PERSONAL JOURNEY OF ARTIST AS RESEARCHER

David Ray Phillips
B.A, University of Washington, Seattle, 1964

PROJECT

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

EDUCATION
(Curriculum and Instruction)

at

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

SPRING
2010
PERSONAL JOURNEY OF ARTIST AS RESEARCHER

A Project

by

by

David R. Phillips

Approved by:

__________________________, Committee Chair
Crystal Olson, Ed.D.

Date: ___________________________
Student:  _____ David R. Phillips ___

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Department of _____ Teacher Education_______
Abstract

of

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This project is an alternative culminating experience for a Master of Arts in Education: Curriculum and Instruction with an elective Emphasis on Arts in Education. It follows Pathway I: Artist as Researcher. This project addresses the importance of individual creativity and reviews why a balanced curriculum includes the arts. Founding educational theorists as well as observers of current and future trends will be noted in support of the necessity for school curriculums to continue the arts as a tool for personal development of all students, personal creativity being a main ingredient. This project has been developed with the intent to illuminate the universal and abundant nature of personal creativity.

______________________________, Committee Chair
Crystal Olson, Ed.D.

Date: ___________________________
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank all the members of my cohort whose dedication to the principle of preparedness in order to make a greater contribution to others has inspired and filled my journey with satisfaction well beyond what I may have imagined. I have special gratitude for the trio of exceptional professors, Karen Benson, Ph.D., Lorie Hammond, Ph.D., and a special thanks to Crystal Olson, Ed.D., with her encouragement this journey became possible and complete.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of Project

This project is an alternative culminating experience for a Master of Arts in Education: Curriculum and Instruction with an elective Emphasis on Arts in Education. It follows Pathway I: Artist as Researcher. This project addresses the importance of individual creativity and reviews why a balanced curriculum includes the arts. Founding educational theorists as well as observers of current and future trends will be noted in support of the necessity for school curriculums to continue the arts as a tool for personal development of all students, personal creativity being a main ingredient. This begins with the inclusion of the arts in the first suggested standardized curriculum, evolving to a Discipline Base Art Education emphasizing art history, art curriculum, art production, and the aesthetics of art.

Purpose of Project

This project has been developed with the intent to illuminate the universal and abundant nature of personal creativity. A review of how K-12 classroom instruction has encouraged and incorporated these attributes as well as patterns and methods to enhance current classroom environments and personal development. The sporadic minimalizing of art in the classroom is noted; balanced by the continuing successes in many current classrooms. Future needs are recognized as globalization and the pluralistic character of society broadens our cultural understanding.
Statement of Problem

This project will address challenges teachers and students have acknowledging, awaking, and expressing their creativity. Researchers will include innate and cognitive aspects of individual creativity with a historical review of the importance public education has placed on the need for these processes by incorporating the “Arts” in a basic, balanced curriculum. Cultural attitudes will be noted which have encumbered personal development of these capabilities as well as masking their current and future importance for individuals to acquire financial success and attain personal satisfaction. Interviews with two professional artists will be included to trace this process. The varied specialties, ages, and experience of these professionals will highlight varying pathways of discovery and development of creativity.

Significance of Project

This project exposes the abundance of individual creativity and calls for an awakening by each person to acknowledge this and take ownership of the same. Methods for expanding these abilities through activities and study will inform both instructors and students. With personal empowerment instructors will be able to guide, direct and inspire students to greater achievements not limited to school curricula. With inspired personal accomplishments students would be able to live more productive and satisfying lives.
Definition of Terms

**Acknowledge** – the ability to admit to own or declare ones belief in something.

**Aesthetic** - beautiful, pleasing in appearance.

**Awaken** – the ability to become more conscious or aware.

**Creativity** – the ability to combine the familiar with unknown, which shall not be limited to artifacts or written compositions.

Organization of Project

This project has been organized into four chapters. The first chapter titled Introduction includes the following sections; description of project, purpose of project, statement of problem, significance of project, definition of terms, and this section regarding the organization of project. The second chapter is the review of relevant literature. The first of these three sections is the theory and practice of arts in education. Second is acknowledging and awakening creativity. The third section is expressing creativity. The third chapter is the methodology used to complete this project. Active classroom participation in varying pedagogies, participation in workshops, seminars and attendance at conferences is included. Extended studies of Waldorf pedagogy and the cultural exchange of teaching in Nicaragua complete this chapter. Chapter four has two sections, reflections and recommendations. The reflections section includes what I presented and how it has affected me as well as what I think about the project process. The recommendations section includes what I wish to share with my academic community. Reference materials include print and
electronic text. In the appendices, interviews with two professional artists have been transcribed.
Horace Mann was a Massachusetts lawyer and state legislator. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts asked him to serve as the first Secretary of the Board of Education formed in 1837. As a social reformer, his 12-year tenure as Secretary of the Board of Education provided vast opportunities to call for change in educational policy. As he observed the schools, he addressed the issues of educational opportunities, teacher training, subjects to be taught, and other issues. So strong was his “Voice” that he is often referred to as the Father of American Education (Kliebard, 1982). His recommendations for tax support, public schools, centralized oversight at the state level, and the inclusion of art as part of the basic curriculum are still deployed today.

