

THE DISCURSIVE FORMATION OF AN  
ART HISTORY SURVEY CLASSROOM

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate  
School of the Ohio State University

By

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## ABSTRACT

*The Discursive Formation of an Art History Survey Classroom* is a study taken of a survey class and how the discourses in which it is imbedded privilege ways in which the classroom constructs knowledge about art, culture, and difference. The concept of discourse as developed within poststructuralist theory has become central to my investigation as I search to develop a critical understanding of how art history teaching facilitates meaning making. Drawing on the work of Michel Foucault, discourse can be understood as a structure through which knowledge produces activity. Specifically, I seek to reveal the discursive practices that structure teaching and how such practices frame ways in which we participate in the world. By focusing on one art history course, in the midst of education reform, I examine the environment of the classroom, the discursive practices of art history, and how its educators stage signification and deploy relations of power through their choices and actions, and construct and embody values through their framings. My intention is to question the hierarchies of knowledge at work in the ways in which we see and understand art, culture, and difference in this environment, and how these understandings have relevance to wider cultural experiences. Findings included humanistic and counter-humanistic discourses that structured the classroom.

Dedicated to my family

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## PUBLICATIONS

### Research Publication

1. Kundu, R. & Bain, C. (2006). Webquests: Utilizing technology in a constructivist manner to facilitate meaningful pre-service learning. *Art Education Journal*, 59(2), 6-11.
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## FIELDS OF STUDY

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## CHAPTER 1

### AN INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1 Purpose of Study**

As both a teacher and a student, I have come to realize that the activities taking place in a classroom can be considered social work. Learning embodies a range of socially constructed values. As Britzman (1991) explains, learning involves a social process of negotiation and cannot be considered an individual problem of behavior; learning, as well as teaching, means coming to terms with one's values, intentions, and ways of knowing within settings characterized by dependency, contradiction, and struggle. People push to organize experiences from a world of meanings, images, and social bonds (Bruner, 1990). Teachers do not passively teach and students do not passively receive ideas. In fact, learning is discursive, manifesting a range of constructed values and priorities toward how one participates in the world. So, the dynamics of the classroom engender individual and collective identities, or rather subjectivities.

Because this study conceives of art history as cultural politics, disseminating narratives by which we come to understand others and ourselves,

the teaching of art history becomes problematic. Those involved in art history education naturalize the social organization of the discipline. For example, art history programs are organized in accordance with academic specializations and levels of understanding. Such compartmentalization deflects attention from the assumptions that built such structures and excludes consideration of other ways to organize knowledge and people. Michel Foucault (1972) illustrates that knowledge is material practice; it generates action. Thus, as an art educator, I am interested in the art classroom, particularly one university art history survey, and the privileged ways in which the activities of the classroom construct knowledge about art, culture, and difference<sup>1</sup>. Specifically, I seek to reveal the discursive practices that structure the teaching of art history and how such practices frame the ways in which we participate in the world. By focusing on one art history course, in the midst of education reform, I look at the possibilities set into motion by the changes made to the curriculum by a group of university researchers. These reformers were interested in creating a survey class that promoted active inquiry and a better understanding of art and culture. My intention is to question the hierarchies of knowledge at work in the ways in which we see and understand art, culture, and difference in this environment, and how these understandings have relevance to wider cultural experiences.

The concept of discourse as developed within poststructuralist theory has become central to my investigation as I search to develop a critical

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<sup>1</sup> I chose to look at the discursive practices surrounding art, culture, and difference because

understanding of how art history teaching facilitates meaning making. Drawing on the work of Michel Foucault (1972, 1973, 1984a, 1984b, 1990, 1995), discourse can be understood as a structure through which knowledge produces activity. Foucault (1972) describes discourse “sometimes as a general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable groups of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements” (p. 80). His investigations reveal that discursive practices transform humans into subjects. These subjects are both active and acted upon, both producers of discourse and products of discourse. Because my research investigates how knowledge constructs activity, including how we understand ourselves and others, in an art history classroom, my research questions are:

What educational practices are used in the university art history classroom?

