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The Coupling of the Visual Arts with the Core Curriculum

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

THE COUPLING OF THE VISUAL ARTS WITH THE CORE CURRICULUM

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

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BY

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This paper comes from the unrest of teaching visual arts at the secondary level for fifteen years, and arriving at the point in my career when I began to worry less about what my students were going to make, and more about why I was asking them to make it. I want to thank all of my colleagues at Tecumseh High School who helped me become the educator I am now, and who graciously supported my decision to leave and explore new avenues. I also want to thank the Visual Arts Educators of Lenawee, who contributed so much to my success as an art educator, and who also saw me begin to form questions about our profession and encouraged me to seek answers.

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Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.
— William Bruce Cameron

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of the relationship between the visual arts and the core subjects in American public education, and how this relationship has changed over time. Additional aims of the study included how visual arts educators have positioned the visual arts in relationship to the core subjects since the visual arts entered public education. An initial examination of the current state of art education reveals the tenuous position it holds in America's schools. After identifying the four dominant paradigm shifts in art education during the twentieth century, each paradigm was examined through the use of loose coupling as a conceptual lens. An analysis of the reasons for the shifts in paradigms led to the conclusion that the coupling of art education to the core curriculum has indeed fluctuated over time. Further conclusions were drawn regarding the coupling of art education to the core curriculum that include acknowledging both the frustrations and the benefits of loose coupling. Finally, recommendations were made for improved training in the values, beliefs, and practices of art education for all preservice teachers. The hope for this is not only an improved status for the visual arts, but to also open a dialogue that would allow for both disciplines to learn from each other and find resolutions for long-standing issues in both curricula.

Keywords: art education, coupling, paradigm analysis

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this age of shrinking budgets, increasing measures of accountability and reliance on standardized testing as indicators of achievement, where does art belong in the curriculum of public schools? Or does it belong? As art programs are being eliminated from schools throughout the nation, questions concerning the role and value of art education in the future of the public school curriculum arise. This investigation of the relationship between art education and the core curriculum over time will offer insight into some of the methods art education advocates have employed to legitimize the visual arts in American public education.

Art educators spend great amounts of time and effort advocating for the visual arts as part of public education, yet schools across America are cutting back on the arts. Under the pressures of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, and the linking of test scores to federal funding, schools with budget constraints have begun to view the visual arts as something that consumes valuable time from further study of the core subjects (Beveridge, 2010). School districts are frequently finding themselves in situations where it seems more profitable for students to invest increasing amounts of time in studying math and language arts than in studying the visual arts.

In 2010 (Farkas Duffet Research Group), a national survey asked over 1000 teachers of grades 3 to 12 to describe the teaching practices they observe in their schools and in their own classrooms . Teachers were asked questions regarding how classroom time was used, if some subjects were given more priority, and how testing affected their curriculum. According to the survey, “two-thirds of teachers said, at their school other subjects have been getting ‘crowded out by extra attention being paid to math or language arts’” (p. 3). Nearly three-quarters of those teachers surveyed “believe ‘electives, humanities and the arts are getting short shrift because schools are putting so much focus on the basics’” (Farkas, 2012, p. 3).

The Current State of Art Education in America’s Public Schools

The fine arts in America’s public schools are witnessing cuts in funding, the elimination of arts educators and the outright termination of programs. A study by the National Endowment for the Arts (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2008) found a longterm pattern. beginning in 1985, of a decline in school-based arts education offerings, declining most significantly since 2001–2002 (p. 44). In the recent obsession with measures of accountability and preoccupation with standardized testing, subjects like the arts are being lost or forgotten in the curriculum of our public schools. In a 2010 survey of 3,412 art educators, “nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents disagreed that NCLB positively affected their attitudes about being an art educator,” with many commenting that, since the enactment of NCLB, they had felt “marginalized and devalued by colleagues, students and school administration” (p. 3). According to Heilig, Cole, &

Aguilar (2010), “the benefits of creative initiative may not be as clear and measurable as core subject test scores, but we should not underestimate the value of arts education for our youth” (p. 142). If schools are to still be responsible for preparing students to become successful citizens in a democratic society, then we must offer lessons in all of the skills necessary to become those persons, including skills in creative thinking and innovation.

The issue of instability and impermanence in the status of art education raises questions regarding the role of the visual arts. A perpetual advocacy and struggle for survival has led to, essentially, two arguments for the role of the visual arts in the school curriculum (O’Farrell & Meban, 2003, p. 5). The first role being that art should be included in the curriculum as a discipline. The second role places value on the instrumental outcomes of art education, such as transfer of learning and influence on student behaviors. These two different strands of art advocacy position the visual arts very differently. Art as a discipline indicates a more centralized status in the curriculum, one that affords a prestige similar to the core subjects. While including the visual arts in the school curriculum in order to support the objectives of other learning goals marginalizes learning in the visual arts. These two opposing expectations for the visual arts have led only to further uncertainty regarding the value and status of the visual arts in education. A brief examination of three recent federally enacted education policies demonstrates the current state of art education in America’s public schools, and reveals how the two differing roles for art education are perceived in policy.

Art Education and The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002

While the stated inclusion of the arts as a core subject in the No Child Left Behind policy appeared to be a victory for arts education, in essence it has been merely a symbolic gesture. As schools face budget cuts nationwide, resources are directed towards those subjects being tested, and non-tested subjects, like the arts, lose out. As currently written, NCLB funding is only associated with testing in math and language arts. Achievement in any other subject offers no reward, so tight budgets at the district level are channeled toward those subjects being tested. The pressure to perform on standardized tests outweighs any value a district may have for the visual arts.

With schools struggling to meet the assessment demands of No Child Left Behind and acquire the additional funding offered to those districts who perform well on testing of particular subjects, the arts have experienced many set backs in achieving a more centralized status in the curriculum. An attempt to bring the arts to the center as a core subject has actually further marginalized the arts by the method in which NCLB has distributed funding as well as the way in which it has been implemented at the district level. The first of these is in the delegation of minutes in a school day. Many districts have sought to direct more time toward testable subjects or test preparation at the expense of the arts. A commonly cited statistic in the literature can be found in a Center on Education Policy report, and states, “71 percent of surveyed districts reported cutbacks in time devoted to other subjects, 22 percent reported cuts in time for arts and music” (as

cited in Chapman, 2007, p. 34). A more recent Center on Education Policy report concludes,

Forty-four percent of all districts nationwide have added time for English language arts and/or math, at the expense of social studies, science, art and music, physical education, recess, or lunch. Where these changes have occurred, the magnitude is large, typically amounting to cuts in other subjects of 75 minutes per week or more. (McMurer, 2008, p. 6)

In regards to how NCLB has affected the visual arts, Heilig, Cole, and Aguilar (2010) have stated, “even in recent history, policy that has been created to bring arts to the center has been vague and resulted in mere symbolic gestures by policy makers” (p. 143).

For many students, courses in the arts have been replaced by courses in remedial mathematics or reading instruction. Students who have failed standardized tests are often pulled from classes in the arts for individual instruction in a tested subject. As one teacher reported in the Learning Less survey (Farkas, 2010), students are taken out of elective classes, like art, “so they can take an extra class in reading” (p.4). This treatment of the arts by principals and teachers indicates that learning in the arts is not valued, resulting in the secondary classification of the arts as unnecessary (Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010, p. 143). As a result of NCLB demands, arts educators are also often encouraged, if not required, to include standards and benchmarks of tested subjects in their arts lessons.

Art Education and STEM

More recently, there has been intense conversation around STEM education. STEM, the acronym used for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, is

defined as “an educational inquiry where learning was placed in context, where students solved real-world problems and created opportunities - the pursuit of innovation” (Daugherty, 2013, p. 10). STEM education has gathered its momentum from our national concern that the United States is falling behind the rest of the world in STEM subject areas. “The argument for STEM subjects,” according to Daugherty (2013), “is that if the U.S. is to compete with other nations, our children must be well-versed in 21st century workforce skills related to STEM education” (p. 10). The fear that we may be losing our edge in the competition of the global market has led to federal funding in excess of a billion dollars for the recruitment and training of STEM educators as well as in supplying grants to schools who can show evidence that STEM subjects are emphasized in their curriculum (Piro, 2011, p. 28).

Many educators argue, however, that STEM should really be STEAM, the “A” representing the arts. Creativity, of course, being necessary for innovation. Bequette and Bequette (2012) assert, “in certain cases, this might be an opportunity for greater prominence for art education, better art and STEM learning, and heightened student engagement; in others, it might weaken each discipline and confuse the boundaries between different approaches” (p. 40). STEM, in its application, has the potential to bring the visual arts into a more centralized position in the curriculum. It also has the potential to decrease the status of the visual arts, if the discipline is reduced to instrumental purposes in serving only to promote greater learning in the STEM subjects.