Each school determined the diverse and varying requirements for college entrance. This created a public need for uniformity. As the nation grew in social order and moved towards industrialization, factions of political, financial, and religious groups exerted pressures on this process. The determination of curriculum was initiated and solidified by the National Education Association’s Committee of Ten in 1882 (Kliebard, 1982). A standardized curriculum in schools became more prevalent in the early 1900s with the use of common textbooks.

As a philosopher and educational theorist, John Dewey was able to open and operate a “Laboratory School” during his tenure at the University of Chicago from
1894 to 1904 (Tanner, 1997). Tanner (1997) noted that Dewey did not invent an integrated curriculum yet worked hard to have subjects and lessons to be inter-related in some way. The children in the lower grades utilized drawing and art to speak about the content and subject matter being taught. This was drawn from their personal relationship and understanding of the subject matter.

In later years, Dewey (1934) further explained his pragmatic views. “In every integral experience there is form;” (p. 57) this being said in relation to discussing the aesthetic. What he expressed as a resulting condition of living one’s life was the following dynamic: from conception to development, then fulfillment is an expression of the creator’s prior experiences.

The arts not only contribute to the development of human intelligence, but they offer the means to reach the great diversity of students in every school today. With the growing pluralistic aspects of today’s society the ways of thinking, learning and behaving have grown exponentially. It would then follow that creativity and perception would be unique to each individual. Knowing this as the norm, the approach to deliver a common curriculum must be pragmatic to ensure a clearer and greater understanding.

A pragmatic approach to today’s curriculum using the arts as an integrated learning adjunct or a single subject is a major challenge for any teacher, formally trained in the arts or not. When the accepted goal of public education is to prepare citizens to critically view their world and learn by experience, a programmatic and integrated school curriculum is needed.
Eisner (1998) spoke of literacy not being limited to text. “What cannot be conveyed or constructed in words is often possible in visual images or in music” (p. 15). When the arts are referred to in public education it is the inclusion of theater, dance, music, and visual arts. We may also accept literature, as in storytelling and poetry as being arts. There is no question that the exposure to the arts in education inspires thought, provides opportunities for making judgments and applies to self-discipline to any future career path. Developing the sense of well being and well-being of others is maximized in this process. Artistic and scientific inventions are fostered through the participation in the arts.

With the understanding that learning does not occur with all students in the same way, the following is valid. Those students who primarily learn through visual and kinesthetic association would be slighted with only oral presentations as in rote memorization. The opportunities for personal growth and expanded self esteem would also be minimized. The methods of presentation rest with the creativity of each interested teacher. To become more of a facilitator in the learning process by infusing the arts, thereby inspiring students to become self-sustaining learners should be a major goal for every interested teacher.

Although the arts were included as a recommended course in the No Child Left Behind legislation, the current economic conditions have excused some politicians for their non-support and in some cases for the elimination of school funding for the arts. This is a regional consequence depending upon a district’s tax revenue and amounts of state contributions.
Dee Dickinson (1998) in the article titled “Learning Through the Arts” reported the progress of schools in the greater Seattle area that have successfully incorporated the arts within their teaching strategies. Dickinson (1998) reported on measurable success in several schools. At Green Lake Elementary, Dickinson (1998) quoted Principal Harvey Deutsch that “students who might not have otherwise been successful are flourishing. Discipline problems have nearly disappeared and academic achievement is constantly rising as a result of the rich arts programs” (p. 3). This program employs a full-time arts specialist who enlists professional artists and performers to work on different arts related activities. The results are noticed district wide and speak of the strong commitment to the infused arts currently in these schools.

As the current testing measures tie achievement to economic support for public education, some schools have abandoned the challenges and commitment to integrate the arts as an important part of the learning process. Elliot Eisner (1998) proposed that the challenge of testing be able to demonstrate that interrelated ideas and concepts having been explored have also been understood. Expressing that the eventual outcome of such testing would create a clearer understanding of the relatedness of the ideas as well as having aesthetic features.