What discourses make these practices possible?

What are the consequences of such practices?

## **1.2 A Revolution in a Discipline**

To begin a discussion on the teaching of art history, I first must represent how the discipline itself is being remapped. Hans Belting (1987) gives insight into this matter:

Today the artist joins the historian in rethinking the function of art and challenging its traditional claim to aesthetic autonomy. The dutiful artist used to study masterpieces in the Louvre; today he confronts the entire history of mankind in the (British) Museum, acknowledging the historicity of past cultures and in the process becoming aware of his own historicity. Anthropological interests prevail over exclusively aesthetic interests. The

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participants in the study, as well as the content of the course, continually focused on these terms.

old antagonism between art and life has been defused, precisely because art has lost its secure frontiers against other media, visual and linguistic, and is instead understood as one of various systems of explaining and representing the world. All this opens up new possibilities but also new problems for a discipline which has always had to legitimize the isolation of its object—art—from other domains of knowledge and interpretation. (p. xi)

This situation described by Belting (1987) within art history has been fueled by discussions on signification from other disciplines. In recent years, feminist, Marxist, structuralist, and poststructuralist ideas have influenced the practices of art history. Characteristic of what has been termed the “new art history” is theoretical rigor, historically specific analysis, and political critique (Bird, 1988). These particular characteristics question the supposed apolitical nature of cultural practice, received models of historical presentation, and the prioritization of the artist. The traditional approach to the discipline had always been framed within a positivist tradition and included a discussion on style, attribution, construction, quality, and meaning (Roskill, 1976). The new approaches scrutinize and criticize, asking why representations look as they do, linking art to power. For example, the new art historians question the possibility of producing objective scholarship; they are more self-conscious about their points of view; and they make their methodologies evident. They also present different models of telling; instead of a history of evolution, the approach may include a story about solutions to such problems as “what makes an image” or “what makes it a convincing vision of truth” (Belting, 1987, p. xii). Visual representations are thus examined for the ways in which they circulate knowledge and their ability to



construct the social. They reject the usual story, the concept of history as a celebration of progress, where technical and artistic innovations follow close upon one another. Lastly, they question production as a major determinant of meaning, that artists and patrons are the only human beings involved in meaning making. The focus on the artist's intent has been replaced by an understanding that the play of meaning is plural, art having effects on many lives and experiences.

Stephan Bann (1988), however, questions that there is a revolution in the field of art history. He instead argues that art history, as other disciplines, has been bankrupted by its old ways of knowing. Borrowing critical methods from linguistics, such as semiotics, art historians' study of images converges with the study of language (Bann, 1988). This convergence has transformed institutions and cultural practices by not only extending the list of what is to be studied but by rearranging categories, modes of address, and forms of evaluation (Belting, 1987). For example, some art historians are moving away from high cultural artifacts, patriarchy, and Euro-centricity towards low cultural artifacts, feminist positionings, and marginalized cultural traditions. No longer accepting one aesthetic theory but embracing a multiplicity of competing theories that disrupts the function of art, those involved in the discipline are part of a site of struggle, questioning what sorts of knowledge are being offered (Belting, 1987). Ultimately, art history is a discursive field composed of a variety of practices and

subject positions which get redefined in relation to codes of opposition and marginality (Bird, 1988).

### **1.3 How Do We Teach a Discipline in Crisis?**

As art historians come to acknowledge their ideological framings and how they maintain and challenge existing social relationships, they disrupt the category of art, reconsidering it in relationship to wider social structures. What those practicing the new art history propose is an argument for using art as a means to explore ideas and concepts of relevance to wider cultural experiences. In this way, the intention is to question the hierarchies of knowledge at work in the way we see and understand art. As art's reception, as opposed to its production, comes into focus, one begins to understand that art and its disciplines construct value systems. One may infer that art historians are not only doing scholarship differently, but they are also reforming ways of teaching their discipline. In fact, according to an issue of *Art Journal*, from the fall of 1995, art historians around the nation are indeed redressing the long neglected topic of education within the discipline of art history and asking about the conditions of possibility set into motion by changes made to curricula. These historians ask: What social work is done by the teaching art history? What paradigmatic assumptions drive survey courses? Are there alternatives to the chronological survey? How is interpretation engaged with? What are the purposes of teaching? What narratives about us are disseminated?