In addition to strengthening the learning in STEM subjects, learning in the visual arts may “expand the toolbox of STEM,” as well as be “a means to free the scientist’s and engineer’s mind” (Daugherty, 2013, p. 11). To emphasize only the STEM subjects will serve to further the marginalization of other disciplines, “and overlooks the sense of urgency many see for reaching students who excel in the arts but are having their talents and needs ignored” (Piro, 2011, p. 28). Art and design have the potential to compliment the STEM subjects, if their role is carefully balanced in mutual respect of the type of learning and knowing that takes place in each discipline.

The Turnaround Arts Initiative

In response to research that demonstrates the instrumental values of the arts in schools, in April of 2012, the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities announced the Turnaround Arts Initiative (Robelen, 2012, p. 5). The initiative is an investment into promoting academic achievement in some of the nation’s lowest performing school districts by integrating the arts into the school curriculum. Already recipients of federal grant support, the schools selected to participate in the program “are among the lowest-achieving 5 percent in their respective states” (Robelen, 2012, p. 5). The initiative includes three years of bringing arts education resources to eight schools across the country, resources that include additional training, supplies, and a famous artist. Presidentially appointed artists, including Sarah Jessica Parker, Yo-Yo Ma, and Forest Whitaker, will offer their support to the arts initiative by working with students,

being involved in performances and events, while also offering some “star power” to the programs (Herbert, 2012, p. 20).

The schools will also “serve as a test bed for the idea that high-quality, integrated arts education can play a valuable role in motivating students, enhancing school climate, and improving academic achievement across disciplines” (Robelen, 2012, p. 5). Should the initiative be successful, the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities will have developed what they perceive as a template for creating school reform by integrating the arts (Herbert, 2012, p. 20).

The Turnaround Arts Initiative, while radically promoting the arts as a way to keep America competitive in a global economy, has also placed them in precarious position should the initiative fail. Hetland, Winner, Veenema, and Sheridan (2007) stated,

Justifying the arts only on instrumental grounds will in the end fail, because instrumental claims for the arts are a double-edged sword. If the arts are given a role in our schools because people believe that arts cause academic improvement, then arts will quickly lose ground if academic improvement does not result, or if the arts prove less effective in improving literacy and numeracy than high-quality, direct instruction in these subjects. (p. 3)

The implementation and potential for success of this unprecedented initiative is a contested topic amongst art educators and advocates who wrestle between the value of the role of the arts as a discipline and the value of the role of the arts in the instrumental outcomes of arts-rich education programming.

Problem Statement

The ease with which art can be removed from the school curriculum, along with the confusion of its role and status, has created a history of advocacy and arguing for a

presence in education. As schools resolve to cut, or even eliminate the visual arts, what will the consequences be for students, as well as for schools? What is truly saved by these cuts? And what is lost? This research intends to review key points in the history of art education, and to learn why it is such a struggle to argue for the existence of the visual arts in American public education. A review of these key points in history through Weick's (1976) lens of coupling may offer a deeper understanding of why the visual arts are so vulnerable when resources become scarce.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory of coupling, as introduced by Weick in 1976, was intended to be a “sensitizing device,” offering a method for studying and a language for describing things unnoticed or taken for granted in an organization (p. 2). The design of coupling theory allows for the expansion and enrichment of the set of ideas available when trying to make sense of organizational life. By using coupling theory as the theoretical framework for this study, the subtleties of the relationship between the core subjects and the visual arts can be recognized and discussed.

Constructing a Framework

The theory of coupling, according to Spillane, Parise, and Sherer (2011), “captures how organizations are made up of interdependent elements that are more or less responsive to, and more or less distinctive from, each other” (pp. 588-589). Weick (1976) describes coupled elements as “responsive,” although, “each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical or logical separateness” (p. 3). Coupling is discussed in varying degrees; elements can be loosely coupled, tightly coupled, or even decoupled. Loosely coupled implies a relationship that is impermanent, dissolvable, weak in its influence, and infrequent in its responses (Weick, 1976, p. 3). Weick (1982) describes loose coupling, as opposed to tight coupling, as “evident when

elements affect each other suddenly (rather than continuously), occasionally (rather than consistently), negligibly (rather than significantly), indirectly (rather than directly), and eventually (rather than immediately)” (p. 380).

Coupling theory is a helpful way to understand how the marginalization of the visual arts has evolved, and when used as a sensitizing device, becomes a lens in which we can see the varying degree to which the visual arts have coupled to the core curriculum through time. By recognizing the varying degrees of coupling between the visual arts and the core subjects, it becomes evident that loose coupling, while seemingly pressing art education to the periphery, may also be the force by which art education finds a way to persevere in an educational system concerned with assessment and accountability. For the purposes of this study, three of the major concepts from coupling theory, as presented by Weick (1976), will be applied to the study of the relationship between the visual arts and the core curriculum.

The first of these concepts is the ability for elements within an organization to maintain their separate identities within the larger identity of the organization. For example, while all courses are listed within a school curriculum guide, they do not all hold the same status. It is well understood that some of these courses are core and required for students, yet others are electives and not required for students to have taken in order to complete their education. The ability for the visual arts and the core subjects to appear cohesive within the school organization, yet maintain separate and distinguishing characteristics is important in analyzing this relationship.

A second concept to be used from Weick's (1976) theory of coupling is what he refers to as "the building block analogy" (p. 3). This idea is essential to understanding the relationship between the visual arts and the core curriculum. Within this concept, each element of an organization is considered to be a building block. Should a school be imagined as a tower of building blocks, this concept suggests that some blocks, or subjects, could be removed from the tower and the tower would remain standing. This concept provides explanation and a visual for how schools are able to cut back or eliminate art programs.

Finally, a third concept to be applied to this study is that of goal ambiguity. Weick (1976) argues that most actions have ambiguous consequences, making it possible to justify intentions or outcomes for nearly any situation. Within this concept, issues of how schools have developed goals for core subjects without considering the visual arts, or the confusion of how art education should fit into the goals of a school can be explored.

Using coupling theory as a conceptual lens, the relationship between the visual arts and the core curriculum can be better understood. The three concepts described and drawn from coupling theory help to further detail this relationship. From the understanding of this relationship, valuable insight might be attained regarding the current position of the visual arts in the curriculum, contributing to an awareness of what is presently driving educational reports and policy decisions regarding the visual arts, and perhaps other non-core subjects.

Maintaining Separate Identities

“Coupled events are responsive,” according to Weick (1976), but “each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical or logical separateness” (p. 3). The ability to reveal not only the similarities, but also the differences and detachments between the visual arts and the core curriculum is part of what makes coupling theory an interesting lens for examining this relationship. The very separateness of their labels, core as opposed to elective, serves to keep the distinct identities of the visual arts and the core curriculum.

Weick (1976) has used the concept of loose coupling to envision the relationships between elements in an organization; existing and functioning independently, yet responsive to each other within particular activities of the organization. Following Weick’s (1976) example of the loose coupling of the principal’s office with the guidance office (p. 3), a similar study can be made of the loose coupling of art education with the traditional curriculum. Weick’s (1976) illustration suggests that the principal’s office and the guidance office are affiliated, yet operate separately from one another, and that this affiliation “may be circumscribed, infrequent, weak in its mutual effects, unimportant and/or slow to respond” (p. 3). While these offices interact with one another, and policies are developed to create an impression of a tightly coupled system, each office maintains its own identity.

By extending this example to the core subjects and the visual arts, the identity and separateness of the two curriculum is highlighted. Regardless of the subject, after

registering for a class, students will enter a classroom expecting to learn, a teacher will be there for instruction, and upon successful completion of the class the student will earn credits toward graduation. These common activities seem to aid in the coupling of all subjects more tightly. These commonalities, including placement in the curriculum guide, the manner in which the courses are scheduled, and structure of classes serve as mechanisms for coupling. Activities that couple elements more tightly, give the appearance of solidarity and likeness.

However, further distinctions have been made between subjects creating the separateness of a loosely coupled system. These differences are found in the subtleties of the language and rituals of the school day. The labels of “core” and “elective” have formally identified and separated the subjects. In elementary schools, those subjects considered to be electives are given labels such as “specials” or “encores” further distinguishing the elective classes from the core classes as extra, or unessential. Students learn at an early age, if only by the implicit meanings of their labels, that elective classes are fun, but unimportant as a subject of study. At the secondary level, core subjects are required, while electives, as indicated by their label, can be chosen, based upon the desires and interests of the individual student. While there is apparent attachments between core and elective subjects, they also clearly maintain their own identities.