With the current trend of measuring achievement with aptitude tests, the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), and others, there has been a
reallocation of instruction time that often reduces the creative processes fostered by an integrated arts curriculum.

The continuing debate of redefining the role of K-12 public education and the pedagogies deployed has brought additional voices supporting the arts in education. Goleman (1995) noted an expanded mission for schools to be “Society’s agents” (p. 280) to see that students develop the skills essential for life. These lessons are enhanced by participating in the arts.

Professor Donalyn Heise (2004) noted that “if one of the functions of schools is to prepare students for life, then art educators must attend to all facets of learning” (p. 43). She stressed that classroom lessons must relate to the real world. Developing lessons based on or including our Visual Culture, creates numerous opportunities to accomplish this goal. To study modern and historical architecture, clothing, function and design, as well as the many ways that consumer products are advertised, will all involve critical thinking. This will contribute to society’s citizens becoming wiser and more discerning.

In the introduction to his book A Whole New Mind, Daniel Pink (2005) noted a paradigm shift in the abilities of individuals who will flourish in the coming decades. He not only noted financial success, but also personal satisfaction. Individuals with a mind to create, empathize, recognize patterns and create meaning will flourish. “These people – artists inventors, designers, storytellers, caregivers, counselors, big picture thinkers – will now reap society’s richest rewards and share its greatest joys” (p. 1).
These attributes and abilities that Daniel Pink spoke of are directly related to an educational curriculum infused and integrated with the arts.

Acknowledging and Awakening Creativity

In *The Art Instinct*, Dennis Dutton (2009) noted that despite the many cultures, languages, customs and differences that “all human beings have essentially the same art” (p. 29). Ornamental decoration of clothing, tool making, and architecture has been recorded in early tribal communities through and including current technological societies (p. 29).

To readily acknowledge one’s creative or artistic abilities becomes more difficult as we mature with age and experience. As Berger (1972) emphasized in his book *Ways of Seeing*, each individual is affected by their perceived knowledge and cultural beliefs.

Ellen Handler Spitz (2006) noted in her book *The Brightening Glance*, that in early childhood varying aspects of perceiving and imagining in young children’s lives appear “seamless” and aesthetic potential can be observed in their daily routines (p. 5). Children by nature are creative. We as adults “categorize (and) compartmentalize” (Spitz, 2006, p. 5), and pass along values as to what society perceives as having aesthetic importance. To mature to adulthood with an understanding of creative powers and the skills to observe the aesthetic is very challenging.

In Smith, Ward, and Fink’s *The Creative Cognition Approach* (1995), they emphasized how our society has discouraged recognition and development of these natural abilities. By viewing creativity as a “rare and mystical gift” (Smith et al.,
A grant for artists, inventors, scientists, and others (Gardner, 1995, p. 229), this pervasive attitude discourages most and the label of unattainable is put in place and accepted by many individuals. The challenge for adults is to encourage young children to have aesthetic experiences without introducing influences and input that would skew their perceptions and interpretations. Spitz (2006) pleaded that whenever possible, it is best not to override a child’s natural aesthetic tastes and preferences.

This has been our culture and heritage. Related studies indicate that a shift to emphasize creative capabilities as having higher premiums is becoming a current trend. “Today we are all in the Art Business” (Pink, 2005, p. 55). The training of graphic artists has outnumbered chemical engineers four to one since 1970.

With the support of the J. Paul Getty Foundation, public education has adopted a Discipline Based Art Education pedagogy (DBAE). This modified approach emphasized evaluation and critical thinking of art, not just the production of artifacts. Since this introduction in the early 1980’s, the computer has evolved and fostered a revolution in associated products.

The efforts and energies invested by advertisers and marketers have expanded society’s visual culture. This has placed emphasis on and created a need to address these issues and in some way incorporate them in classroom instruction. The development of Visual Cultural Art Education (VCAE) has been the outcome. Individuals who observe and study the vast amount and nature of society’s accomplishments should be moved to feel some sense of connectivity. The challenge is to remove the doubt one may hold and participate in the process of being creative.
The inclusion of VCAE to infuse and co-exist with other classroom instruction could illuminate the fact that we are all creative by nature.

**Expressing Creativity**

As noted early in this project, the most creative mind may be that of a young child where imagined and real flow in and out, and appear seamless. With this being so the following will address the challenge of being a facilitator, guide or teacher to students and other in ways of expressing their creativity in all areas of learning. This discourse will focus on students K-12 and certainly could apply to everyone as in lifelong learning skills.