A challenge to teach differently has been undertaken by an institution in which I once worked. What I have noticed is that the art historians at The Ohio State University teach a number of surveys, one of which is meant to fulfill the school's mandate to teach toward diversity (see Appendix A). This survey is the *History of Art 213: Survey of Far Eastern Art*, which covers the arts of India, China, and Japan. Recently, a team of researchers, which included me as an education consultant, at this institution has been interested in reforming the curriculum of this survey to improve students' understanding of content and culture. We wanted to promote meaningful learning that fosters active inquiry.

The research team felt that for decades the discipline of art history had been dominated by a single teaching methodology, a slide illustrated lecture. The methodology often encourages rote memorization and passive learning among students. Students are moved along with the use of slides. The format fosters little sense of participation, exploration, or responsibility for learning. Current education theory, such as constructivism, however, holds that meaningful learning requires that the learner interacts with new information in a way that enables active inquiry. Students should have opportunities to construct their own knowledge and to develop their own cognitive maps, making personally meaningful connections to concepts. As students actively engage with learning, they can move to higher levels of cognition, such as applying, synthesizing, and evaluating knowledge. The research team felt that the use of an interactive CD ROM package could help expand the types of inquiry that can be undertaken in

university art history classrooms by enabling students to master materials through problem solving and critical thinking. Assessment tasks in conjunction with the CD ROM package helped to facilitate and assess student learning.

#### **1.4 Description of the Assessment Project**

##### **1.4.1 Assessment Goals**

Since the project team was interested in reforming curriculum to improve education, two types of assessment data needed to be gathered; formative and summative assessments were conducted to monitor the flow of the instructional process, including the effectiveness of the CD ROMs and to evaluate what students were learning. The CD ROM package and assessment tasks were designed to eliminate some of the traditional obstacles to art historical learning and expand the types of inquiry that can be undertaken in art history classes. Questions guiding the case studies included two: How can curriculum reform nurture authentic forms of student achievement? What are the consequences of such reform? Insights gained from the study were to provide information on how the project team can improve the design of the CD ROM package and develop classroom practice which engages students actively and facilitates meaning making.

##### **1.4.2 Methodology of the Assessment Team**

As researchers interested in postpositivist inquiry, our narrative was framed by interpretivist paradigmatic assumptions. If knowledge is constructed by individuals and is not a package of facts to be transmitted, the instructional

design of the CD ROMs must help facilitate students' engagement with active learning. Furthermore, as we explored the effects of curriculum reform, including the use of technology, on student learning, we were interested in the participants' perception of the interactive experience. We were not interested in measuring how much information participants could recall or memorize. We were instead drawn to how participants constructed knowledge about cultures, how they understood the relationship between art and culture, how they used context and various other art historical methodologies to situate works, how they understood particular works and their social and historical significance, and how students transferred their learning to other life experiences. The data collection methods used were qualitative, including observation, interview, and the analysis of oral and written documents, including the journal entries of the students, their examinations, and their assignments.

#### **1.4.3 Design of Study**

The purpose of the assessment study was to investigate the effectiveness of the History of Art 213 curriculum on student understanding and to develop instructional strategies to facilitate authentic forms of achievement among students. An art history classroom using interactive multimedia especially designed to facilitate a deeper understanding of works of Asian art was compared to a classroom using the traditional slide-illustrated lecture. Observations of classroom practice; interviews with students and the instructor; and the written assignments, journal entries, presentations, and examinations of

students were used to gather assessment data. Assignments and examinations included assessment tasks measuring the degree that students employ knowledge effectively within the context of authentic art historical problems and interactions. The exercises required that the student know the conditions that mediate the use of various principles explored during the quarter, including conducting a visual analysis; comparing and contrasting objects, both familiar and unfamiliar; examining objects within contexts; and finding interrelationships between objects or cultures.

