?

He was so busy.

From the very beginning when he arrived, he had that kind of rigorous schedule?

Yeah, some weeks, he'd only be here three days. He'd be out in California or Oregon. Back before Monday's classes. He'd be here for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday and be off again on Thursday and Friday and so... It worked out well.

Were you still a student of his at that point?

I was a student until 1953 and so from 46-47 to 53 I was still a student working on my doctorate.

How would your student experience have influenced your teaching practice? If it did. It sounds like it is so different from your experience of going out to these little schools and teaching... there was something that really took you.

For my graduate work, I would say that an awful lot of it was just a waste of time.

Your doctorate?

Yeah, the part with Lowenfeld wasn't, but you had to take so many crappy courses and I felt were a waste of time. Studying statistics now, if I could have spent that time studying art history, that I spent studying statistics, and I never did learn them. I tell a story that I was taking advanced statistics class. I didn't even know the elementary statistics let alone the advanced. And, there was a big class that met at night. And, the teacher, who was a wonderful man. We met up in the old building. We were in the temporary classroom and Joe Alexandro who was a teacher at the public schools out in Pine Grove Mills, and then went to the university to teach, but he was working on his doctorate and we were good friends. We were sitting in his class, and these poor souls, all working on advanced degrees had to drive in from Montoursville, or wherever, to take this night class in statistics. And, the teacher was just the loveliest man you'd ever know. And, had a black board, he went to that, and this class was just starting and we were all sitting there fidgeting. And, he's up at the black board and he's writing and crossing the board down on the second line and go rub a little more; this formula filling this whole thing. I said to Joe, "When is he gonna get over this elementary stuff and get on to something more advanced?" And, all the people around us squirmed cause we didn't have the slightest idea what he was doing up there! And, after class, they stopped us and asked if we would consider tutoring us?

We didn't have the slightest idea what he was doing up there. But we all passed the course and he worked with us with our statistical problems and virtually do them for us so that we could get through it. But it was a waste of my time; taking statistics, taking courses that were- some of those education courses I took. What we would do is gather in the evening classes and teachers would come in from all over trying to get certification.

That was a waste of time but the classes that you took with Lowenfeld were significant?

Oh, they were significant. The curriculum in education- we were in the college of education and they wanted to make sure that we took college of education courses. And, some of this, we would gather at night. And, it might be a childhood education class or something like that and the teacher would say, "Well tonight,"... These teachers were all tired, had taught all day, and they would come from wherever and have to be there at 7 o'clock, and it was a three hour class, so they could get their three credits. And the professor would say, "What I want you to do tonight is, we'll gather in groups of five and you pick a topic and you discuss that topic and then in the end we will meet together as a group and each group will report." Like a buzz session, they call them. In the middle we would stop. If it was a good professor and he could bake, well, he'd have a cake or something baked, or other teachers would bring it in to help their grade a little bit. It was

such a waste of time. If I could have been painting or drawing, or taking an art history class, it would have been so much more profitable.

So what was it about Lowenfeld that was so different as a teacher? Because you had three different relationships with him... also as a colleague and a friend, but as a student/teacher relationship, how was that significant for you?

Well, I guess his humanity and his own personal experiences. It came to play in his teaching, in that he was a Jew from Austria and he would not join a youth movement and he realized what was happening and he was frightened by it. He had been teaching and he was doing his early research on what he called the visual/haptic aspects of his work with blind or near blind children in sculpture. They fled the country and escaped. They were separated at one time. The fact of the regimentation and the horror of the Nazis certainly crept into his life and in his opposition; His lack of racism, his concern for humanity was always evident in what he did.

I get a sense in reading him this lack of materialism. He talks about how, the lectures that I have read, he talks about how- I just think that if he was alive now to see how much time people are sitting in front of the television. He talks about that in the early forties or in the late forties/ early fifties. A lot of people didn't even have television sets but it is like he foresaw this.

We didn't have a television set. Well, I guess it was fairly early in the fifties. Penn State got a couple television cameras and they had a couple fellows that could operate them and we were going to do our television. We didn't have a station here then and what they produced would be sent by, I guess, microwave to Altoona. I forget what that station was called WMHA, or something. I guess I made this little film with John Driscoll.

You were a student when you made that film?

No.

You were a student until when?

53 and I was on the faculty at that time.

They said, "Would you consider doing a television program for us?" I said, "I guess so. I don't know anything about it." And they said, "Well, we are just going to learn." They had a writer and a director, a local guy who was going to work for us and I said, "Well, we'll give it a try." I mean, we didn't even own any television set. I had never seen any of the programs. So, I thought well, "What can I lose?" So, I thought of a concept and the first concept I thought of was Grandma's attic. Well, we couldn't figure out how we would do a set for Grandma's attic and then I went out into the salvage depot where they get rid of equipment at Penn State. And, I found a cupboard about the size of that doorway, an old cupboard with doors on it, and we bought that thing for a couple dollars. We rebuilt it, and cut holes in the back of it for a puppet to come through, and called it "Key to the Cupboard". Have you seen that?

Well I was born in 69 and I wouldn't have seen it on TV. We had one channel growing up and it didn't get much. I was out in Pennsylvania Furnace.

That was Altoona.

But, what is funny is that everyone up the hill from me got more channels but we only had one channel.

They got Johnstown too. There were only two channels then anyway. Well, at any rate, so we took this concept and developed it. I was the host and every morning I would greet the children and then go in the cabinet and to see what we could find in there to work with. And, we had Alice Schwartz, who later, I married, who made a puppet mouse. It's a really big mouse. Joe Serbello, who is an artist around here now; he does murals and different things. He was a puppeteer and he would operate from inside and he was my adversary. I would look for something, and find a shoe box, or some yarn, or some salt, or something in there, and we were going to work with that today. And, he would have a little conversation then and he would try to do me in. Then, we would maybe pan over to Alice, who had started to work with maybe 3,4,5 children there, whatever it was, maybe modeling with salt clay, and then we would go to a sculpture and talk about some sculpting, or we would go to an artist story, and we'd talk about sculpture history, or something like that, and finally back to the kids. And, we were crawling on our hands and knees to get from one set to the other, to keep out of the view of the camera, and then a closer show of the little mouse would be working with the clay or whatever we were doing.

How long did you do that for?

We made 13 weeks of that and then they put it on. Well, they didn't have any way to tape them. We didn't have any equipment like that in those days. So, a couple years later they came back and said, "Would you do it again?" And I said, "Well this time we gotta have some budget to buy some stuff". And so, for 5000 dollars, I hired Alice to come. She was a professor at Southern Illinois University, and she came up for the summer, and came back and was Miss Alice again. And we did 13 weeks on tape and that was kinescope.

Okay so the first time you did this, it was live TV?

Yeah.

Oh, my gosh! No wonder you were crawling!

Well, it was live the second time but they kinescoped it because, we didn't have a rehearsal. We didn't edit or do anything. It had to work, and it did. We'd get them all done in time. They were fun to do, but a lot of work cause that was just extra work on

top of our- we didn't get paid to do anything like that. That's the difference now. Like when I coached basketball. I didn't get paid to coach basketball. I was a teacher.

That's me. I am not getting paid for my community art program that I am doing. The only thing is, trying to get materials, trying to get the school to...

Get some stuff.

Just get some stuff! I mean, the basics. So then, was Lowenfeld around at that point when you were doing the TV?

Yeah, I think I had him on for maybe one show. He was always. We always did them on Saturday.

What would he do?

He'd just go around and talk to the children. I think he is on one but I am not even sure of that. But we did 13 weeks; that is the sequence that you do in television, you do 13, 13, 13, 13 all those 13's add up to 52. That is the way television works but none of us knew anything about it. But, the second time around, the technical people were better, but the show was good enough in concept to become a show. But technically, the equipment that we had was too poor and then the educational TV looked at it and they liked the show but they said that technically it wasn't good enough for broadcast purposes. So that was my experience and then Alice went on and she did three other major television projects in her career that were good ones. I wrote a proposal once in 24 hours that got 60,000 dollars. They said, "There is a lot of money left in the budget for stuff like this." And I said, "Oh gosh! I think I'll do it." and I whipped together one. And we must've got more money than that because we hired Alice to come here and do it. She changed her job from Illinois to come.

So it was significant enough for that?

Yeah, So, I think we got 60,000 dollars a year.

There are some things that I want to make sure that I ask you and I guess the one coming to mind is that when I first talked to Marcile Tressler she said to me that, "Yeah, I had Edward Mattil, Doctor Mattil as my high school teacher." I haven't yet talked to her but I guess I want to ask you, what do you think that your impact was for her. If she as an art teacher and later in life is going to say that, "yeah, Dr. Mattil was my teacher"...

I don't know, Marcile was a very shy little girl and she came to Penn State after high school and she has developed into a fine little watercolorist.

