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This dissertation, RE-IMAGINING ARTS-CENTERED INQUIRY AS PRAGMATIC INSTRUMENTALISM, by LEANN F. LOGSDON, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

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ABSTRACT

RE-IMAGINING ARTS-CENTERED INQUIRY
AS PRAGMATIC INSTRUMENTALISM
by
Leann F. Logsdon

Arts education must continually provide justification for its inclusion in the K-12 curriculum. This dissertation utilizes philosophical and conceptual analysis to probe the tensions, ironies, and contradictions that permeate the arts education advocacy discourse. Using evidence from advocacy materials published online, scholarly critiques of themes in the advocacy discourse, and research reports describing school-based arts programs, I construct an argument that posits generative consequences for student learning when arts-centered inquiry is reimagined as pragmatic instrumentalism. Such a reimagining of arts-centered inquiry seeks to draw a distinction between utilitarian justifications for the arts and instrumental benefits the arts provide individual students in mediating complex and connected learning. In reclaiming the term “instrumental” for arts-centered inquiry, I offer a way to restore the notion of generativity to arts learning and a means to promote greater understanding among practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and advocates.

RE-IMAGINING ARTS-CENTERED INQUIRY AS PRAGMATIC INSTRUMENTALISM

by

Leann F. Logsdon

A Dissertation

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I dedicate this work to the memory of my parents, Louis and Gladys Logsdon, whose pragmatic zest for life opened up for me a vast horizon of possibilities.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM OF ADVOCATING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

Arts education advocates have argued for years that the arts deserve a place in the public school curriculum alongside other disciplines. Providing philosophical grounding for arts education poses a complex array of challenges, however, since the conceptual analysis of arts-centered inquiry requires the use of language to probe underlying assumptions and reconstruct ideas for future consideration, a process arguably at odds with the sensory immediacy of the arts domains in which aesthetic inquiry proceeds.[1] Moreover, rationales offered by arts advocates in an effort to convince policymakers and arts educators of the positive role the arts can play in achieving societal goals not only lack empirical support but represent a dualistic conceptualization inadequate to the task of understanding how students make meaning when engaged in arts-centered inquiry.

Positioned toward one end of the arts advocacy spectrum are those who make the case that given today's high-stakes testing environment, integrating the arts across the curriculum provides a useful and appealing argument for arts learning in K-12 schools. The arts integration advocacy stance emphasizes an array of instrumental benefits afforded students that contribute to enhanced learning outcomes in state-assessed content areas. Some educational scholars, however, worry that increased efforts to integrate the arts will further weaken school-based arts programs. They argue instead that a

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[1] Nel Noddings notes that many educational philosophers engage in conceptual analysis to probe the connections between the use of language and practice. See Nel Noddings, *Philosophy of Education*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2007), 44.

comprehensive, sequential arts program taught by certified arts specialists offers students educational benefits not attainable anywhere else in the curriculum.[2]

Recent arts-based school reform initiatives have sought ways to resolve tensions between the arts-centered and integrated approaches to thinking about the role of arts education in schools.[3] In assessing the sustainability of the A+ Schools Program, for example, the program evaluators note that taking a both/and approach to competing conceptualizations of arts education sets A+ apart from other reform efforts. Noblit, et al. conclude that "the arts and arts integration simply make classrooms and schools more desirable places to be."[4] Yet there is a tacit presupposition within the phrase "the arts and arts integration" that a distinction persists between how the arts are viewed and valued in schools. This dissertation adopts a pragmatic instrumentalist stance to demonstrate the incongruity of drawing a distinction between "pure" stand-alone arts experiences and "practical" classroom arts activities tied to content from other subjects since, as I will argue, the desired educational consequence of arts-centered inquiry is connected, generative learning. In short, like John Dewey, I want students to construct meanings instrumental to subsequent inquiries.[5] In adopting Dewey's pragmatic view that

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[2] See, for example, Bennett Reimer, "Facing the Risks of the 'Mozart Effect'," *Music Educators Journal* 86, no. 1 (July 1999): 37-43; and Elliot Eisner, "Does Experience in the Arts Boost Academic Achievement?" *Art Education* 51, no. 1 (January 1998): 7-15.

[3] See George W. Noblit et al., *Creating and Sustaining Arts-Based School Reform: The A+ Schools Program* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2009), 25.

[4] Ibid., 1.

[5] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1916), 76.

"knowing is not self-enclosed and final but is instrumental to reconstruction of situations,"[6] I provide evidence from selected examples of advocacy materials published online, scholarly critiques of arts advocacy claims, and program evaluations of school-based arts programs to support an expanded conceptualization of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism. Reimagining arts-centered inquiry in this way entails reclaiming the concept *instrumental* for the arts and reawakening in schools what Dewey describes as the "imaginative vision [that] elicits the possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of the actual."[7]

What Taking a Pragmatic Approach to Arts-Centered Inquiry Means

In the essay, "What Pragmatism Means," William James argues that pragmatism shares features with other philosophies. For example, pragmatism appeals to particulars like nominalism, emphasizes the practical like utilitarianism, and avoids metaphysical abstractions like positivism.[8] In contrast to Idealists, whose Truth-claims are grounded in *a priori* principles, James posits that to the extent that ideas work to securely and satisfactorily carry us from one part of our experience to another, they become "true for just so much, true in so far forth, true *instrumentally*."[9] For James, the question Pragmatism asks is whether, in granting an idea or belief to be true, its being true makes

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[6] John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1920/2004), 84.

[7] John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee, 1934/2005), 359-360.

[8] William James, "What Pragmatism Means," in *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, eds. Fredson Bowers and Ignas K. Skrupskelis (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1907/1975), 32.

[9] Ibid., 34. Italics in original.

any concrete difference in one's life.[10] Referring to objects of inquiry, James writes: "The practical value of true ideas is thus primarily derived from the practical importance of their objects to us."[11]

In a pragmatist approach to inquiry, which I define as conscious effort directed toward the solution of a problem, inquirers generate ideas in ways that take into consideration a range of consequences should the means connected to those consequences be enacted. Charles S. Peirce frames the process as follows: "Consider what effects that might *conceivably* have practical bearings you *conceive* the objects of your *conception* to have. Then, your *conception* of those effects is the whole of your *conception* of the object."[12] Dewey clarifies the pragmatist approach to conceptualization when he describes ideas as "intellectual instruments to be tested and confirmed – and altered – through consequences effected by acting upon them."[13]

To lend further support to the pragmatist approach to knowing, Dewey underscores the illogic of separating means from ends with examples from the arts:

> It is as if one professed devotion to painting pictures conjoined with contempt for canvas, brush and paints; or love of music on condition that no instruments, whether the voice or something external, be used to make sounds. The good workman in the arts is known by his respect for his tools and by his interest in perfecting his technique. The glorification in the arts

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[10] William James, "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth," in *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, eds. Fredson Bowers and Ignas K. Skrupskelis (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1907/1975), 97.

[11] Ibid., 98.

[12] Charles S. Peirce, "Issues of Pragmatism," excerpted in *The American Pragmatists*, eds. Milton R. Konvitz and Gail Kennedy (New York: Meridian Books, 1960), 119. Italics in original.

[13] John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1929/1988), 221.

> of ends at the expense of means would be taken to be a sign of complete insincerity or even insanity. Ends separated from means are either sentimental indulgences or if they happen to exist are merely accidental. The ineffectiveness in action of "ideals" is due precisely to the supposition that means and ends are not on exactly the same level with respect to the attention and care they demand.[14]

Dewey concludes the section by stating: "For there is no art without tools and instrumental agencies."[15] Dewey's conceptualization of artistic production as pragmatic instrumentalism provides the philosophical grounding for my argument that in order for arts-centered inquiry in schools to make a positive difference in students' lives, the conceptual divide between creativity and instrumentality must be interrogated and pragmatic consequences for arts education reimagined.

Historical Antecedents to Dualistic Approaches to the Arts

Dewey attributes the persistence of dualisms within Western thinking to the fact that the Greek society of Plato and Aristotle was sharply divided into the servile and leisure classes. The latter was associated with contemplation, intelligence, and finality, while the former concerned itself with practical matters of instrumentality.[16] Dewey exposes what he called "the ingratitude displayed by [classic Greek] thinkers to artists."[17] In the classical scheme, any object considered to be a means was inherently defective and menial precisely because the object's transitory nature and transformational potential

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[14] Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, 223.

[15] Ibid.

[16] John Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 2nd ed. (New York: Dover Publications, 1929/1958), 93. Here, the term *instrumentality* denotes utility in exerting control over nature and facilitating communal life.

[17] Ibid., 124.

indicated that it lacked fullness of Being. As Dewey explains, the division in Greek society between the laboring and leisure class became a metaphysical division into things which are mere means and things which are ends. This classical conceptualization has epistemic implications since, as Dewey notes, it means that the former class of objects "can never be *known* in themselves but only in their subordination to objects that are final, while the latter can be known in and through themselves by self-enclosed reason."[18]

Dewey argues that this narrow view of instrumentalism protected classical Greek philosophy from facing the possibility that the stable outcomes the thinkers and rulers sought were tied to the intelligent agency of those members of their society most attuned to the workings of nature: the farmers, fisherman, navigators, carpenters, metalworkers, weavers, tanners, healers, and warriors. Safeguarding the social order, however, came at the expense of introducing what Dewey describes as "a split in Being itself" as reflected in other metaphysical dualisms that persist today, including mind/matter, rational/ sensuous, and universal/particular.[19] This inquiry is my affirmative response to Dewey's challenge to question taken-for-granted dualisms. In laying out my argument, I seek to "balance the credit items" gained as a result of my having inherited the tools of logic and discursive thought from the Greeks against what have been for the arts "debit consequences resulting from the hard and fast separation of the instrumental and final."[20] My academic training and cultural perspective are decidedly Western. Nevertheless, my

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[18] Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 124.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., 125-126.

work to expand the concept of *instrumentalism* represents my commitment to generative arts learning, a stance that advocates for student inquiry of limitless possibilities.

Dewey's Naturalistic Approach to Inquiry

According to Craig Cunningham, Dewey's reconstruction of the Greek notion that *thought* was real and observed *facts* only appearances hinges on how Dewey defines "object." Rather than flipping the attribution of what constitutes the real and its approximation as the empiricists did, Dewey instead develops a naturalistic view in which what is there is experienced as a whole in its immediacy. Objects emerge as objects of inquiry, that is, in connection with other perceptions or ideas.[21]

Dewey's naturalistic approach to inquiry also differs from the two-phase description of experience offered by Immanuel Kant in *The Critique of the Power of Judgment*.[22] Dewey criticizes the Kantian notion that sense material, entering from the outside, connects with thought, supplied from within, in a covert synthesis.[23] Instead, Dewey argues that in the experimental approach to knowing, perception furnishes the problems for knowing, and its status in inquiry, although tentative, is complementary to conception in directed action toward an "intelligible conclusion."[24]

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[21] Craig A. Cunningham, "Dewey's Metaphysics and the Self," *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 13 (1994/95): 344-346.

[22] See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1790/2000).

[23] Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, 136-137.

[24] Ibid., 143-144.

In reconstructing the notion of instrumentality, Dewey regards a tool both as a particular thing and also something more, for it embodies a relation connecting ends-in-view to means. Dewey writes: "The spear suggests the feast not directly but through the medium of other external things, such as the game and the hunt, to which the sight of the weapon transports imagination. … A tool denotes a perception and acknowledgment of sequential bonds in nature."[25] Thus, Dewey expands the concept of *instrumental* to help describe what happens in inquiry. Nature presents transitory events, the possible consequences of which are apprehended by the individuals experiencing the events and formulating connections with other perceptions in the process of making meaning. "When things are defined as instruments," Dewey explains, "their value and validity reside in what proceeds from them; consequences not antecedents supply meaning and verity."[26] Eventualities suggest further possibilities for directed action toward the fulfillment of desires. With each successive inquiry, the interdependent operations linking "This-is-true-if" hypothesizing with "Making-sure" testing recur.[27] In short, on the Deweyan or Pragmatic Instrumentalist view, the word "knowledge" means events understood.[28]

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[25] Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 123.

[26] Ibid., 154.

[27] Ibid., 154-155. See also pp. 158-159 where Dewey emphasizes that the idealist paradigm "mistranslated" the constructively instrumental work of thought (intelligence, reason) as a noun rather than as an adjective or adverb. "It is disposition of activity, a quality of that conduct which foresees consequences of existing events, and which uses what is foreseen as a plan and method of administering affairs."

[28] Ibid., 161.

Dewey's work to reconstruct the concept of instrumentality reflects his time and place. Noting the industrial accomplishments and scientific achievements of his day, Dewey nevertheless considers both to be inadequate in addressing the challenges confronting the world. He writes:

> What is the matter? It lies, I think, with our lack of imagination in generating leading ideas. Because we are afraid of speculative ideas, we do, and do over and over again, an immense amount of dead, specialized work in the region of "facts." We forget that such facts are only data; that is, are only fragmentary, uncompleted meanings, and unless they are rounded out into complete ideas – a work which can only be done by hypotheses, by a free imagination of intellectual possibilities – they are as helpless as are all maimed things and as repellent as are needlessly thwarted ones.[29]

Dewey clearly is calling for a renewed commitment to the constructively instrumental work of producing imaginative and generative ideas to meet social needs. Paul Oskar Kristeller argues that the modern system of what we commonly refer to as "The Arts" evolved in Western Europe precisely in response to social needs; the arts were variously grouped according to the particular intellectual, moral, religious, and practical functions each art form contributed to society.[30] The following section will trace the fluidity with which the arts were conceptualized in Western philosophical discourse.

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[29] John Dewey, *Philosophy and Civilization* (New York: Minton, Balch, 1931), excerpted in *The American Pragmatists*, eds. Milton R. Konvitz and Gail Kennedy (New York: Meridian Books, 1960), 182.

[30] Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (I)," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 4 (October, 1951): 496-527. A second part was published in the same journal in volume 13, no. 1 (January, 1952): 17-46.

Fluid Conceptualizations of the Arts Viewed in Historical Context

Kristeller formulated his argument for the evolving ways the arts were conceptualized and grouped based on evidence in Western philosophical writing from Hippocrates, Plato, and Aristotle to John Dewey. In ancient Greece, for example, music was paired with mathematics to reflect the deep structural connections Pythagoras discovered in the numerical proportions associated with musical intervals. Poetry was associated with religious prophecy in its function as a form of divine madness, while painting and sculpture were categorized as manual arts and therefore relegated to the lower echelon in the duality separating ends from means. In conceptualizing the arts in terms of function, classical Greek thought nevertheless made a distinction between knowledge and skills still evident in educational standards that state what students should know and be able to do. Kristeller concludes: "Plato puts art above mere routine because it proceeds by rational principles and rules, and Aristotle, who lists Art among the so-called intellectual virtues, characterizes it as a kind of activity based on knowledge, in a definition whose influence was felt through many centuries."[31] The ancient Greeks always understood Art as something that could be taught and learned; an important question is whether current narrow conceptualizations of arts-centered inquiry threaten to limit students' potential for creative growth in all areas of their lives.

A major shift in how the arts were conceptualized took place throughout the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to Kristeller, as the acceleration of scientific discoveries solidified the philosophical notion of human progress, academies of science developed apart from academies of the fine arts. It was

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[31] Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts (I)," 499.

this divide between science and art that shaped the modern Western conceptualization of "the Fine Arts." As Kristeller's textual analysis shows, the arts disciplines, "where everything depends on talent and taste," were characterized in the treatises he examined as less able to assert their contribution to the idea of human progress with the same confidence as the sciences, which depend on measurement.[32] Interestingly, the discourse begun three centuries ago continues today as amenity to curriculum-based measurement serves as the criterion for determining the relative value of what is taught in school.

Had the separation between the arts and sciences persisted unchanged, arts educators might not be facing the challenge of having to continually advocate on behalf of the arts for inclusion in the school curriculum, since both divisions of intellectual inquiry contribute to maintaining functioning societies. What muddied the waters conceptually was the appearance in 1714 of a discussion of Beauty by J. P. de Crousaz in a work considered to be the earliest French treatise on aesthetics.[33] For some time, the exchange of ideas across the European continent concerning commonalities among the various arts disciplines had flowed largely from the pens of amateur writers sharing ideas about the aesthetic judgment of beauty. Kristeller posits that the rise of the amateur public accounts for the tendency to group together the spectator activities of collecting and exhibiting art, attending concerts and theatre performances, and writing literary criticism. He further notes that this approach to the fine arts may also explain why until

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[32] Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts (I)," 526-527.