The Building Block Analogy

In applying Weick’s (1976) imagery of loosely coupled systems as a collection of building blocks (p. 3), art education is seemingly one of the blocks that could be easily

pulled from the curriculum without affecting the overall organization of the school. This building block analogy suggests that organizations are divided into subsystems that can simply be added or removed without disturbing the functioning of any of the other subsystems or the system at large.

Tyack and Cuban (1995) present a very similar concept, when talking about school reform, that they call “structural add-ons” (p. 57). In a discussion of what types of reforms have been easily implemented, they cite structural add-ons; reforms that “generally did not disturb the standard operating procedures of schools, and this noninterference enhanced their chance of lasting” (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 57). Tyack and Cuban (1995) offer this example of a structural add-on:

If educators added a wing to the high school where students learned typing or mechanical drawing or built a gym for physical education, these innovations did not disturb what happened in English or mathematics class. (p. 57)

In fact, as a result of “the power of pedagogical custom” (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 57), or what Spillane et al. (2011) refer to as “organizational routines” (p. 591), instruction in a new subject would quickly come to resemble that of a traditional core subject. This deepens the concept of various units of an organization interacting with one another at some level, offering the mirage of cohesiveness, while each maintains their separate values and practices within their units.

Evidence of the building block theory, or structural add-ons, can be witnessed in the reduction of minutes in art class, or even the elimination of art programs from our schools. Loose coupling allows the persistence of core subjects, despite what is

happening in the elective arena. Art, as well as other elective courses, is able to be cut from the curriculum with seemingly no expense to the core subjects. Although connected by hallways throughout high schools in America, art rooms and core classrooms are not dependent upon one another for their existence.

Goal Ambiguity

Of the conditions necessary for loose coupling to exist within an organization, according to Ogawa and Scribner (2002), one of these is goal ambiguity (p. 580). “Organizations may lack agreement on the specific goals that they pursue,” and furthermore, “without specific goals to anchor operations, organizations lack the bases for rationally linking their key elements” (Ogawa & Scribner, 2002, p. 580). In the constant struggle to succinctly define the purpose of art education, and in the inability to test student achievement in art, it has left the goals of art within the public school curriculum as ambiguous. This ambiguity leads to uncertainty in how the two divisions of the curriculum effect one another, or how they should interact in order to benefit student learning. Finally, in an era of accountability and dependency on test scores for feedback and affirmation of progress, art education is at a loss. Without a score in art achievement, there is a great deal of confusion as to how to assess the progress or the purpose of the department. This inability to measure outcomes in the visual arts, in a world where these statistics determine the value of a program, has influenced many art educators, art advocates, and schools to turn their attention toward the potential for instrumental outcomes from the visual arts.

Ogawa and Scribner (2002) make the critical point that “schools often lack clear linkages between work activity and outcomes” (p. 578). The confusion that results in art education remaining on the periphery could be attributed to schools working under the pressures of high stakes testing and accountability measures. In attempts to raise students’ scores on achievement tests, schools have made policy changes that have perhaps had unintended results. Berliner (2009) argues that the No Child Left Behind Act has resulted in a “narrowing of the curriculum,” as schools eliminate subjects that are not being tested, and work feverishly to raise student scores on high stakes tests (p. 285). Intentions appear to be honorable in setting goals of school improvement and in raising student test scores, but the outcomes of these actions have not been entirely accounted for, resulting in the unintended displacement of subjects not covered by standardized testing.

Relevance of Coupling Theory

In 1990, Orton and Weick asserted, “the concept of organizations as loosely coupled systems is widely used and diversely understood” (p. 203). Interpretations of the theory have the tendency “to drift away from a dialectical interpretation of loose coupling toward a unidimensional interpretation of loose coupling, thereby weakening the explanatory value of the concept” (Orton & Weick, 1990, p. 203). While the application of coupling theory is complex, making it easily misused, it is relevant to the study of the fluctuating relationship between the visual arts and the core curriculum.

The value in the theory of coupling is that it creates a language to discuss the simultaneous existence of rationality and spontaneity in a single organization. It can be argued, for example, that it is the loose coupling of art education with the core curriculum that can be seen as having served to marginalize art in public schools. However, it could also be argued that loose coupling, and the ability for academic disciplines to function without frequent responses to each other, may also have allowed the visual arts to persist in academia. While the two states seem incompatible, loose coupling provides a language for certainty and indeterminacy to be understood as operating within a single organization.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH QUESTIONS & METHODOLOGY

Art educators have long been on a quest to stake a position within the broader curriculum for the study of the visual arts in education. In 1984, Efland began an article about the role of art in education with, “the function of the arts in general education is a perennial issue” (p. 267) and in 2013, Daugherty begins his discussion on finding a place for the arts with the statement, “arts education has always struggled with a tenuous position in PK-12 education” (p. 10). From its troubled beginnings as industrial drawing to the current advocacy for STEAM over STEM, art educators and advocates have fought tirelessly, and perhaps without much success, against a traditionally marginalized position in education. Carroll (1997) explains that “research questions arise out of practice, out of a sense that unsolved problems, unresolved conflicts, and contradictions in beliefs and actions in some way block us from being better at what we do” (p. 183), and that individuals who are involved in art education “all have had to argue for the arts in the schools and know what it is to encounter resistance to notions and beliefs art educators take as common sense and good practice” (p. 180).

Research Questions

This research intends to address the question, what is the nature of the relationship between the visual arts and the core subjects in American public education, and how has

that relationship changed over time? In particular, how have visual arts educators attempted to position the visual arts in relationship to the core subjects since the visual arts entered the public school curriculum?

Methodology

Paradigm Analysis, as a research method, was essential in this study for gaining insight into the positioning of Art Education in American Public Schools.

According to Carroll,

A paradigm is a body of beliefs and values, laws, and practices which govern a community of practitioners. A paradigm is analogous to world view. Paradigm theory holds that the beliefs, values, laws, and practices of a community are embedded in its actions and documents. Paradigm analysis, as it provides a structure for research, requires determination of the character and structure of a professional community. (p. 171)

Arthur Efland explains a paradigm as

A conceptual system of ideas shared by a community of practitioners, but it is a social construction as well. In fact one might say that allegiance to a particular paradigm is what creates a community of practitioners, and that by implication, the lack of a paradigm makes the formulation of coherent policies and practices difficult or impossible. (p. 692)

It was determined that paradigm analysis, as a method of study, would best tell the story of how the visual arts have been left at the periphery of education, and that through a comparison of the shifts in the paradigms of art education with the shifts in general education, conclusions could be drawn about the coupling of the two curricula.

First entering the curriculum of America's public schools in the 1870s, the visual arts have experienced a very short, yet challenging, history. Having identified a need to understand how art fits into the curriculum, an analysis of the historical shifts in

approaches to art education creates the picture of how art has reacted to the shifts in education trends of the core subjects. This reactionary behavior, when viewed through the lens of coupling theory, demonstrates the variation in the coupling of art education with the core curriculum. This methodology begins by examining the shifts in art education paradigms, followed by a comparison of these shifts to what was happening, in general, in education trends.

The first aspect of this research was to identify the paradigm shifts in art education during the twentieth century. This process was done through the use of secondary historical sources, particularly the research of art historians recognized and published by the National Art Education Association. While other authors, such as Stankiewicz and White (2004), have written about art education in twentieth century America, Arthur D. Efland's (2004) "Four Dominant Visions of 20th Century Art Education" were chosen for the purposes of this study. The four main paradigm shifts in art education identified for this study were drawn from Efland's (2004) "Four Dominant Visions" (p. 697), which can also be found in a larger work by Efland (1990) that covers the history of two centuries of art education. According to Efland (2004) these four dominant visions reflect "a series of trends or streams of influences" that took place during the last century, "each having their origins in opposing conceptions of the individual, the nature of knowledge, the role of the visual arts in social and cultural life, and in rival educational purposes" (p. 691). Efland (2004) is explicit in his choice to call these eras in art education "visions," (p. 692), but because these visions include the

beliefs, values, and practices of a professional community, they are considered paradigms for the purposes of this research. It is understood that reliance creates limitations, but the four visions defined by Efland (2004) divide the century into clear time periods that are broad and inclusive. While an attempt is made to neatly categorize each vision, or paradigm, it is important to note that these paradigms are overlapping and that traces of each can be witnessed in the art education theories and classroom practices of today.