To go beyond the notion that “I can’t or I’m not creative” is to understand self doubt fostered by criticism. In his book *Five Minds For The Future*, Howard Gardner (2008) noted how uncritical a young child is and that as they grow to adolescence, they may become hyper critical of self and others. A tolerance for accepting criticism throughout a lifetime is essential. Students need experiences that offer a reasonable chance for success and opportunities to constructively criticize one’s self and others. To participate in an arts based curriculum does just that. Working in groups with guidelines offers a safe environment for self evaluation in addition to valuing the project as a whole.

The diversity in today’s student population has grown. Not only in cultural ethnical and social experiences, but in the acknowledgement of the established ways we take in information. Dr. Dickerson (1997) refers to studies done by Lynn O’Brien from Specific Diagnostic Studies, Inc. O’Brien studied an individual’s preferred way
of taking in information. The strongest channel being auditory, the number of students who learn most effectively by listening comprises less than fifteen percent of the population. Students preferring a visual style for learning comprise forty percent of the population. The use of charts, numbers, and words in conjunction with illustration is most effective with these students. The remaining forty five percent of the student population would be helped to understand abstract ideas with moving or "manipulations or concrete examples" (p. 7). When the Kinesthetic or Haptic students can literally hold or see the movement in relation to a subject, they are served to the fullest.

Lynn O’Brien has been involved in Education since 1969 and is the founder of Specific Diagnostic Studies, Inc. in Rockville, Maryland (1990). With permission to reprint materials for classroom use, she has created questionnaires and suggestions to help evaluate and understand the three different learning styles. The questionnaires are designed to discover visual, auditory, and haptic learning channel preferences, each having ten questions with a potential value of 1, 2, or 3. Whereas (1) is never or almost never applies, (2) is sometimes applies, and (3) is often applies. There are suggestions, and I have noted one example for each learning preference. With the visual learning preference, most students study better by themselves. Eleven additional suggestions are included. With the auditory learning preference, it helps students to read aloud when possible. In a quiet setting, students can try "hearing the words in their head," when reading. Five additional suggestions are included. With the haptic learning preference, if students need to fidget in class a good suggestion is to
cross their legs or squeeze a Nerf ball. All movements should be done in manner not to disturb others. Eight additional suggestions are included. Dr. O'Brien is willing to share this most valuable information that is formatted in a direct and concise manner and is available to all educators for classroom use.

To have students incorporate visual culture that interests them like movies, video games and doing so with stories encourages students to express their creativity (Dutton, 2009). Stories provide low cost, low risk surrogate experiences. They give rise to opportunities that answer the question, “What if?” In a fictional setting they give rise to safe exploration. Stories, whether true or fictional or mythological can provide a great deal of factual information to students. Stories encourage exploration of individual values, beliefs, motivations of others lending to growth in interpersonal and social skills as well as regulation for social behavior (Dutton, 2009).

There has not been a history of standardized testing designed to demonstrate students’ abilities as well as to what degree they possess creativity and the capability to empathize. Although imagination can be used to solve life problems, this and other qualities are hard to measure by standardized testing. Daniel Goleman (1995) argues that standard and “I.Q.” testing and the resulting scores are not reliable predictors of personal success, in areas of income as well as personal satisfaction in the course of living one’s life.

The teacher is directly responsible for the manner in which content is delivered to the students. To accomplish this and become more effective requires continuous
inquiry and training which would empower and develop the teachers own abilities to
think creatively and be an example for others.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The following methods were utilized for research to complete this project:

   a. Library resources, print and electronic. As noted in the list of references.
   b. Personal text resources. Some were noted; many are in my ever expanding personal library.
   c. Interviews with two professional artists
      i. Filmmaker Rick Smith, Bozeman, Montana. Current focus is on films with nature and the outdoors.
      ii. Visual Artist Jerry B. Kidd, Sutter Creek, California. Visual artist working in various mediums.
   d. Pedagogies explored in class. Various pedagogies were explored in class. I presented a segment based on newspaper art as a portion of the Theater of the Oppressed. The other class members were presenters of or participated in other pedagogies.
      i. Boal Theater of the Oppressed. The objective being for citizens to work out issues that might affect their community through theater.
      ii. Orff Schulwerk. This approach to fostering creativity in addition to conveying musical knowledge and skills was experienced with Elena Bennett, a member of my cohort. We travelled to Sacramento Country Day School where she teaches music with focus on Orff philosophy and
enjoyed an evening of creativity with singing, playing instruments, and
dancing.