[33] Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (II)," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13, no. 1 (January, 1952): 17-46, 17.

recently, aesthetics has been theorized from the point of view of the percipient rather than the artist.[34]

To further complicate matters, around the same period the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten defined aesthetics as the theory of sensuous knowledge and conceptualized it as the epistemological counterpart to logic, a branch of philosophy that provides a theory of intellectual knowledge. It is Baumgarten whose name is most closely associated with "aesthetics" as a separate field of inquiry and whose work laid the foundation for our modern conception of the "fine arts."[35] His legacy persists in the ways the arts are perceived as separate from academics despite their designation as core academic subjects in current federal law.[36]

George Dickie argues that Baumgarten's ideas had little direct influence on the subsequent turn in philosophy which took place during the second half of the eighteenth-century, a move away from focusing exclusively on theories of beauty and toward the development of theories of taste.[37] The philosophical shift had more to do with the larger

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[34] Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (II)," 44.

[35] Ibid., 33-35.

[36] U.S. Public Law 107-110, *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, U.S. Department of Education Homepage, http://www.ed.gov/ (accessed January 3, 2011). Title IX, Sec. 9101, Stat. 1958 reads: "The term 'core academic subjects' means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography." The entire law may be downloaded by linking to http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/ sea02/107-110.pdf.

[37] George Dickie, *Introduction to Aesthetics: An Analytic Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 9-10. This book is a revision of *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, which Dickie published in 1971. The author notes on page ix of the Preface: "The material on eighteenth-century theories of taste in this history has been extensively

discourse engaging thinkers across Europe beginning in the seventeenth-century, a period in Western thought now referred to as "The Enlightenment." As Dickie explains, the movement in aesthetics toward taste reflected both rationalist and empiricist approaches to inquiry. Attention turned to the human subject, who, upon encountering works of art or natural phenomena, would enter into distinct states of mind that could be categorized rationally and associated empirically with qualities in the external objects that caused these states. A person could then judge with confidence whether an object was beautiful, picturesque, novel, sublime, and so forth. Edmund Burke's philosophical inquiry published in 1759 exemplifies the complexity of this effort, in which "faculties of the mind" of the subject are assumed to perceive objects "in all men the same," but the subcategories of sensuous qualities making up the perceived objects number in the dozens.[38] Still, Burke is able to construct a useful dualism, judging objects that engender pleasure to be beautiful and those causing pain or terror to be a source of the sublime. Taste, then, is a concept, and according to Burke, it is comprised of sensibility and judgment. Logically, therefore, taste can be improved "exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise."[39]

The foundational belief that taste can be cultivated enters the philosophical discourse as the role of the arts in U.S. public schools is articulated in the nineteenth

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rewritten to bring it into accord with my 1996 book, *The Century of Taste: The Philosophical Odyssey of Taste in the Eighteenth Century*."

[38] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 2nd ed. (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1759/2008), 3.

[39] Ibid., 15.

century. Even during the colonial period, the Western notion of rational human subjects forming mutually beneficial associations offers historical context for the view that education in the arts serves societal needs. My conceptual analysis of various justifications for art and music education found in historical documents from the earliest days of the republic follows interpretations offered by J. Scott Goble, whose pragmatist orientation aligns with the theoretical framework of this dissertation.[40] The historical evidence presented in the next section supports my argument that since colonial days, the cultivation of taste and the promotion of a democratic and capitalist society both emerge as interwoven rationales for school-based arts instruction.

The use of the word "rationale" is problematic, however, since the word connotes providing an *ad hoc* explanation for phenomena rather than offering possibilities for understanding the consequences of choices. In order to better understand consequences for students given current opportunities for arts-centered inquiry, I turn to Cleo Cherryholmes, who writes: "Tracing consequences can be thought of as the present looking forward. And the present itself is a construction of past experiments. A history of the present, therefore, is contextually important in imagining outcomes."[41] At the same time, Cherryholmes cautions that "power, aesthetics, and knowledge, not necessarily in this or any stable order or set of interactions, produce anticipations of consequences that we continually re-write and re-evaluate."[42] So in order to, as Peirce advises, "consider

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[40] See J. Scott Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2010).

[41] Cleo H. Cherryholmes, *Reading Pragmatism* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999), 109.

[42] Ibid., 8.

what effects that might *conceivably* have practical bearings" on students' learning in the arts were a pragmatic instrumentalist view to be adopted,[43] I will pragmatically examine past experiments in arts education in the United States.

Early Rationales for Music and Art Education in the United States

Music education in seventeenth-century North America centered on teaching musical skills necessary for worship. For Roman Catholic communities, this meant training priests in how to intone chants and choirs in how to sing polyphonic parts of the Mass. Similarly, Lutheran communities developed formal and informal means of preparing hymns for Sunday worship services.[44]

Goble notes that early versions of Puritan psalters, including the *Bay Psalm Book* of 1640, contain references to tune names but include no musical notation.[45] Despite the inclusion of notation in later editions, historical writings from the colonial period document the decline in singing quality among Puritan congregations. Beginning in Boston in 1722 and continuing over the next fifty years, singing schools were established in New England as well as in South Carolina, Pennsylvania, New York, and Maryland, to address the decline by providing colonists vocal instruction.

Vocal music was introduced as a regular school subject in Boston common schools in 1838. According to Goble, the Boston School Board's approval came as a consequence of a friendship between William Channing Woodbridge and Lowell Mason.

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[43] Peirce, "Issues of Pragmatism," 119.

[44] Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 172.

[45] Ibid.

Woodbridge, an influential New England educator, had traveled to Europe in the 1820s, where he was introduced to the ideas of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. Mason, a children's vocal instructor in Boston, met Woodbridge after the latter's return from Europe and in the course of their association began to incorporate Pestalozzian ideas into his vocal teaching practice.[46]

Mason spent several years soliciting public support through concerts and other advocacy efforts before securing approval for publicly funded, school-based music education.[47] In the instructional manual Mason published in 1834, he offered a number of justifications for school-based vocal music, among them improved physical health, exercise and discipline for the mind, and training, cultivation, and elevation of the feelings.

Art education in the early days of the Republic, like music education, was grounded in the Enlightenment notion that "exposure to great works of art was expected to improve intellect, behavior, and taste."[48] The arts advocacy discourse emerging between 1790 and 1840 conceptualized art making as an intellectual project, but the justification argument broadened to emphasize the connection between artistic communication of human ideals and a democratically functioning social order. For example, not only could the technical aspects of art making be taught to individuals with

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[46] Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 186-188.

[47] Ibid., 188.

[48] Mary Ann Stankiewicz, Patrica M. Amburgy, and Paul E. Bolin, "Questioning the Past: Contexts, Functions, and Stakeholders in 19th-Century Art Education," in *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education*, eds. Elliot W. Eisner and Michael D. Day (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 35.

natural talent, but principles of art criticism could be taught to the wider population. The presupposition was that as Americans improved their individual creative and critical faculties, the nation as a whole would benefit.[49]

Given the high value that members of local communities placed on participation in music and art experiences, one can conclude that the arts provided many localities with structures to promote social cohesion. For example, the singing school tradition that had been established in the eighteenth century to address the decline in singing in worship services continued into the nineteenth century in the form of community-based singing societies.[50] These American cultural institutions, along with symphony orchestras and conservatories, focused on performing European masterworks, evidence of their philosophical grounding in both the Enlightenment conception of musical works as objects of beauty and the increasingly important notion of the artistic genius.[51] As Goble notes, the formalist and expressive dimensions of the European music these groups chose to perform embodied and affirmed the worldview of those who revered it.[52]

Similarly in the realm of visual art, the emergence of the middle class created a demand for institutions that would offer technical training, particularly in drawing.[53] According to Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin, more than 145 drawing books were published in the United States in the three decades preceding the Civil War, but their

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[49] Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin, "Questioning the Past," 35.

[50] Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 259.

[51] Ibid., 257-258.

[52] Ibid., 258.

[53] Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin, "Questioning the Past," 36-37.

chief purpose was directly connected to the utilitarian goal of advancing economic prosperity through disciplined instruction in drawing.[54] The Massachusetts legislature permitted the inclusion of drawing in the public school curriculum in 1859,[55] responding to an advocacy discourse that emphasized the connection between drawing instruction and the development of conceptual knowledge in geography and geometry.[56] The idea of transfer across subjects embedded in the Pestalozzian educational approach influenced visual art education as it had vocal education, with object drawing viewed instrumentally as a means to assisting students in formulating clearer ideas.

The philosophical justifications for the inclusion of visual art and music as core subjects in public schools diverge somewhat during the second half of the nineteenth century. While advocates for music education argued that teaching vocal arrangements of works by prominent European composers elevated students' artistic tastes toward an ideal, the advocates who petitioned Massachusetts legislators in 1869 to devise a plan to offer free instruction in drawing took a utilitarian approach to art education. Representing business, political, educational, and religious interests, many signers of the petition envisioned expanded training in mechanical and industrial drawing to be an effective way to enhance a strong economic climate in the industrialized northeast.[57] At first glance, it

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[54] Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin, "Questioning the Past," 37. I use the term "utilitarian" to denote desired outcomes for the region or nation as a consequence of having a larger pool of technical workers. I employ the term "instrumental" in the context of arts education to describe benefits to individuals in the form of expanded opportunities for creative growth.

[55] Ibid., 38.

[56] Ibid., 35.

[57] Ibid., 38-39.

might appear that community leaders were acting pragmatically: They conceived desirable economic consequences for the region and imagined the practical steps they could take to produce the desired effect. However, to the extent that drawing instruction was viewed as a means to an economic end, the policy philosophically shares more with the "greater good" thesis espoused by utilitarianism than with pragmatism's notion of an individual's considered inquiry into an array of potential life consequences.

Given the historical context for justifying the inclusion of the arts in the nation's public school curriculum, this dissertation probes the tensions, ironies, and contradictions that continue to permeate the arts education advocacy discourse. Using evidence from advocacy materials published online, scholarly critiques of themes in the advocacy discourse, and research reports describing exemplary school-based arts programs, I construct an argument that posits positive consequences for student learning when arts-centered inquiry is reimagined as pragmatic instrumentalism.

My argument is propelled by the critical need to interrogate various usages of the term "instrumental" in the context of arts education. I draw a distinction between the syntactical use of the term "instrumental" in denoting a structural, *utilitarian* function and its meaning in the pragmatic sense of describing a medium for growth and generativity. The difference has to do with the center of power. Structural instrumentality has as its intended outcome efficient management of human behavior. By contrast, pragmatic instrumentalism looks at transformative consequences for particular individuals engaged in practical, everyday transactions. In reclaiming the term "instrumental" for arts-centered inquiry, I offer a way to restore the notion of generativity to arts learning.

My argument employs conceptual analysis within a pragmatist framework. By inquiring into arts education advocacy claims and arts-based research in schools using a Deweyan approach, I am able to propose enriched possibilities for student learning when arts-centered inquiry is reimagined as pragmatic instrumentalism. My purpose is neither to argue the merits of arts education nor to deconstruct various philosophies of arts education but rather to offer another approach to instrumentalism more in keeping with the unpredictable and improvisational way arts-centered inquiry proceeds. I engage in the inquiry bearing in mind Dewey's words: "'The only truly general thought is the generous thought.'"[58] It is my hope that this thesis will generate fruitful discussion about the value of the arts in expanding the educational horizons of students and in deepening their capacities for human connection.

[58] John Dewey, *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925-1953: 1932*, ed. Barbara Levine (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 270, quoted in James W. Garrison, "The Aesthetics of Ethical Virtues and the Ethical Virtues of Aesthetics," *Interchange* 35, no. 2 (2004): 229-241, 235.

CHAPTER 2

THE ADVOCACY DISCOURSE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

For more than a decade, scholars in the field of arts education have probed the complex relationships among research, policy, and advocacy in formulating arguments to justify the value of the arts in the K-12 curriculum. This chapter examines the pertinent research literature from a pragmatist perspective, employing conceptual analysis to critique major arguments in light of consequences for student learning. In taking a Deweyan approach to philosophical inquiry, I view means and ends as inseparable; however, to retrace consequences of educational policy decisions made over the course of decades is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Instead, the discussion will center on recent antecedents to philosophical tensions, ironies, and contradictions embedded within the current arts education advocacy discourse. The next section provides historical context for the current debate over instrumental outcomes associated with arts education.

Twentieth Century Justifications for Arts Education

At the beginning of the twentieth century, music educators added the education of feelings to the elevation of taste as a justification for offering music in schools.[59] According to textual evidence gathered by Goble, music textbook editors took a systematic and structural approach to song selection, choosing songs that would stimulate

[59] Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 194.

universal feelings of continuity, balance, proportion, and coherence.[60] Terms describing formal properties of music were characterized as effects connected to feeling. It was generally believed that students would first respond to a song's organic structure in its perceived or "felt" immediacy; presumably the instructor would then guide the students in musical inquiry in order to understand through conceptual analysis how the song's structural elements produced the felt effects of unity, balance, and proportion. This two-stage process connecting individual sensory or felt perception to concepts believed to be universal recalls theoretical constructs proposed by Immanuel Kant in the late eighteenth century. In his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Kant argues that the power of aesthetic judgment "makes possible the transition from the domain of the concept of nature to that of the concept of freedom."[61] As H. Gene Blocker explains, Kant theorizes that in an aesthetic encounter with nature, imagination and understanding enter into "harmonious play."[62] This process of reflective imagining "aesthetically enlarges the concept itself in an unbounded fashion" and in so doing expands the subject's possibilities for knowing.[63]

The dominant theme running through the introductions to music textbooks in the nineteenth century is the reliance on the masterworks of European composers to lift public school music "'from mere song singing to its true function as a disciplinary,

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[60] Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 194-195.

[61] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 82.

[62] H. Gene Blocker, "Kant for Kids," *Arts Education Policy Review* 107, no. 1 (September/October 2005), 31-33, 32.

[63] Ibid.

educational, and elevating force.'"[64] By the second decade of the twentieth century, the arts advocacy discourse takes on another layer of complexity. Not only is the music curriculum conceptualized as a means to shaping students into rational individuals concerned with bettering themselves, but now the public schools come to be viewed as a structure necessary to realizing larger cultural expectations. Good music for the public good is the message I deduce from the published objectives of the Music Supervisors National Conference (MSNC), for example, an organization which frames its advocacy argument in terms of "'the promotion of good music through the instrumentality of the public schools.'"[65]

A shift in power relations is evident in the MSNC document. While we can only surmise that students may still have derived life-enhancing instrumental benefits from their participation in school-based vocal instruction, another conceptualization of *instrumental* has entered the discourse. Based on the inclusion of the phrase, "through the instrumentality of the public schools," it is clear that the national association representing music educators has begun to use the term "instrumental" to convey the idea of the public schools as a utilitarian structure capable of advancing music advocacy goals. The term "instrumental" continues to be used in both arts advocacy texts and in scholarly critiques of advocacy claims to denote the concept of using the arts as a means to achieve utilitarian ends tangential to arts-centered inquiry.

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[64] Frederic A. Lyman, "Preface" to *The Normal Music Course in the Schoolroom: A Practical Exposition of the Normal Music Course* (Boston: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1896), v, quoted in Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 192.

[65] James Edward Houlihan, "The Music Educators National Conference in American Education," (PhD diss., Boston University, 1961), 50, quoted in Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 193.

Selling Arts Education

The need for a reimagining of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism becomes increasingly urgent when the arts advocacy debate is viewed through a critical lens. Referring to visual art education, John Howell White points out that long-standing philosophical tensions between the self and society affect how mediated visual images, for example, are to be "transported, understood, critiqued, emulated, and resisted."[66] A related critical issue concerns the justification put forth by arts education advocates that students need art and music in schools in order to become wise consumers of the arts. The question arises as to whose interests are being served by the promotion of the arts as a commodity.

History provides us with a glimpse into the business of arts education in the United States. Between 1870 and 1907, legislative bodies in 12 states passed laws establishing drawing as a required subject in public schools, and during this same period, cities and towns in 31 other states approved the teaching of drawing as a school subject.[67] Not surprisingly, the art education market became a lucrative segment of the textbook publishing field as school-based drawing instruction spread throughout the United States.[68] Concurrently, civic organizations that were founded on the belief that decorating school buildings with art reproductions would help shape student character and taste

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[66] John Howell White, "20th-Century Art Education: A Historical Perspective," in *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education*, eds. Elliot W. Eisner and Michael D. Day (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 72-73.

