

History of Art Education:
The Progressive Era and the New Deal

Industrial Design Education during the 1930s

By Jennifer Galvelis

This thesis is a historical study of industrial design education in New York City during the Depression years. The Federal Art Project (FAP) of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) established the Design Laboratory, one of New York City's first free public industrial design schools, in January 1936. The thesis explores how the Design Laboratory contributed to shaping a new and accessible form of industrial design education in New York City, while utilizing innovative curriculum and pedagogy.

Although the Design Laboratory was short-lived, the thesis argues that its unique combination of educational philosophies drawn from the Bauhaus and John Dewey, contributed to making the Design Laboratory an important player in the revision of industrial design education in the 1930s.



The Design Laboratory
Photo Courtesy of the WPA
American Magazine of Art. (New York, NY), v. 29, October 1936

Effaceable Union: The Story of Art Finding Its Place Within the Nature-study Movement

By Joseph Robert Peterson

Beginning in the later stages of the 19th century and continuing well into the 20th century, nature-study found a place within the curriculum of the elementary schools of the United States of America. This thesis compares the lives, ideas, and major contributions of key figures in the movement, with a special focus on Wilbur Samuel Jackman, a science educator, and Liberty Hyde Bailey, a professor of horticulture. It also explores how these two men, along with other progressive educators, helped art find a place in the classroom within the nature-study movement. The coverage of this movement within historical art education texts is sparse. Yet the argument is made that this



Playmates.

absence should not diminish the important connection made between art and nature-study at this time.

The roots of the nature-study movement are presented within this thesis, contextualizing the forces

surrounding the formation of the movement and its ideas. These forces included major social changes sparked by the industrial revolution and demographic shifts from rural areas to towns and cities. This thesis examines how these forces, along with the differing ideas of Jackman and Bailey, established the multiple facets of the nature-study movement. It explores the ways in which art was treated in the nature-study curriculum, drawing connections to the philosophies behind nature-study itself. At last, the cyclical nature of history is offered as a union with the present state of affairs, amalgamating the nature-study movement with the now largely accelerating field of green concerns.

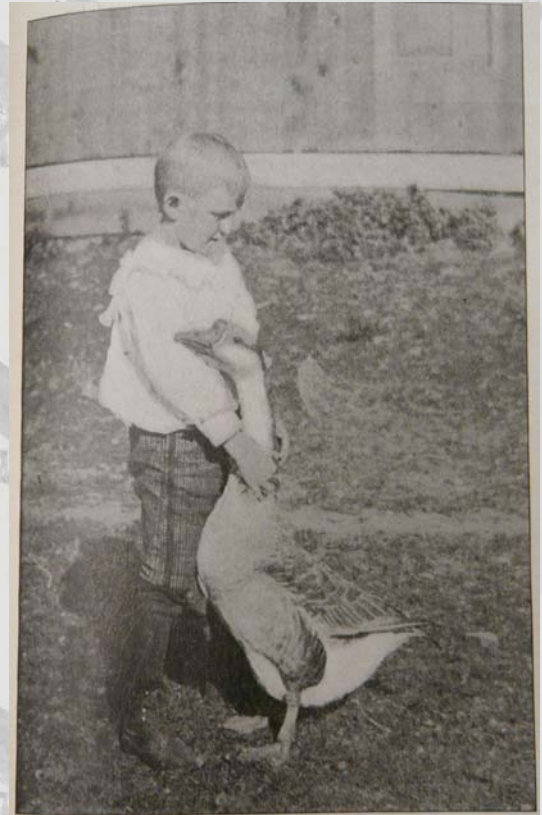


FIG. 3.—An affectionate companion.

**Studies of Art and Design Education
in Schools and Districts: Home and Abroad**

New York City's Alternative Art High Schools

By Josh Friedman

This thesis examines small, non-selective alternative art high schools that were created within the last eight years in New York City. Through case studies of three schools the thesis shows the similarities and differences in their instructional approach to engaging students with the arts. The thesis shows that these schools are different from the traditional concept of specialized art schools, which require auditions and have academic admissions criteria. Due to the lack of opportunity and socio-economic factors, the majority of students in the alternative art high schools have had fewer personal and educational opportunities to explore the arts. The thesis argues that the alternative arts high schools attempt to provide that opportunity by connecting studio practice to the development of artistic capital

Through an analysis of observations, interviews, and school documents and public materials, the thesis provides school profiles highlighting demographics, school organization, and instructional plans. The thesis argues that the schools, which are in an early stage of development, face certain challenges as they attempt to engage students with the arts who have had limited exposure and preparation.