She did her masters in photography, right?

I don't know.

I think that is what she said.

But anyways, she did a very good job as a teacher but in high school, was a shy little girl and I think in college, she was very quiet. You weren't quite sure if she was going to be a strong teacher or not because I would describe her as being very shy. But obviously, she has done a very good job.

And, if she talks about you... I would imagine it would be because she was introduced to a lot of different ways to create. Do you think as a teacher, what is it that you gave the most? What do you think that was?

Oh, I think not to be afraid to try things, be experimental. Find a way to use what you have. Almost any material I could think of, I could do something with. One of the things I remember with the kids of the Black playground, we didn't have any equipment. There was this great big hill behind us, just dirt, and really, at first, you were just kind of a watch dog. Making sure they weren't going to hurt one another, but I went out to look for stuff that they could work with, and one of the things that they loved to do was, I'd get a big wash tub and put water in it, and get tin cans wash them out. And they just loved to get water from the bucket and have more fun with that. Sometimes, I'd find them building little towns and little villages with the mud that they made. And they'd be down there making stuff, whatever we could find to work with.

So, because this is one thing that I think that I remember... Something as simple as that, even you are not going to have anything tangible in the end, it is the whole experience.

It is the experience in doing it. That is the important part. The product is simply a report of the experience and it is essentially the way I felt about it. If it turned out to be a nice aesthetic piece, wonderful but we didn't shed tears if it was something to throw away. Playing in the mud is fun you know. You can get sticks or little twigs, make trees.

So, when you were teaching, you mentioned before that, with Lowenfeld it brought in this teacher as researcher; to step back and look at the process that you are doing.

Well, that was a wonderful opportunity I had ever experienced before; that you could sit as the third person.

Would you write things down?

Oh yeah. And, we might have a child who is a difficult child, or a child that has problems, and to observe that child for the hour, or hour and a half, and make a graphic record of movements and time, and whatever you can, to see if you can understand that child.

Would there be an interaction with that child?

No, the child would not know that they were being observed. We had one child, John and I can remember John Sawyer was a doctoral student who wanted to sit in those Saturday classes and he wanted to observe this youngster. I didn't know what his problem was and I still don't because he would come in and go to the blackboard and start to draw and never do what the other children were doing. He'd spend the whole time at the blackboard. He obviously had a fixation on trains. He could draw trains and engines like you have never seen before and fill that whole blackboard with trains. John did a kind of case study on him, as best we could do a case study, of photographs, progress he made. One day, this is probably bad on my part, I said before he gets to the blackboard, have another child start to work there. When he came in, he had such a tantrum. It was just heartbreaking and clearly an autistic child, but I didn't know what an autistic child was at that time. Of course, we had the other child step away from the black board so that he could calm down. But as long as he was at the blackboard, he was the happiest child he could be. He couldn't participate with the other children. Those were just observations and they weren't scientific. We were not trained to know what we were seeing, but we were observing the differences in children, and the differences in the way they respond, and it was really a pretty good cross section of what they might expect with children.

When you were teaching the high school class that Marcile was in, did you also do that kind of observation?

No, because I was alone in the classroom.

Even if it wasn't that kind of observation would you still have another eye so to speak, taking a mental note of what was going on?

Oh yeah, I had different expectations for different children. For example, we had a child who, this was in the children's classes, who'd scarcely do anything at the time. The child started because her mother brought the child in. She would do virtually nothing. But then one day she does a figure painted with a big brush. And a teacher, student teacher, walked out in the hall and said, "Wow!" If somebody would walk by, and would see her holding that thing and saying wow, they would say, "What in the hell would you see in that and say wow about?" But, it was a wow. We saw her go from a scribble to a figure, was a wow. Even the teacher recognized what an achievement that was, and that happened over a period of ten weeks from the scribble to what happened, and that is a great big wow. That's the way we tried to learn, and see, and understand better, and no two children achieve at the same rate or in the same way.

How would you describe good teaching?

You have to be accepting and you have to be patient. You have to be tolerant and you have to expect some results. Something has to happen or should happen as a result of your interaction with the student.

When you say results you mean a certain progress?

Not progress or a great achievement, but some change is just taking place that you might be able to view as a positive change; maybe a period of attention or time that a child can stay with a work. Maybe it is the amount of detail you see, and observation that they are seeing things that they weren't seeing before. Maybe there are aesthetic things happening that you are seeing. There are all kinds of factors. You just have to keep an open mind. You just realize that each child is going to be different and to expect all to achieve at the same rate and at the same level is a fallacy.

Conversation with Dr. Mattil January 5, 2006 at his residence in State College

[Mattil]...It wasn't until the 50s that Penn State even purchased any television equipment and what they purchased amounted to two cameras and tripods and recording. That was in the fifties, during the middle part of the fifties. Alice Schwartz and I were asked to do a television show and this will tell you about the influence that it has on children. It was played over the Altoona station on Saturday mornings and that was the children's entertainment program for a half an hour. We didn't have all the Mister Rogers and that stuff. That hadn't come into being yet. I don't know when Mister Rogers started but it wasn't wide spread yet, and then we did that program again in, probably 1961, or in about that time, and it was still- we weren't even into color television yet. And, it wasn't until the middle of the 1960's when I hired Dr. Schwartz to come back from where she was teaching, in southern Illinois, to do a television program for children and we were still working in black and white. And by the time she got through with that project in the 70s, we got into color. So, the television influence wasn't as great as it is today.

[Myself] Maybe not so much in the aspect of TV education, but was it considered as it is today, in a sense, a distraction from education? Would that have been considered something that was taking children's time from physical growth, that they are not active, or intellectual growth?

Not to the extent that it is now. I would say that Penn State didn't get color equipment, and, well I don't think Alice finished her project probably about 1970. And it was all in black and white and it was no longer useable because the stations had all switched by that time to color. That was a really a good effort wasted because they switched at that time. So Lownefeld wasn't in a period where television was an active factor in distracting from education.

There was one mention of it in his book of lectures where he talks about how man is isolating himself from his own personal sensibility because he, instead of using his leisure time in a creative sense, he will waste his leisure time sitting in front of the television set in his living room.

He may have said that and I don't doubt that he did say it, but the television certainly didn't have an impact then as it does now. In other words, when we had television when I left here in the 70's, we had Altoona and Johnstown and that was our television essentially. We weren't getting really good national stuff.

That's true even when I was growing up. We had one station.

He died in 1960 and television hadn't really impacted. As a matter of fact, we had a conference with the National education association, and I helped write the contract on that. It was called "The Uses of Newer Media in Art Education".

When was that? Was that after he died?

Yes, after he died. And we had Raymond Carpenter from Penn State and Leslie Greenville, were two of our experts that we brought in for the conference. And there was nary a word spoken about the television.

Newer Media was considered then...?

We hadn't really gotten into anything regarding television. Slides, photographic pictures, that's about it- tape recordings. We didn't have any demonstrations of the television.

So, it wasn't really something that was even considered.

No. I wish that I had a copy of that, but I might, but I doubt it. It's called "The Uses of Newer Media in Art Education" and it was sponsored by, we got a grant from the US Office of Education for that. And I know that the art education department and the National Education Association would certainly have a copy of that. And there would be one in the library too. I think that we got him to be the director of that project. I think that our grant was large enough that it paid him to go to Washington to organize and I don't think that it was very productive thing because he still hadn't gotten into the uses of newer media. He was talking about photography and things like that. I think that Lowenfeld wasn't impacted very much by television.

So he never thought about it as being a possible threat to...

Oh he probably did, but at that time the real impact hadn't come. Video games weren't, nobody knew anything about video games. And, there were the children's programs and there were a few similar to the one Alice and I did. Sesame Street came along, but I don't really know the dates of those.

He mentions a lot in the book, in the lectures- it was interesting actually reading the lectures and then using the textbook as if I was in his class. He talks a lot about materialism and consumerism, how people are just mindlessly buying and buying.

I am wondering, I think what would have helped that situation was also the television because it gave an opportunity for advertisers to show you what you are missing or what you really need.

Well, he did have values or opinions strongly about the things that you mentioned there.

Did it come out in his teaching philosophy in terms of materials for the classroom or?

Well, I really don't think he taught a course that had to do with materials very much. Those were generally my classes that were dealing with materials. His classes were philosophical and his theories were founded in- what he did was really awaken the field into looking more carefully at the work of children and people whose work...but he lead the charge in terms of examining growth and examining content, and primarily growth. We could see a pattern from scribbling up through realism in the direction which we called haptical.

What age was that where he would see if the child was visually or haptically oriented?

Well he saw it better than others did. That is what was his theory and that was based upon his work with the blind and I don't know if it was anything that teachers bought into too much.