#### **1.4.4 Constructivism and Situated Learning**

Since this research is about the instructional design of an art history course, including the design of a multimedia CD ROM package, and its effects on students, an investigation of how theory interacts with technology was needed. Among the cognitive learning theories available, the research team felt that constructivism and situated learning were most significant to the assessment project. Constructivism promotes the idea that learners construct knowledge. As Glaserfeld (1996) explains, what sets constructivism apart from other learning theories is its epistemology. In other words, knowledge is not a collection of facts but a mapping of actions and operations that become viable to a learner's experience. Learning thus becomes an activity that students must carry out.

Fosnot (1996) describes the principles of constructivism as follows:

- Learning is not the result of development; learning is development. It requires invention and self-organization on the part of the learner. Thus teachers need to allow learners to raise their own questions, generate

their own hypotheses and models as possibilities, and test them for viability.

- Disequilibrium facilitates learning. “Errors” need to be perceived as a result of learners’ conceptions and therefore not minimized or avoided. Challenging, open-ended investigations in realistic, meaningful contexts need to be offered, thus allowing learners to explore and generate many possibilities, both affirming and contradictory. Contradictions, in particular, need to be illuminated, explored, and discussed.
- Reflective abstraction is the driving force of learning. As meaning-makers, humans seek to organize and generalize across experiences in a representational form. Allowing reflection time through journal writing, representation in multisymbolic form, and/or discussion of connections across experiences or strategies may facilitate reflective abstraction.
- Dialogue within a community engenders further thinking. The classroom needs to be seen as a “community of discourse engaged in activity, reflection, and conversation. The learners (rather than the teacher) are responsible for defending, proving, justifying, and communicating their ideas to the classroom community. Ideas are accepted as truth only insofar as they make sense to the community and thus arise to the level of “taken-as-shared.”
- Learning proceeds toward the development of structures. As learners struggle to make meaning, progressive structural shifts in perspective are constructed—in a sense, “big ideas” (Schifter & Fosnot as cited in Fosnot, 1996, p.30). These “big ideas” are learner-constructed, central organizing principles that can be generalized across experiences and that often require the undoing or reorganizing of earlier conceptions. This process continues throughout development. (Fosnot, 1996, pp. 29-30)

Such an understanding of constructivism was used to create the CD ROM package and the assessment tasks. Students were required to construct rather than reproduce knowledge, consider alternative solutions, strategies, and perspectives, employ ideas and theories central to the academic discipline, utilize writing to demonstrate understanding, engage problems and issues found in life

beyond the classroom, and demonstrate understanding for an audience beyond the teacher, classroom, or institution (see Appendix B, C, and D).

Situated learning asserts that enculturation leads to learning. Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1996) explain that knowledge is situated, a product of the activity, context, and culture in which it is used. Most situated learning theorists advocate for authentic practices that place content within context. Situated learning has its roots in Lev Vygotsky's (1997) ideas about social development. Vygotsky (1997) notes that understanding is social; the relationship between the individual and a social context is dynamic. Even tools, including technology, do not only facilitate but also fundamentally reshape and transform experience. Furthermore, Lave and Wenger (1991) discuss apprenticeship as situated learning. In apprenticeships, learners participate with others in the context of production. Learning is thus not located within an individual but is placed in the context of the social. Situated learning thus goes beyond the concept of learning by doing, considering it inseparable from social practice.