Efland's four visions were selected for this study partially for the manner in which he discusses the conflicting views that inspired the shifts in visual arts education paradigms. As a method of study, paradigm analysis includes the study of the shifts in paradigms, so it was important to the research to find the impetus for change. "These visions," according to Efland (2004), "spurred conflict with some being the result of simple inertia, a reluctance to change how things were done; but conflict was also driven by deeply felt divisions of opinion regarding the nature of art, the purposes of education, developmental issues, different beliefs about learning, and the like" (p. 696). The four visions are presented by Efland (2004) in a language that is compatible with Carroll's (1997) presentation of paradigm analysis as well as Weick's (1976) description of coupling theory.

In this study, the goals and motivations of each shift are defined, followed by an exploration of the motivations behind each shift. These motivations are then considered within the broader context of general education paradigms. From this comparison, it will

be determined if these shifts come about in response to trends and paradigms in the core curriculum.

Paradigm theory brings energy and hope to this study, as it involves more than a structure for studying the status quo, but also concerns the spirit of revolution and change. Paradigm analysis provides an opportunity for projecting how change might occur, and for identifying how ideas converge and where points of entry lie in creating a dialogue for change. Carroll (1997) suggests,

The field of art education has its share of unsolved problems, the most persistent of which is the need to secure a position for the arts in the schools. As a long standing problem, it threatens the fate, mission and future of the field. Paradigm analysis may be of assistance in understanding why this is the case. (p. 174)

Paradigm analysis, does not simply describe a paradigm. It provides a method for deconstructing historical events to reveal what belief and value systems are at work.

While a paradigm includes the values, beliefs, laws and practices that bind a community together (Carroll, 1997, p. 174), paradigms also shift. There are times in which the paradigm is challenged; sometimes a new idea emerges within a community and takes hold, or sometimes it is discovered that the reigning paradigm is unable to address all of the issues within the community. When a new way of thinking emerges, and then becomes the dominant view of the community, replacing the former values and belief systems, then a shift in paradigms has taken place.) The paradigm shifts in twentieth century art education were studied through the lens of Weick's (1976) presentation of the concepts in coupling theory.

The second aspect of this study includes looking at paradigm shifts in art education through the lens of coupling theory. Because the theories of coupling have generated from the question, “how does an organization go about doing what it does and with what consequences for its people, processes, and persistence?” (Weick, 1976, p. 1), it is a relevant theory to address questions of art education’s position in public education, as well as an excellent compliment to paradigm analysis. According to Carroll (1997), paradigm analysis, finding its origins in Thomas Kuhn’s theories about paradigms, change, and revolution, includes “a way of looking into practice so it can be of assistance in thinking about why things are they way they are” (p. 171). An important aspect of this research is to understand the relationship between core and art in order to gain insight into how art has arrived at the place it is presently so future possibilities can be considered.

As addressed by Carroll (1997), “paradigm research becomes an appropriate strategy for those who are interested in viewing issues, questions, and unsolved problems contextually” (p. 182). A knowledge of the history of art education helps to clarify questions about not only the past, but the present and the future. This understanding of how we came to where we are is also intended to create a foundation on which art education can base its goals and directions for the future. This study attempts to understand how the visual arts are coupled to the core subjects through an analysis of the causes or reasons for paradigm shifts in the visual arts. This paradigm analysis, looking

through the lens of coupling theory, captures the complex nuances, events and ideas that have influenced and shaped the present status of the visual arts in America.

Potential for Limitations

Having selected to research the shifts in visual arts education for this project, a methodology that will incorporate examining secondhand accounts of historical events, there are several possibilities for limitations in this study. The first of these is bias. The researcher must be aware of the potential for bias in the historical information, as well as the biases of the historian. Additionally, the researcher must be aware of their own biases in their reading and interpretation of data.

In their text on performing educational research, Johnson and Christensen (2012) cite “the confusion of correlation and causation” as a potential problem in historical research (p. 422). There are many factors that can contribute to an event, and the researcher must be careful in suggesting that one thing caused another. Other potential limitations to the study include confusing or misinterpreting historical data. Johnson and Christensen (2012) include realizing the differences between professional opinions and popular behavior, defining key terms or phrases, and recognizing that the intent of an act may not have resulted in the desired consequences of the actor(s) as all possibilities for creating misunderstandings of historical information (pp. 422 - 423).

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Using Efland's (2004) "Four Dominant Visions of 20th-Century Art Education" (p. 697), the major paradigms of art education will be examined, along with the role that each has played in the future of art education. The dominant visions identified by Efland (2004) include, Elements and Principles of Design, Creative Self-Expression, Art in Daily Living, and Art as a Discipline (p. 697). According to Efland (2004),

The visions that dominated the last 100 or so years were responses to the challenges of modernity, which ushered in unprecedented changes in the forms of work in economic and social organization, and especially in new forms of art. (p. 691)

The shifts between these four dominant visions, or paradigms, is of utmost concern in this study. Efland explains,

An educational paradigm cover the ways we think about the realities of schooling including students, teachers, curricula, and educational settings. It identifies goals to pursue and values to guide the selection and organization of content and activities. (p. 692)

Paradigm shifts, or the key moments in the history of art education, should include those times when art education has attempted to organize and reorganize its position in the realm of public education. Paradigms, as described by Efland (2004), however, "are not permanent or absolute" (p. 692 Looking at these paradigm shifts, or key moments,

through the lens of coupling theory will create the opportunity to discover how and if art educators and advocates of art education have attempted to tighten the visual arts curriculum with that of the core subjects.

Major Paradigms in Art Education

The visual arts entered the public school curriculum by way of the Massachusetts Drawing Act of 1870 (Bolin, 1990, p. 64). The initial group of petitioners for the visual arts included businessmen calling for a mechanical drawing program to be implemented in public schools, leading to the often told historical perspective of art entering into the broader curriculum as industrial drawing and design. The act, however, in its final state called for all schools to implement a drawing program of some form, not necessarily a mechanical drawing program. This historical entrance into the realm of public education seems to exemplify the confused role that art has played in the curriculum and the uncertain position it has held in education for over a century.

Paradigm 1: Elements and Principles of Design

Regardless of art education's entrance into America's schools as technical drawing just a few decades prior, Efland (2004) describes art education as entering into the twentieth century with an emphasis on nature study (p. 694). Early in the twentieth century however, Efland (2004) describes a shift away from this emphasis on drawing to a new emphasis on design, "a universal means to organize instruction both to produce works of art and to study their form" (p. 694). One of the core beliefs of this vision included embracing creative abilities as innate, and that "artistic genius could be nurtured

but not imposed by instruction” (Stankiewicz, 2000, p. 307). Stankiewicz (2000) explains that the authors of this movement believed that all students were capable of learning the elements and principles of design, but were only capable of executing these to the extent of their personal levels of creativity (pp. 307-308).

In a society that was beginning to be dominated by the tough-minded businessman, the artist and the artisan were becoming a smaller and more marginalized population. Social Darwinism was the societal trend, and education was finding its curricular challenges in efforts toward becoming more efficient. A process that was including the elimination of subjects, like art, that lacked social efficiency. According to Efland (2004),

The art curriculum with the best chances of acceptance and survival was one that could demonstrate a structure organized in a scientific way. Art, like chemistry, was shown to have its elements and principles. Like the laws of science they were assumed to have universal applicability. (p. 694)

This movement toward a scientific method implicated that “the extraordinary complexity of the visual arts was reducible to a set of universal, teachable rules” (Efland, 2004, p. 694).

Paradigm 2: Creative Self-Expression

The 1920s brought about the second shift in art education of the twentieth century, a movement meant to free the imaginations of students. The vision for Creative Self-Expression offered students the opportunity to express their ideas and feelings through self-determined, creative methods rather than through imitation or constructed rules. For example, progressive educators, as described by Stankiewicz (2000), “argued that subject

matter should grow organically out of the child's interests or respond to current social needs" (p. 308). As a vision, Creative Self-Expression considered child art as inherently valuable, and vulnerable to criticism.

Advocacy for a vision based on creative self-expression grew out of a discomfort with social efficiency and a new found interest in fostering creative growth in the child.

The aim of conventional education was social efficiency. Growth was seen as increasing power to conform, to acquiesce to a schooled discipline; maturity was viewed from the standpoint of successful compliance to social demands In the new school, however, it is the creative spirit from within that is encouraged rather than conformity to a pattern imposed from without. (Rugg & Shumaker, 1928, p. 3).

This questioning of standardized practices as inconsistent with democratic ideals, being posed by a rising middle class population, resulted in art education following the lead of child-centered education in the general curriculum, to a shift in curriculum valuing creative self-expression.