It seemed to be clear in the lectures anyway, that it wasn't something that he was trying to categorize children per say, young children; that it was a tendency that you could start to see later in their growth, meaning towards the gang age, or later than that, in adolescence. When I look at the criticism towards him, it seems that people- one of the huge criticisms was that he was categorizing, D'Amico was definitely saying that he was trying to categorize children. It seems to me that the definition was too wide in terms of child art, because it seemed to me that Lowenfeld was doing that with young children. It was more maybe something that you could see later.

So much of the criticism that was D'Amico's was kind of political. He had a very good program with children and the children produced very well but he didn't make any effort to categorize them. That wasn't necessary then or atleast this is my feeling I have nothing against D'Amico except that he developed a personal, political rivalry of who is the top dog and this came out on a number of occasions where one wanted to be more important than the other. And, that was kind of unnecessary and there was this man in California. What was his name?

Eisner?

No. Eisner came along a lot later. He had a long following publicly and he called Lowenfeld's work applesauce or something like that and people booed him for saying that. It was at a committee of art education meeting in New York. What Lowenfeld did was kind of energize the field with his book and he gave teachers and art teachers a kind of something to teach, of making stuff, and he made it sound more of a discipline of some

sort. His book had an enormous impact. Immediately, when something like that happens, there are people that will want to go on the attack, and do, and did. That is to be expected. And now, I am so glad that I am out of the field of art education, because the crap they are producing now really astounds me. Charles Dorn- do you get the art education magazine? Charles was, at one time, the executive officer of the NAEA. And now, is a professor of art education at one of the universities. A couple of issues ago, there was an article talking about the death of art education. People are wordsmiths. I wonder if any of them have ever worked with children or not. I swear to goodness, Eisner has written all of his books, but if I were to ask an art teacher, "How have they impacted you? What have they really done for you?" I don't think any of them could even answer.

You wonder even how many teachers are following that.

I wonder that too. I mean, if people, who are out in the fields, doing the work, how this.... Somebody's getting something on their resume to get promoted from assistant professor to associate professor by writing some wordy thing. And now, they are into fields all the time now that I don't even know what they are talking about and little do I care. If I were still teaching, I would be working with my children. If you go into the public schools, or even into this little school next door, the Friend's School, and see what the teacher does there. She is not reading those articles or being concerned with that at all. She's dealing with the problems of life as they confront children. And you'll go up there and see a magnificent portrait of Martin Luther King that they did as a group, or you'll see a whole classroom of portraits of Martin Luther King for an occasion. She is in touch with the world, and her children are in touch with the world, but they are still working as children and producing wonderful, wonderful stuff. It is so different. We had a teacher come here, and she came only for a year, back in probably 1945, or in and around that time, at the end of World War II. And, her name was Mary Creasler. And, she brought with her- she came as an art education teacher in the school of Home Economics. That was where it was located at the time. Mary brought a portfolio of examples of children's work at different levels. She must have been just a knock out of a teacher; Just wonderful, wonderful stuff. That is many years ago, 60 years ago. Lowenfeld hadn't written a book yet, D'Amico hadn't written a book yet and nobody had written any books yet. She was teaching. She probably had a good teacher in college who said, "Let the children be creative." That is all Viktor was asking you to do too, was when he talked about eating a piece of candy, or whatever or talked about, he tried to get them to experience it, and she obviously knew how to get down to the children and inspire them. And, oh the work was just staggering. When I came here to State College to teach in 1946 we produced wonderful work and we'd go, this doesn't seem like a good example, but we'd go to these scholastic competitions and we'd win all the medals for the good work that the kids were producing. I had good students to start with, and I tried to be a good teacher too, but I wasn't working to win medals. These were examples of what they had produced in their own classes and the elementary school, the same way. I worked with the teachers, trying to get them all to dispense with copy books, and tracing, and patterns, and other things you could do to decorate with the children. And, we had just good teachers and we got good work.

That is when you came right after the war right? That was an instinct of your own?

Oh yeah. I just intuitively knew how to teach. I didn't learn how to teach in the classes I took in college because we had virtually no instruction. We had someone come in the summer to do a 6 week course from Baltimore, or someone come from Hartford, Connecticut to teach a 6 week course. But these were stodgy men wearing suits with vests and talking. I just had the instinct to learn what to do and I did. Viktor didn't effect my teaching at all.

You agreed with him?

I didn't disagree with him. He made me much more observant than I would have been otherwise. I could see things in the work of children that I hadn't really observed before.

Did he use a textbook?

He didn't have a textbook. Essentially, it was what became the textbook; his course. But I didn't have a textbook at that time.

Did you feel that the stages of development, the way he analyzed the drawings, really did make sense then? In terms of the way the child relates to picking the apple or...

I think what it did for a lot of teachers is make them realize that all children are not going to grow at the same rate. There were some things that you could observe, to see if growth were taking place or not taking place. I used to use an example- we had some children in the children's class who were very slow in their development. And, would just be making scribbles at first and then comes the day where they take a brush, and they make a person, and the teacher picks it up and says, "This is wonderful!", and brings it around and says, "Look at this, Dr. Mattil! It is wonderful! Wonderful! The child has gone from a stage to another stage." Now, if someone else had come around and didn't know what we were talking about, they'd say, "What the hell is he talking about?!" So, he brought an awareness that we became able to look at things. But Viktor would have changed as time moved on. He came from a, one climate, or from Europe, and he was obsessed by the Nazis. The concept of freedom, and he had developed this theory, and he taught it, and we all bought into it, without it changing our lives, or really changing the way we taught. But, I think that we became more observant in terms of change, as it took place, and recognized it. So, we could see some growth from kindergarten to junior high school.

Would you say that at that period, there was a need for this kind of approach?

I think it made art teachers feel more comfortable and understood better what they were seeing. It was acceptable for children to be scribbling, it was acceptable for them to be making a figure with a circle or two circles and sticks for arms and that wasn't a bad thing at all. That was a normal and natural thing to accept. They were not supposed to in

first grade draw a Christmas tree with everything and draw everything the way... In a sense, it took the pressure off teachers and made them say, "Well, this is an acceptable thing, what my children are doing. I am not a bad teacher at all." I think it really undergirded us a great deal and gave us an opportunity to understand a little more what we were doing, and made us able to articulate it.

And also what is a child's world.

Yes, and that we weren't just wasting paper with scribbling. And so, we could explain to our principals that this is what the expectation is when a child is 6 years old. And, this child is going to change as he grows. And, we can expect that by the time she or he is in junior high school, we are going to see much more representation emerge.

In a sense the aesthetic part of the art is what is going to happen as the child develops in all the different aspects?

Yes, and as the teacher, you do things in your motivation, or what ever subject you decide is going to be the subject that you will be working on. Connect the children more where they are more observant. I often brought in animals to my class. In fact, we had a lady in at our Christmas Eve event that said that her son had been in my class. Oh god! How many years ago that would have been, in the middle of the 1950's. She said, "Do you remember when you brought a skunk in?" The skunk would have been de-oderized, so that the children could play with the skunk. I said, "Yeah, I remember the skunk and I remember the child too.

That's fun, because with the university, you probably had access to all those things.

Yeah, and we would go out to the barns too. The cow barns weren't too far away in those days. But in the country schools, kids could bring in a cow and tether it in the yard, or a horse, and we could work from that. One little piece, I wonder where that piece is, one of my favourite pieces of art....

That a child did?

Yeah, and I have had it all these years. And, we were reading a book. And, I'd have them take positions, to look at how do we read a book. And, this little girl was flat on her back and holding her book up like that and we modeled. She modeled herself reading a book, lying on her back, and holding the book up here. It was so charming, I fired it and I kept it. It upsets me that the current writers, the wordsmiths in the profession must be frightening the heck out of classroom teachers that don't understand all this crap they are writing.

When you go to the conferences, there are so many people and so many different people to listen to. A lot of the art teachers will go to the hands on.

That's my guess too. And I'll tell you, when I did a conference, the first one that we ever did in Pennsylvania, I was elected president and we had never done one. When we look at the program, it was a one-day conference. They were much more practical than what they are doing today and I still have the program some place. They are still doing the same thing- how to make mosaic, how to paint on silk or how to model with modeling clay. Gosh, when I started teaching at Wallingford, the principal let me do anything I wanted to and I said, "Well, how about a potter's wheel?" and he said, "Okay." I learned to do it myself first. And, I bought a very nice kick wheel and then got clay from a place over in Paoli. I had weaving equipment, and I had wood equipment, we had sculpture stuff, and a kiln to fire everything, and that was 1940. My art appreciation classes, I got all the old initial Life magazines. And at that time, they always had a two-three page section on an artist. And, it was a lesson in itself. I used those through the years as my art appreciation stuff. Even when I wrote my little book, there is a discussion in the beginning of every chapter, enough to wet your appetite a little bit, to discuss with the children before you do something.