iii. Multiple intelligences. This philosophy proposed by Howard Gardner in
the early 1980’s was effectively presented in a workshop environment that
included activities that demonstrated the use of all seven intelligences that
Howard Gardner has cited.

iv. Education Through Music. Through song, movement and interactive play,
this approach to learning will promote language development, listening
skills, physical coordination, social skills and musical development.

v. Waldorf Methods. Based on a philosophical view of human nature
developed by Rudolf Steiner, this approach to education follows the
developmental stages of physical growth, curiosity and capability of each
person. The goal of Waldorf is to enable students to realize and to choose
their individual path in life as adults.

vi. Anchor Works. This is a program that infused the curricula with an arts
program knowing this would lead to practical and integrated learning
experiences.

vii. Reggio Emilia Approach. Unusual in the way a teacher is a co-learner and
facilitator as to what curricula a young child may show interest in. This
from birth to age six is referred to as an emergent curriculum. As the child
develops cognition, language and social skills, graphic art is used to
facilitate understanding of these experiences.
2. Attended conferences, seminars, workshops.


   This full day of dance, drumming as well as playing some Orff instruments was attended by more than thirty individuals. Our facilitator and instructor was a native from Ghana, Africa. He was exuberant, witty and knowledgeable. The day was filled with song and dance. He cautioned that you choose the best student to play the cow bell. At the end of the day I understood why.

b. *Creativity for the Classroom*, Sierra Northern Arts Project (S.N.A.P), University of California Davis, October 2009.

   With a full evening of arts related information and activities, a dinner break was welcomed. An update on the support that is available to art instructors was examined. Activities with small and larger groups included improvisational theater, dance, mask construction, lesson planning and time management were a part of the evening.


   This all day conference provided a wealth of information and alternative practices to be employed in and out of the classroom. Panel 1A, Art in a Deficit Era was somewhat discouraging yet there appears to be a light
“dimly” shining. Panel 2A, Walls 2 Canvas: Youth Street Art and the MOSAIC Program was a delight to attend. The success of at risk gang related behavior being transformed from graffiti on walls to works of art on canvas was great to hear. Panel 3B was Art as a Learning Engine: Creative Ideas for Fostering Art in the Schools. To see a one minute animated film by second and third graders of a two-hundred year history and peek into the future for the geography on which their school resides was truly amazing. This was a terrific example of learning with the added features of The Arts playing a large role in the curriculum.


The keynote speaker Dr. Brian D. Schultz was engaging and inspiring. Drawing from his experience as a teacher in Chicago’s Public Schools, he spoke of successes in seemingly hopeless situations by getting the students involved in forming the curriculum around issues that concerned them. Letter writing by students produced contractors to make repairs to the school, parents to reenroll their child in this neighborhood schools as well as re-commitment by the local and national school boards. Dr. Schultz is a true innovator and demonstrated what can be accomplished.

e. *Four Pathways To Creativity*, California State University Sacramento Masters Cohort Retreat/Workshop, Marin Headlands Institute, September 2009.
The intent of this workshop was to invigorate, collaborate, brainstorm, focus and rejuvenate all in a relaxed atmosphere of the Marin Headlands Institute. As a group we produced a very large mandala with multi colors of sand on a twelve by twelve foot tarp laid on the floor. The finished mandala was spectacular. We did group projects of song and dance plus improvisation with words and movement games. Individual assignment for Pathways One were to be in the present moment, have an attitude of gratitude, access all five senses, open the door to nature, Artist Date (as recommended by Julia Cameron), and see with your “Eyes Wide Open.” With a solemn thank you, we closed the weekend by collapsing the mandala in a swirl of colors.


This Arts Faire was produced by our cohort, Don Wright and I took responsibility for the signs directing auto traffic. With a five thirty a.m. start our work day was over early. We assisted the exhibitors with moving their supplies. The last one assisted was the Taiko Drumming group so we joined their nine a.m. workshop. I found this to be informative, exhilarating, and infectious. In the afternoon I attended a “Blues in School” music presentation. The testimonials by those working with music in Public Schools confirmed the positive results by individuals as well as the whole campus culture due to participating in music. With well over seven hundred attendees this was the most successful Arts Fair.
3. Extended Pedagogical Studies


   Two full weeks from nine a.m. to four thirty p.m. of Waldorf educational philosophy and practices for teaching students grades one to three, with class participation for each grade level. Two experienced Waldorf teachers guided us in age related activities as though we were students. We learned one, two and three color water color painting; hand skills of knitting, drawing to inspire writing as well as math skills; physical movement incorporating song, story, and math; as well as emphasizing age appropriate neuro-motor movements. These delightful two weeks of Waldorf pedagogy were supplemented with group coral, lectures, and elected activities. The electives were song and games as well as storytelling, which culminated in a short play presented at our final assembly.