[67] Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin, "Questioning the Past," 41.

[68] Please note that the term "art education" refers specifically to teaching and learning in visual art.

expanded their efforts to include the systematic study of masterpieces whose subject matter carried moral lessons.[69] Called "picture study," the movement relied on suppliers like the Prang Educational Company to provide the mass-produced black and white or sepia reproductions that were used in public school art education programs.[70]

As Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin point out, art education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was located "in the political context of northeastern industrial expansion and the cultural context of European academic art traditions."[71] Grammar school teachers, largely untrained in art, turned to textbooks and school art periodicals for guidance in providing grade-appropriate instruction, while professional associations of art educators merged ideas from the Kindergarten movement, progressive education, and manual training to direct curriculum design within art education.[72] Thus, selling arts education to the American public meant reconciling capitalist-based utilitarian rationales with the philosophically pragmatic argument that experiences in visual art enhance intellectual and emotional growth.[73]

Technology helped sell arts education. Advances in printing made instruction in both drawing and art appreciation accessible to an increasingly broad cross-section of the public school population. Beginning in the 1920s, as White notes, radio broadcasts were also used to teach adults and students how to make art and appreciate beauty in everyday

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[69] Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin, "Questioning the Past," 45-46.

[70] Ibid., 46.

[71] Ibid., 48.

[72] Ibid., 46-47.

[73] Ibid., 48.

objects.[74] Around the same time, the introduction of Victor audio recordings for classroom use shifted the instructional focus in music education from singing simple arrangements of European masterworks to listening to and apprehending their complex formal stylistic elements.[75] Goble argues that emerging music technologies influenced the music advocacy discourse as well. First, the availability of high-quality music recordings for classroom instruction meant music was regarded "not just as a product of the human mind but also as a marketable product of art or entertainment."[76] A related impact was that student musical performance no longer served as the primary medium for experiencing musical masterworks but instead came to be viewed as "a means of emotional experience, expression, and release."[77]

In his overview of American music textbooks, Eric Branscome notes that during this time period, music textbook writers and publishers began to incorporate ideas held by John Dewey and other pragmatist thinkers emphasizing the importance of student interest and participation in the learning process.[78] Similarly in visual art, White argues that because European Modernism envisioned change based on individual experience and action, it aligned with American Pragmatist ideas. Describing the pragmatist approach to inquiry, for example, White writes: "That philosophy, which associates inquiry with

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[74] White, "20th-Century Art Education," 63.

[75] Goble, *What's So Important About Music Education?*, 203.

[76] Ibid., 206.

[77] Ibid., 211.

[78] Eric Branscome, "A Historical Analysis of Textbook Development in American Music: Education and the Impetus for the National Standards for Music Education," *Arts Education Policy Review* 107, no. 2 (November/December 2005): 13-19, 15.

embodied responses to a changing world, provides a framework through which art education found a place in schooling."[79] In White's view, the emphasis on learning by doing led artists, scientists, and educators to search for underlying principles to guide and frame the "moral, aesthetic, and instrumental aspects of their inquiry."[80]

It is important to note here that White connects the Enlightenment notion of *universal principles of taste*, which derive from culturally-constructed conceptualizations based on perceived sensory relationships, with the twentieth-century idea of *universal principles of design*, which "promised the democratization of beauty, even though it was accomplished through the abstraction of visual experience into intellectual categories through language."[81] Yet White is careful to note that John Dewey, in developing an art education program for philanthropist and art collector Albert C. Barnes, "went beyond the moral lessons of picture study and the pure formalism of Dow, Ross, and Hambridge,"[82] instead contextualizing the Barnes collection to reintegrate art and life.[83]

The collaboration of Dewey and Barnes serves as a metaphor for the tensions, ironies, and contradictions in play within art and music education in the first half of the twentieth century. As Albert Levi points out, Dewey opens *Art as Experience* with a "virulent attack upon art museums and capitalist art collectors" while dedicating the book

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[79] White, "20th-Century Art Education," 55.

[80] Ibid., 58.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid., 58-59. Arthur Wesley Dow, Denman Ross, and Jay Hambridge were influential in establishing principles of design central to studio instruction.

[83] Ibid.

"in gratitude" to Barnes, himself a capitalist art collector.[84] Levi attempts to reconcile the apparent contradiction by offering a conceptualization of today's public art museum as "indispensable instrument in the great task of aesthetic education."[85] Levi's interpretation misses the point, however, since he conflates the idea of aesthetics education with Dewey's notion of aesthetic experience. Cultural institutions such as art museums and symphony orchestras, for example, promote educational outreach efforts in fulfillment of conditions for receiving public funding, the presupposition being that aesthetics education in the form of arts-based school field trips will secure a base of future support. In contrast, Dewey's philosophy of art, which seeks to restore continuity between aesthetic experience and everyday living, flows from his naturalistic stance that sees the live creature in transaction with the environment.[86]

Growth as well as continuity characterize Dewey's philosophy of education in the sense that what one learns in one situation "becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations which follow."[87] In the next section, I analyze scholarly critiques of advocacy claims made over the past decade to argue, following Susanne Langer, that the many paradoxes evident within the arts education advocacy

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[84] Albert William Levi, "The Art Museum as an Agency of Culture," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 19, no. 2 (Summer, 1985): 23-40, 24. See Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 6-8.

[85] Levi, "Art Museum as an Agency of Culture," 29.

[86] Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 2.

[87] John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Touchstone, 1938/1997), 44.

discourse impel philosophical inquiry.[88] In order to expose, analyze, and correct the tacit presuppositions underlying basic premises, I adopt a pragmatist approach to inquiry and reject dualisms that place limits on possibilities for knowing. In the place of justifications and rationales for arts education that reify and perpetuate narrow conceptualization of arts learning, I propose pragmatic instrumentalism as a more expansive, fluid, and generative reconstruction of arts-centered inquiry. In reimagining arts-centered inquiry in terms of its consequences for student learning, I argue for the possibility of an expanded advocacy discourse among researchers, educators, policymakers, and the public that conceptualizes the arts in schools as instruments of transformation for individuals living connected lives.

Reconceptualizing the Debate Over Instrumental Outcomes

In an article first published in 1993, Karen Hamblen reminds readers that over the years advocates for the inclusion of art instruction in the school curriculum have offered rationales representing diverse philosophical perspectives. A century ago, for example, some arts advocates argued that drawing lessons refined technical skills that were directly transferable to industry jobs, while others associated art with refinement and made claims regarding art's intrinsic value. More recently, advocates have sought to promote the study of art for its purported connections to creativity, critical thinking, self-awareness, social adjustment, increased motivation, and higher test scores.[89] Hamblen argues that even

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[88] Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), 15-16.

[89] Karen A. Hamblen, "Theories and Research That Support Art Instruction for Instrumental Outcomes," *Arts Education Policy Review* 98, no. 3 (January/February 1997): 27-33, 27. The article was reprinted from *Theory into Practice* 32, no. 4 (Autumn 1993): 191-198.

though support for instrumental outcomes has been weakened by "overstated, unsubstantiated, and politically motivated assumptions,"[90] the instrumentalist approach to art instruction remains philosophically sound. In Hamblen's view, art study provides students with experiences very different from those found in other areas of the curriculum, giving students "a sense of value and purpose."[91]

Noting that advocacy claims often lack theoretical footing, Hamblen supports her instrumentalist argument by citing Susanne Langer's idea that cognition subsumes many ways of knowing and experiencing: qualitative, relational, connotative, and affective.[92] Hamblen also argues that the broader approach to teaching art in the context of history, aesthetics, and criticism extends opportunities for students to engage in critical inquiry, examining "hypotheses, statements of value, and the ambiguities of artistic meanings and designations."[93] For Hamblen, the emphasis on big questions entailed in an inquiry

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[90] Hamblen, "Theories and Research That Support Art Instruction," 27.

[91] Ibid., 28.

[92] Hamblen, "Theories and Research That Support Art Instruction," 28. See Langer, *Feeling and Form*, 240-241. Langer writes: "Non-discursive form in art has a different office, namely to articulate knowledge that cannot be rendered discursively because it concerns experiences that are not *formally* amenable to the discursive projection. Such experiences are the rhythms of life, organic, emotional and mental (the rhythm of attention is an interesting link among them all), which are not simply periodic, but endlessly complex, and sensitive to every sort of influence. All together they compose the dynamic pattern of feeling. It is this pattern that only non-discursive symbolic forms can present, and that is the point and purpose of artistic construction."

[93] Hamblen, "Theories and Research That Support Art Instruction," 29. Her reference to teaching art in context aligns with the conceptual framework of Discipline-Based Arts Education (DBAE). For an overview of DBAE, see Brent Wilson, *The Quiet Revolution: Changing the Face of Arts Education* (Los Angeles: The Getty Education Institute for the Arts, 1997).

approach to arts education expands the possibilities for making substantive connections across domains.[94]

Hamblen concludes that while instrumental outcomes should be neither the goal nor the rationale for arts programs, theory and practice indicate that arts-centered learning provides opportunities for linkages across disciplines when instruction directly attends to those connections. Such linkages can promote the development of creativity and critical thinking skills which may in turn translate to enhanced academic achievement.[95]

Liora Bresler, also writing in the 1990s, similarly argues that although humanistic and instrumental research orientations differ with respect to the role of the arts in the curriculum, they need not be considered mutually exclusive, depending on how broadly *instrumental* is conceptualized.[96] Like Hamblen, Bresler points out that the arts fulfill both economic and democratic functions within the educational system. She writes:

> The attempt to ground the arts in a pragmatic, instrumentalist framework has characterized arts education since its introduction to formal schooling in the nineteenth century, when advocates emphasized the arts' contributions to the world of work (for example, in drawing skills) and to good citizenship. "School arts" is a hybrid genre, existing between the educational and the artistic. Artistic forms and values are transformed or created as they enter the embrace of the school institution, assuming the look, practices, and goals of academic subject matters.[97]

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[94] Hamblen, "Theories and Research That Support Art Instruction," 30.

[95] Ibid., 31.

[96] Liora Bresler, "Research, Policy, and Practice in Arts Education: Meeting Points for Conversation," *Arts Education Policy Review* 99, no. 5 (May/June 1998): 9-15, 13.

[97] Ibid.

Bresler draws a clear distinction between instrumentalist and utilitarian approaches to education. She argues: "A utilitarian approach to education is promoted by the voices of businesses and community members that associate education primarily with jobs, the economy, and the production of good citizens."[98] Warning that since education involves initiating the young into the norms and beliefs of the society they inhabit, it is necessary to consider whose values are being advocated in research, policy, and practice. According to Bresler, the tensions within arts education resulting from narrowly conceived justifications for its educational value "reflect the problematic nature of a field that is not critical of itself."[99]

Thomas Brewer also calls attention to the lack of criticality within arts education, resulting in a climate in which advocacy, research, and policy are interdependent to the point that "the strength and quality of one has a considerable impact on the others."[100] To illustrate his point, Brewer offers the typical scenario in which a school board member or principal asks for a one-page report about the instrumental impact of the arts on learning in non-arts subjects rather than a research summary of indicators pointing to student learning in the art forms themselves. As long as arts educators continue to respond to policymakers' requests with advocacy claims based on questionable research

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[98] Bresler, "Research, Policy, and Practice in Arts Education," 13.

[99] Ibid., 14.

[100] Thomas M. Brewer, "Arts Education Advocacy and Research: To What End?" *Arts Education Policy Review* 99, no. 5 (May/June 1998): 16-20, 16.

methodologies, Brewer sees negative consequences for arts education, its quality diluted "to make it economically and politically palatable."[101]

Pointing out the contradictions inherent in an educational climate that places advocacy marketing campaigns ahead of inquiry, Brewer asks, "To what end are national and state advocacy and research efforts leading?" and "Should the advocates be the policymakers?"[102] The work of Constance Bumgarner Gee interrogates the blurring of boundaries between advocacy and research and between advocacy and policy. After examining the intended and unintended consequences of organized arts advocacy efforts, Gee came close to arriving at "the sad conclusion that, try as we might to brake its forward motion, the momentum of the marketing machine was so powerful as to be unstoppable."[103] The next section will further probe the interrelationships among advocacy, practice, research, and policy since the late 1990s to provide context for the conceptual analysis of current arts advocacy claims that I present in Chapter 3.

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[101] Brewer, "Arts Education Advocacy and Research," 16.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Constance Bumgarner Gee, "Spirit, Mind, and Body: Arts Education the Redeemer," in *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education*, eds. Elliot W. Eisner and Michael D. Day (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 116. See also Constance Bumgarner Gee, "The 'Use and Abuse' of Arts Advocacy and Consequences for Music Education." *Arts Education Policy Review* 103, no. 4 (March/April 2002): 3-21.

Philosophical Tensions Between Advocacy and Practice

A decade ago, the arts advocacy debate centered on claims of cognitive transfer across subject areas, the veracity of which was largely unsupported by the research.[104] While instrumental outcomes persist as a core theme in the arts education advocacy discourse, I argue that the focus is shifting in an explicitly utilitarian direction, with arts education increasingly placed in the service of realizing national economic goals. This section will lay the groundwork for my expanded reconceptualization of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism, a philosophical stance that reaffirms the value of generative arts learning for individuals and schools, enlarges possibilities for substantive educational research, and repositions arts education policy as necessary for cultural vitality in a democratic society.

For the purposes of this inquiry, I based my philosophical and conceptual analysis on evidence published online by major organizations based in Washington, DC which produce arts education advocacy messages designed for national distribution and consumption. Gee identifies the principal governmental entities responsible for generating advocacy texts as Americans for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education, the Arts Education Partnership, and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.[105] According to Gee, "these federal arts agencies and federalized

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[104] See Ellen Winner and Monica Cooper, "Mute Those Claims: No Evidence (Yet) for a Causal Link between Arts Study and Academic Achievement," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 34, nos. 3-4 (Fall/Winter 2000): 11-75.

[105] Gee, "Spirit, Mind, and Body," 116. I also examined advocacy materials published online by MENC: The National Association for Music Education and the

arts organizations, virtually one and the same with shared administrative staff, board membership, and advisory panels (and, therefore, philosophy and missions), are largely interchangeable."[106] Gee points to recurring themes running through the advocacy documents produced by these organizations. Intended to persuade policymakers and the public of the need to continue funding the arts, these advocacy texts offer three broad justifications for arts education, namely, that arts study improves social development, academic achievement, and emotional well-being in students.[107]

Gee rejects the reliability of arts advocacy claims made by federal arts agencies, arguing that "most of the assertions about the effects of arts study/experience/exposure on math, reading, and test taking are much more assumption than fact."[108] Moreover, she asserts, advocacy claims have little to do with the fundamentals of arts teaching and learning, aside from engendering confusion in some and cynicism in others."[109] In Gee's view, most arts educators

> do not teach music to improve math scores; they do not teach visual arts to improve reading skills. They teach because they love the art form and they want others to love it. They teach because they believe that artmaking is an immensely satisfying experience; and they believe that knowing about artistic forms and traditions makes life in general a more satisfying experience.[110]

National Art Education Association (NAEA), both located in Reston, Virginia (outside Washington, DC).

[106] Gee, "Spirit, Mind, and Body," 116-117.

[107] Ibid., 120-124.

[108] Ibid., 124.

[109] Ibid., 126.

[110] Constance Bumgarner Gee, "The Perils and Parables of Research on Research." *Arts Education Policy Review* 102, no. 5 (May/June 2001): 31-38, 36.

Samuel Hope takes a similar stance when he connects the viability of arts education to the actions of its practitioners:

> There is no apparent direct link between the survival of any governmental arts or education entity in Washington and the survival of art education as a field. The strategic survival issues are placed elsewhere and are not linked to federal agencies and quangos (quasi-autonomous governmental organizations, e.g., the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, The Arts Education Partnership) as much as to ideas, professional practice, students, and local resource streams.[111]

Viewed through a Deweyan lens, both Gee and Hope argue for valuing arts education as a distinctive discipline best judged according to the extent to which substantive ideas, mediated in arts-centered practice and supported by thoughtful arts education policy, have generative learning consequences for students.