I wanted to refer back to when you said about how Viktor came from the Nazi regime and his beliefs in democracy and freedom... I was thinking there would be that that would tie in to his thinking, but also, wouldn't it be also fair to say that what he encountered for instance, when he was first teaching here, his first experiences, when he came to the United States as a Jewish immigrant with a German accent, teaching at Hampton and seeing basically the social climate that was in the South, and what was going on, the fact that there were the internment camps for Japanese-American citizens... Wouldn't that also sort of tie in to his belief that society needed to be healed?

Oh, very much.

Did he talk about it?

Yes and no. I mean he didn't run a crusade, but he was so strongly concerned about the Poor, and the Under-Privileged, and the Blacks. And, the Latinos were not really a subject yet, but that was on his mind all the time and he was very concerned. He and I both agreed that we couldn't have wealthy people if we couldn't have poor people to support them, because that is how people are wealthy, because the Poor are supporting them. I use an example. Do you know what a PD loan is? A Pay-Day loan. They call'em PD loans, and you get your pay check and you deposit it in the bank. And then, you can go write a check for whatever you can write on a check. And, someone will give you money and you want to borrow more money. But the interest rates are so high, and so progressive, that if you ever failed to pay over a certain period of time, you can almost owe back 100% of what you borrowed. It was terrible and he was always upset by that. He said, "The poor people have to pay the most to live and they have the least to show for it and the rich are getting richer." This was a subject that he dwelt on, not in class necessarily, but in conversations. He was very concerned. And of course, having been in Hampton and seeing the homes from which probably a lot of his students came from, and the conditions that they had to live in. He was very pro- Black and pro-everybody. Penn State became a place in Art education that Blacks came to because they knew they were

going to be well treated here and respected. We had wonderful African- American students here and they knew that they could come here and be treated well. [picks up a book] I'll show you a painting from one of my children's classes... There is one of Michael's, my son did that. He would have been 10, I guess. That's not the one I wanted to show you. That was a daughter of one of the Black students, Elizabeth Andrews. They are a vulture [the drawing] of a sort, but I thought that it was wonderful.

That's incredible.

One of the things that I am finding- I am looking at a lot of literature to tie him in with African- American artists and one of the things that I found was that there was an interview with Samella Lewis and I guess she was involved in the bus boycott in, I am going to say North Carolina but maybe it is South Carolina. But anyway, she was being investigated for subversive activity. She was part of the NAACP and ended up losing her job and Lowenfeld helped her to get a job in Plattsburgh. Do you remember hearing that?

I remember her but I don't remember hearing that specific circumstance.

Were there ever any fears about the communist hunts? Was there ever anything that made educators in the faculty have to keep their mouths shut or conduct themselves in a certain way?

No, I don't have any recollection of that. We weren't political as professors- we may have been as individuals, but politically we didn't get involved.

Was it because it wasn't really safe to talk about?

No, I don't think that anyone on our staff would have been afraid to talk about anything. We were all very liberal in our thoughts and in our actions. And, you did ask a question about Mary Godfrey and where did she come from. She was an art supervisor in Virginia. None of us knew her. Viktor must have met her when he gave a lecture someplace. I supposed it was down in that region. And Mary was an Assistant State Supervisor to my recollection. And, he thought that she would be a good member of the faculty and hired her. It wasn't a matter that the faculty had any input on it, which was no problem in that that was never a problem. Mary, everyone liked her very much, all the faculty, she got along well with everyone on the faculty. Maybe my successor, she didn't like- the man who took my place after I left but.

She stayed on she was there for 22 years.

Yes, but she wasn't, what I would call, an impact teacher. That is, we liked her, and we all accepted her, and we included her in everything that we did. And she is still a good friend. I sent her a Christmas card and didn't get one in return. I suspect she is now so old- I used to see her doing grocery shopping. She wasn't an activist. So she didn't impact us by that means at all. In fact, I would say that she had relatively little impact.

She was highly accepted and well liked, but I never felt, I don't know if it is fair to say that she was a strong teacher or not. I don't know if she was or not.

Was she a big contributor to the research vein?

No, in fact that was one of the problems. I suspect that she was wonderful as an art supervisor working with teachers probably. African-American teachers, and working with the children but she didn't really have an impact here. I don't mean to be unfair but that would be my conclusion.

Alice and she were very close friends. Alice was my wife and the fact that they did things together that you could hardly believe. Mary's brother- she came from a very good family, a very prosperous family, and her brother had a resort up in the Catskills for all-Black. Mary invited Alice to go with her and of course Alice loved everybody and it didn't make any difference to her. The people were shocked to find a white person in the water with them and they laughed it off and got along fine. Alice, she was without prejudice and it didn't matter to her. She would not have even thought of it. That would not enter her mind. She was truly like a Black coming into a white country club. We could never figure out exactly where to position Mary on the faculty in terms of what kind of assignments she would want.

Apparently, I read an interview with her, and apparently, she was reluctant about going in the first place. And then, I guess, I can't remember exactly what made her decide to take the position at Penn State. Maybe, she was a professor that wasn't necessarily interested in that type of rigorous study, and, was more comfortable just teaching.

She would have been happier had Viktor just left her in Virginia, I think. Although, everybody did everything in their power not to make an issue out of her; of being a person of color.

Apparently she said she had a really hard time finding a place to live at first until Lowenfeld stepped in. And then, details like getting her hair done, she went to Harrisburg!

Well see, there were a lot of things that I didn't know about Mary myself. She wasn't the kind of person to; Now Alice knew her well, but I didn't know her well and I was her department head. I treated her with all the respect that I could give to every person. And, we would usually meet in the grocery store and she would make me think of Colombo. Mary always looked like Colombo with her raincoat! But we were always fond of Mary but maybe she wasn't as fond of us. I don't know. She was never, ever excluded from anything.

That was one of the things that she said in the interview; that she felt very accepted. And, she felt that it was almost like a family atmosphere that she was entering into.

I never read that.

It was a thesis by Charles Hollingsworth on the racial landscape of the Hampton Institute when Lowenfeld was there. There are interviews with Mary Godfrey, Mrs. Lowenfeld and with Gilliard, one of the staff that Lowenfeld taught with.

Charles Collingwood, I don't know who that is.

Hollingsworth... but he went to Penn State. His advisor was Beittel. His thesis is sort of all over the place. It is a play and the interviews at the end are quite interesting. About Viktor's health, the fact that he suffered his first heart attack when he was 36, it really shocked me. I am 36. To me, when I read that for the first time, I thought that had to have had a certain significance in his life. The way he approached people, how he approached his views.

We were never aware of that as a faculty. That was kept very private. The one thing I did know and I think that I probably told you this. It was probably 1958. Michael had a phone in his bedroom, we didn't. Michael is my son and one night he comes over; we were in bed, and he says, "Daddy, you better come over here. There is something wrong." I pick up the phone, and did I tell you this?

Either that or I read it. Did Viktor call you?

Yeah, and he had fallen and pulled the telephone by the cord down. And he knew my number because we talked almost every day. All I could hear was his breathing and I thought, "My god! It is Viktor!" and I called the police. And I said that the house was locked because his wife was away. I called Dr. Leight, who was his doctor, and who was a good friend of mine too. He died here a couple years ago. I said, "At Viktor's house, there is something wrong!" And the police got there and got the door open and we went in. And, Viktor was sprawled on the floor with the telephone down there, unconscious. We had called for an ambulance and took him to the hospital. He had just had a small stroke. He wanted that to be kept silent. He didn't want me to speak about it. He didn't want people to know that he had a condition. And then, subsequently, he had a stroke while speaking to the Senate.

That was the second?

Yeah, and he died within ten days.

So, the moment you were aware of it was actually when he called you that first time, and you didn't know that he had a condition.

I did not know.

It seems to me that if he had already gone through that at a young age, it would have been like a wake up call as they say.

Yeah, but he was so active. He travelled all the time. He could have had one anytime while he was travelling because travelling then is not, well, I am not saying that it was worse, it is probably better than it is now. But, every weekend he was away someplace.

That is very taxing.

Were there other questions?

Well yeah, let me see... During the early part of the 50s, there was the threat of nuclear war and the bible was the number one best seller for three years running. So, at the same time there was this intense religious revival, there was also this bomb threat. I am wondering if this played in at all in terms of how- not to say that these are the kinds of things that direct one's teaching, but we are still affected by the world that we live in, and I can't imagine that that this wouldn't be a reason why Viktor's ideas, in terms of social growth, and the way that we perceive each other, and those sensibilities- why he didn't see a need for this almost peaceful and rational way of thinking to sort of counteract these ideas that were so controversial.

You know, I did not attend any of his classes after the first one.

And that first class was?

1946. That would have been probably "Art in the Elementary School". In that, he was in no way political or did he express any of the outside influences that you are talking about. His lecture was essentially a book which hadn't yet been published and it was almost as if he were reciting and illustrating his book. He may have written it but nothing of the political nature.