   Two superb lecturers were a part of my experience. Susan R. Johnson, M.D., F.A.A.P. spoke of physiological aspects of early childhood development in conjunction to age related educational challenges. Dr. Johnson also shared two personal stories including her brother and her son and the prolonged frustration of these two who were deemed remedial learners with additional problems.

   Betty Staley, Educator and Author, thoroughly reviewed the Four Temperaments and incorporated classroom methods and organization that
would favor the understanding of each personality type. The Sanguine Temperament, The Phlegmatic Temperament, The Melancholic Temperament, and the Choleric Temperament were presented. The concluding improvised skit clearly demonstrated the usefulness of being aware of these individual tendencies of young students.

To see alternative pedagogy in practice was inspiring. I understand the ideal situation of a Waldorf classroom, yet there are components and methods that could be used in a public education setting.


To be of service in a small rural community in Central America was a definite highlight of my educational experience at Sacramento State University. For our journey to Nicaragua, we held several planning sessions. We divided into three, six member groups.

My group decided on individual lesson plans all relating to a science theme by the water cycle. The personal and classroom supplies were discussed and determined. The cultural experience was heartfelt by all participants. We brought text books in Spanish, and school supplies that we knew they could not afford like soccer balls and Frisbees for the playground. We were well prepared and all that we donated was much appreciated. Our classroom
experience consisted of one day of observation, three days of lesson presentations with the fifth day culminating in a celebration festival.

The school of one hundred plus was structured with three classrooms of combined grades with one teacher per classroom. The makeup of the classrooms is as follows: grades one and two (including three kindergarteners), grades three and four, and grades five and six.

I served on the science committee. The water cycle was presented, incorporating geography, weather, the growing cycle of plants and animals with emphasis of our own individual responsibilities for use and management of these resources. Songs and meaningful games were incorporated within these lessons. We had someone fluent in Spanish but there was no lack of communication skills by those of us who had little or no training in the language. The whole week was abuzz with excitement and cooperation.

The visual arts committee brought supplies for making masks, water color painting, plus components to construct a fourteen foot tall mannequin. The children brought plastic bottles of various sizes, plus empty snack bags which are brightly colored and with clear tape we attached to a twelve foot sheet of four millimeter plastic. This was used as a dress for the Sun Goddess. The puppet was huge and colorful.

The performing arts committee worked with dance and song to the delight of all the school children. We brought some rhythm instruments. Elena Bennett, a cohort member and accomplished violinist was able to dust off a
three stringed violin found in a closet and played beautifully joining the guitar and the other rhythm instruments we brought. The universal disposition of young people to sing and dance was very evident throughout the week.

The culmination festival was attended by parents and local dignitaries. It was received well, with much applause. For a country that is the second poorest nation in the western hemisphere, and for a relatively short time, I personally experienced a polite, calm and a bright enthusiasm look toward the future by local citizens. To see the people of Nicaragua surround themselves with colorfully decorated architecture both public and private, speaks to man’s nature to be aesthetically creative.

I chose to investigate creativity as my project theme for many reasons. The three most significant being, (1) to gain a greater understanding of my ability to solve problems with an aesthetic overview, (2) to be more informed as to why the amount of these abilities each individual expresses varies so greatly, and (3) how creativity can be discovered and nurtured so all individuals might grow and be able to attain and strengthen opportunities for greater personal satisfaction and success.

Reflecting upon my early youth, interview responses from both Jerry Kidd and Rick Smith coincide with my experiencing creativity as innate yet nurtured by many as I grew older. My father challenged and nurtured my spatial perception and mechanical ability while very young, as well as assisting my mother as we decorated for weddings at our church were common experiences. Knitting and crocheting was a frequent activity as my sisters and I made gifts for family members. Athletics were a
part of my life and I had the good fortune of attending college with an athletic scholarship. Growing up in this era with television in its infancy and fewer games and toys offering instant gratification, contributed in my ability to take part in more developmental activities. These activities are recognized today as major contributors to a balanced curriculum that inspires life-long learning and allows for every student participating to see additional pathways for personal growth.

Ten years ago I received a phone call from a young man age twenty two who was in training for his first job as he had just graduated from college. The employer was the Microsoft Corporation. In the company of 23 other graduates from various universities and colleges like M.I.T., Georgia Tech., Harvard and others, he felt a little intimidated. In our conversation I asked him, “How many of those individuals could stand on stage and sing a cappella?” His response was “Good point, Dad.” I knew he could as I had been a part of his life since birth and witnessed many performances. To see my eldest son reap the rewards for having participated in an arts infused curriculum was very gratifying.