Paradigm 3: Art in Daily Living

The Depression left a deep mark on society, and art education in America's public schools quickly shifted away from self-expression to a more pragmatic vision of "art in the life of the community, the home and workplace" (Efland, 2004, p. 694). America depended on its schools to address the lingering social issues of the economic catastrophe, with "the arts being asked to repair the social fabric" (Efland, 1984, p. 268) of a nation.

Art in Daily Living valued art as an instrument for enhancing one's surroundings, whether it be in the home, or in the community. In 1935, Melvin Haggerty (as cited in Efland, 2004) explained,

Art as the province of the sophisticated few lies outside the pattern of our thinking here. Art as a cult may be a hindrance rather than an aid to art as a way of life, and it clearly seems to be so in many cases. The teachers of art must be those of the broad and crowded avenues of life, the home, the factory, and the marketplace. It is the conception that must be clarified and dramatized in concrete ways if art is to take its place in the schools as a major and vital instrument of cultural education. (p 695)

Until the 1960s, art education shifted its emphasis to the application of art and its practice to the everyday life of the common American.

Paradigm 4: Art as a Discipline

Art education for the first half of the twentieth century had “a livelier and more pervasive presence” than it did in the years following World War II (Walling, 2001, p. 626). The early half of the century had brought an exciting surge of creativity into the public education scene, influenced by John Dewey's ideas of authentic education and, later, the child study movement. Following the Depression, art education had taken a more practical position. With the launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union in 1957, however, the nation turned to a curriculum almost completely focused on math and science. With this turn toward scientific methods, art education saw a reduction in funding and other supports, leading to a shift in focus to art education based on inquiry. Among art educators, as Carroll (2004) describes, there was a feeling that “if art

education was to survive, it would have to be approached as a demanding and disciplined field” (p. 696).

This attitude continued, and in the 1970s, according to Walling (2001), a new movement in art education was begun, one with influences that included national goals and standards, discipline-based art education (DBAE), postmodernism, constructivist teaching, and new technology (p. 627). This was the start of a trend in art education that would encourage treating the visual arts as a discipline. In 1988, the National Endowment for the Arts issued a statement that claimed the “arts are not viewed as serious, knowledge itself is not viewed as a prime educational objective, and those who determine school curricula do not agree on what arts education is” (p. 19). Experts in art education began to call “for sequential curricula, comprehensive testing, improved data gathering , improved teacher quality and increased educational responsibility” (Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010, p. 138).

Present Visions for Art Education

With the turn of the century came the No Child Left Behind Act, NCLB, creating an emphasis on reading, writing and mathematic skills. Increasingly, under the pressures to perform well on standardized tests, classroom time was designated for test preparation, rather than for acquiring new knowledge. Ravitch and Cortese (2009) attest that NCLB has not done anything to close the achievement gap between American students and students from across the globe (p. 35). In fact, Ravitch and Cortese (2009) argue that NCLB may be making matters worse because it “has narrowed the curriculum so that

most of our students are not acquiring the broad base knowledge they need to succeed as they advance through school” (p. 35).

We are now in the era of accountability, “a transition from local control to state and federal influence and direction in educational policy” (Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010, p. 139), and a new obsession with standardized test scores. Efficiency and accountability have narrowed the curriculum to those subjects that are tested, forcing art education to the periphery, assigning it a secondary status to the core subjects. When students are spending more time preparing for tests and in remedial instruction, then something is suffering, and in this case it is the arts.

Applying the Conceptual Lens

Answers to the questions of this study were sought through the use of coupling theory as a conceptual lens, in that the relationship and the positioning between art education and the core curriculum is characterized by varying degrees of coupling. Each shift in paradigms in art education will be examined through coupling concepts of levels of responsiveness between elements, autonomy between elements, and the building block analogy. This study of twentieth century paradigm shifts in art education takes a pragmatic view of history in its concern with the problems of the present, and hopes that an understanding of the history will shed light on possibilities for the future. According to Erickson (1985), the concerns of a pragmatic historical study relevant to current issues, is evaluated by its ability to illuminate those issues, and often conclude with recommendations for immediate action in creating solutions to present problems (p. 123).

As we reread this history of art education through the lens of loose coupling and coupling theory, questions of how art and the core are related and have reacted over time can be addressed with hopes of addressing change for a better future for art education.

Paradigm 1: Elements and Principles of Design

The shift in paradigms from Nature Study to the Elements and Principles of Design first appears to come from art educators' criticisms of a curriculum that exclusively valued drawings mimicking nature, the human figure or the work of accomplished artists. However, the concurrent activities in the broader field of education must be considered in order to gain a fuller understanding of where the unrest with Nature Study originated, as well as how this unrest influenced the visual arts in coupling to the core curriculum. Efland (2004) points to the critical impact science had on the philosophy of education at the beginning of the twentieth century as the major influence toward a curriculum based on the Elements and Principles of Design:

The concern with the life of the mind as self-activity, so characteristic of the idealist philosophies of the nineteenth century, was replaced by a philosophy of scientific rationalism. This intellectual movement posited that all philosophical problems should be resolved by the methods of science, in effect declaring that traditional philosophical inquiry was no longer viable. The nature of the universe, the origin of life, the evolution of consciousness - all these could be explained by the action of natural laws. God, Mind, and spirit were not needed to explain human nature or to justify human actions. (p. 156)

This larger picture offers a more in depth explanation for the shift in visions for art education, and creates evidence of this shift being a response to the influence of science on America's schools.

According to Efland (1990), the mid-nineteenth century questions of Herbert Spencer regarding what knowledge is of most worth were of utmost influence on early twentieth century American art education:

He argued that the degree to which a subject potentially contributes to the survival of the individual should determine its place in education. Since the aim of education is preparation for life, one begins by teaching students those activities ministering directly to self-preservation. then one teaches those that secure the necessities of life, followed by those concerned with the rearing and disciplining of offspring. Finally, one teaches those that support proper social and political relations including those devoted to the gratification of tastes and feelings. In this final group he placed the arts. Thus the doctrine of evolution was invoked to provide a rational basis for determining the relative importance of the subjects in the curriculum, and by Spencer's reckoning the arts assume a minor role. (p. 157)

Art educators were forced to examine their philosophies and methods for teaching the visual arts. "It became clear that art educators could no longer take comfort in arguments warranting art as a way to teach culture and morals" (Efland, 1990, p. 165).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, America was preoccupied with the theory of Social Darwinism. So much that it brought about an entire social efficiency movement. The movement, as applied to education, called for scientific evidence for claims of the practicality of all subjects in public schools. Not only art, but all subjects were under fire, and required to produce visible of evidence of this practicality. Within the social efficiency movement, art education became, as described by Weick's (1976) theory of coupling, an element to be easily removed without creating any disruption to the functioning of the school as a whole. In an effort to survive, art educators developed an approach that valued formal order, and teaching through sequential exercises.

White (2004) suggests the Element and Principles of Design Paradigm evolved from a new vision that “design promised the democratization of beauty,” and that the design principles offered a way for “all people to frame the moral, aesthetic, and instrumental aspects of their inquiry” (p. 58). During this era, Arthur Wesley Dow developed a method for teaching art that became widely used and extremely influential on art educator’s in America. The new method included the dismantling of the visual arts into identifiable elements and principles that students could use to organize and formulate successful pieces of artwork. Dow called this theory of design “synthetic,” resulting from his proposal that the “elements and principles were the building blocks for all forms of art past, present, and future” (Efland, 1990, pp. 178-179). Synthetic art took the mystery out of producing and learning about art, and made it a very scientific process. Producing artworks through a series of sequential exercises, as opposed to creating through methods of self-expression or the study of nature, demonstrates how the visual arts had organized instruction in scientific manner. Adopting a more scientific language and formulating a definition for a well-constructed artwork indicate attempts by art theorists and educators to tighten coupling to the core subjects. This tightening allows art educators to share a language and a methodology with the core subjects that offers a more shared identity with the core subjects in their common activities and seemingly similar values for education and teaching methodologies. These shifts in values reflect scientific methods, and ultimately reduce creating artwork to a series of steps, with students being

offered a simple recipe of success through the proper organization of the elements of art through effective use of the principles of design.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, art educators justified their teaching on reasons of appreciation for art and beauty, but “this lack of utilitarian mission tended to reduce the importance of the subject, as is seen in its relegation to elective status in secondary education” (Efland, 1990, p. 185). Art education now reflected scientific processes in its formal order. Efforts like Dow’s theory of synthetic art allowed art education to adopt the activities of the core curriculum, yielding the appearance of being more tightly coupled to the broader goals of education.