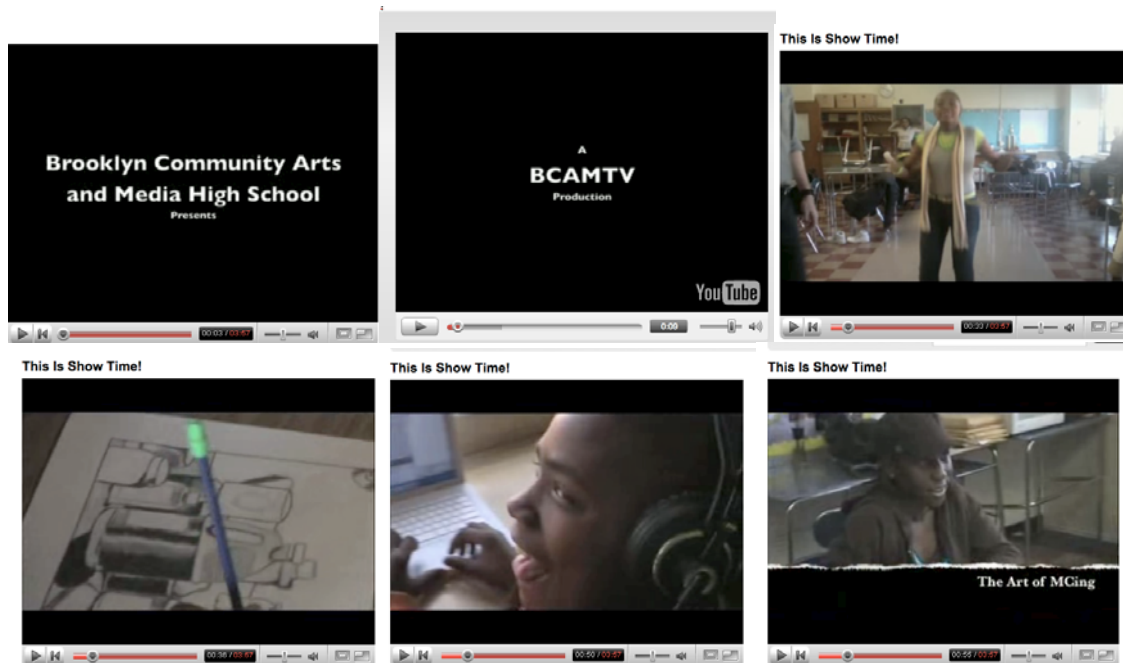
An alternative art high school in New York City containing initial challenges.

Media Arts Studies in the Digital Age

By Amy Albano

This thesis explores how media arts programs develop and evolve over time in the secondary art curriculum at a new, public high school, the Brooklyn Community Arts and Media High School (BCAM) and the Packer Collegiate Institute, a well-established private school. The thesis investigates the schools' approach to the relatively new field of media-arts. Even though the thesis examines two institutions with differential resources, the thesis argues that in both cases teachers integrated media literacy with media arts production. At Packer, media literacy focuses on aesthetic analysis and response, in BCAM, social awareness and critique.

Through interviews, classroom observations and analysis of student work, the thesis argues that although there are many different kinds of media arts programs, the integration of media literacy and media arts production helps students to be sophisticated users and creators of media-based work.



The Promises and Challenges of Design Methodology in School Organization and Classroom Pedagogy

By Elise Pelletier



This thesis explores the promises, and challenges, of integrating design methodology into high school curriculum as well as using it as a process to improve and enhance the organization of small high schools. At the student level, the thesis asserts that students' confidence with, and application of, design methodology in all subject areas, contributes to their intellectual and emotional growth and their capacity to prepare for the future. At the school level, the thesis argues that teachers and administrators' use of design methodology for curricular and administrative planning helps them revise and improve learning opportunities for teachers and students and also sustain a collaborative and flexible school culture.

The thesis bases this argument on a case study of a newly created, design-themed public high school in New York City in which teachers and administrators use design principles and strategies to shape and re-shape curricular offerings and enhance institutional culture. Through an analysis of interviews, classroom and school observations, school and district documentation, and student work, the case study reveals the benefits and challenges of using design methods to build a unique and sustainable school model. The thesis suggests that the design process used in the case study school may be applicable in other school settings if the quality of leadership and commitment among staff aligns with the development of the school model.

Art Education in Catholic Elementary Schools in the Archdiocese of New York

By Corey J. McCarthy

This thesis explores art education in Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of New York through a case study of one elementary school, Transfiguration School, which is located in New York City's Chinatown. The thesis also situates the school in its broader historical and organizational context. Through an analysis of observations, interviews, historical and contemporary public materials, this thesis provides not only a case study of Transfiguration School and its art program, but also an overview of Catholic education in America, profiles of the Archdiocese of New York, a non-profit organization that supports the arts, and the Chinatown community.

The thesis argues that even though arts education has generally been lacking in Catholic elementary schools, currently some schools in the Archdiocese of New York are providing quality experiences in the visual arts through professional teaching artists and enrichment activities. It is a quiet but noteworthy advancement.