Daniel H. Pink (2005) stated that, “In the Conceptual Age, we will need to complement our L-Directed reasoning by mastering six essential R-Directed aptitudes. Together these six high-concept, high-touch senses can help develop the whole new mind this era demands” (p. 65). “Design. Story. Symphony. Empathy. Play. Meaning. These six senses increasingly will guide our lives and shape our world” (p. 67). All of these aptitudes are fostered and nurtured when you are enrolled in a curriculum that is infused with or based on the arts.
As an older student not having taught in a classroom in more than forty years, I came to class optimistic and with a fresh outlook about public education. Placing the websites of the Teachers Network, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Organization, International Journal of Education and the Arts on the favorites bar on my laptop has contributed to maintaining my optimism.

Researching and referencing what has been called for historically, and noting the familiarity of course content being explored in today’s curriculum is encouraging. Noted successes are occurring by some who have infused and integrated the Arts into their curriculums. Experiencing two weeks of Waldorf instruction sets the bar quite high for a teacher’s performance.

The evidence and testimony I can relate is the result of our cohort group of twenty two individuals travelling to Nicaragua. We stayed for a week in the small village of Totagalpa along the Pan American Highway, in the northern part of the country. We taught K-6 students with an art infused science lesson that culminated in a festival celebrating the water cycle with song, dance and visual art. This exhilarating experience enjoyed by the entire community was a bright example of human response to the Arts in Education. This was done in spite of our limited capabilities in their local language. I am hopeful the arts will grow in stature and be recognized by all societies and be included in every K-12 curriculum.
Chapter 4

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Reflections

Writing the introduction for her book, *The Artists Way*, Julia Cameron (1992) called our personal being “our work of art” (p. xvi). In as much as we are all creative by nature, this could be the summary example of our finished work in progress. Contributing factors as noted by Jerry Kidd (Personal Interview, April 9, 2010) include a balance of nature with nurture and an abundant amount of “doing art.”

Researching the historical aspects of the Arts in Education followed a fairly direct path to what kind of mind is needed for personal satisfaction and financial success in today’s society. The need for a more balanced androgynous mind is the call; not too linear as left dominance, and not too creative or loose as right dominance might be. There are many testimonies of classroom and individual success when an art based curriculum or art infused curriculum is applied. As I researched and participated in the various activities noted, I have experienced a great deal of growth in skills, knowledge, and understanding.

This recognizable shift to include more training in people skills is and always has been served by an arts in education curriculum. Since Howard Gardner introduced the concepts in the Theory of Multiple Intelligence in 1983, others have expanded and invented new components of the mind. For example: Dr. Victoria Stevens has “Seven” components as being a part of creativity (Stevens, 2009). Standardized tests
are not designed to measure skills like imagination, empathy, play, and innovation; all included by Stevens (2009). This perplexing situation continues.

Although the discussion has included various skills, no one has called for the “cure all” for the major problems facing educators and policy makers to prepare students for the Twenty First Century. Dr. Stevens (2009) declared that the elimination of the arts as a basic component to our educational system could have, “serious negative consequences for the future of our society” (p. 27). Citing the influence on artistic, scientific, as well as social behavior, Dr. Stevens stated the need to include the above or, “face the millennial change unprepared” (p. 27).

Recommendations

For Administrators:

1. Seek out programs that are succeeding and emulate those things which work.
2. Recognize the importance of in service training and bolster those efforts.

For Teachers:

1. Familiarize and understand the “Four Temperaments”
2. Become knowledgeable in the varied ways of learning including auditory, visual and haptic.
3. Be courageous and try on your creativity. Filmake Rick Smith advises “to get out and start taking pictures. You will come to a time when you will say ah-ha. This is it” (Personal Communications, April 1, 2010)
4. Continue to explore and grow in pedagogical understanding.
APPENDIX A

Phone Interview with Film Maker Rick Smith

Bozeman, Montana, April 9, 2010
Q: When you were young did you think that you were creative?
A: No.

Q: In relation to your photography; when did you become aware of your abilities?
A: From the beginning I was always concerned with how my subject was framed for the picture.

Q: What age were you?
A: Six or seven years old.

Q: Then you did see with an aesthetic early in your youth? Were you aware of that or not?
A: Yes, I guess I did. But at a young age you don’t think about it, you just do what comes naturally.