Although marginalized by the secondary status given to art education during the social efficiency movement, art education had found a way to survive. The trend of science informing educational philosophy would lead to art coupling more tightly to the sciences, borrowing their language and methods, striving to bring the visual arts to a more centralized status in the curriculum. These survival efforts happen within the ambiguous goals of a loosely coupled system, and the unawareness of some elements of what is taking place in other elements of the organization. This ambiguity allows for art education to align itself to the more stable and dominant core curriculum, and justify its place in education.

Paradigm 2: Creative Self-Expression

In contradiction to the vision for art education brought about by the Elements and Principles of Design, was a proposed reform meant to free the child’s imagination, and

eliminate the rules that had bounded creativity. A critique of conformity in the current practices, this new paradigm brought about a value for originality and creative expression. “The failures of science and technology,” as described by White (2004), “experienced by people alienated by work and the experience of World War I, produced a different sort of hope for art educators: that art education could heal, revive, and integrate people’s emotional disconnection with the world” (p. 59). The Creative Self-Expression movement proposed that this healing could take place through developing the self and the personal growth of the individual.

Efland (1990) cites Harold Rugg and Ann Shumaker’s book “The Child-Centered School” as “the most widely quoted reference on creative self-expression as a school reform credo” (p. 193). Rugg and Shumaker sought a school that was “intent upon releasing the child from social and psychological forces believed to constrain personal growth” (Efland, 1990, p. 193). For them, success in educational reform would be the release of creative self-expression in all subjects, not just art (Efland, 1990, p. 193).

Part of the vision for the Elements and Principles paradigm had been to bring democracy to design by offering a scientific method for appreciating and creating artworks. The Creative Self-Expression movement promoted individuality in thought and expression, and questioned how the ideals of democracy could be supported through conformity. At first glance, this could have been a movement or reform in art education initiated by a shift in values and beliefs of art educators. It was, instead, a movement that came from educators who valued the child’s imagination, and believed the curriculum

should stem from the child's natural curiosities and interests. Creative Self-Expression find its roots in progressive movement and its scientific grounding in contemporary ideas of Freudian Psychology. The leaders of the progressive movement are described by Labaree (2010) as promoting learning as a natural process,

They were more concerned about having students learn to learn than learn the curriculum. In their view, the ideal school would revolve around student initiative and student inquiry; focus on discovering knowledge instead of presenting knowledge; emphasize active and engaged learning over passive recitation of the text; organize study around projects which drew on student interests and which synthesized knowledge and skill from multiple disciplines; and create a school as a democratic community, modeling values of justice and cooperation for later life. (p. 92)

Efland (1990) describes how Creative Self-Expression finds its "scientific sanction" in the psychology of Freud:

Freudian theory postulates that the unconscious mind is the real source of human motivation. Accepting this view, educators believed that the real task of education was not to repress the child's emotions but to sublimate them into socially useful channels" (p. 192)

This origin of a movement valuing originality of thinking, having been initiated in conversations outside of the circles of art education, continues the emphasis of the two curricula being loosely coupled.

While the Creative Self-Expression paradigm is truly a response by art educators to a popular social movement in education, it does stand to be the time in which art education and the core curriculum are most tightly coupled through a common value for the creative mind of the child, and may be a point in which the ideas and values of art education are, theoretically, most central to the ideas and values of education as a whole.

In terms of coupling theory, this does represent a move toward common goals and shared values by both the visual arts and the core subjects, perhaps creating a more tightly coupled relationship. What seems most interesting, is that this era in education also demonstrates a time when the core subjects attempted to couple themselves more tightly to the values of creativity and artistic expression. Should art education be pulled from the curriculum, it would call the true values of progressives into question. In this case, removing art education, as in Weick's (1976) theory of building blocks, would have implications for the core subjects, indicating at this time in history, the coupling of art education to the core was tighter than it had been in the past.

Paradigm 3: Art in Daily Living

Art in Daily Living was a shift in paradigms that “critiqued the imposition of elitist taste on the masses of people” (Efland, 2004, p. 698), and opposed the overemphasis of self by the progressives. “Art as a means of solving the everyday problems of living replaced the pursuit of beauty for its own sake, an attitude appropriate to an age that celebrated the common man” (Efland, 1990, pp. 205-206). The movement proposed teaching art for application to daily living at home and in the community. The Art in Daily Living reform had little use for the study of masterpieces or the self-centered approach of the Creative Self-Expression vision. Instead, the emphasis was “toward art as an integral part of human activity” (Efland, 1990, p. 203). Efland (1990) further explains,

Art history shows how art was linked to worship, statecraft, and manufacture as well as personal expression; since it is thus an integral part of life, to the

reconstructionists it made sense to integrate it into the rest of the curriculum. Art was not to be taught in isolation of other studies. (pp. 203-204)

Art in Daily Living was a shift in paradigms that brought about values for art as an approach to solving the problems of everyday life, for art as a tool for the integration of subjects, and for art as a means to develop community (Efland, 1990, p. 206).

At this time, America had just emerged from the Great Depression with, perhaps, a rather dim view of the world. This new vision for art education would be to teach students to use art to enhance their environment, and turn their attention toward the betterment of society. Remarkably, the Depression did not have the deep effects on art education programs that might be expected. Efland (1990) cites a survey of 700 cities taken in 1933 by the U.S. Office of Education, that concludes “thirty-five cities reported having eliminated art programs entirely, while 67 had reduced art instruction” (p. 205). Whether tightly coupled to the goals and identity of the core curriculum or not, it seemed that art was valued for other qualities, and that perhaps it had found a place in the public schools.

In addition to promoting the integration of the visual arts with community and daily life, there was also a movement to integrate the visual arts with core subjects. Efland (1990) describes Leon Winslow’s approach to art education as one that “strongly advocated creative expression but also maintained that art should be taught for broad cultural purposes, that in this capacity it can function as an important integrating agent in the curriculum” (p. 209). Winslow advocated for an integrated curriculum that would balance instruction in the technical aspects of art, with the content of subjects like

science, literature and history, from which the content of artworks could be informed.

Efland (1990) discusses the criticisms that generated from the emphasis on integrated programs:

In the years after World War II, criticism of integrated school arts programs began to mount. Generally, the feeling grew that art had become the servant of other studies, that it was not valued as important in its own right. (p. 210)

The instrumental role of the visual arts in this era had brought about greater interaction of art with other subjects in the school, but had perhaps brought its value as a discipline into greater question. A tighter coupling to the goals of the core subjects, in this case, may have been resulting in the loss of the goals for art education.

Although all subjects were pushed toward a ‘life-adjustment curriculum’ in the 1940s (Efland, 1984, p. 268), this movement in art education was a response to a demand for reform from society. As looked at through the lens of coupling theory, Art in Daily Living appears to be a vision that moved art education further to the periphery, creating a looser coupling in the goals and identities of the two curricula. The emphasis on art to improve daily living seemed to detract from art as a discipline, as a subject of study, or as a valuable form of Knowledge. The categorization of studying the masterpieces as an issue of class forgoes the historical value of studying artworks, or the skill that is required to read and study a painting. Art in Daily Living brought about an era in which art education became a treatment for social ills. This paradigm shift was a movement away from attempts to tighten coupling of the visual arts curriculum to the core curriculum. Art education instead focused on improving America’s self-image.

After an era where it appeared as though much of the values of art education would be shared by educators in general, and that art education had more tightly coupled its values and ideals with the core, there was the shift in paradigms. Art in Daily Living led art education out to the periphery in terms of curricular issues. Using the building block analogy, art may have coupled itself more tightly to greater educational goals of relieving social issues or improving learning opportunities in other subjects, but the visual arts had become easily removable from the functioning of the school as an academic institution.

Paradigm 4: Art as a Discipline

In the late 1950s, America's schools came under attack once again. After the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik, it became clear to many that the United States would have to strengthen education in math and science if the nation was to compete with the rest of the world. This concern for national security and our nation's ability to remain globally competitive led to the Woods Hole Conference in 1959. The conference brought together scientists and mathematicians from leading professional organizations and government agencies to discuss curriculum reform for America's public schools. Efland (1990) describes Jerome Bruner's report on the conference:

Jerome Bruner's *The Process of Education* (1960) reported on this conference and treated such problems as content selection and sequence with a disarming ease that had eluded the conventional curriculum theorists of the period. The key to the curriculum riddle, according to Bruner, was to be found in the "the structure of the disciplines." The problem with the school curriculum, he stated, was that it had become too cluttered with subjects, with facts and techniques organized for instruction. Spelling and arithmetic were subjects that existed in schools and

virtually nowhere else. Disciplines, by contrast, were fields of inquiry pursued by professional scientists and scholars in adult life. (p. 238)

This very determined movement, could have been the point in which the loose coupling of art education to the core curriculum would have allowed it to be cleanly removed from education. Instead, art educators realized that art education would have to respond to the core curriculum by taking actions to tighten the approach of teaching art to the approach being taken to teach math and science. According to White (2004), “art educators now had to make the case that the arts were disciplined and basic”(p. 68).