So he never went off in his opinions?

No, but I wouldn't be surprised if you were talking to his graduate students, who took some of these courses and research, if he didn't go off on tangents of the social or political nature. He was a strong believer in peace and adversely effected by the situation in Europe. He would have been marching in Selma had he been able to.

Matter of fact, I don't know if I told you. I was invited to talk in Birmingham and I said, "Is this conference going to be integrated?" and they said, "No." and I said, "Well, unless I can talk to a black audience as well, I won't come."

When was this? In the 60s?

Well, this would have been early 60s. And, they said, "Well, if they would arrange for you to go to Montgomery and talk to the Black conference there, would you come?" and I said, "Yes." So, I gave the lecture first in Birmingham and then they transported me over to Montgomery. They had several conferences for the teacher's association. The Blacks all met in one place and the Whites all met in the other and I did the same thing at the University of Houston.

When you were on the faculty there?

No, when I was here. But the University of Houston had invited me to come and talk. I said, "Texas Southern is in the same city, and our graduates are teaching there too. If you will arrange to invite the faculty and students at Texas Southern, I'll come down, but if you can't do that, I won't come." Not only did they arrange it, they went to Texas Southern. Texas Southern was an all-Black school. Didn't I tell you that story? The two faculty members hadn't met each other before and they met and mingled. And, we had Art Ed students from both schools there. And there was this funny young man, and I can't think of his name, very funny, great, big guy and he played on being the ignorant, country boy. He came up to me afterwards and he said, "Mistah Matteel, if Ah'd known how to use big words like you was usin, I woulda ast you a question that woulda had you so fucked up you wouldna known what to say!" I thought that was wonderful. He was just pulling my leg and that's all there was to it. I thought that was really funny. They got together and I don't know if they ever joined or mixed allowing Blacks to go to the one school or the other but they had a much better art department at Texas Southern, as far as I was concerned.

Was Charles White down there?

No, he may have been there at one time.

Did you meet Elizabeth Catlett and Charles White? They were at the Hampton. I know that one of them went down there.

They were at the Hampton but this was at Texas Southern. Charles White was a wonderful artist. When John Biggers came up here for a show, he was the first and only Penn State graduate that has ever had a show in the museum.

That was after he was a student?

Yeah, well they had just done a show in the museum in Atlanta. And well, I guess they figured that if he was good enough for them, then he must be good enough for Penn State. And, he did a show here, and it was a wonderful show. Very talented.

Also, he was the first to do a doctoral dissertation as a studio-based thesis?

Yes. He did a large mural and actually did two of them in the entrance of the Burroughs building and, as you walk into the lobby. Is it Chambers or Burroughs? It's Chambers- they are opposite one another. You walk into the lobby. It is probably the depth of this room then, on either side, there is a black wall, and John did two murals, one on either wall. He did them on paper. We did them on brown wrapping paper and glued it together to make the surface big enough and put it on and wet it. It would stretch good. I used to go in and look at them and they still are.

So they are still up?

Yeah, and they'd be maybe someone would rub against them with a notebook or something and would tear it. I'd go and patch it with a little Elmer's glue and patch it down so that somebody wouldn't get a hold of it and tear it up. The University decided to go and have them restored and probably put some kind of a protective coating on them. But they were wonderful, and he did those while he was here so he was a graduate student. Very, very talented.

I'll have to go and see them.

Do you know where the buildings are?

Well my mother will know where they are.

Well, if you are walking up campus toward the library, it is the one on the right, closest to the library.

Well, I guess this is pretty much it. In terms of any loyalty oaths or any thing like that; we talked about the communist policies you and the faculty never had any problems.

Never.

Even though there were some problems in other departments.

There could have been, but we weren't affected at all.

Did Viktor talk about his religious faith at all?

No.

It seems to me- but, I am reading this from 2005, in the lectures, he talks a lot about religion, but I think he is more seeing it as religious tolerance. Catholic, Protestant.

He didn't practice a religion, not to my knowledge. I mean, he was Jewish, but I don't know that they ever went to Tabernacle. I don't know if I ever told you, one time the dean's wife, Dean of Education in the College of Education; Viktor had a party and we were there and the deans wife was kind of a naïve, little lady. And, Viktor had a painting about this big, and it was a Black man, bent over like this, with a big weight on his back. Viktor used to teach in drawing to make your experience, what you were drawing. That means, if you were lifting a log and dragging something, get down and feel how it feels to lift the log, or if you swinging an axe, physically do it and get the sense of the rhythm of it. Well she says- what's that Black man doing? Is he taking the laundry home?

I have a picture of that painting right here. See it?

Yeah, she thought he was carrying the laundry. That's a picture of me [pointing at a picture in the book].

Oh wow! This is you, right here? That's funny, because it says, "Saturday morning art school at Penn State- Teacher Mary Filer with author and two un-identified students."

Mary Filer was my assistant.

And you were the teacher?!

Yeah. This is Bob Saunders, I think, right here.

If it is, well he's the one that wrote this, so he maybe should have said that this is him if it is.

Do you know Bob? I don't know this book.

This is Elizabeth's book. She let me borrow it.

Elizabeth Sacca.

Do you want to borrow it while I am here?

No, well he was very fond of the Lowenfeld family and he spent a lot of time over there with them.

Is this their house on Atherton?

No, you wouldn't recognize it because they have re-done it so much. Viktor was so proud of it. This is the backside. And he owned these two lots down here. They have been sold now. They built houses there now.

Where is Franklin?

As you go up Franklin Street and go to the very end and you turn.

Is that South Atherton there?

No, it is College Heights, way back, and I don't know which street you go up. It is just on the corner and here is Franklin Street going around this way. They were very nice. They always had graduate students. They would meet every two weeks and we had lots of fun.

That's the thing that amazes me when I read about the atmosphere of the department. That is just not what I am experiencing right now. We will get together once and while.

But maybe because the department is bigger, I don't know, the fact that there were so many students going over to his house and hanging out.

Bob was particularly close to the family and they kind of accepted him. He was kind of a loner and he liked to hang with the Lowenfelds as much as he could. He kind of liked to be an insider and I think he kind of... [looking through the book and pointing to a picture] This may be one of his murals...

No, that was his mural.

I'd like to read that sometime.

Yeah well, why don't you keep it, and then, before I leave, I will pick it up. This is Elizabeth's so I need to bring it back with me. She let me borrow it.

Well that is awfully nice. Well, I can probably get it at the library.

I don't know. Let's see when it was published, because it wasn't at our library. But maybe it would be at Penn State library. Yeah, 2001. NAEA. It's up to you.

Bob was a really bright guy. He was art supervisor at maybe Rhode Island.

He mentions in there, it was either New Jersey or New York.

Well, one of the states. He was art supervisor. He has a twin brother I recollect, but they followed different pathways.

Well, thanks a lot.

Well, I'll tell you one thing about Viktor. There were about a dozen people who thought they were Viktor's closest friend and he made everyone feel like they were his closest friend. Ellen Abell thought that she was his closest friend; Bob Saunders felt that he was his closest friend, and god knows how many others. Because Viktor, when anyone went into his office and no matter how busy he was, everything stopped and he was focused on you.

That is amazing. It has to be because of the kinds of experiences that he had and also his priorities. It seems to me that his priorities were very set.

Oh sure. If you went into his office and you were just there for the first time to ask about coming to do a graduate program, no matter how busy he was, you would think you were the only person in the world that he ever wanted to come to Penn State and that is the way. The second time you would come, you would get a hug to go along with it. He wouldn't be talking to you and signing papers. That used to drive me crazy when people would do that and you would go in for whatever reason and they would be there signing and filling out something else. Never would he do that, even if it was a poor student or

the lowest student. So Bob thinks that he is the closest friend that Viktor ever had and Ellen Abell knows she was the closest friend that he ever had and god knows how many other people there were.

He must have been a pretty charismatic and nice person



ART EDUCATION

THE JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

AS AN ART TEACHER,

I BELIEVE THAT . . .

The art education creed on the left was printed in the first Yearbook of the Association. It was presented to the Council by the Committee on Policy and Research and adopted at the Chicago meeting last February.

It is the belief of the editor that in this format the creed may be seen by more people; in fact it may be passed on to principals and other administrators, or it may be exhibited as a poster whenever the occasion demands. A limited number of reprints have been made on heavy stock. These will be mailed to individuals upon request.

ART EXPERIENCES ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE FULLEST DEVELOPMENT OF ALL PEOPLE AT ALL LEVELS OF GROWTH **BECAUSE THEY PROMOTE** SELF-REALIZATION OF THE WHOLE INDIVIDUAL BY INTEGRATING HIS IMAGINATIVE, CREATIVE, INTELLECTUAL, EMOTIONAL AND MANUAL CAPACITIES **AND**

SOCIAL MATURITY AND RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH CULTIVATING A DEEPENED UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS, IDEALS, AND GOALS OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIAL GROUPS.

