

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF A RESEARCH PROJECT IN EDUCATION

SUBMITTED BY-

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TITLE: THE ARTS AND SOCIETY

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Project of Study

-by-

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I INTRODUCTION

Fifteen years in the classrooms of both private and public schools and also sixteen years spent as a faculty member in college and university have served to show me how little I know. It is because of this frustrating feeling of ignorance in the face of many problems yet unsolved in education and within myself, that I am continuing a study, begun many years ago, with the hope that enlightenment may come.

Study of an art, until recently in the history of our Western Society, was a private affair between pupil and master. Private patronage made possible the production of art and the existence of the artist.

Gradually schools of art were formed and finally the public schools, colleges and universities became the "patrons" through public support by way of taxation or endowments. Thus a "benevolent school patronage" (at public expense) has helped in the perpetuity of art and the personal security of the artist.

Certain dangers have threatened the freedom of teaching and of learning as well as freedom to create, within these so-called "secure" protective institutions. Also from without have come continuous "rumblings" of discontent regarding the place of the arts in education and society at large. The oft-used word- "frills"- has never ceased to be spoken by those who conceive education from pragmatic views with an emphasis upon economic values.

Repeated efforts to face and overcome these dangers have been made and are presently in the process of becoming vital parts of community life.

Groups have been formed dedicated to the arts and their place in society. To mention one such movement: The Arts Council.

Especially since World War II the Western World seemed to review its values. Basically, the philosophy of "Arts Councils" seems to be founded in the belief that concerted thought and action toward making the arts more significant within our society is mandatory. This feeling, it is believed, arises from deep convictions that Beauty is the ESSENCE of LIFE!

In our appraisal of the educational philosophies and the practices within our societies there appears to be a healthy disagreement. The "frill concept" of the arts has been mentioned. Perhaps this arises from a sense of desperate expediency in view of world conditions and an assumed insecurity on the part of the individuals.

Would it not be better to borrow some ideas and attitudes from science and engineering? For example, pure science makes discoveries. The engineer uses these discoveries and gives us "things." We have much to be thankful for in this respect.

In his way the "artist" lives in a world of "pure knowledge." His experiences may come through intuitive channels. He acts as a means of personal interpretation of his own feelings about UNIVERSALS! Through music, painting, sculpture, literature, drama and dance, the artist becomes articulate, saying or doing that which we long to express but in which we are inarticulate. However, when communication is established between ideas and US, as receivers, then the "artist" as the "channel" has served a vital function.

Finally, it might help us to conceive the arts in their relation to other areas of experience through a simple analogy of the wheel. No part is more or less important. Let us think of the hub symbolically as representing the mind of Man. The spokes are the channels of learning from experience in such fields as: science, literature, history, philosophy, the arts etc. The rim suggests Understanding!

A wheel serves best in motion. Action with maximum efficiency depends upon perfect balance and proper relationship of rim, spokes, to hub. At any given moment the weight is largely borne by a few spokes and the hub and rim, however always dependent upon the function of the other spokes as well.

In a way such a concept of Man's experiences, as exemplified through separate areas of knowledge, becomes more sensible and inspiring when surrounded by an over-all Understanding and conceived and accepted as supporting the mind of Man.

This mind then then becomes the efficient machine over which the Spiritual Mind has or may have control, according to Man's will!

II THESES

1. The arts should occupy a place in society Equal to each of Man's most cherished and valued productions.
2. The responsibility of the "artist" to society is to become the most effective channel, possible for himself, of aesthetic values.
3. Society's responsibility to the "artist" is to provide ways and means of helping the "artist" to be SEEN or HEARD!
4. The responsibility of Educational Institutions both private and public, is to establish and maintain ART-EDUCATION (all the arts) in a position of equality with other areas of learning and experience deemed important within the curriculum.

III THE SCHOOL

In schools from Elementary through University, the basic purposes of Education should be re-stated as follows:

- A. To Understand better---VALUES!
- B. To see, when possible, RELATIONSHIPS.
- C. To act from VALUE through RELATIONSHIPS toward a MACROSCOPIC view.

IV THE COMMUNITY

- A. Seek leadership in programmes of Study and Action re: Community Betterment.
- B. Seek to establish better working relationships between School and Community re: Community Betterment.
- C. Seek ways of stimulating the Community to act in its own interests by taking the initiative in coordinating all available resources.

V RESEARCH PROJECT

- A. My interest is in learning as much as possible about my four THESES, the SCHOOL, and the COMMUNITY(listed and discussed above)
- B. I respectfully request consideration of my request for a Research Grant for one year's graduate study at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B. C., in order to help make the arts more significant in our lives and also to show how communities may re-appraise their resources toward aiding a programme of action in implementing the four THESES.

VI METHODS IN RESEARCH

I should like to divide my year's research into three parts as follows:

1st Quarter: Study of the History of the Arts. Review and accumulate bibliography and all possible reference material.

2d Quarter: Review areas of study in Philosophy particularly: Value Theories and Aesthetics.

3rd Quarter: Directed reading in Man's Cultural Evolution.

VII SUMMARY

I should like to work as a Tutorial student under a professor or a committee for each quarter.

My desire is to publish a brief of my Research with the hope that it may give reasons for further study and possible action in the implementing of my THESES.

Respectfully submitted:

H. Klyne Headley
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