At this time, Elliot Eisner’s questioning of public school art education and the lack of formalized tests, also brought attention to the difficulties in making intelligent curriculum changes in the visual arts. Efland (1990) states that Eisner’s “major problem was the status of art curricula in public school” (p. 239). To further his point about the need for curriculum reform in art education, Eisner surveyed eighth grade art students to determine what they knew and understood about art:

He found that the most basic art terms, such as *value*, *saturation*, *hue*, *contour*, and *symmetry*, were understood by less than half the students tested and that some were understood by less than 10 percent. The art programs taken by these students were ones in which the making of art was the dominant activity, yet fewer than 25 percent understood the meaning of the term *media*. (Efland, 1990, p. 239)

These findings successfully perpetuated the feeling amongst art educators that it was time for reform.

“In this new environment,” explains Efland (1990), “such subjects as the arts had to become disciplines themselves or lose their legitimacy” (p. 241). The Penn State

Seminar in 1965 was the response of art educators to the curriculum reform measures that came out of the Woods Hole Conference. From this seminar, art educators and advocates were able to form the beliefs and values that would bring about the shift in paradigms to Discipline in Art. White (2004) states that “the Penn State Seminar contributed to a series of aesthetic educational initiatives, involving responding to art in structured ways that provided guidelines for developing curriculum” (p. 69). According to Efland (1990),

The definition of a *discipline* came from the sciences and referred to such attributes as having an organized body of knowledge, specific methods of inquiry, and a community of scholars who generally agree on the fundamental ideas of their field. (p. 241).

In later years, Duane Greer, would coin the term “Discipline-Based Art Education,” based on the outcomes of the Penn State Seminar, and using “the disciplines of art criticism, aesthetics, art history, and studio production to provide models for structuring lessons” (White, 2004, p.69).

Art education attempted to tighten the coupling of the curriculum to the core by emphasizing the disciplines and basing activities on modes of inquiry. Efland (1990) describes the measures as necessary for survival. “As the disciplines became the focus for curriculum reform, a hierarchy was established, elevating some studies to the status of disciplines and relegating others to the status of mere subjects.” (p.241) Carroll (1997) also explains the tightening to the core curriculum through the new emphasis on art as a discipline as a survival tactic:

This paradigm shift was motivated, in part, by a sense that the old paradigm, characterized as creative self-expression, was insufficient to solve the most

critical problem faced by the field of art education, i.e., the need to establish secure grounding for the arts in the schools. (p. 177)

As art educators critiqued the lack of discipline and lack of structure in art education of the first half of the twentieth century, they worked to emphasize the disciplines of the visual arts. This era brought about conscious efforts on the part of education to tighten coupling to the core curriculum by promoting a common identity as a discipline.

Present Visions for Art Education

Presently, art education finds itself part of an era in public schools marked by an obsession with standardized testing and measures of accountability. As art educators and advocates search out ways to meet the social and academic demands of this time, how will this current paradigm be defined? Efland (2004) says,

Definitions of “current practice” vary from writer to writer. For some, current practice might be an art education grounded in studio practice, whereas for others it may be discipline-based art education (DBAE) prominent in the 1980s. Others see their position as a refinement or elaboration of the discipline-based position, whereas others abandon it in pursuit of differing directions. (p.691)

Carroll (1997) argues that it is yet to be seen whether we have entered a “postparadigmatic era” or “perhaps we have entered an era marked by the co-existence of multiple paradigms or the emergence of yet another paradigm” (p.173). Looking at recent art education policy movements through the lens of coupling theory may not offer a label for this current paradigm, but it does give insight into the direction in which art education is trending.

While the No Child Left Behind Act appeared to be a victory for art educators and advocates in its declaration of art as a core subject, in practice the policy has pressed art

out even further to the periphery. As looked at through the lens of coupling theory, the visual arts became even more loosely coupled to the core subjects with No Child Left Behind. The efforts of Discipline Based Art Education were all seemingly unnoticed, as schools began to dedicate more resources to the improvement of literacy and math skills. Art did become a “building block” (Wieck, 1976, p. 3) that could easily be removed from the school day, and schools were able to give the appearance of still offering a quality education. Although coupled under the same core subject label, the visual arts clearly did not hold the same status and maintained an identity quite separate from core subjects. The ambiguous goals schools have for what a quality education includes allow for a great deal of fluctuation in how the various subject matters are valued.

The movement to change STEM to STEAM, as well as the Turnaround Arts Initiative have both been reactionary measures by art educators and advocates. Both movements are clearly strategies for art education to tighten the coupling with the core curriculum, and for establishing permanence in the curriculum. Each movement attempts to tighten the coupling of the visual arts to the core subjects through art education adopting the educational goals of the core curriculum as their own.

One difference between the STEAM advocacy and the Turnaround Arts Initiative, however, is the approach to the identity of the visual arts. STEAM promotes the discipline of the visual arts as a study that compliments science, technology and math. This vision for art education, in theory, maintains the separate identity and the value of studying the visual arts. Bequette and Bequette (2012) advocate,

By highlighting the essential aims of art as a discipline and how the principles that inform art and design can be adopted to present science to the public in an engaging manner, educators can stress why quality art programs warrant ongoing local and national support. (p. 47)

There is great risk in coupling art education to the STEM subjects, in that the visual arts could easily slide into a role where art becomes instrumental in learning outcomes for STEM subjects. What seems an opportunity to achieve a more centralized status in the curriculum could actually reinforce a marginalized status and role for the visual arts. A remarkable commonality between the quote from Bequette and Bequette and the literature on the four paradigms of the twentieth century in art education is the language that implies that this is a method of survival for the visual arts. This language signifies that STEAM is another trend in the core curriculum that art educators and advocates have attempted to react to and through which it may be possible to find a way to validate art education.

The Turnaround Arts Initiative, however, is a movement that openly values art for instrumental outcomes. Integrating the visual arts into core courses, whether via STEAM or the Turnaround Arts Initiative, could be described as a more tightly coupled relationship between the subjects, in that they have become more responsive to one another. When in fact, integration makes it difficult to maintain the identity of art as a discipline, and decreases the value for studying the visual arts. The integration of arts into other subject areas, according to the National Art Education Association, “could reinforce the perception that the arts are not a core subject” (Reeve, 2008, p. 372).

The last decade has witnessed reductions in and complete eliminations of art departments in America's elementary, middle and secondary schools. Some argue that art is a financial burden to school districts. Others point out that the pressures created by the No Child Left Behind Act to improve performance in the core subjects have left schools with no time for "extras" like art. Now is the time for art educators and advocates to work together to determine a direction for art education that establishes a role for the visual arts in education. Rather than reacting to the trends of the core curriculum in ways that, at times, appear to be mere survival tactics, art educators and advocates have an opportunity to form the next paradigm based on the values and beliefs of the art community.

Summary

Drawing conclusions about the coupling of art education to the general curriculum over time demonstrates that "coupling is a process, something organizations do, not something they have" (Spillane, 2011, p. 590). The coupling process attempts to make two or more elements more or less responsive to and distinctive from one another. A study of the coupling of art education to the core curriculum in the paradigm shifts of the twentieth century constructs an image of how art education has responded to the shifts in the broader scope of education.

An initial careful identification of itself as a discipline, based on scientific methods, demonstrates an attempt to tightly couple art education with the core. Later, the progressive movement brought about an opportunity for the learning valued by art

education to impact the entire curriculum for what appeared as a possible alignment of identities and values across the disciplines. However, the impact of the Great Depression, and the social issues it brought to the nation, led to art education making a profound movement to serving as a remedy for America's social issues. This shift in paradigms takes art education almost entirely out of the academic arena. Art in Daily Living was as much about brightening the world view of Americans as it was hoped by art educators to reestablish the value of art in the American home. Ultimately, the formulation of art as a discipline evolved out of an urgency to tightly couple with math and science in an effort to survive. Art as a Discipline continues to impact the visions for art education in the twenty-first century.