A soft-pastel landscape by a fourth grade student at Transfiguration School.



An oil-pastel and acrylic Expressionist self-portrait by a seventh grade student at Transfiguration School.

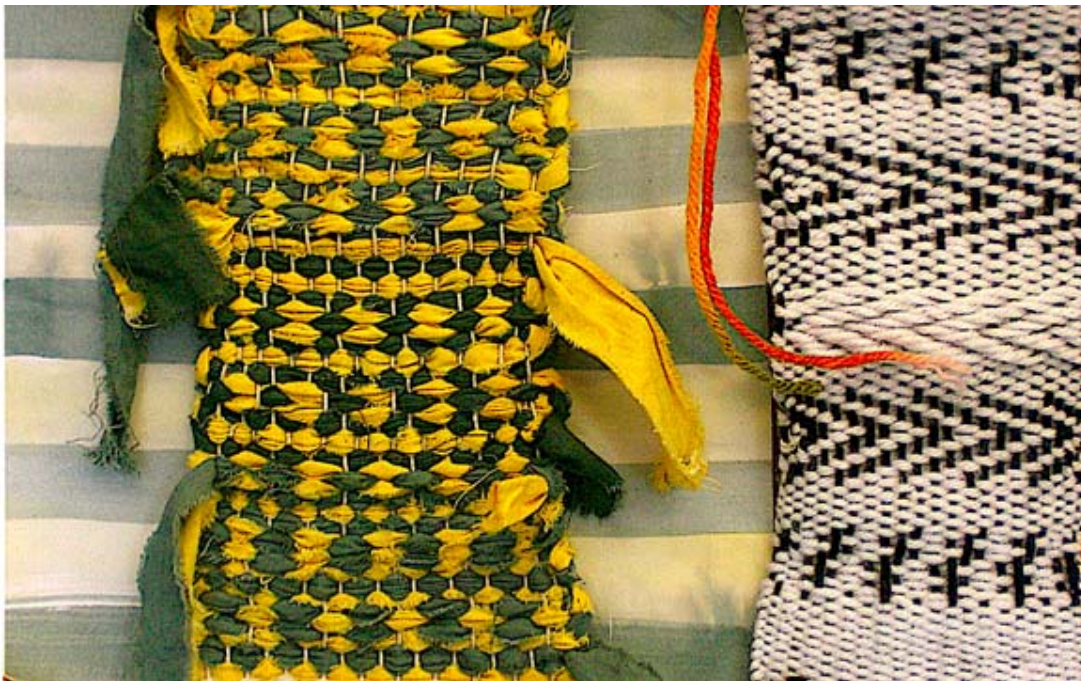
**Studies of Art Teachers and their Classrooms:
Real and Imagined**

Teaching Weaving and Textile Design

By Visnja Popovic

This thesis explores the effects of teaching weaving and textile design to children and young adolescents. Through a self-study and case-study of two fiber arts classes, the thesis asserts that the design process teaches discrete skills and improves student concentration. The thesis argues that because such skills and concentration have broader applications for student learning beyond the specific field of fiber art, weaving and textile design should be taught in the K-12 art curriculum.

The thesis utilized a research approach that examined visual data as a way of analyzing students' experiences in the textile design classes. This emergent methodological approach depends on several "looking" techniques which help give new meaning to visual data. The research findings are partially based on an analysis of photographs which capture students making art, as well as photographs of their finished products, within the context of the classroom. This process revealed certain themes and patterns in the teaching and learning process that might not have otherwise been apparent.



Weaving samples of students in the Pratt Summer Design Program

ABSTRACT

Dancer, Desiree L. THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ART EDUCATION AND ART THERAPY IN THE SPECIAL NEEDS AND INCLUSION ART CLASSROOM, 2008.

This thesis considers how art therapy and art education are intertwined through the practices of art educators who teach children with special needs. The thesis demonstrates that art therapy approaches are intentionally, and at times unintentionally, incorporated into art educator's daily practice. The thesis argues that art educators are better able to work with children with special needs when they are more aware of, and are able to integrate, art therapy practices into their teaching.