Q: Who encouraged and mentored you?
A: I can think of many - my parents, athletic coaches, my teachers in school, also some neighbors and friends. My mom and dad were always there to give me a boost if I needed it.

Q: Was there a special avenue or path that your parents set you on?
As all the boys in my neighborhood, I participated in little league, sports of all kinds, but my mother was a good tennis player and introduced me to the sport.

How did tennis serve your creativity?

In retrospect, tennis provided confidence in my abilities to be challenged and accept the consequences of winning or losing.

How accomplished were you?

I wasn’t great, but I did play on teams in high school and college.

Can you recall a time while participating in sports that called on your creative nature?

Yes. Once while playing little league baseball I was asked to play second base, pitch the last two innings and deliver a bunt at a crucial time.

How old were you during all this?

I was ten on a team with mostly eleven and twelve year old boys.

From this experience could you say that your creativity was more natural than nurtured?

Not at all. I have always worked hard in my areas of interest to become accomplished.
Q: Did you ever stretch and do anything unusually creative in your youth?
A: This may qualify. I was a candidate for a senior class office and at the assembly I delivered my campaign speech while riding my unicycle and juggling four objects.

Q: Did you win the election?
A: Most definitely.

Q: Why did you choose film as your avenue of creative expression?
A: I think film chose me.

Q: How so?
A: As a Biology major in undergraduate and graduate studies, I wrote a number of research papers and came to realize that I needed to choose an alternate path to satisfy my personal interests.

Q: Why film? And why Montana State University?
A: They have the world’s first Master of Fine Arts in Science and Natural History Filmmaking. I thought it would be fun. As I progressed within the program I found that I was good at filmmaking.
Q: Do you have teaching responsibilities, and if so what do you say to younger students to encourage their creativity in film?
A: I tell them to get out there and take pictures. Just as a story begins with writing words on a page, the same goes for visual images. It begins with doing, taking photographs.

Q: When did you experience that moment of “Ah – Ha, this is it”?
A: For me it generally occurs in the process of working and review. There will be a time when I will see that “this is it.” That is what I want.

I concluded the interview with thank you’s and appreciation.
APPENDIX B

Personal Interview with Visual Artist Jerry B. Kidd

Sutter Creek, California, April 9, 2010
Q: Did your education focus on the arts?
A: Yes, both my undergraduate and master’s degree were in Fine Arts.

Q: Were you an instructor of Fine Arts?
A: I instructed for California in their junior college program.

Q: What was your approach to teaching?
A: I felt that I was the very best at what I did. Students often dreaded my approach. I felt that the study of art should lead to the practical.

Q: In what way?
A: I would ask questions about the color of blue used in the painting. Why blue? Why that shade of blue?

Q: So, your approach was critical thought and evaluation?
A: Yes, as well as the meaning and relations to the whole work being appreciated.

Q: Why not continue teaching?
A: Three reasons I did not continue. First; I was bored with the extracurricular duties of giving slide presentations to women’s groups that were not interested or half asleep. Second; I think I experienced “burn out” from regurgitating the same information. I did not meet the criteria I had set for myself. While in college I had a
literature professor deliver Shakespeare with a fresh newness although I was sure he had done the same several hundred times. I chose this style to recreate with freshness, not just recite. I saw that I had lost my enthusiasm. Third; at a gallery showing at the college I had included two paintings with anti-war themes. They set met me in front of the administration with no support from the head of my department; very frustrating. Two weeks later these two were included in a show in San Francisco. Being up for tenure the coming year I stayed under duress and then left teaching.

Q: What did you do to continue your creativity?
A: I designed and built houses.

Q: Any specialization in the creative sense?
A: I took pride in form needing to be practical. I specialized in what was art form of etching and staining concrete floors.

Q: Why the transition of focus to create artifacts?
A: Health reasons. I had a heart operation.

Q: Would you rather be doing something other than art?
A: I think that we are chosen to do what we are supposed to do.

Q: As a child did you grow up in an urban area?
A: My youth was in a modest suburban neighborhood.

Q: Do you feel artistic abilities are more innate than nurtured?
A: That’s difficult to say. I think both are a part of the process.

Q: Do you incubate creative concepts or do you receive ethereal inspiration?
A: No. My work is inspired by something I have read or an area of interest that I have been studying.

Q: Do you choose the medium for a work of art?
A: No, the medium evolves as I work with the idea.

Q: So you evolve with your art?
A: I take the words “all is always now” as an article of faith yet I feel that we are chosen to do what we do.

I was invited to see his studio and I saw a number of projects completed and some in progress.
REFERENCES