Organized arts advocacy campaigns, by way of contrast, use messages and methods to frame arts education as a commodity. According to Gee, the federal funding structure "provides a direct means for the buying of favor and funding and for the selling of services."[112] For Gee, arts advocacy connotes "what we proclaim art will do for the individual and society in return for investments of time, love, and money."[113]

The lines separating practice, advocacy, research, and policy are rarely so clearly defined, however. While conducting a targeted review of music education advocacy literature, for example, Gee noted ambivalence toward the role of advocacy within the field. In examining advocacy-related texts, Gee found that "professional education

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[111] Samuel Hope, "Art Education in a World of Cross-Purposes," in *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education*, eds. Elliot W. Eisner and Michael D. Day (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 99-100.

[112] Gee, "The 'Use and Abuse' of Arts Advocacy," 15.

[113] Ibid., 13.

organizations such as MENC walk a tightwire between scholarly interests and political activism,"[114] publishing both advocacy claims based on research findings and scholarly critiques of those same research findings.[115]

The ambivalence toward federal arts advocacy efforts which Gee attributes to arts educators stems from tensions going back to the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) shifted public attention away from the funding of art and toward the support of arts education partnerships in schools. As James Modrick argues, funding schoolchildren offered a "politically safe refuge" for nonprofit arts organizations.[116] The shift in emphasis away from funding potentially controversial artists and toward arts education continues to provide legislators who fund federal arts agencies opportunities to spread political goodwill.[117]

Modrick describes the way in which government-sponsored advocacy materials have targeted policymakers with the message that in providing schools with artist residencies, local arts organizations – funded through the NEA network – fill a void in the public schools.[118] Gee notes: "Embedded within the philosophy of the artist residency

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[114] Gee, "The 'Use and Abuse' of Arts Advocacy," 14. According to the MENC website, www.menc.org (accessed January 8, 2011), the Music Educators National Conference changed its name in 1998 to MENC: The National Association for Music Education to better reflect its mission.

[115] Gee, "The 'Use and Abuse' of Arts Advocacy," 8-9.

[116] James E. Modrick, "Promoting a Future for Arts Education: Distinguishing Education Policy from Arts Advocacy," *Arts Education Policy Review* 100, no. 1 (September/October 1998): 27-31, 27.

[117] Gee, "The 'Use and Abuse' of Arts Advocacy," 16.

[118] Modrick, "Promoting a Future for Arts Education," 27.

is the conviction that a practicing artist knows more about the art form than does the elementary or secondary arts educator."[119] Gee's own cynicism regarding the purported role advocacy plays in promoting sequential arts instruction taught by certified specialists is evident in her scholarship. Describing the complex network of mutually beneficial relationships that sustain federally-funded arts agencies, Gee writes:

> Self-promotion is the primary interest of these organizations and arts education serves them well in this respect. They seek to convince politicians, policymakers, and community leaders that they (and their state and local sister arts agencies and organizations and artist dependents) are essential to the work of arts education in all venues and at all phases and levels. Through their own in-house publications and through publication of research that they themselves sponsored, they assert their collective importance as the primary factor in successful arts education programming and as the main change agent in effective reform.[120]

Gee argues that it is essential for arts education professionals to continue to expand and refine their thinking about what and how they teach and why, while at the same time remaining vigilant in not allowing "hype and political maneuvering" to trump scholarship.[121] The next section will extend the discussion to address philosophical implications of advocacy for educational research in the arts.

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[119] Gee, Constance Bumgarner. "For You Dear – Anything!: Remembering and Returning to First Principles – Part 2." *Arts Education Policy Review* 100, no. 5 (May/June 1999): 3-22, 7.

[120] Gee, "Spirit, Mind, and Body," 117.

[121] Gee, "The Perils and Parables," 37.

Philosophical Dilemmas for Researchers of Advocacy Topics

In the early 1990s, the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, representing arts educators from the disciplines of music, visual art, theatre, and dance, received a total of $1 million from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities to develop voluntary national standards for grades K-12.[122] The National Standards for Arts Education were published in 1994 and describe the knowledge and skills that all students should acquire in the arts. As a consequence of having developed the capabilities contained in the National Standards for the Arts document, "students can arrive at their own knowledge, beliefs, and values for making personal and artistic decisions" based on a "well-grounded understanding of the nature, value, and meaning of the arts as a part of their own humanity."[123]

The conceptual framework for the National Standards for Arts Education (hereafter referred to as the National Standards) reflects the influence of Discipline-Based Arts Education (DBAE). As Gee explains, the establishment in 1982 of the Getty Education Institute for the Arts signaled a formalized shift toward the discipline-based approach to teaching the arts that both structured and broadened the focus of student

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[122] MENC: The National Association for Music Education, "The National Standards for Arts Education: A Brief History," MENC Resources: National Standards, http://www.menc.org/resources/view/the-national-standards-for-arts-education-a-brief-history (accessed January 8, 2011).

[123] MENC: The National Association for Music Education, "The National Standards for Arts Education: Introduction," MENC Resources: National Standards, http://www.menc.org/documents/natlstndartsedintrolarge.pdf (accessed January 8, 2011).

learning beyond self-expression and production.[124] Gee argues that in the DBAE theoretical approach to teaching and learning, "it was not only the work of the artist that merited attention, but also the work of art historians, critics, and aestheticians" whose perspectives are valued as students engage in arts-centered inquiry.[125]

Elliot Eisner also points out that the mission of arts education has evolved over the course of the last century, moving from its educational role in providing a curricular space for self-expression at the beginning of the 1900s to its current conceptualization as a social force to reflect and shape values.[126] He notes the growing public interest in the usefulness of the arts to domains outside the arts, particularly with regard to the arts' potential for developing complex forms of thinking.[127]

Eisner argues, however, that a focus on testing distracts educators from addressing the conditions necessary "to create not only enriching arts programs for our students but genuinely educative schools."[128] Recent evidence supports his argument. A report published in 2007 by the Center for Education Policy shows an inverse relationship in the amount of instructional time elementary schools allotted to both English/

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[124] Gee, "For You Dear – Anything! – Part 2," 10.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Elliot W. Eisner, "Arts Education Policy?" *Arts Education Policy Review* 101, no. 3 (January/February 2000): 4-6, 4.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid., 5.

Language Arts (ELA) and Math compared to the arts. Since the enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation,[129] 77% of districts with at least one Needs Improvement school increased time devoted to ELA, and 56% increased Math instructional time, while 30% of those same districts decreased the amount of time (the average decrease was 61 minutes per week) that students spent in art and music classes.[130] The average increase in minutes per week dedicated to ELA was 140 minutes, representing an increase of 46% over the 2001-02 school year. What is striking is that in districts with at least one school identified as needing improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, the increase in ELA instructional time was 183 minutes per week, compared to districts with no identified schools where the increase in English/Language Arts time was 122 minutes per week.[131]

The disparity in time accorded English/Language Arts and Math in comparison to Art and Music reveals presuppositions about the preferred symbolic representations through which students are able to mediate meaning. On Eisner's view, the verbal skills needed to learn to read print material are unlike those required to read works of art. Arts perception is less a matter of cracking a code and more about penetrating the surface in order to gain a greater understanding of the relationships between the parts and the whole. He argues that the particular form we choose in order to represent our experience

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[129] See U.S. Public Law 107-110, *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, U.S. Department of Education, http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html (accessed January 8, 2011).

[130] Center for Education Policy, "Choices, Changes, and Challenges: Curriculum and Instruction in the NCLB Era," Document Library, http://www.cep-dc.org/ (accessed April 7, 2010): 7.

[131] Ibid., 6.

of interacting with each other and with the environment "not only influences what we can say, it also influences what we are likely to experience."[132] Eisner points out that when schools limit opportunities for students to learn and use diverse forms of representation – visual art, music, drama, dance, to name a few – educational equity is jeopardized. Like Dewey, who criticized those who would equate intelligence solely with facility in verbal and mathematical symbols,[133] Eisner concludes that to restrict forms of representation is "to deny students access to meanings that might otherwise be theirs."[134]

The amount of time allotted to arts learning by a particular school provides an indicator of the extent to which the arts are valued in that school. For schools that fall into the "Needs Improvement" category as a result of outcomes on state testing mandated under NCLB, the expectation is high that students will be provided the instructional interventions necessary to help the school make its Adequate Yearly Progress targets. Eisner's argument concerns the moral imperative of affording all students equitable access to opportunities for deep and meaningful learning. Following this line of reasoning, educational research related to arts education advocacy entails philosophical inquiry into structural impediments that limit equity of access to knowing for the nation's K-12 students.

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[132] Elliot W. Eisner, *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Inquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1998), 8.

[133] Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 47.

[134] Eisner, *Enlightened Eye*, 195. Eisner expands this argument in *The Arts and the Creation of Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), going so far as to put forward the claim that in making the kinds of curriculum decisions that privilege particular domains over others, policymakers directly influence how children think.

Dewey argues that philosophy of education, occupying an intermediate and instrumental place, "neither originates nor settles ends" but instead goes back to the experiences of education to test, confirm, modify, and suggest new methods and materials, thereby enabling educators to see more clearly and think more critically about what they are doing.[135] I adopt Dewey's pragmatist approach in pointing out that effectively advocating for equitable access to high-quality arts-centered inquiry means to argue philosophically for an expanded definition of arts education's instrumental value from a narrow reductive view to one which encompasses rich possibilities for growth.

From a pragmatist perspective, then, research and advocacy are not philosophically in opposition. The advocacy discourse evident in MENC publications serves as a case in point. Yet as Kenneth Elpus notes, "Music education's philosopher-scholars have largely ignored the true need for music education advocacy."[136] He argues, "In dismissing the need for practical music education advocacy, the music education philosophers are doing a grave disservice to the profession."[137] He continues: "The lack of a strong, defensible, philosophical basis for music education advocacy arguments

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[135] John Dewey, *Sources of a Science of Education* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 1929), 56. See also the discussion on pp. 75-76.

[136] Kenneth Elpus, "Improving Music Education Advocacy," *Arts Education Policy Review* 108, no. 3 (January/February 2007): 13-18, 13. Elpus criticizes Wayne Bowman for stating that "advocacy is a political undertaking, not a philosophical one" since in advocacy, what counts is persuasion whereas in philosophy, the point is validity or truth. See Wayne Bowman, "To What Question(s) is Music Education Advocacy the Answer?" *International Journal of Music Education* 23, no. 2 (2005): 125-129, 126.

[137] Elpus, "Improving Music Education Advocacy," 14.

contributes to the practical advocacy crisis and makes our current advocacy practices controversial and divisive within the profession."[138]

Before expanding on aspects of MENC's advocacy efforts that he finds problematic, Elpus credits MENC with successfully advocating for inclusion of the arts in national education legislation and development of the National Standards for Arts Education.[139] He then states his objections to the manner in which MENC is reconciling research and advocacy goals: "In our efforts to simply get the listener's attention to deliver our message, we are selling out our professional dignity and relying on questionable research or questionable interpretations of valid research."[140]

As a way for music education to gain recognition as a core subject, Elpus recommends that the field take the initiative in directing advocacy efforts to develop fair and equitable assessment measures that focus on the value of arts learning within a standards-based framework.[141] Nancy Smith Fichter calls for similar action, urging arts educators to respond imaginatively, given the current climate of accountability, with "arts-centered paradigms for assessment and evaluation."[142]

Kent Seidel sees increased efforts to open lines of communication among arts educators, researchers, artists, and community arts resources as a way to ensure that

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[138] Elpus, "Improving Music Education Advocacy," 14.

[139] Ibid., 15.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid., 17.

[142] Nancy Smith Fichter, "Babel: A Reminder," *Arts Education Policy Review* 101, no. 3 (January/February 2000): 13-14, 14.

research findings are not misinterpreted or overstated in advocacy campaigns.[143] He also questions the usefulness of sharing research findings only within the arts education community when the interpretive approach to knowing employed in arts-based inquiry has much to offer the field of educational research.[144] Seidel posits that when research focuses on what an education that includes the arts looks like, "a broader conceptualization of what education can and should be for all students" results.[145]

It is precisely at this intersection of research and advocacy that I call for a re-imagining of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism. Researchers may face dilemmas in probing advocacy questions since, as Michael Blakeslee notes, a jigsaw of complicating arts education goals may come into play: institutional goals of community arts partners, commercial goals of educational corporations, and professional goals of artists and teachers.[146] Although Fichter's metaphor of Babel may be more apt than Blakeslee's image of the jigsaw,[147] I build on the insights of these two scholars. Speaking from a Deweyan perspective, I urge researchers to listen pragmatically to the arts education advocacy discourse for the core philosophical theme necessary to clarify and

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[143] Kent Seidel, "Many Issues, Few Answers – The Role of Research in K-12 Arts Education," *Arts Education Policy Review* 103, no. 2 (November/December 2001): 19-22, 22.

[144] Ibid., 21-22.

[145] Ibid., 22.

[146] Michael Blakeslee, "Assembling the Arts Education Jigsaw," *Arts Education Policy Review* 105, no. 4 (March/April 2004): 31-36, 33.

[147] Fichter, "Babel: A Reminder," 13-14.

ground it, namely, that learning which helps students develop and grow in the arts helps them develop and grow as individuals living connected lives.

Research findings released a decade ago illustrate the subtle but powerful ways research can open up new directions for advocacy. A team from Project Zero,[148] an educational research group at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, conducted a search of all relevant studies written in English, published and unpublished, that appeared between 1950 and 1998 in order to "analyze the primary research testing the claim that study of the arts is associated with improved academic outcomes."[149] They chose for the meta-analysis 31 studies, all correlational, since no experimental studies were available to provide a test for a causal relationship between arts study and academic achievement.[150]

The researchers found that a positive relationship between studying the arts and academic achievement does exist, but they found no evidence to suggest a causal relationship between arts study and either verbal or math achievement.[151] They offered explanations for the findings by noting that standardized tests call for convergent thinking while the arts engage learners in divergent thinking. Winner and Cooper, who authored the research report cited here, add: "The arts are at a distinct disadvantage compared to

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[148] See Harvard University, "Project Zero," Harvard University Graduate School of Education, http://www.pz.harvard.edu/index.cfm (accessed January 9, 2011). According to the website, Project Zero is an educational research group whose mission is "to understand and enhance learning, thinking, and creativity in the arts, as well as humanistic and scientific disciplines, at the individual and institutional levels."

[149] Winner and Cooper, "Mute Those Claims," 13.

[150] Ibid., 14-15.

[151] Ibid., 58.

academic areas when it comes to evaluating learning outcomes because, while the arts teach measurable skills, they also teach experiences and outcomes that are inherently difficult to measure and quantify."[152]

Winner and Cooper conclude that evaluation of educational outcomes of arts education "should be based on learning in the arts."[153] As a response to an advocacy climate in which "the same secondary and tertiary sources" were quoted over and over,[154] the research has implications for both practice and for ongoing advocacy discussions, as noted in the report:

> The arts are important human ways of understanding and knowing, no less important than the sciences. Studying the arts should thus never be a frill, but should be a basic part of what we expect our children to learn. If they can be shown to aid learning in another domain, fine. But this should never be their primary purpose.[155]

The research team posits that cognitive skills developed in arts study might be applied to learning in other subjects, but transfer is unlikely to occur without explicit teaching of those skills on the part of the teacher. Among the skills listed as candidates for cognitive transfer are focusing, close observation, critical, divergent, or independent thinking, problem solving, and problem finding.[156] A subsequent research project conducted by a Project Zero team will be discussed in Chapter 3 in conjunction with my conceptual

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[152] Winner and Cooper, "Mute Those Claims," 67.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid., 13.

[155] Ibid., 67.

[156] Ibid., 12.

analysis of the current arts advocacy discourse.[157] The final section of Chapter 2 will provide additional context for the philosophical analysis to follow by describing arts education policy formulation from a pragmatist perspective.

Policy Formulation as Pragmatic Inquiry

Winner and Cooper argue that advocacy arguments justifying arts education on utilitarian grounds are evidence of a fundamental misunderstanding of the inherent value of the arts.[158] I reiterate the distinction Liora Bresler draws between instrumentalist and utilitarian approaches to education and her description of the latter as one "promoted by the voices of businesses and community members that associate education primarily with jobs, the economy, and the production of good citizens."[159] Following Bresler, I ask, "Whose values are being advocated in research, policy, and practice?"

Samuel Hope points out that "time and experience have shattered a number of naïve illusions" concerning how arts policy decisions are made.[160] Defining policy as "some sort of engagement with simple or complex efforts to make successful decisions or to influence the decisions of others,"[161] Hope cites marketing pressures as exerting negative long-term consequences on arts education policy. In his view, the only research

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[157] See Lois Hetland, Ellen Winner, Shirley Veenema, and Kimberly M. Sheridan, *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007).