ART IS ESPECIALLY WELL SUITED TO SUCH GROWTH **BECAUSE IT:**

ENCOURAGES FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, EMPHASIZES EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES, INTEGRATES ALL HUMAN CAPACITIES, **AND** UNIVERSALIZES HUMAN EXPRESSION.

ART INSTRUCTION SHOULD ENCOURAGE:

EXPLORATION AND EXPERIMENTATION IN MANY MEDIA,

SHARPENED PERCEPTION OF ESTHETIC QUALITIES, INCREASED ART KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS, **AND THE** CREATIVE EXPERIENCE IN SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES, **AND THE**

REALIZATION THAT ART HAS ITS ROOTS IN EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE.

ART CLASSES SHOULD BE TAUGHT WITH FULL RECOGNITION THAT:

ALL INDIVIDUALS ARE CAPABLE OF EXPRESSION IN ART,

INDIVIDUALS VARY MARKEDLY IN MOTIVATIONS AND CAPACITIES, **AND**

ART IS LESS A BODY OF SUBJECT MATTER THAN A DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITY.

BECAUSE ART EXPERIENCES ARE CLOSE TO THE CORE OF INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND **BECAUSE THEY PERVADE ALL PHASES OF LIVING, THE NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION BELIEVES THAT ALL TEACHERS SHOULD HAVE BASIC TRAINING IN ART.**

Volume 2

MARCH-APRIL 1949

Number 2

Figure 14: As an Art Teacher I Believe... as reproduced from *Art Education* 1949 March-April, vol.2 no.2

Chapter 8

Education

This chapter focuses on the themes that have already been discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 but through the lens of educational policy and art education. In this chapter I write about education history from World War I and the Great Depression with the emergence of Progressive education policy. I concentrate on the impact of World War II and the subsequent effects after, including critical issues such as the influence of modern psychology, science and technology and the cold war. I examine art education and national education policy in context to those influences and conclude with another discussion of Lowenfeld in context of national policy and how critics have interpreted his philosophy.

Pre- WWII

One of the concerns during the 1920s was to liberate society from puritanical domination that was a part of the preceding decades. New ideas proliferated and were readily accepted because of changes in social, political and cultural attitudes brought on by the ending of the First World War. People were not only happy that the war was over but also adamant that it should never happen again. This prompted many to anticipate new

ways of thinking; paving the way for modernism. The progressive ideas of thinkers such as John Dewey helped to shape education along with modern psychologists such as Sigmund Freud who greatly influenced education and culture as well. As schools impose patterns of social order, education including art education began to be viewed as an opportunity to better society. This was an idea of Dewey and other Reconstructionists (Efland, 1990) who saw education as the best instrument for social remediation.

Influence of Psychology

Psychology played two important key roles in education policy. It became integrated with academics including art education “promising to offer the methods for ascertaining the needs of a hypothetically pure child” (Korzenik, 1990, p.203). There was an increasing amount of research that was based upon the psychological development of the child. Psychology in education was a tool for individual self-improvement and brought about a focus on the psychiatric model of the child learner. It was considered a guarantee towards solving the problems of the human mind and thus solving social problems.

The science of psychology was also integral in the developing the industry of public relations through controlling mass opinion and in creating a culture of consensus (Hinchey, 2006; Chomsky, 2000; p.137). Chomsky mentions the work of Edward Bernays who was honoured by the American Psychological Association in 1949. Bernays gained valuable insight during his experience on the Committee on Public Information, Woodrow Wilson’s state propaganda agency. Propaganda proved

successful during the war and “opened the eyes of the intelligent few in all departments of life to the possibilities of regimenting the public mind”. He adapted similar techniques for business leaders to use; “the conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses”. He considered these measures “the engineering of consent” to be the “very essence of the democratic process”. National consensus and social unity was imperative in order for the nation to peacefully ride out the economic crisis after WW1. It was important after WWII to continue the fight against communism and to build the economy. The rhetoric of democracy and individualism was repeated throughout this period to reinforce a national consensus that favoured democratic capitalism over communism.

Progressive education

Progressive education was a move from traditional methods practiced before World War I towards a more child-centered method. It was a response to the coarse individualism of the 20s and the economic suffering of the 30s. From 1920 and to World War II proponents of the child-centered method expanded towards the adaptation of the sense of the social whole; around the purpose of the community and the well being of the group. This restructuring was partly due to the Stock market crash in 1929 which spanned the entire decade of the thirties as well as the United States involvement in the Second World War. Learning was perceived to be an individual experience and best accomplished in an

atmosphere of freedom from social inhibition and repression; in an environment that cultivated personal exploration. The molding of the child to be able to adjust to the group was also of particular importance. The emphasis on group integration was to cultivate democratic education. Progressive educators were known as social re-constructionists and their goal was to teach students to be active participants in a democratic civic community, able to engage in conceptions of a better society. Art education which before was more technically directed in industrial based design came to mean creative self expression and closely identified with the values of progressive education in promoting the notion of the group. Goldman (1950) wrote that art education's unique potential was in helping generate group processes and activity. Integrating the individual into the group was considered fundamental to democracy. The lack of ability to participate in group action was considered a block to unity and world peace. Although Dewey (Westheimer; Kahne, 1998) had concerns about indoctrination and assuming any fixed truths in the transmission of ideas to students he agreed that educators and students needed to be aware of existing conditions. About art education, he wrote (1934) that art was unique to the individual and that art was important to learning when the activity of art and the product of art influenced human experience. Experience that was enjoyed for its own sake was an experience that was essentially aesthetic in nature.

The Progressive Education Society's Eight Year Study promoted the development of the "core curriculum" (Westheimer; Kahne, 1998) which engaged in an extensive projects that concentrated on small communities. The "core" was to engage students in multidisciplinary action emphasizing the daily experience in their lives and that of the

community. Best illustrating this idea in art education would be the Owatonna Project. Owatonna, a small city near the University of Minnesota was considered at the time a fairly industrial-diversified city. It was sufficiently deprived of art activities in the immediate past as to make assessment of impact easily noticeable in community life (Logan, 1955). The depression had cut out art classes in the public schools. The project essentially flooded the entire community with year- round studio classes in fine art and crafts, art appreciation, lectures and exhibitions. Many facets of the community were involved through exhibition space and resources. The idea was to integrate art into the daily lives of the community. First this was to be initiated by professionals but the hope was that school groups, students and community members would take over an active role in promoting art in everyday life.

The decline of Progressive education

With World War II came the gradual decline of progressive ideas as nationalist sentiments and attitudes made criticism of the status quo unpopular. Anti-communists and conservatives of the 1940s and 50s identified progressivism as a threat to America. Progressive education came under fire for being too socially oriented, not focusing enough on American values of freedom and individuality, therefore not supporting democratic values. Frederick Logan's (1955) *Growth of Art in American Schools* illustrates this period of art education history from the perspective of the times. "The

very use of the words 'progressive education' has reached a point where it sets off automatic emotional reactions pro and con among those persons who take fixed positions as liberals or conservatives (p.152)." Published in 1955, it is written at a time when progressive education was on the brink of being extinguished. It was a highly charged issue that incited attacks from the left claiming that it was anti-intellectual and from the right for having communist ideals. Logan's book mirrors what the domestic political climate of the 1950's was like, when loyalties were important, and what side one was on was crucial to guarding employment and well being.

Logan acknowledged the misinterpretations about progressive education writing that it was more a reflection of the current attitudes and instead, asked the reader to consider what progressive education had contributed to art education.

To infer that the whole progressive movement was crazy at best or subversive at worst is to attempt to defeat educational advance. The present healthful and promising outlook for art education is, in my opinion, based on the scholarly inquiry and exploitation of resources in the arts which were so greatly advanced in that postwar decade. (pp. 152-153)

He felt that the influence of John Dewey's philosophy in 1934 through the publication of his book *Art as Experience* was important to art education because these ideas were the stimulus to a valuable approach.