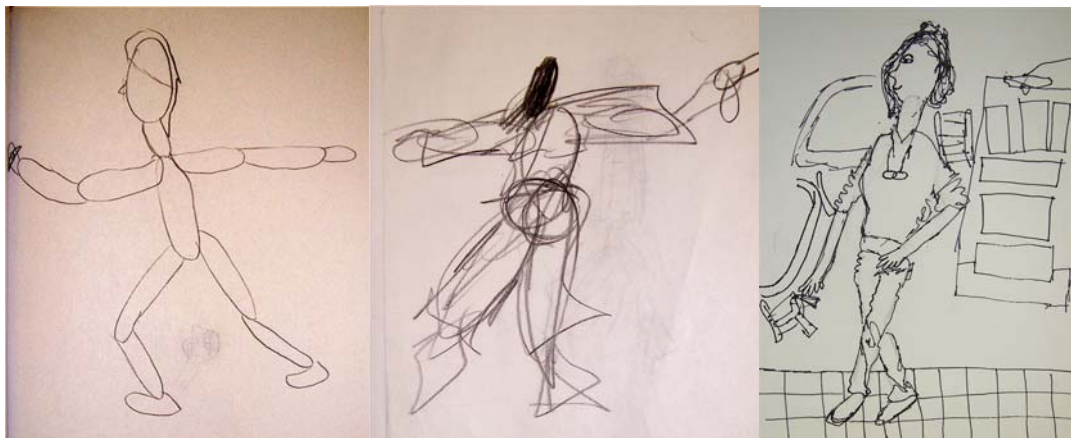
The thesis is based on a case study of two New York City elementary schools; one private, special needs, art classroom and one public, inclusion, art classroom. Through classroom observations and teacher interviews the thesis identifies common practices that derive from the integration of both therapeutic and pedagogical approaches. The thesis also analyzes the scholarly research in the two fields of art education and art therapy to compare and analyze the practices and strategies that are used in special needs and inclusion art classrooms, as well as in therapeutic settings.

TEACHING DRAWING FROM OBSERVATION

By Sarah Tanzer

This thesis is an exploration of the diverse ways teachers teach drawing from observation based on a case study of two teachers; a public elementary school teacher and a private middle school teacher. The thesis examines how their teaching methods and units of study intersect with, and sometimes differ from, literature about teaching drawing.

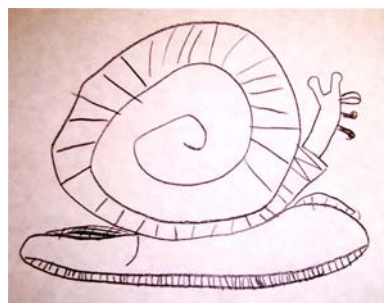
Both teachers strongly believe in the significance of drawing in building a foundation for art. Based on an analysis of their classroom practice and students' work, as well as key texts in the field of teaching drawing, the thesis argues that observational drawing is a language and basic building block of art. Without a foundation in drawing, which is developmentally age appropriate, children are at a disadvantage in their artistic development.



Series of figure drawings from observation by a fourth grader over a five-week period



Drawing from observation by sixth grader



Observational drawing of snail by kindergarten student

**Studies of Teaching in Higher Education:
The Studio and the Classroom**

Journal Writing as a Means for Critical Thinking in the Art Curriculum

By Julia Livi

The thesis analyzes how students and teachers' critical thinking was stimulated and sustained through two Pratt writing projects; the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) project, which began in 1993 and a new, on-line student exchange course that is required as part of Pratt's international exchange program, Pratt on Exchange. The thesis asserts that in both projects, journal writing was an important activity because it generated critical thinking skills. In both cases, participants benefited from journal writing which documented their emotional, physical and academic journeys. The thesis argues that consistency, experience and flexibility are the key to a successful journal project.

The WAC project helped teachers and students use journal writing in the art studio, as well as in different liberal arts disciplines. The Pratt on Exchange on-line course uses journal writing as a tool for students to reflect on their experiences abroad, including their experiences with foreign art curricula. Although the two projects focus on journal writing, they evolved in different contexts. The WAC project occurred over time, was well documented and involved teachers and students. The WAC research draws from archival sources and participant interviews. The Pratt on Exchange course is still in development, is not yet documented, and involves mostly students. The on-line course research was conducted through participant observation. The thesis does not compare these two distinct projects, but applies some of the research findings from the WAC project to analyze and make revisions to the on-line course.



Pictures taken by Sonya Berry to illustrate her journal entries while abroad at the Glasgow School of Art in Scotland

How Can a Teacher Inspire Self-Exploration Through Art Making?

By Kelly Valletta

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This thesis explores the ways that art teachers can promote self-exploration through art making. The thesis does this through a case study of a college level studio course in an art education program. The idea for the course is to help students connect with their artwork so they can strengthen their own teaching. This connection will help prospective teachers develop curriculum, knowledge of materials and techniques, and guide students to explore ideas to shape the content of their artwork.

The research was conducted through participant observation, student and teacher interviews, and analysis of written assignments and artwork. The thesis shows that students in the course were able to ask questions, take risks, play with ideas, build relationships, and gain confidence in their artwork. This was because they were in a classroom environment based on trust, appreciation for fellow students' work, equality, common goals, reflection and assessment. The thesis suggests that this type of classroom environment is possible to achieve not only in higher education but also in K-12 studio classes.