[158] Winner and Cooper, "Mute Those Claims," 66.

[159] Bresler, "Research, Policy, and Practice in Arts Education," 13.

[160] Hope, "Art Education in a World of Cross-Purposes," 94.

[161] Ibid., 95.

that matters to activists is that which supports their position. Hope argues that to acquiesce to the images and messages of professional arts advocates and education reformers is to lose control of the internal purpose of the field. Instead he urges policymakers to conduct what he terms "wisdom-seeking policy analysis."[162]

Hope credits the National Art Education Association with adopting a wisdom-seeking approach to arts education policymaking. He considers the contributions that research, policy, and practice make to the field of art education to be interdependent. More important, what enables those strong connections is a commitment to the core activity of remaining grounded in the philosophical question, "What is unique about what we do and the content for which we are responsible?"[163] Hope illustrates his point this way:

> The National Art Education Association has worked especially hard to keep attention focused on disciplinary content, vigorous teaching, and field identity and security. All these achievements provide a strong foundation for building policy capabilities of greater sophistication and scope. This means an expansion in the kinds of research associated with art education. It means more connections with contextual issues in ways that analyze and synthesize these issues into a relationship with the reasonable purposes of art education. It means that policy analyses for art education must be generated by individuals centered in things visual, or, at least, things artistic.[164]

In short, Hope's words echo those of John Dewey in *The Sources of a Science of Education*: "To look to some outside source to provide aims is to fail to know what education is as an ongoing process."[165]

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[162] Hope, "Art Education in a World of Cross-Purposes," 96-97.

[163] Ibid., 97.

[164] Ibid.

[165] Dewey, *Sources of a Science of Education*, 75.

Hope urges arts educators to remain vigilant to political games and promotional techniques that give the illusion of supporting arts education. He maintains an especially critical eye toward the role of technology in arts education policy formulation. Using the metaphor of a computer screen, Hope argues that "a major policy question is how to keep technology from narrowing possibilities rather than expanding them."[166] He urges the arts education community to consider the consequences when forming alliances with political and corporate interests around the promotion and sale of educational technology.

In the next chapter, I examine pertinent arts education advocacy materials, accessible online and in downloadable format, in order to inquire into tensions, ironies, and contradictions that impel philosophical and conceptual analysis. My inquiry investigates two philosophical concepts permeating the current arts advocacy discourse: *creativity* and *innovation*. Hope maintains that because advocacy is based on promotional technique rather than policy analysis, it does not provide a sufficient base for decision making.[167] I argue that viewing arts-centered inquiry through a Deweyan lens keeps the focus on instrumental consequences for student development and growth *in the arts*. Pointing to the irony of marketing the arts as purveyors of creativity and innovation, I make the advocacy claim that arts-centered inquiry itself opens up inherently creative possibilities for individual students. Sound arts education policy formulation, therefore, represents pragmatic inquiry that conceives of creative and innovative students and connects that conception with the educative school-based arts experiences they need.

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[166] Hope, "Art Education in a World of Cross-Purposes," 106.

[167] Ibid., 111.

CHAPTER 3

A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE ADVOCACY DISCOURSE

In the previous chapter, I discussed the complex relationships among practice, research, policy, and advocacy to provide context for a conceptual analysis of the current advocacy discourse. I now turn to an examination of pertinent examples from arts education advocacy materials, accessible online and in downloadable format, in order to inquire into tensions, ironies, and contradictions embedded in the discourse regarding the instrumental role of arts education in developing creativity and fostering innovation. I have purposefully chosen sources cited in the research literature over the last decade in order to highlight parallels between past and current philosophical arguments. Because my approach to philosophical inquiry is Deweyan, the conceptual analysis that follows critiques major arguments in light of consequences for student learning. The next section will serve as an introduction to the conceptual analysis of the advocacy discourse. It includes a brief overview of representative agencies, organizations, research groups, and professional arts associations who contribute their voices to the ongoing advocacy debate over instrumental outcomes associated with arts education.

Advocating for Creativity and Innovation: An Introduction

As Constance Gee has explained, a number of the publishers of arts education advocacy materials are based in Washington, DC and share administrative staff, boards, and advisory panels. I gleaned evidence for this conceptual analysis from the websites of two such entities: the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Arts Education

Partnership (AEP).[168] In addition, I downloaded documents from the websites of the U.S. Department of Education, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, MENC: The National Association for Music Education, and the National Art Education Association (NAEA), all of which have offices in the Washington, DC area. Although not explicitly cited, the advocacy texts of many dozens of arts organizations informed my thinking as I employed the philosophical tools of conceptual analysis to support my argument for an expanded conceptualization of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism.[169]

The main theme running through the advocacy texts I examined was the role of arts education in developing creativity and innovation, skills argued to be necessary in order for the United States to remain globally competitive. For example, a document entitled, "A Blueprint for Reform," published by the U.S. Department of Education, lays out a plan for new federal investment in improving teaching and learning in all content areas – including the arts. The rationale is that "students need a well-rounded education to contribute as citizens in our democracy and to thrive in a global economy."[170]

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[168] Gee, "Spirit, Mind, and Body," 116-117.

[169] Please consult the bibliography for the web page addresses of the agencies and organizations discussed.

[170] U.S. Department of Education, "A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act," United States Department of Education, http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/blueprint.pdf (accessed January 3, 2011). The mission of the Department of Education is "to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access."

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan reiterated the theme of a well-rounded education in an address to the Arts Education Partnership on April 9, 2010.[171] According to its website, the Arts Education Partnership (AEP) resulted from the Goals 2000 Arts Education Planning Process in 1994. In 1995, the U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Arts entered into a cooperative agreement with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies to provide AEP with administrative support. In 2006, the Arts Education Partnership Steering Committee developed two strategic plans which "adopt assumptions that the arts can play a crucial role in the public concern for a more comprehensive educational experience for all students that prepares them for success and contributions in complex, diverse, and technologically driven global societies and economies."[172]

In his remarks, Duncan asks the Art Education Partnership to help build the national case for the importance of a well-rounded, content-rich curriculum. He notes three ways that arts education advocacy can assist in moving forward the debate over the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):

> First, the arts significantly boost student achievement, reduce discipline problems, and increase the odds that students will go on to graduate from

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[171] U.S. Department of Education, "The Well-Rounded Curriculum," News: Speeches, http://www2.ed.gov/news/speeches/2010/04/04092010.html (accessed December 26, 2010).

[172] Arts Education Partnership, "Mission of the Arts Education Partnership," About Us: Mission & Overview, http://www.aep-arts.org/aboutus/mission.htm (accessed April 20, 2011). The advocacy mission of the Arts Education Partnership, as stated on its website, is "to demonstrate and promote the essential role of the arts in enabling every student to succeed in school, life and work in the diverse and global economies and societies of the 21st century."

> college. Second, arts education is essential to stimulating the creativity and innovation that will prove critical to young Americans competing in a global economy. And last, but not least, the arts are valuable for their own sake, and they empower students to create and appreciate aesthetic works.[173]

Duncan concludes the speech by addressing the need for the field of arts education to continue making progress in developing rigorous arts assessments, noting that "a well-balanced curriculum is simply too vital to our students and our national character to let the teaching of the arts and humanities erode."[174]

The advocacy arguments outlined in Duncan's speech to the Arts Education Partnership are the same justifications for arts education that Gee found in her review of the advocacy discourse a decade ago:

> According to most arts advocacy literature, the improvement of the work-force to ensure economic global competitiveness remains the overarching justification for and ultimate goal of arts education. Increasingly, however, the development of the well-rounded, engaged citizen shares copy space. Of course, happier, better-socialized, smarter citizens make happier, better-socialized, smarter workers, so the reasoning dovetails nicely.[175]

Even claims of the same kinds of benefits arts learning offers continue to permeate the discourse. Among the purported positive outcomes for students who study the arts that Gee found were improved overall academic performance and standardized test scores, enhanced personal identity and social skills, increased problem-solving, reasoning, and communication capabilities, expanded creativity, and greater self-discipline.[176]

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[173] U.S. Department of Education, "The Well-Rounded Curriculum," ¶ 29.

[174] Ibid., ¶ 67-69.

[175] Gee, "The 'Use and Abuse' of Arts Advocacy," 6.

[176] Ibid., 5.

Before continuing with the overview of major contributors to the advocacy discourse, I want to take note of the way Duncan categorizes his justifications for arts education. The first benefit he connects to arts learning, an increased likelihood of college graduation due to increased achievement and decreased discipline problems, involves an educational outcome that might be more effectively and efficiently reached by means of targeted instruction in tested content areas and a school climate that promotes, for example, participation in clubs. Elliot Eisner criticizes advocacy strategies that draw associations between participation in the arts and non-arts outcomes: "To use the arts *primarily* to teach what is not truly distinctive about the arts is to undermine, in the long run, the justifying conditions for the arts in our schools."[177] Instead, Eisner offers a three-tier framework with which to analyze educational contributions of the arts. Increasing the likelihood of college graduation, for instance, would be considered a third-tier Ancillary Outcome of Arts Education under Eisner's evaluation model. It could be argued, following Eisner's reasoning, that participation in the arts might enable students to see coherent relationships in other areas of life or to make better judgments in practical matters.[178]

Duncan's second justification for arts education links the arts with the development of creativity and innovation for economic ends. Eisner terms this a second-tier or Arts-Related Outcome since it has to do with perceiving and describing the qualitative and expressive features of the environment. By contrast, first-tier, Arts-Based Outcomes, according to Eisner, "reside in perceptions and discourse unique to the

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[177] Eisner, "Does Experience in the Arts?," 12.

[178] Ibid.

arts."[179] In Eisner's view, these kinds of consequences for student learning require an understanding of the meaning-making possibilities that the constraints of working within an artistic tradition allow.[180] While Duncan acknowledges that "the arts are valuable for their own sake, and they empower students to create and appreciate aesthetic works,"[181] Eisner's words articulate with far more depth of understanding the generative potential arts engagement holds for subsequent student learning.

Eisner uses the term "instrumental" to refer to measurable student outcomes in non-arts subjects which, as a consequence of their association with measures of student participation in the arts, provide evidence to support arts advocacy claims. I concur with Eisner that valuing arts education on the basis of outcomes in other subjects only serves to further marginalize school arts programs.[182] I differ, however, in my philosophical approach to the concept of *instrumental* within the context of the arts. Rather than resisting the term's limitations in its narrow application within evidence-based discussions of what works in educational settings, I seek to restore the artistic meaning of the term. In other words, I propose pragmatic instrumentalism as a way to answer the question, "Why teach the arts in schools?" by showing where the arts can take us.

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[179] Eisner, "Does Experience in the Arts?," 12.

[180] Ibid., 13.

[181] U.S. Department of Education, "The Well-Rounded Curriculum," ¶ 29.

[182] Eisner, "Does Experience in the Arts?," 12.

A Pragmatist Response to Critiques of Instrumentalist Advocacy Claims

An expanded conceptualization of the term "instrumental" pragmatically connects arts-centered inquiry with its consequences for student growth. I offer as a counter-example to illustrate the soundness of my claim a research study conducted by the RAND Corporation addressing individual and community benefits resulting from involvement in the arts. In the research report, the authors describe instrumental benefits as "important, measurable benefits, such as economic growth and student learning" but restrict their definition to instances in which "the arts are viewed as a means of achieving broad social and economic goals that have nothing to do with art per se."[183] Viewing the word "instrumental" solely in terms of measurement, the research team associates instrumental benefits with an "output-oriented, quantitative approach to public sector management."[184] As a way to reframe the debate over the benefits of the arts, McCarthy et al. propose as a conceptual framework a matrix that takes into account instrumental, intrinsic, private (individual), and public (community) benefits.[185]

The study's key policy implication is that resources should be shifted toward cultivating demand, by which they mean developing the capacity in individuals to derive more value from the arts opportunities around them. A large part of such an effort would presumably be in the area of arts education. As the argument progresses, the researchers broaden their conceptualization of instrumental benefits beyond statistical outcomes,

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[183] Kevin F. McCarthy, Elizabeth H. Ondaatje, Laura Zakaras, and Arthur Brooks, *Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004), xi.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Ibid., 13.

stating simply that learning how to learn "is perhaps the most important instrumental benefit of arts education."[186]

The authors of the research report note two significant elements in the learning-to-learn process, namely, monitoring one's own learning and recognizing the contribution of feedback to making progress. Both elements are connected to sustained learning in the arts.[187] Other benefits linked to arts learning include the development of social bonds and an expanded capacity for empathy.[188] The authors of the study conclude that "the arts, through their communicative power, enhance individual engagement with the world in ways that have both personal and public benefits. We even suggest that these effects are instrumental in that they can open people to life and create the fabric of shared values and meanings that improves the public sphere."[189]

I argue from a pragmatist stance that individuals live connected lives. Whatever benefits we seek from engagement with the arts become instrumental once we confer meaning on those experiences as being valuable for subsequent transactions. The phrases "intrinsic value" and "art for art's sake" ring hollow unless students have opportunities to engage with the arts in ways that enable them, as Maxine Greene writes, "to notice what is there to be noticed, and to lend works of art their lives in such a way that they can

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[186] McCarthy et al., *Gifts of the Muse*, 27.

[187] Ibid.

[188] Ibid., 29, 47.

[189] Ibid., 52.

achieve them as variously meaningful. When this happens, new connections are made in experience: new patterns are formed, new vistas are opened."[190]

By the same token, the misuse of the term "instrumental" in the advocacy discourse in place of more precise words like "utilitarian," "ancillary," or "incidental" complicates the philosophical work of providing warrant for arts-centered inquiry as potentially and instrumentally valuable for student growth. Monroe Beardsley suggests using the term "inherent value" rather than "intrinsic value" to distinguish enriching arts experiences – those connected with particular aesthetic qualities we perceive – from effects of a more incidental nature.[191] The following passage from McCarthy, et al., illustrates the clarity that making such a substitution would achieve in arguing on behalf of arts education:

> Whether it is the immediate delight and wonder that the arts experience can trigger or the cognitive benefits that come from more sustained arts involvement, the intrinsic benefits derived from the experience are what motivate individuals to become involved in the arts. Indeed, only by focusing on individual experience can one understand how individuals become drawn to the arts in the first place, how they develop sustained interest, and how they access many of the effects we have described. From this perspective, it becomes clear that not much is gained by separating the discussion of instrumental effects from that of intrinsic effects – the two are intimately linked. Participation in the arts is motivated by intrinsic benefits derived from arts experiences, and it is only through such experiences that a variety of instrumental benefits can be realized.[192]

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[190] Maxine Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar: The Lincoln Center Institute Lectures on Aesthetic Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001), 6.

[191] Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Aesthetic Problem of Justification," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 1, no. 2 (Autumn 1966): 29-39, 34.

[192] McCarthy et al., *Gifts of the Muse*, 70.

The sedimentation of commonly-held assumptions surrounding the terms "intrinsic" and "instrumental" led to their use in opposition to each other.[193] Beardsley employs the tools of analytic philosophy to expose the fallacious reasoning in the debate between intrinsic and instrumental value in the arts.

Beardsley begins his argument by showing how the genus "value" has over time been divided up into two species, "intrinsic value" and "extrinsic value." Yet, as Beardsley notes, *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* are not coordinate species but rather relational in the sense that some extrinsic value will derive from its serving as a means to good. Thus, instrumental value is conferred upon an art work or arts experience such that it becomes an instrument of value.[194] Moreover, Beardsley continues, the rational justification for conferring value on a work of art is a matter of empirical confirmation, without any previous consideration of intrinsic value.[195]

In summary, Beardsley shows the fallacious reasoning behind Assumption (I) that whatever portion of an artwork's value that is not intrinsic is its extrinsic value. Next, he shows how, by substitution, *extrinsic* has come to mean *instrumental*, thereby setting up Assumption (II) that a work of art has *either* intrinsic *or* instrumental value but never both. In other words, the terms "intrinsic" and "instrumental" erroneously have been held to be mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive. Beardsley therefore rejects (II), arguing that unless the value of a work of art is tied to actual or possible experiencing of the

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[193] Beardsley, "The Aesthetic Problem of Justification," 31-34.

[194] Monroe C. Beardsley, "Intrinsic Value," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 26, no. 1 (September, 1965): 1-17, 3-6.