Dewey in 1952 had his own critique of progressive education (Cohen, 1974). He felt that much of the problems that progressives were dealing with had to do with the fact that they were holding to a practice as a solution to the problem when the problem was no longer the same as it was originally when the solution was founded. He admitted to his share in developing the principles and ideas that were the foundations of what was being taught in the educational institutions of the time, but he criticized the fact that more than half a century had gone by and educators had not adapted to the changes in society. The fixation on certain rules and policies of education and the transmission of these ideas, unless it was truly progressive in the sense that it initiated progress, Dewey felt was simply indoctrination, “propaganda” and not education. He said,

It is a type of education fit for the foundations of a totalitarian society and, for the same reason, fit to subvert, pervert and destroy the foundations of a democratic society. For the creation of a democratic society we need an educational system where the processes of moral-intellectual development is in practice as well as in theory a cooperative transaction of inquiry engaged in by free, independent human beings who treat ideas and the heritage of the past as means and methods for the further enrichment of life, quantitatively and qualitatively, who use the good attained for the discovery and establishment of something better. (p.3127)

The Pasadena Case in 1950 (Nowack and Miller, 1977) is an example of the issues facing progressive educators and the confrontations that they dealt with at this time. Progressive education was perceived as having socialist characteristics. The National Council for American Education published a pamphlet in 1950 asking its readers “How Red Is the Little Red Schoolhouse?” The cover pictured a Soviet soldier injecting a hypodermic needle labeled “organized communist propaganda” into a red structure resembling a schoolhouse. Dr. Willard E. Goslin, who was a nationally known progressive educator and president of the American Association of School Administrators, had been hired to direct the Pasadena schools. In the two years that he served, he introduced changes in the subject matter and teaching techniques in keeping with progressive education policy. When in June 1950 Goslin requested an increase in school taxes to support these changes, his request was denied. The public called Goslin a traitor to the American tradition and he was accused of not teaching sufficient “Americanism”. He was then asked to be removed as superintendent (Cohen, 1974).

Progressive Education Magazine ended production in July of 1957 (Cohen, 1974) due to a lack of subscribers. Although the organization was put to rest, some of the tangible aspects of the movement lasted such as movable desks, project method learning, the cultivation of interest to learning so that students would be more motivated, more effective student teacher relationships, more student activities outside of schoolwork and greater emphasis on self discipline as opposed to the authoritative role of school towards the student.

WWII the dividing point

Efland (1990) regarded the end of World War II as a dividing point in art education history. The war affected the political and cultural landscape of the United States by boosting the economy through mass control and consumption. The transformation of US cities impacted schools as the development of huge tracks of single family residences disseminated outside of the urban centers and into rural areas. The suburbs attracted middle class whites as the cities attracted many African Americans from the south seeking work and more liberal attitudes towards race. Schools in the suburbs were generally white, prosperous and progressive in policy. In contrast, the schools in the major cities were non-white or non-protestant neglected and lacked necessary funding in spite of the surrounding economic boom.

Throughout the decades of the 40s and 50s, the needs of education were in parallel to the needs of government. Art education was in turn influenced by the needs of education. Art education policies and ideas (Efland, 1990) were subject to change depending on the prevailing social climate, to social circumstances, and to socially powerful groups.

As Soviet Russia military strength proved itself, the United States looked for ways to compete. Science and creativity in education were perceived to be important for

technological advancement, innovation and discovery. The freedom to be a creative individual, to be innovative was the essence of living in a free democracy. The idea of democratic values in life and education was to put emphasis on the individual and only a democratic society with democratic schools could safeguard the uniqueness of the individual. Living in a totalitarian society was considered a deterrent for innovation and advancement because it subordinated the value of the individual.

Sputnik and Criticism of US education policy

The Soviet's surprising recovery from the devastation of World War II as well as achievements in science and technology greatly impacted American culture and education. When in October 1957 the Soviets launched Sputnik I and proved themselves to be the new leaders in the space movement, shock was felt in every aspect of American life and particularly in education. With Sputnik came a call to action for a more rigid curriculum which concentrated on the basic disciplines.

Studies came out to show how much America was lacking in their education system compared to the Soviets. From the report of the First Official U.S. Educational Mission to the U.S.S.R in 1959 (Cohen, 1974, p.3153) officials came back impressed with the nationalistic way in which Soviets approached education and the commitment they

demonstrated to advance the citizens through education since the revolution of 1920. The officials found that the underlying attitude was that good schools and universities were necessities in their race for world supremacy. Their efforts of mandatory mass education were rewarded by succeeding in turning the nation's illiteracy rate around within one generation. Not only was education an opportunity for the youth, adults, even those working full-time, were also full-time students or taking correspondence courses to enter university. The officials noted that the Soviet's was a planned society while America's was an individual initiative. In their report they remarked the equal opportunity between men and women as women were expected to do any job as well as a man. Soviet women entered professions in medicine, mathematics and physics as well as operating busses and working in factories.

Re-assessment of the education system

In the United States the attention was focused on changing the education system rather than making other changes. Critics such as Hyman Rickover (Cohen, 1974) who worked in the field of atomic energy building nuclear reactors, was absorbed in the problems of education. He saw a lack in qualified talent coming out of the schools. He criticized American education because it "emphasized learning factual know-how at the cost of absorbing fundamental principals, just as it stressed conditioning of behaviour at the cost of developing the ability to think independently" (p.3159). Other critics such as James Conant (Cohen, 1974) remarked on the mediocrity of American public high schools. "The academically talented student, as a rule, is not being sufficiently challenged, does

not work hard enough, and his program of academic subjects is not of sufficient range” (p.3161). He also noted the gender inequalities in education and that there needed to be more attention given to girls in math and science.

Art Education

Logan (1955) described this period as a time of “bewildering contrasts” for art education because given the state of confusion in the world, it was a general assumption that art could not be important or useful in America’s competition for global superiority. He wrote, “Potential catastrophic destruction makes the slow achievement of art seem less significant than research in medicine, in nutrition, in biology, in new destructive and constructive forces of all kinds.” (pg. 201) Logan described the irony of how educational resources were “embarrassingly plentiful” as art educators were drawing from a wider variety of scholarly literature in other fields such as philosophy, anthropology, psychiatry, therapy, the history of the arts, and social history. He mentioned also the improvements that were being made to the physical structure of the schools. The reason why art education was failing to gain status in the school system was for, in Logan’s opinion, one of the field’s lack of a cohesive set of values.

...it seems possible that we are so diverse in background, point of view, and emphasis that we are talking and teaching too frequently at cross-purposes to one another. More general interest in the basis of

contemporary philosophy of art would advance mutual understanding among art teachers. (p.201)

Art Education and National Policy

In 1987, Freedman argued that art education, during the 40s and 50s, was influenced by American values and the literature reflected the climate of opinion that concerned national political goals. She claimed that there was a redefinition of citizenship based on individual attitudes and beliefs as well as a move towards a therapeutic approach in developing children's social relations. Freedman wrote that the approach "involved the belief that a public institution could scientifically teach children to become independent, yet socially responsible" (pg. 27). Two years later, she wrote that "at various times and in various ways, art education has helped to maintain existing socioeconomic conditions while seeking to promote social mobility and reduce alienation" (pg. 220). She suggests that modernist thought was introduced into education and art education to fulfill certain nationalistic needs.

Freedman's article (1987) "Art Education and Changing Political Agendas: An Analysis of Curriculum Concerns of the 1940's and 1950's, explains how the art curriculum of this period served the United States political agenda through specific art activities. She found two layers in art education literature in the 40s and 50s that reflected new tensions in national, political, and economic conditions in the US. One layer showed school art

publications promoting curriculum focussed on social responsibility for national morale as well as international understanding and another layer in the literature was in the organization of the curriculum at the end of the war. For instance one way that art education was to support America's role in international politics and culture was through the making of posters about the war effort. She refers to examples in literature such as *School Arts Magazine* and *Art Education Today* that she felt reflected 'a new sense of America's power in the world and a narcissistic view of individual freedom' (p.17). One example that she mentions that illustrates the rather bizarre extent to which some art educators incorporated the war into their lessons was in Milwaukee. I include Freedman's reference to A.G. Pelikan's (1943) article "School art and national defense" *School Arts*, 22(2), 3-5 although I did not personally verify it. I find it curious as well as shocking. She writes that, Pelikan was at the time the art supervisor for Milwaukee public schools and he collected a list of lesson plans that were suggested by the city's teachers. Among the many suggestions were that students make posters that encourage enlistment in the military, and another activity, of which the purpose is not explained by Freedman, suggests that students make models of gas chambers. There were also suggestions that students make maps and charts of plans of attack.

Freedman's position is that mass education in the United States contributed to the political advancement of American ideology using the notions of freedom and democracy to control the masses. During World War II art education supported the war effort under the pretext that the enemy was trying to take away artistic freedom. Art education programs produced antiwar propaganda for fundraising. She describes posters depicting

...images of strong, handsome and determined young men illustrated convictions about the inherent good of the Allied countries. Depictions of Allied women and children were to evoke sympathy for the helpless and innocent. The images of people in nations fighting against the United States, in contrast, took on inhuman characteristics. Germans were represented as eerie, dark, skeletal figures without faces or identities (pg.19).

Fehr (2004) notes the irony of these posters because the same type of work was promoted following the war to produce posters for world peace.

Evan Kern's (1985) assessment of school curriculum literature throughout the United States is less critical than Freedman. He found that during this period, much attention was put towards how art contributed to the whole child, good citizenship and social adjustment. Creativity for the development of the whole child was of particular importance in art education literature from 1940 to 1960 and attention was also given to art therapy in order to promote social adjustment. He also found numerous references in the literature suggesting that in many cases art was taught by the elementary teacher instead of an art specialist.