Examining the causes for shifts in art education paradigms during the twentieth century reveals four distinct shifts in the coupling of art education to the core curriculum, with the most recent shifts attempting to more tightly couple the practices of art education to those particularly of math and science. Each of the four dominant shifts demonstrates an overall loose coupling of the two curricula, as each shift in art education is reactive or responsive to outside pressures from education and society. It is notable that art education has changed its practices in response to activities outside of the discipline, rather than altering its practices according to the needs of the art education community.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

By identifying the four major paradigm shifts of art education in the twentieth century, this study has demonstrated how art educators have made changes in teaching methods, goals, values, and principles in reaction to societal pressures and changes made in the mainstream curriculum. These shifts in visions for art education are a reminder of the multiple - and sometimes conflicting - demands placed on America's schools.

Labaree (2010) describes school reformers as driven "to achieve compelling social goals such as democratic equality, social efficiency, and social mobility" (p. 106) through schooling. While schools are generally considered to be institutions for teaching and learning, "as an institution designed to mold the next generation, the school system seems ideally suited to take on these tasks; and as a publicly controlled and publicly funded enterprise, it is responsive to political demands" (Labaree, 2010, p. 106). These social and political pressures faced by America's schools are reflected in the paradigm shifts of art education in America's public schools.

The shifts between the four dominant visions of art education during the twentieth century show the reactionary nature of art education. A shift in educational vision to the Elements and Principles of Design at the beginning of the century, as well as the shift to Art as a Discipline in the latter half of the century, both demonstrate points in which art

education tightened to the core curriculum, particularly to the methods of math and science. Paradigm shifts of Creative Self-Expression and Art in Daily Living, however, demonstrate times in which art education was more sensitive to social and political pressures. What is evident from analyzing these paradigm shifts through the lens of coupling theory, is that both the art curriculum and the core curriculum are subject to change instructional beliefs and practices due to the effects of outside variables.

The loose coupling of art education may be what keeps it at the periphery. However, it may also be the process by which art has survived the various social reforms and educational movements that could have easily sought to eliminate art from schools. As Tyack and Cuban (1997) have explained, a structural add-on has a greater chance of lasting if it does not interfere with the current practices of the school, and do not demand any change in behavior from the school faculty and staff (p.57). In this respect, art education has perhaps been adopted by the schools and has lasted because it does not create controversy, nor does it challenge the notion of what schools should do. The ability of the visual arts to react to the needs of society, as well as mold itself to the goals of math and science may be how art has managed to persist. Art education maintains its place at the perimeter of the educational circle, reacting to the core in ways that allow it to identify as a discipline, isolating itself enough to maintain its identity as a discipline of unique structure. This loose coupling, in fact, could be considered the process through which art education was able to serve the social needs of America during the progressive era and following the Depression.

Perhaps it is loose coupling that has allowed art to persist and continue on through time, allowing art to hang on to the fringes of education. The visual arts never really ask too much. Schools can always count on their art teachers to come through on the decorations for Open House or the backdrops for the school play. Researchers discuss the marginalization of the arts, but the arts are often what a school brings to the forefront when trying to distinguish themselves as an academic institution of excellence. Every school teaches core subjects, but a school with outstanding fine arts programming is a school of distinction. This attitude makes art out to be like the jewelry of the school. When its time to dress up and show off, schools pull out their arts programs. Concerts, art shows, dance performances, and plays are all ways in which schools display the extraordinary talents of their students.

But is it okay to be just an accessory? Is it okay to be just clinging to the fringes? Is that the place in which art education wishes to be located? Do art educators feel comfortable with the reactionary nature of the twentieth century paradigm shifts? Is it acceptable to make shifts in practice according to society's perceived needs? Or change the fundamental beliefs of the art education community by following along with the core curriculum? Wouldn't art educators rather determine the necessary shifts in art education paradigms, making shifts based on beliefs about what is valuable to learn in art, and what is believed to be the best method for teaching those lessons? Do art educators believe they can persist on the fringe in an age of accountability? As schools measure student and teacher success through test scores, can we continue as we have? Art educators have

an opportunity to influence the positioning of art education in schools if they are able to explain the value in the knowledge that comes from studying art, even though it may not be testable or easily quantified. Allowing elements to maintain their unique identities is a part of being loosely coupled that art educators might consider embracing for their own benefits.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS

The visual arts have yet to secure a place in education. As the shifts in art education paradigms of the twentieth century are reviewed, it is critical to ask, have art educators learned from the past? Is art education setting its own agenda for change? Is the discipline still leaping from one trend to the next? Is art education allowing its path to be directed by social issues and pressures? Art educators cannot make decisions for the discipline based on trying to keep up with the core subjects, or just to survive educational budget cuts.

Creating real change for the positioning of art education in public education will require influencing a long established belief system in all teachers, from all disciplines, about the marginal role of art education. Meyer and Rowan (1978) have addressed the relationship between reform efforts and actual change in practice as “decoupled” (p. 98). Suggesting that large reforms or attempts to change the structure of schooling are met with symbolic compliance, yet nothing about instructional methods in the classroom or the belief systems of teachers are changed. Coburn (2004) responds to the notion of decoupling with a study offering evidence that real change can take place in schools when teachers have their belief systems challenged. “Deep-seated assumptions about the nature of teaching and learning that are linked to broader movements in the environment

guide decision making often in preconscious ways, framing the range of appropriate action and guiding what ‘makes sense’ to teachers” (Coburn, 2004, p. 235). Teachers develop their framework for perceptions of education through prior experiences that can range anywhere from their own experiences as a student to their experiences as a pre-service teacher. Once these perceptions are developed, they are often difficult to alter. What Coburn (2004) is able to demonstrate is that the institutional environment can influence classroom practices and teachers beliefs, by offering “evidence that the nature of teachers’ interaction with messages plays a crucial role in the degree to which pressures from the environment influence classroom practice” (p. 235). Degrees of intensity, congruence, pervasiveness and voluntariness all influence the way educators respond to messages that challenge their sets of beliefs.

“The field of art education has its share of unsolved problems, the most persistent of which is the need to secure a position for the arts in the schools. As a long standing problem it threatens the fate, mission and future of the field” (Carroll, 1997, p. 174). In his 1996 address to the National Art Education Association at a conference in San Francisco, California, Efland asked, “When has the subject of art ever been safe in the history of American education?,” to which he immediately retorted “The answer is Never!” (p. 54). In looking for solutions to unresolved problems, art educators could look for what Carroll (1997) calls “points of entry” to begin a dialogue with other disciplines in education to create a discourse around common interests and values (p. 188). Referencing her own work, Carroll (1997) describes research “motivated by a

desire to understand more about the way in which teachers, in general, were prepared to think, or as it turns out, not to think about the about the arts” (p. 182). From this study, Carroll (1997) has recommended that both art education and the broader field of education could “have much to gain from opening these paradigms to critical inspection, inter-community dialogue, and revision” (p. 179). From Coburn’s (2004) study, and Carroll’s (1997) study it can be gathered that “world views are shaped very early on in the initiation of professionals new to the field of teaching,” and there may be an opportunity to change perceptions of art education by informing colleagues in the broader field of education of the values, beliefs and practices central to art education if addressed early in their own teacher education experience (p. 179). Carroll’s (1997) study revealed,

Certain ideas, theories, and theorists central to art education were found to be missing, or presented as dismissible, in literature of the fields of educational psychology and the history of education. Such exclusions and omissions included recognition and significance of visual learning styles, the nature of visual intelligence, and the utility of drawing behaviors and art-like activities in the curriculum. (p. 179)

Addressing the value of the visual arts with pre-service educators can begin with addressing what is currently missing from their coursework in this regard.

It is hopeful that the results of this research will be enlightening about the inclusion of the visual arts in schools, as well as informing for future decisions regarding art programs throughout America. Art education can better establish itself in America’s schools by improving the training of preservice teachers in the value of art in education, but also by standardizing the way in which art teachers are trained. Consider Efland’s (1984) expression of what quality teaching means in art education,

Art in Dewey's sense of the word is 'an experience' - the ordinary made extraordinary. All great art reminds us of the possibility for excellence in human accomplishment. In our own time, this is one of their principle functions. To achieve excellence in education we need to make it artistic, by providing the arts to be sure, but also by making teaching an art. (p. 269)

It is not acceptable for a pre-professional to be going into art education because he or she "likes to make things." It is critical for current art educators and advocates to recognize what is important about art education and teach this to future art educators.

In this age of accountability and assessment, art education will not be able to maintain the status quo if art educators are unable to offer evidence of the significance of the visual arts in education. There is much to be gained when art educators are able to affirm to the education community at large, that art is a discipline worthy of study. The discipline is in need of advocates who are able to eloquently explain the value of art education to administrators, policy makers, and politicians who don't understand how to discern if something that can't be counted really counts.

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