[195] Ibid., 8.

artwork, it becomes difficult to establish its capacity for producing a beneficial effect.[196] Since the work's capacity for producing such an effect consists in instrumentality, however, Beardsley cautions that the instrumentality we experience when we interact with a work of art is only provisionally valuable since we can only say that a painting or an opera or a play has instrumental value insofar as the artwork connects to something we value.[197]

Because the terms erroneously have been held to be mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive, the current advocacy debate sounds eerily like that of a decade ago. In the next section I will bring together voices representing arts agencies, research, policy, and practice in order to show how misapplication of the terms "intrinsic" and "instrumental" impede clearer articulations of the concepts of *creativity* and *innovation* in the advocacy discourse.

The Conceptualization of Creativity and Innovation in Advocacy Texts

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government charged with awarding grants "to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities."[198] According to the NEA website, the agency's slogan, "Art Works," incorporates three meanings: the works of art themselves, what happens in arts

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[196] Beardsley connects the value of a work of art with its capacity for producing aesthetic enjoyment.

[197] Beardsley, "The Aesthetic Problem of Justification," 33.

[198] National Endowment for the Arts, "About Us," National Endowment for the Arts, http://www.arts.gov/about/index.html (accessed January 12, 2011).

encounters, and the impact of arts-related jobs on the nation's economy, which "together are the intrinsic value of the arts."[199]

The Chairman of the NEA, Rocco Landesman, did not refer to the intrinsic value of the arts when he spoke before the Arts Education Partnership on April 9, 2010 to enlist AEP help in advocating for more arts education across the nation. Like Duncan, who appeared on the same program, Landesman made the claim that "the arts help maintain our competitive edge by engendering innovation and creativity."[200] Yet his conceptualization of the instrumental role of arts education as a model for education systems is far more nuanced than that articulated by Duncan, who uses the phrase, "well-rounded" to describe a curriculum that includes the arts.[201] Speaking in his capacity as the NEA Chairman addressing one of his agency's partners, Landesman frames the ideal arts education as one offered by a partnership of classroom teachers, arts specialists, teaching artists, and arts and community organizations. Drawing on his experience as a Broadway producer, he stresses the need for collaboration in classrooms, likening them to "affinity spaces" where knowledge moves in many directions simultaneously.[202]

In his speech to the Arts Education Partnership, Landesman draws a parallel between the collaboration that is central to a jazz ensemble and the complex of learning

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[199] National Endowment for the Arts, "About Art Works," National Endowment for the Arts, http://www.arts.gov/artworks/?page_id=79 (accessed January 12, 2011).

[200] National Endowment for the Arts, "Rocco Landesman Comments at the Arts Education Partnership's Opening Plenary," National Endowment for the Arts, http://www.arts.gov/news/news10/ELI-Rocco.html (accessed December 26, 2010), ¶ 17.

[201] U.S. Department of Education, "The Well-Rounded Curriculum," ¶ 5.

[202] National Endowment for the Arts, "Rocco Landesman Comments," ¶ 45.

transactions that characterize a twenty-first century classroom. Unlike Arne Duncan, who describes arts integration in terms of students singing songs about gravity and the planets,[203] Landesman's conceptual understanding of what happens in arts-centered inquiry includes the development of two habits that he claims would have instrumental consequences for reforming education, namely, the "lessons" of strategic thinking and productive failure.[204] Landesman also connects the fostering of innovation with learning environments that emphasize creative problem-solving strategies over rote memorization; innovation happens in spaces where it is okay to fail and noble to try again. In Landesman's vision I see possibilities for stakeholders in advocacy, research, policy, and practice beginning a conversation in which the instrumental value of the arts is conceived in terms of learning *in* the arts. I argue that reimagining arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism opens up these possibilities. The next section elaborates on the concept of inquiry from a pragmatist perspective.

Viewing Inquiry as an Instrument

Because my argument is grounded in a Deweyan analysis that conceptualizes arts-centered inquiry as a human value meeting a human need, the work of James Garrison provides guidance, particularly in clarifying how I examine and judge the soundness of scholarly arguments that critique advocacy claims. As an inquiry into inquiry, I adopt Garrison's definition of inquiry as "the creative activity of transforming needful

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[203] U.S. Department of Education, "The Well-Rounded Curriculum," ¶ 41.

[204] National Endowment for the Arts, "Rocco Landesman Comments," ¶ 46-70.

situations into more desirable circumstances."[205] According to Garrison, inquiry is as much a moral task as an aesthetic adventure because imagining possibilities that expand freedom requires practical wisdom and practical reasoning to ensure that consequences of action are morally desirable, not merely desired.[206]

I apply Garrison's interpretation of Deweyan "transactional realism" to learning transactions within the context of visual art, music, theatre, or dance instruction. Garrison illustrates transactional realism in schools:

> In transactional relationships between teacher and student, the potential of the student is actualized when she learns. She may learn how to do something, or that something is true or false, or perhaps that some things are more desirable than others. … The teacher and student transaction can be reciprocally transformative. Actualizing potentialities is creative. It bestows value on others by helping them to realize their unique potential. It resembles the sculptor shaping the stone to call forth the image hidden within. It is a perceptive and imaginative activity requiring us to "see" the possible in the actual.[207]

Viewing arts-centered inquiry in this light means "understanding what a technique is good for – indeed, whether it is genuinely good at all."[208] Inquiry is an instrument that, according to Garrison, "artistically mediates between the actual and the possible, just as it cognitively mediates between ignorance and knowledge."[209] In this dissertation I seek to illuminate possibilities for advancing arts advocacy policy discussions by pragmatically

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[205] James W. Garrison, *Dewey and Eros: Wisdom and Desire in the Art of Teaching* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997), xv.

[206] Ibid., 22, 51.

[207] Ibid., 45.

[208] Ibid., 73.

[209] Ibid., 88.

conceiving consequences for student learning that are not final but rather generative to subsequent learning. To remain otherwise entrenched in short-sighted educational policy objectives poses the ironic educational scenario of employing targeted interventions designed to boost achievement outcomes or spark innovation without attending to nurturing the deep structural understandings on which individual creativity depends.

Dewey's conceptualization of artistic production as pragmatic instrumentalism provides the philosophical grounding for my argument that arts-centered inquiry belongs in schools. Inquiry demands creativity in the reiterative process of imagining possible consequences of actions and choosing among alternative courses of action to shape subsequent albeit provisional outcomes. Arts-centered inquiry creatively probes the creative process itself; students reflect on how working with artistic media within traditions of practice affords individuals living connected lives powerful ways to make meaning. Reimagining arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism connects creative action with its fruits for subsequent learning within the context of the wider community. And there is precedent in our nation's history for bridging the conceptual divide between creativity and instrumentality. The arts advocacy discourse emerging between 1790 and 1840, for example, conceptualized art making as an intellectual project but broadened the justification argument to emphasize the connection between artistic communication of human ideals and a democratically functioning social order. Conceived in this way, not only could the technical aspects of art making be taught to individuals with natural talent, but principles of art criticism could be taught to the wider

population. The thinking was that as Americans improved their individual creative and critical faculties, the nation as a whole would benefit.[210]

I maintain that arts-centered inquiry, though not sufficient for carrying out the entire instrumental work of a comprehensive curriculum, nevertheless contributes to fostering growth and continuity within it; there is a moral dimension to consider when warranting its value for students and for the wider community. As Beardsley so convincingly argues, Dewey's rejection of the notion of intrinsic value has important social and ethical implications because it underscores Dewey's commitment to connecting values with human needs.[211] Elliot Eisner argues that the particular form we choose in order to represent our experience of interacting with each other and with the environment "not only influences what we can say, it also influences what we are likely to experience."[212] He points out that when schools limit opportunities for students to learn and use diverse forms of representation – visual art, music, drama, dance, to name a few – educational equity is jeopardized. Like Dewey, who criticized those who would equate intelligence solely with facility in verbal and mathematical symbols,[213] Eisner concludes that to restrict forms of representation is "to deny students access to meanings that might otherwise be theirs."[214]

In addition to making the case that advocating for a greater valuing of the arts in schools has a moral dimension, I adopt the Deweyan approach that creative inquiry unites

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[210] Stankiewicz, Amburgy, and Bolin, "Questioning the Past," 35.

[211] Beardsley, "Intrinsic Value," 17.

[212] Eisner, *The Enlightened Eye*, 8.

[213] Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 47.

[214] Eisner, *The Enlightened Eye*, 195.

aspects of science and art rather than placing the two in opposition. In fact, Dewey argues that both science and art become unnatural and inartistic when they are reduced to blind routine. Alternatively, when cause-and-effect relationships are transformed in our understanding into meaningful experiences where "consequences belong *integrally* to the conditions which may produce them," then our conscious ideas – as works of art – liberate subsequent action to create more meanings.[215] What distinguishes arts perception, Dewey notes, is that the invitation to pursue these possibilities for further meaning making, to directly sense the intersection of the instrumental and the consummatory both in aesthetic appreciation and artistic production, is particularly urgent and compelling.[216]

Craig Cunningham points to evidence in Dewey's later writings of a theoretical shift from a scientifically-framed concern for student capacity to a more artistically-informed interest in potentiality.[217] Cunningham cites in particular a passage from his earlier *Democracy and Education* in which Dewey advises educators to take into consideration the needs of students when designing learning environments in order to "liberate and organize" their capacities.[218] In contrast to this passage, Cunningham points to later works in which aesthetics plays a much greater role in imagining the consequences of various choices. The following excerpt from *Experience and Nature* supports Cunningham's general claim:

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[215] Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 371.

[216] Ibid., 374-375.

[217] Craig A. Cunningham, "Ideal Ends: John Dewey's Later Vision for Education" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association and the John Dewey Society, New Orleans, LA, April 4-8, 1994).

[218] Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 108.

> To *perceive* is to acknowledge unattained possibilities; it is to refer the present to consequences, apparition to issue, and thereby to behave in deference to the *connections* of events. As an attitude, perception or awareness is predictive expectancy, wariness. Since potential consequences also *mark* the thing itself, and form its nature, the event thus marked becomes an object of contemplation; as meaning, future consequences already belong to the thing. The act of striving to bring them existentially into the world may be commuted into esthetic enjoyed possession of form.[219]

To NEA Chairman Landesman and others who look to arts education to unlock the potential for creativity and innovation among the nation's students, I quote Maxine Greene, who reminds us that "the arts cannot be counted on to liberate,"[220] but they can help open up spaces where emancipatory education is possible. Dewey defines education as the reconstruction of experience to better perceive meaningful connections and continuities and more effectively direct activity in subsequent experience.[221] The next section will outline research conducted under the auspices of Harvard University's Project Zero that posits a Studio Thinking Framework to conceptualize the ways in which arts-centered inquiry develops habits potentially instrumental to subsequent learning in and beyond arts domains. The study has implications for future directions in arts education advocacy.

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[219] Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 182.

[220] Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988), 131.

[221] Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 76.

The Studio Thinking Framework

Dewey describes the two principles of continuity and interaction as "the longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience."[222] In designing the conditions for learning experiences, he argues, educators must exercise wisdom in judging which attitudes and habits are being developed that are conducive to students' continued growth and which are detrimental.[223] Consistent with the naturalistic stance that sees the live creature in transaction with the environment is Dewey's philosophy of art, with its primary task of restoring continuity between aesthetic experience and everyday living.[224]

Inquiring into the connection between habits formed in visual arts classes and students' engagement with the world provides a Deweyan framework for my conceptual analysis of a recent Project Zero study by Hetland, et al., probing the benefits of studying the arts.[225] The team of researchers observed, filmed, and interviewed five Boston-area visual arts teachers to understand what kinds of thinking are developed through study in the arts.[226] I concur with their philosophical position that justifying the arts on the basis of their utilitarian value in teaching the content of other subjects devalues the arts and threatens their viability in the current high-stakes testing environment.[227] I argue, however, that in citing the conclusions of the RAND report (mentioned above) that

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[222] Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 44.

[223] Ibid., 38-39.

[224] Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 2.

[225] See Hetland et al., *Studio Thinking*, *op. cit.*

[226] Ibid., 4.

[227] Ibid., 3.

"instrumental claims about the effects of arts education on learning in other subjects go far beyond the evidence,"[228] Hetland, et al., conflate the terms "utilitarian" and "instrumental."

The data collected as part of the Boston area study led Hetland, et al., to develop a Studio Thinking Framework comprised of eight Studio Habits of Mind: Develop Craft, Engage and Persist, Envision, Express, Observe, Reflect, Stretch and Explore, and Understand Art World.[229] Arguably, the five visual arts teachers whose classes were the focus of the case studies align philosophically with Dewey in that they each draw on the wisdom of their experience to produce conditions in which their students develop attitudes and habits instrumental to continued growth.[230] Ironically, the researchers' criticism of previous arts-focused studies as evidence of what they term "the failure of instrumental arguments"[231] contradicts the philosophical premise of their Studio Thinking Framework. The framework itself represents a conceptualization of instrumental benefits associated with participation in arts experiences, namely, the development of the Studio Habits of Mind.

When viewed through a Deweyan lens, Studio Thinking restores the continuity between the arts studio and everyday life in the way it challenges students "to put skills to

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[228] Hetland et al., *Studio Thinking*, 3. See McCarthy et al., *Gifts of the Muse*, *op. cit.*

[229] See Hetland et al., *Studio Thinking*, Figure 1.2.

[230] Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 38-39.

[231] Hetland et al., *Studio Thinking*, 2.

use in new contexts"[232] and "notice the world around and connect it to learning in art."[233] The research supports my argument that reimagining arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism offers advocates, researchers, and practitioners sound philosophical grounding for making the claim that students need arts education in schools. The study also calls attention to the important distinction between fostering innovation in schools for utilitarian ends and supporting students as they develop the studio habit of innovating through exploration.

In an article summarizing the Studio Thinking research, Winner and Hetland note that "Stretch and Explore" is a central skill explicitly taught by all five of the art teachers observed. The common theme emerging in these teachers' practice is that they are all committed to getting students to experiment, take risks, and let mistakes lead to unexpected discoveries.[234] Just as important for student growth in the arts and beyond is the habit of reflective self-evaluation, whereby students learn to stand back, analyze, judge, and entirely reconceive the project if necessary.

In constructing the Studio Thinking theoretical framework from their data analysis, the Project Zero evaluators were surprised to find that in arts-centered inquiry, "teachers talked about decisions, choices, and understandings far more than they talked about feelings."[235] (A Deweyan approach to inquiry in which "consequences belong

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[232] Hetland et al., *Studio Thinking*, 18.

[233] Ibid., 98.

[234] Ellen Winner and Lois Hetland, "Art for Our Sake: School Arts Classes Matter More Than Ever – But Not for the Reasons You Think." *Arts Education Policy Review* 109, no. 5 (May/June 2008): 29-31, 30.

[235] Ibid., 31.

integrally to the conditions which may produce them"[236] sees no incongruity between artistic process and the working out of problems.) While remaining cautious about making claims of cognitive transfer between arts and non-arts domains, the research team sees the framework easily adapted to other arts disciplines. They recommend that the arts be used "to restore balance and depth to an education system increasingly skewed toward readily testable skills and information."[237]

The Project Zero researchers, like NEA Chairman Landesman, consider productive failure and strategic thinking both to be fundamental to an expanded conceptualization of arts education. The Studio Thinking research team also sees the arts as a model for how classroom teachers might offer "just-in-time" interventions or conduct group problem-solving sessions.[238] As Samuel Hope cautions, however, "If art education has every purpose, then it has no purpose of its own."[239] In the next section, I examine advocacy texts posted on the homepages of MENC: The National Association for Music Education and the National Art Education Association (NAEA), as well as advocacy texts electronically linked to those two organizations' websites sponsored by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21). My purpose is to show how tensions, ironies, and contradictions at the digital intersection of practice, research, policy, and corporate sponsorship further complicate attempts to offer the advocacy discourse philosophical grounding.

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[236] Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 371.

[237] Winner and Hetland, "Art for Our Sake," 31.

[238] Hetland et al., *Studio Thinking*, 110-111.

[239] Hope, "Art Education in a World of Cross-Purposes," 100.