Reconsidering Lowenfeld's philosophy through the frame of social control

Freedman (1987) claimed that Lowenfeld's work best illustrates the 'psychiatric ideology' that art educators promoted during the 40s and 50s; that he did not simply respond to humanistic needs that were evident at this time. She claims that "Lowenfeld's work responded to political imperatives of social control, nationalism, and the position of America in the post war world" (p.24). Freedman described Lowenfeld's approach as a subtle form of social control. Her argument was that his work represented fundamental assumptions of art education as it responded to the social and political agendas of post-war America. As direction from psychologists was to help art educators develop acceptable, democratic and healthy personality traits in children, she saw contradictions in this because the notion of individual was 'generic' in that it did not differentiate people. The notion of culture and politics was not important. She states, "The contexts of time and place, of history and community, were lost" (pg.27). The hidden curriculum assumed that everyone was the same and forced the individual to be like everyone else in their democratic thinking in order to belong to the group. Freedman felt that the lack of attention to the complexities of art and society was intended to keep the 'child child-like' (p.27) and such programs avoided social realities.

I feel that Freedman's argument is strong in that it illustrates through art education literature the climate of opinion and how it effected education and society. However, in light of my research, I believe that her argument that Lowenfeld's approach contained the indoctrination of American values and that he was building support for American policies

lacks thorough knowledge about who Lowenfeld was and what he experienced. My research holds that his approach, although it was well accepted by the mainstream, promoted values that were not at all mainstream. Although Lowenfeld did believe that psychology was important in understanding children, he used psychology as a means to see children as individuals. His model was one that was rooted in the idea that everyone regardless of race, religion, socio-economic background or handicap was a unique and capable individual and should be free to develop their own ideas. In turn, they would develop into individuals that held their own opinions and would not blindly follow any government or institution that does not respect freedom. His was not a 'psychiatric model' but an anti-fascist, anti-totalitarian model.

Lowenfeld's lectures and writing are full of American slogans. The language that he used reflected the language of the time but his voice was a voice of resistance to the status quo. Taken in context to the times, his was a voice of reason during a time of extreme prejudice, religiosity and superficiality. Lowenfeld's repetition of the notions "creative self-expression" and "freedom from regimentation" reflected the general rhetoric of American values of democracy as these values were repeated to American citizens and to the world in order to differentiate from Soviet ideology. However, I think that for Lowenfeld it was not superficially integrated into his beliefs. It was part of who he was.

Lowenfeld perhaps had strong beliefs about democracy because of his intense personal experiences under the Nazis and I believe as well, the rude awakening to the Jim Crow

laws that he witnessed while living and working in the segregated American South for several years. Coser (1984) suggests that perspectives of democracy may be considered part of a particular reaction common among Jewish war refugees. They embrace an idealized conception of American democracy because they have first-hand experience of what life is like without rights or freedom and they become more dedicated to it than even life-long American citizens. Liebman (1979) said “World War II made it almost a necessity that these Jews show their gratitude toward what by now was their native land. “It was the might of America that brought to a halt the greatest menace the Jews had ever known” (p.375). Lowenfeld’s attitudes were shaped by his own experience with totalitarianism, exile and being subjected to oppressive conditions in his lifetime (Raunft, 2001) and these experiences should not be minimized. For him, schooling was to support the values of freedom for individual development as opposed to an education that fostered dependency on bad leadership, material wealth and superficial remedies. Such personalities he considered lacked good mental health. Very important to consider in his critique about Americans and their way of living was the fact that he mentioned the high rate of depression and mental illness in the United States despite the high standard of living (Michaels, 1982).

Through an understanding of the social, political and economic issues in the United States during the 1940s and 50s, the expressions that Lowenfeld uses and the urgency of his priorities for art education are justifiable. Society was looking for evidence of creative development in the schools and Lowenfeld answered this call. Being familiar

with his life and his own critique on the society of his time (Michaels, 1982) is important in order to truthfully understand what his goals were for art education.

Given the circumstances of the type of environment in which he practiced, one could state the case that he tried to play the right cards for the advancement of art education in America's schools; that he adapted his argument to give meaning to an audience that was ready to listen. Perhaps he used the turn towards innovation in science and technology as an opportunity for art education. Beittel (1982) believed that Lowenfeld was responsive to the times. "If science was the way of the culture, then he could humanize that into the aims of art education; not the other way around" (p.20).

From this perspective one could say that Lowenfeld found that his ideas, if tuned to the national consensus, could advance the cause of art education. He successfully adopted American slogans of individuality, freedom and democracy in his justification for art education as a way to teach social responsibility. In *Progressive Magazine* Lowenfeld (1949) wrote about the importance of self expression. "Self expression, in my opinion, is one of the most powerful educational weapons in a time which needs to collect all its forces for a survival of democratic thinking". (p.76)

The types of attitudes that were prevalent in the culture of this time as well as the events and changes in the daily issues of society were important to the success of Lowenfeld's work. Because society and the climate of opinion during this time held science in such

high value, the psychiatric model and Lowenfeld as a psychologist/ art educator was readily accepted by the mainstream.

On August, 10 1945, the *Daily Collegian* published an article introducing Lowenfeld, who was invited to teach during that summer session. Lowenfeld said in the interview, “An art teacher must be a psychologist as well as an instructor in the techniques of art (p.5).” Knowing a child and their desires was impossible without being familiar with their psychology. Freedman (1987), even though she was skeptical of Lowenfeld from a social-political standpoint, also suggested that the field of American art education was a supporting community for the scholar and that he was readily accepted in relation to the current national climate of opinion and ideology.

Not everyone agreed with Lowenfeld’s justification for art education. Barkan (1955) considered the social environment the ultimate place for children to mature into socially responsible adults. Later, Eisner (1972) concurred with Barkan that art pedagogy should consist of more content than creative liberation and was a key figure in the development of discipline-based art education later.

Lowenfeld has been included in the therapeutic model of art education which was to nurture the mental health of a child. It was based on the assumption that children are naturally independent and, if left alone to discover their self would grow up to be healthy democratic citizens. The mental health of children was to reflect that good citizenship

and a strong democratic personality. Lowenfeld's ideas, based in psychology, were readily accepted into the broader scope of American social thought however his ideas have been interpreted in differing ways. I believe that his model was to nurture the mental health of the child but for the means to develop empathetic, tolerant and strong adults that would defy totalitarian or fascist rule.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Korzenik (1992) asks the question of who shapes the work of historical research. She focuses on the personal aspects of historical writing and how inevitably, the researcher influences history with biases and private preoccupations. Instead of considering this as contamination, she is fascinated by it and believes that it is valuable to look at the context that the publication year and time in history have on the subject in question. The researcher's work is a process of making choices.

“We pursue, gather data, and then become the ultimate arbiter, the authority, deciding what goes in and what stays out... we shouldn't be surprised to find our reconstruction of the past reflecting back to us our worries, preoccupations, even obsessions. We are a part of why we do it.” (p.265)

Korzenik also describes this historical path as being a question of what one chooses to reveal. I would expand on that to say that through the search, revelations surfaced. For this study, I took time and care in deciding what was significant. Sometimes, everything seemed significant because of the many interpretations. Looking into where I come from and how my teaching philosophy was encouraged was a way to learn about the larger picture.

The initial feelings behind my study were based on wanting to go back and explore my own past. Korzenik describes being able to reflect directly on her life, to use

autobiography as a form of art educational historical research. Although I did not use autobiography as a basis for my study, the connection to the place (Penn State) was, without a doubt, a foundation for the questions that I attempted to answer.

In concentrating on a history of art education through an examination of a part of my own history, I was able to build my awareness of the field of art education and at the same time situate myself within that context. I reflect on what this research means to me. It has not only been an opportunity to learn about my chosen profession; it has given me much insight as to who I am and what I want to accomplish.

This research illuminated aspects of the theoretical background about the field of art education as well as offered valuable insight into different methodologies of working; possibilities of which I had not been previously aware. It allowed me to reflect on what I had been doing in the classroom, to validate my experience and to challenge what I thought I knew.

Equipped with these tools, I now approach teaching and art-making as a means to build my knowledge, understand the consequences of my work while setting it in a context that links me to a community of art educators from which I can learn more. In this way I situate myself as a learner by looking at my practice through multiple perspectives.

Through this research, I learned a great deal about the art education department at Penn State as well as about my own education in the State College Area School District all the

while guarding an element of the outside perspective since I was in Montreal for the better part of the research.

It will be 20 years that I have been away from my hometown of State College, with the last 11 years spent out of the country. Now with the prospect of going back to my hometown to continue my studies in art education at Penn State, I feel that this research and, in some ways, my life, has now come full circle.

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