Philosophical Analysis in a Grab-and-Go Environment

As Dewey argues, the philosophy of education, occupying an intermediate and instrumental place, "neither originates nor settles ends" but instead goes back to the experiences of education to test, confirm, modify, and suggest new methods and materials, thereby enabling educators to see more clearly and think more critically about what they are doing.[240] To engage in a philosophical analysis of the arts education advocacy discourse, therefore, I entered the online sites accessible to and targeted toward music and art education practitioners in order to critically examine the online text posted there by two professional organizations representing arts educators, MENC (music) and NAEA (art). I kept the focus on the two interrelated advocacy themes of the last decade, valuing arts education for the ways it helps students succeed in school and valuing arts education for the ways it develops creativity and innovation for economic ends.

The MENC Advocacy and Public Policy page lists the ways MENC advocates for music education, including sponsoring national events like the World's Largest Concert, producing and distributing one-minute public service announcements recorded by music industry artists, and compiling facts, quotations, research, and statistics on music education. The "Grab and Go Advocacy" flyer, available for download, provides an example of the philosophical approach implicit within the MENC texts. Available in two formats, a red and orange version with diagonal text entitled, "Crisis Management: When Times Get Tough…" and the blue and green version entitled, "Proactive Strategy: When

[240] Dewey, *Sources of a Science of Education*, 56. See also Dewey's discussion on pp. 75-76.

Times Are Good….”[241] The crisis-oriented flyer advises music educators to include personal anecdotes about their programs because “legislators/administrators remember anecdotes better than facts. Too many statistics can be overwhelming.”[242]

To assist educators in assembling an advocacy argument, MENC provides a link to a “Make Your Case” database, where practitioners can search for anecdotes, quotations, and short excerpts from secondary sources on topics that largely emphasize the contribution of music to student success in school and as citizens in the twenty-first century.[243] The advocacy page also features a sidebar with links to federal and state sites. Of particular note for the purposes of this conceptual analysis is the link entitled, “Legislative Memo,” which provides MENC’s 75,000 members online updates on music education policy issues.[244]

As one might expect, the homepage of the National Art Education Association has dynamic and interactive features that draw the eye to the theme for the association’s national conference, “Creativity, Imagination, & Innovation in Art Education.”[245] The

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[241] MENC: The National Association for Music Education, “Grab and Go Advocacy,” Advocacy and Public Policy, http://www.menc.org/documents/advocacy/31473_menc_proof.pdf (accessed January 13, 2011).

[242] Ibid., ¶ 1.

[243] MENC: The National Association for Music Education, “Support Music: Make Your Case,” Make Your Case Database, http://www.menc.org/supportmusic_cases (accessed January 13, 2011).

[244] MENC: The National Association for Music Education, “MENC Legislative Memo,” News Stand, http://www.menc.org/news/view/menc-legislative-memo/ (accessed January 13, 2011).

[245] National Art Education Association, “News & Events,” Homepage, http://www.arteducators.org/ (accessed January 13, 2011).

text and graphics on the Advocacy page urge visitors to the site to communicate a clear message in their advocacy efforts. To find out what the message is, one must click on the word "Message" in order to learn the answer to the question, "Why is learning in the visual arts essential to education in the 21st century?" The answer encompasses all the arts: to strengthen literacy (in the sense that the arts are a language), to develop the essential skills of a globally competitive workforce, and to nurture engaged learners by promoting active and complex learning.[246] On the same page are tools and links to assist in developing an advocacy message. Among the tools is a downloadable flyer entitled, "Ten Lessons the Arts Can Teach" with excerpts from Elliot Eisner's *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*.[247] The links connect directly to research reports prepared by Harvard's Project Zero, the Arts Education Partnership, and arts entities whose advocacy materials align with the NAEA message.

Both the MENC: The National Association for Music Education and the National Art Education Association websites link to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Map for the Arts. According to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) website, the arts skills map, designed in cooperation with the nation's arts educators and released in 2010, follows similar documents for English, Social Studies, Science, and Geography. The skills maps "support a vision for learning to ensure 21st century readiness for every

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[246] National Art Education Association, "Communicate a Clear Message," Advocacy Resources – Message, http://www.arteducators.org/advocacy/advocacy-resources-message (accessed January 13, 2011).

[247] See Eisner, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, 70-92.

student."[248] Graphically depicted at the center of the P21 conceptual framework are a set of student outcomes categorized as Learning and Innovation Skills, or the 4Cs: Creativity and Innovation, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Communication, and Collaboration.[249]

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills was formed in 2002 as a public-private organization whose members include the National Education Association, AOL Time Warner Foundation, Apple Computer, Cable in the Classroom, Cisco Systems, Dell Computer Corporation, Microsoft Corporation, and SAP, a major business software company, with the U.S. Department of Education serving as a key partner.[250] Professional arts educators served as writers for the Skills Map for the Arts, and one of the project managers was Michael Blakeslee, Senior Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of MENC: The National Association for Music Education. Two organizations sponsored the arts skills map project, the National Education Association and the New Media Consortium.

All five P21 skills maps are organized around 13 skill areas: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Innovation, Information Literacy, Media Literacy, Information, Communication, and Technology Literacy,

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[248] Partnership for 21st Century Skills, "Publications," Tools & Resources, http://www.p21.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=504&Itemid=185#maps (accessed January 13, 2011).

[249] Partnership for 21st Century Skills, "Framework for 21st Century Learning," Overview, http://www.p21.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=119 (accessed January 13, 2011).

[250] Partnership for 21st Century Skills, "Our History," About Us, http://www.p21.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=507&Itemid=191 (accessed January 13, 2011).

Flexibility and Adaptability, Initiative and Self-Direction, Social and Cross-Cultural Skills, Productivity and Accountability, and Leadership and Responsibility. I use the arts skills map as a counter-example to support the central argument of this dissertation. I assert that when the voices of corporate interests promoting utilitarian student outcomes provide the central themes of the arts advocacy discourse, arts educators risk abrogating their primary responsibility to their students: rich and generative arts-centered inquiry.

As Bennett Reimer argues, in arts-centered inquiry students explore materials (including sound) to probe the full range of human expressiveness and gain knowledge *of*, in contrast to other cognitive areas which rely on symbols to communicate knowledge *about*.[251] Reimer points out that whereas conceptualization yields meanings of an informational nature, communicated through abstract signs and symbols in discursive form, aesthetic perceptual structuring – Reimer's preferred term for the artistic process – reveals meaning that is immanent and concrete, shared through presentational, not discursive, form. In Reimer's view, "Philosophy strives to get below all the many reasons that might be given for the importance of a subject to that reason underlying them all – that essential, singular, unifying concept that identifies the subject as being both unique and necessary."[252] In the next section, I will examine the text from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Map for the Arts, probing the definitions and outcomes to interrogate the underlying philosophical assumption that creativity and innovation are commodities that can be traded across domains.

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[251] Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1989), 83-84.

[252] Ibid., 8.

Limiting the Defining Qualities of the Arts to Skills

The P21 Framework defines the skills associated with critical thinking and problem solving as asking significant questions, synthesizing information, and making complex choices. When understood as interdependent parts of a recursive and reflective process yielding provisional answers, they represent skills for inquiry. It would be a reasonable expectation that a skills map for the arts would be arts-centered, with students learning how to inquire into problems within artistic structures and traditions.

Eisner describes inquiry that is centered in the arts in terms of getting a feel for the process of art: learning what it means to transform ideas and feelings into an art form and as a consequence of working within the artistic process, learning how to recognize excellence.[253] Experience working within music, visual arts, dance, drama, film, or another art form has pragmatically instrumental consequences for students as lifelong inquirers. As Eisner argues, students come alive to aesthetic qualities in art and in life, using an aesthetic frame of reference to see and hear and move; they understand art in the context of time and place and grapple with the problems and possibilities cultural context presents; and they develop a willingness to imagine possibilities, explore ambiguity, and recognize multiple perspectives.[254] Eisner calls these dispositions first-tier outcomes since they are essential and fundamental to making art. I view them through a Deweyan lens as pragmatically instrumental consequences inseparable from the arts-centered inquiry from which they arise.

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[253] Eisner, “Does Experience in the Arts?,” 13-14.

[254] Ibid.

The sample art activities listed in the P21 category "Critical Thinking and Problem Solving," however, do not reflect an arts-centered pragmatist approach to inquiry. Instead, the examples emphasize verbal skills, with suggestions that students disseminate the solutions to problems by means of blogs, wikis, and electronic journals.[255] By way of contrast, the activities developed for the category "Communication" do focus on multiple ways meaning is communicated through artistic media, reflecting an interpretation of the word "communication" that goes beyond the narrow definition provided in the left sidebar of the document: "Articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively through speaking and writing."[256]

Restricting the definition of "communication" to speaking and writing illustrates the contradictions and limited scope inherent in how the Partnership for 21st Century Skills conceptualizes what happens in arts-centered inquiry. The skill area entitled, "Media Literacy" provides a case in point. Although the topic of media literacy is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I argue that the way the P21 document defines media literacy as understanding how messages (rather than meanings) are constructed and interpreted frames the arts in terms of the emotional responses they can engender. Moreover, to limit the arts to their usefulness in teaching students to communicate verbally flies in the face of deeper questions pertaining to how individuals living connected lives mediate those connections in mutually enriching ways.

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[255] Partnership for 21st Century Skills, "Critical Thinking and Problem Solving," Tools and Resources: Publications: 21st Century Skills Map: The Arts, http://www.p21.org/documents/P21_arts_map_final.pdf (accessed January 14, 2011).

[256] Partnership for 21st Century Skills, "Communication," Tools and Resources: Publications: 21st Century Skills Map: The Arts, http://www.p21.org/documents/P21_arts_map_final.pdf (accessed January 14, 2011).

Eisner attempts to "dispel the idea that the arts are somehow intellectually undemanding, emotive rather than reflective operations done with the hand somehow unattached to the head."[257] In *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, Eisner examines the question of representation, that is, the process by which students show evidence of cognition. He points out that the forms of representation emphasized in schools have a direct bearing on "the kinds of mental skills and modes of thinking that students have an opportunity to develop."[258] Eisner argues that it logically follows that local policy decisions regarding curriculum influence how the children in that district or neighborhood school think, musing that "the school's curriculum can be considered a mind-altering device."[259]

The same reasoning applies to the decision-making process used to design the P21 curricular framework. Showing teachers and students ways to employ the tools of technology to talk about the arts is potentially an engaging strategy for selling school districts technology, but it hardly merits the time and energy necessary to develop a curricular map. If, instead, educators and business leaders were to acknowledge the arts for the complex kinds of thinking that students who are engaged in arts-centered inquiry demonstrate, then the conversation about how to support and value such inquiry in schools could begin. For example, Eisner associates complex thinking with perception of subtle relationships and adds that even preschoolers demonstrate long periods of engrossment when they are involved in producing art work. Students also show cognitive

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[257] Eisner, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, xi.

[258] Ibid., 9.

[259] Ibid.

flexibility in their improvisatory responses when they participate in music, drama, and dance. Anticipating the research of Harvard's Project Zero,[260] Eisner notes that "the kind of flexible purposing fostered in the arts might develop forms of thinking and attitudes toward problems that emerge in other fields" but at the same time cautions that "such outcomes are never the arts' primary educational justification."[261]

John Dewey reached a similar conclusion that the curriculum determines the kinds of thinking that takes place in schools. Criticizing those who would privilege the intelligence exercised in the use of language and mathematics over the kinds of thinking demonstrated in artistic production, Dewey writes:

> Any idea that ignores the necessary rôle of intelligence in production of works of art is based upon identification of thinking with use of one special kind of material, verbal signs and words. To think effectively in terms of relations of qualities is as severe a demand upon thought as to think in terms of symbols, verbal and mathematical.[262]

Dewey emphasizes making sense of the whole situation, that is, apprehending meaning in "relations of qualities." The arts skills map, by contrast, largely focuses on discrete work habits, presumably important for success in twenty-first century work settings. For example, collaboration is defined in terms of flexibility and a willingness to be helpful and compromise, while information, media, and technology literacy involves knowing how to access and manage information efficiently within ethical and legal boundaries. Meeting standards for delivering high-quality work on deadline is also a workforce skill

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[260] See Hetland et al., *Studio Thinking*, *op. cit*.

[261] Eisner, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, 78-79.

[262] Dewey, *Art as Experience,* 46.

that the Partnership for 21st Century Skills claims the arts can develop.[263] In the final section of this chapter I summarize how creativity and innovation are conceptualized in the arts skills map and call into question the wisdom of professional arts associations for supporting the document as an advocacy strategy in light of its embedded philosophical ironies and contradictions.

Arts Advocacy and the Trope of Creativity and Innovation

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills Map for the Arts defines creativity as demonstrating originality and inventiveness in work. In the same framework, innovation is defined as "acting on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the domain in which innovation occurs."[264] The inclusion of the sections on creativity and innovation in the P21 Skills Map has ironic implications. First, their inclusion is unnecessary. Based on the sample activities offered by the arts educators invited to collaborate on the project, creativity in the arts *is* arts-centered inquiry. It is what the arts do. For example, consider the sample eighth-grade activity of creating an original piece of choreography as a performance task that demonstrates creativity: Students "identify a topic, research, explore options, select and develop ideas, get feedback, revise, refine,

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[263] Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Tools and Resources: Publications: 21st Century Skills Map: The Arts, http://www.p21.org/documents/ P21_arts_map_final.pdf (accessed January 14, 2011). See pages 5, 8, 10, and 14 of the skills map.

[264] Partnership for 21st Century Skills, "Innovation," Tools and Resources: Publications: 21st Century Skills Map: The Arts, http://www.p21.org/documents/ P21_arts_map_final.pdf (accessed January 14, 2011). See page 6 in the same document for definitions and student outcomes in the skills area of Creativity.

perform."[265] Similarly, the fourth-grade example describes the process of producing multiple sketches in the working out of a painting and the twelfth-grade example describes the playwriting process from initial script to final submission. If the Partnership for 21st Century Skills is seeking effective ways to infuse more creativity into schools, the pragmatically instrumental course of action would be to ensure that all students engage in substantive arts-centered inquiry over the course of several years.

The second philosophical irony is that whereas the P21 Skills Map for the Arts defines innovation in terms of tangible and useful contributions, K-12 students learn and develop in mysterious and idiosyncratic ways.[266] Engagement with the arts very often has consequences for students that are intangible, yet powerfully instrumental to their growth. Learning activities in which students use technology to manipulate sound, text, and graphics to produce novel artifacts may be innovative, but they are not necessarily educative.[267] As Dewey reminds us, "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. … Hence the central problem of an education based upon experience is to select the kind of present experiences that live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences."[268]

During my years as an elementary school music educator, I took care to plan arts experiences for my students that would live on fruitfully in their subsequent learning. I

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[265] Partnership for 21st Century Skills Map: The Arts, "Creativity," 6.

[266] See Samuel Hope, "Creativity, Content, and Policy," *Arts Education Policy Review* 111, no. 2 (2010): 39-47, 40-43.

[267] See the sample activities listed on the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Map: The Arts, "Innovation," 7.

[268] Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 25, 27-28.

could neither orchestrate nor predict the ways those experiences would play out in the lives of my students, so I remain skeptical of twenty-first century frameworks that seek to impose rationality on every aspect of the learning process. In arguing for a reimagination of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism, I am urging arts educators, researchers, policymakers, and advocates to design, study, ensure, and support deep and generative arts learning for every K-12 student. In defining instrumental benefits of the arts in terms of expanded learning possibilities for individual students, I focus on where arts-centered inquiry can take students in their understandings within the arts and beyond. In short, arts education happens *in* the arts *for* students. It is up to students – not education-business partnerships – to decide where they go next with what they learn.

A research team from Project Zero at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education recently asked the question, "How do arts educators in the United States conceive of and define high-quality arts learning?" After extensive interviews, site visits, and literature reviews, the researchers concluded that

> it is time to expand beyond the legislative perspective on quality, in which the primary focus is on policies that create the conditions for high quality arts programs, and instead embrace an experience perspective, in which the primary focus in on the nature of the learning experiences for students. This shift of focus prioritizes students' learning as the heart of the matter – the compass and measure of every arts learning experience.[269]

To advocate for arts education means to advocate for students. In Chapter 4, I will discuss implications of the current analysis and suggest possibilities for further study.

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[269] Steve Seidel, Shari Tishman, Ellen Winner, Lois Hetland, and Patricia Palmer, *The Qualities of Quality: Understanding Excellence in Arts Education* (Cambridge, MA: Project Zero, 2009), 85. Downloaded from The Wallace Foundation, http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/ArtsParticipation/Documents/Qualities-of-Quality-Understanding-Excellence-Arts-Education.pdf (accessed December 27, 2010).

CHAPTER 4

REACHING TOWARD THE HORIZON

This dissertation argued for a reconstruction of the term “instrumental” to encompass the generative possibilities for student growth inherent in arts-centered inquiry. It presented a conceptual analysis of philosophical tensions evident within the arts education advocacy discourse and offered an alternative way to warrant the claim that the arts belong in schools. My work was largely informed by philosophers of education who, in my judgment, consistently demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of how students make meaning when immersed in arts-centered inquiry.

Although the pedagogical justifications for arts in schools take up positions along a conceptual continuum stretching between stand-alone arts instruction at one end and seamlessly integrated curriculum-based arts encounters at the other end, the philosophers associated with those positions in the educational research literature tend to ask the larger question of whether evidence supports the central claim that the arts provide individuals and societies with value. My argument for an enlarged view of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism, for example, was informed by the writings of Maxine Greene, who sees the value of aesthetics education residing precisely in the unpredictable ways arts experiences broaden a particular student’s sense of life’s possibilities. She writes:

> We who are teachers, authentically committed to enabling the young to become, know what this means and how hard this is to attain. In aesthetic education, classes can open the way to what seems secret or hidden. They can appeal to each person’s sense of what might be, perhaps ought to be, as

> one reaches toward the horizon.[270]

David Granger's interpretation of Dewey's writings similarly lends support to my idea that taking an organic and unified approach to arts-centered inquiry in schools "actively gestures toward the possible."[271]

Bennett Reimer also adopts an expansive perspective on aesthetics education. In the Preface to the third edition of *A Philosophy of Music Education*, Reimer acknowledges "rebalances in emphases among various dimensions of the aesthetic enterprise."[272] While he defends his leadership role in formulating the National Standards for Arts Education as a strategy for garnering legitimacy for arts education,[273] Reimer has moved toward what he describes as a synergistic philosophical stance, one in which musical experience plays a major role.[274] He explains that musical experience

> includes aspects of form, practice, and social agency, is bounded in a particular way, and inevitably serves some functional purposes. An experience-based philosophy of music education, I propose, allows for, honors, and cultivates a broad array of characteristics particular to music and the ways

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[270] Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*, 132.

[271] David Granger, "Expression, Imagination, and Organic Unity: John Dewey's Aesthetics and Romanticism," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 46-60, 56.

[272] Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education: Advancing the Vision*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2003), ix.

[273] Ibid., 11-14. The collected standards were published as *National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts* (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1994). The National Standards for Arts Education are accessible online at http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/standards.aspx (accessed January 15, 2011).

[274] Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education*, 3rd ed., 39. By synergistic, Reimer means the attempt "to recognize sufficient overlaps among seemingly contending views to allow a more inclusive position to be attained."

> people engage themselves with it, while also recognizing how such engagements can musically incorporate and transform many dimensions of life and culture. An experience-based philosophy, I believe, can be inclusive yet distinctively musical.[275]

It is the "distinctively musical" stipulation that keeps Reimer's philosophy from embracing expansiveness at the expense of coherence. I have adopted similar kinds of parameters in limiting the research studies I examined to those in which students engage in arts-centered inquiry, that is, school-based experiences in which individuals transform materials into musical, visual, and dramatic media to make meaning.

Reimer further clarifies his pluralistic philosophical approach in a way that recalls Dewey's idea of generous thinking when he writes:

> The mistake is to assume [the Western classical tradition] is sufficient. It is not, because each music in the world, including the many musics within the Western world, creates its own lived-in space of feeling, and each of those feeling-habitats allows us to experience the world through its body of accomplishments. Creating music within a style requires feeling out the ways of making meaning in that style, making meaning in the tradition, belief-system, constraints, and generative possibilities each style operates within, each style's world of possible encounters with feeling. One must put oneself in the shoes of a style to create within it. Doing so is a powerful way to think, feel, and act "inside" the style.[276]

Reimer's stylistic constraints parallel the research parameters I have placed on this dissertation, and his proposition that creative inquiry yields generative possibilities for meaning-making aligns with my reimagining of arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism.

Another philosopher of music education who informed my work is Estelle Jorgensen. The distinction she draws between music's instrumental value in developing

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[275] Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education*, 3rd ed., 39.

[276] Ibid., 130.

individual agency and the structural use of music to manipulate people for political, social, religious, psychological, educational, or economic ends helped me clarify my own conceptualization of *instrumentalism*.[277] Facets of Jorgensen's philosophical approach are Deweyan, as when she acknowledges the centrality of student-teacher interaction to knowledge construction and defines *experience* (italics in original) "in the deep sense of a profound impact on the person, one that is practical and relevant to the needs and interests of student, teacher, and public alike; perceived as significant by the individual undergoing it; and vividly remembered by him or her."[278] Following Jorgensen, I acknowledge that balancing individual and societal needs is a time-consuming process, one which she accurately describes as "messy, sometimes difficult, and even painful."[279] To successfully communicate that imagining meaningful alternatives lies at the heart of arts-centered inquiry will offer ongoing challenges – along with generative possibilities – for any future work in arts education advocacy.

An Inquiry into Inquiry

To question philosophical assumptions implicit in various justifications for arts education risks undoing arguments that currently provide students with access to the arts in schools. I gained insight into this dilemma from Harry Broudy, who challenges those who consider musical enjoyment the sole standard of value to explain why then music

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[277] Estelle R. Jorgensen, *Transforming Music Education* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), 90.

[278] Ibid., 124.

[279] Ibid., 69.

education is at all necessary. In response to his own challenge, Broudy looks to classical Realism, with its foundational premise that human nature strives for perfection, to ground his philosophy of music education. Yet Broudy also understands that the school program "is fashioned as a rough compromise among the diverse values of life" and that "the place music may achieve in a specific curriculum often depends more on the relations of music to other areas of value and life than on aesthetic considerations."[280] Music educators can teach a work's form, Broudy argues, but it takes "a growing and deepening experience" to understand the music's significance.[281]

Broudy's solution to negotiating the complexities surrounding having multiple values in schools is to provide rational guidance in the selection of materials that lead the learner into deeper levels of discrimination. As for the life experience needed to grasp music's meaning, Broudy advises music educators to "lead each individual to the gate, open it as wide as musical training can, invite all to pass through it and, finally, hope that life and general education will make a whole-hearted entry probable, if not inevitable."[282] In formulating his realistic philosophy of music education, Broudy acknowledges Dewey's idea that artistic form expresses the pushes and pulls of life,[283] and Deweyan influences are evident when Broudy makes the key concept of his music education program growth in musical understanding within the continuity of the musical

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[280] Harry S. Broudy, "A Realistic Philosophy of Music Education," in *The Fifty-seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, ed. Nelson B. Henry (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 62-87, 69.

[281] Ibid., 75.

[282] Ibid., 81.

[283] See Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 140.

tradition.[284] Broudy and Reimer both have guided my work as I reimagine generative consequences of arts-centered inquiry while still honoring the qualities that delineate arts experiences within a particular tradition.

Over the years, arts education advocates have reduced competing claims justifying the place of the arts in schools to an argument of intrinsic value versus extrinsic value, with the term "instrumental" often substituted for "extrinsic." I learned to question this line of reasoning from reading Monroe Beardsley, who shows how the sedimentation of commonly-held assumptions surrounding the terms "intrinsic" and "instrumental" has led to use of the terms in opposition to each other.[285] Acknowledging that he is taking up Dewey's attack on the concept of intrinsic value, Beardsley argues that *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* are not coordinate species but rather relational in the sense that some extrinsic value will derive from its serving as a means to good. Thus, instrumental value is conferred upon an art work or arts experience such that it becomes an instrument of value.[286] Moreover, Beardsley continues, the rational justification for conferring value is a matter of empirical confirmation, without any previous consideration of intrinsic value.[287]

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[284] Broudy, "A Realistic Philosophy," 86. Compare to Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 36.

[285] Beardsley, "The Aesthetic Problem of Justification," 31-34.

[286] Beardsley, "Intrinsic Value," 3-6.

[287] Ibid., 8.

Beardsley cautions that instrumentality in the arts is provisionally valuable insofar as the experience itself connects to something we value.[288] I argued, therefore, that the phrase "art for art's sake" rings hollow unless students have opportunities to engage with the arts in ways that enable them, as Maxine Greene writes, "to notice what is there to be noticed, and to lend works of art their lives in such a way that they can achieve them as variously meaningful. When this happens, new connections are made in experience: new patterns are formed, new vistas are opened."[289] I maintain that arts-centered inquiry, though not sufficient for carrying out the entire instrumental work of a comprehensive curriculum, nevertheless contributes to fostering growth and continuity within it. As Beardsley so convincingly argues, Dewey's rejection of the notion of intrinsic value has important social and ethical implications since it underscores Dewey's commitment to connecting values with human needs.[290]

Because my argument is grounded in conceptualizing arts-centered inquiry as a human value meeting a human need, the work of James Garrison provided guidance, particularly in clarifying how I examined and judged the soundness of scholarly arguments that critique advocacy claims. As an inquiry into inquiry, I began this study by adopting Garrison's definition of inquiry as "the creative activity of transforming needful situations into more desirable circumstances."[291] According to Garrison, inquiry is as much a moral task as an aesthetic adventure because imagining possibilities that expand

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[288] Beardsley, "The Aesthetic Problem of Justification," 33.

[289] Greene, *Variations on a Blue Guitar*, 6.

[290] Beardsley, "Intrinsic Value," 17.

[291] Garrison, *Dewey and Eros*, xv.

freedom requires practical wisdom and practical reasoning to ensure that consequences of action are morally desirable, not merely desired.[292]

I applied Garrison's interpretation of Dewey's "transactional realism" to learning transactions within the context of school-based arts programs. Viewing arts education as arts-centered inquiry means "understanding what a technique is good for – indeed, whether it is genuinely good at all."[293] Inquiry is an instrument that, according to Garrison, "artistically mediates between the actual and the possible, just as it cognitively mediates between ignorance and knowledge."[294] In this dissertation I sought to illuminate possibilities for advancing arts education advocacy discussions by pragmatically conceiving consequences for student learning that are not final but rather generative to subsequent learning. I urged all participants in the advocacy discourse to consider the negative consequences for students if we as a nation continue to employ interventions designed to boost achievement outcomes or spark innovation without attending to the nurturing of deep structural understandings on which individual creativity depends.

Educational Implications

In *The Quest for Certainty*, Dewey argues that the traits of objects and events we experience are effects, not causes, and that what knowledge concerns itself with is our ability to judge initiating actions that direct some phase of connected changes toward a

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[292] Garrison, *Dewey and Eros*, 22, 51.

[293] Ibid., 73.

[294] Ibid., 88.

stable, albeit contingent, result.[295] Related to Dewey's reconnection of knowledge with action is his attempt to eliminate the divide – persisting since ancient Greece – separating the lofty "pure activity" of the ideal and eternal from the inferior practical arts. Dewey wants to extend the meaning of "practical" to all activities that enhance human relationships and make life more secure, including the fine arts, education, and ethical conduct.[296] Reimagining arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism offers an intelligent alternative to ossified ways of thinking about the arts. To support my argument that a more expansive approach to arts advocacy is needed, I examined pertinent advocacy materials, accessible online, scholarly critiques of arts advocacy claims, and research evaluations of school-based arts programs. My work was informed by experiences gained over fifteen years as an arts educator in a large urban school district. Now serving as a school counselor, I wonder at the complexity of K-12 public schools and agree with Dewey that what happens at the intersection of the necessary and the spontaneous, in the space where reciprocally productive and receptive dimensions of human experience become infused with immanent meaning, is art.[297]

Dewey argues that inquiry serves the instrumental function of "connecting principles which link different phenomena together" in order to artfully enrich understanding for practice.[298] It is from this pragmatic stance that I envision arts-centered inquiry as instrumental to enhancing student growth. Such a reimagining of arts

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[295] Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, 106.

[296] Ibid., 25-26.

[297] Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 360-361.

[298] Dewey, *Sources of a Science of Education*, 20.

education is important because it seeks to draw a distinction between *utilitarian* justifications for the arts and *instrumental* conceptualizations of the role of the arts in mediating complex and connected learning in schools. The pervasiveness of "creativity and innovation" as a theme within the advocacy discourse impelled the conceptual analysis that anchors this study. I offer it as a means to promote greater understanding among practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and advocates.

Samuel Hope argues that creativity is a complex of knowledge and skills that work together over a long span of time. For Hope, creativity is mysterious and must be approached with care and wisdom. He associates creativity with bodies of content, albeit in multiple combinations of "fields of endeavor, disciplines, professions, sets of sensibilities."[299] With constant practice, students are able to become more fluent and sophisticated in using various languages and frameworks, and the greater their fluency *in* a discipline or medium, according to Hope, the greater their capability to think things *up* for the benefit of others.[300]

Hope cautions arts educators and researchers to be alert to the use of terms like "creativity" and "innovation" as "rhetorical or conceptual substitutes for the arts."[301] He points out that educational practice in the United States "has a tendency to express deep yearnings for accomplishments such as creativity, while at the same time encouraging attitudes, setting policies, and promulgating systems that make such accomplishments all

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[299] Hope, "Creativity, Content, and Policy," 40-41.

[300] Ibid., 43.

[301] Ibid., 46.

but impossible."[302] Hope also advises practitioners in the field of arts education to be attentive to the misuse of research findings to support advocacy claims linking creativity development with the arts.[303]

Enid Zimmerman similarly urges the arts education community to be mindful of the consequences an over-zealous embrace of creativity might entail, calling particular attention to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills.[304] She wants arts educators to be aware of "political, economic, and socio-cultural agendas to reconceptualize creative practice and concurrently satisfy educational goals."[305] I agree with Hope and Zimmerman, adding that individuals working in arts education have the responsibility to articulate in words the instrumental value of the arts for students and to present evidence to support those claims in the myriad ways that growth in the arts can be represented. To advocate for arts education requires a philosophical foundation that focuses on generative possibilities for student learning in the arts. I offer a Deweyan approach that reimagines arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism to provide that philosophical grounding.

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[302] Hope, "Creativity, Content, and Policy," 39.

[303] Ibid., 47.

[304] Enid Zimmerman, "2010 Lowenfeld Lecture, Creativity and Art Education: A Personal Journey in Four Acts," 1-19, 13. Downloaded from the National Art Education Association Homepage, http://www.arteducators.org/research/LowenfeldLecture_2010 _ EnidZimmerman.pdf (accessed December 27, 2010).

[305] Ibid., 14.

Concluding Thoughts

To make art is to conceive consequences in terms of one's own instrumentality in creating and responding to those conceptions, and then act in light of that imagining. This is pragmatic instrumentalism. Experiencing art made by another is similarly transactional. Both artist and percipient are engaged in arts-centered inquiry, which for the purposes of this study I defined as school-based experiences in which individuals seek understanding by entering into meaning-making transactions that transform materials into musical, visual, and dramatic media.

In arguing for a reconsideration of pragmatic instrumentalism as a way to re-imagine arts-centered inquiry, I continued in Dewey's efforts to eliminate the divide separating the lofty "pure activity" of the ideal and eternal from the inferior practical arts, addressing philosophical tensions, ironies, and contradictions underlying current arts advocacy debates. Dewey writes:

> In reaction against the age-long depreciation of practice in behalf of contemplative knowledge, there is a temptation simply to turn things upside down. But the essence of pragmatic instrumentalism is to conceive of *both* knowledge and practice as means of making goods – excellences of all kinds – secure in experienced existence.[306]

Given that in adopting a pragmatist approach to inquiry, provisional conclusions continually become instruments of new inquiries, reimagining arts-centered inquiry as pragmatic instrumentalism affirms the generative possibilities of the arts. Any attempt to force the arts into a framework of twenty-first century skills begs the question, "Does arts education develop creativity?" In other words, designing skill maps for the arts assumes rather than demonstrates precisely the point in contention, namely, that arts education is a

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[306] Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, 30 (Footnote 1).

useful vehicle for producing creative workers for the nation. Moreover, the trope of creativity and innovation embedded in the arts education advocacy discourse gives voice to – “advocates for” – a dualistic conceptualization that separates pure and final “Creativity” from practical and product-driven “innovation.” This study offers an alternative way to conceptualize arts-centered inquiry. I urge arts educators, researchers, policymakers, and advocates to pragmatically provide warrant for the instrumental value of the arts in schools by connecting the complex meanings mediated in arts-centered inquiry to their generative consequences for student learning.

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