In the context of this study, the CD ROM package promotes a virtual environment that situates learning. The researchers created one CD ROM, a site survey, which situated works virtually in the site of its original context and the other CD ROM, a museum internship environment, allowed students to move through various jobs, using skills to actively construct knowledge. Social interaction and participation are key to learning within this context. Authentic activities were used to stimulate students toward problem solving and critical



thinking. Students collaborated, did activities that facilitated understanding, used ideas central to the discipline, and addressed concepts and issues in life.

#### **1.4.5 Standards and Rubric Developed by Research Team**

Different kinds of standards have been advanced for judging what teachers and students do. For this study, standards were developed which focused on assessing the intellectual quality of instruction and student performance. Our standards arise out of the literature on authentic achievement and involve the construction of knowledge, disciplined inquiry, and the value of learning (Newmann, 1996). Authentic achievement stands for accomplishments that are worthwhile and meaningful, such as those undertaken by professionals in the field of art history. High quality intellectual achievement for students would thus be characterized by creating a classroom atmosphere where students are required to actively construct knowledge, pursue understanding, and develop contextualized meanings.

Assessment tasks teach students the kind of intellectual work that is valued. The standards we used to design our assessment tasks included facilitating higher-order thinking, addressing the central ideas of the discipline, building understanding, and connecting knowledge to the world outside the classroom. The standards, based on the work of Wehlage, Newmann, & Secada (1996), used to assess student performance included:

- Standard 1: Analysis

Student demonstrates higher-order thinking with art historical content by organizing, synthesizing, interpreting, evaluating, and hypothesizing to produce comparisons, contrasts, arguments, application of information to new contexts, and consideration of different ideas and points of view.

- Standard 2: Disciplinary Concepts

Student performance demonstrates an understanding of ideas, concepts, theories, and principles from art history by using them to interpret, explain, and articulate specific information or events.

- Standard 3: Value Beyond School

Student is able to communicate knowledge, present a product, or take an action for an audience beyond the teacher or class.

Rubrics were developed to judge the quality of students' work as they developed understanding of the materials. The following rubric, based on the work of the Board of Studies (1997), in New South Wales, Australia, was used:

Satisfactory	Substantial	High	Excellent
Student describes some aspect of subject matter, style, and conventions in written and verbal accounts of works to locate them in historical contexts.	Student uses a variety of historical evidence to construct written and verbal accounts of works in historical contexts.	Student organizes and selects historical research and evidence to build written and verbal narrative accounts of work.	Student synthesizes historical research and evidence to construct written and verbal narrative accounts.
Student interprets evidence to locate particular works in a time and place referring to subject matter and form.	Student identifies some of the ways in which works are historically interpreted and explained from different points of view, referring to subject matter and form.	Student seeks to explain the historical significance of works using a developing understanding of methodologies that promote thinking and reflecting on works.	Student demonstrates an understanding of how methodologies affect explanations of works in historical contexts.

Table 1.1: Assessment Rubric

#### **1.4.6 Some Findings**

Some major findings include uncovering technical problems with the CD package, a way to facilitate shared understandings of materials through collaborative work, and a more complex understanding of content material among students.

1. The value of learning about the material culture of Asia for most students extended beyond the classroom and spoke to understanding oneself in relationship to others. Students explained that ethnic differences should be accepted and recognized. Students expressed that cultural taboos were lessened through experience and understanding of Asian cultures.
2. The CD ROM class constructed more complex and creative exhibitions, which organized knowledge in different ways and spoke to context. The traditional class organized their exhibitions around themes already covered in class.
3. Students related that the CD-ROM reinforced their learning. They were able to look at an object, see it within a site, and see how it was used. The CD-ROM promoted a spatial understanding versus a linear understanding.
4. Instruction was changed by the instructor's engagement with assessment. Collaborative learning was promoted, opportunities for active learning were added, and tasks facilitating the construction of

knowledge were developed. Teaching methods were further revised through formative assessment data.

### **1.5 What Are the Consequences of Reform Initiatives in Art History Classrooms?**

With all of this done by the research team, a question still remained to be answered. Does a change in teaching methods necessarily promote better learning? And who defines “better?” According to Popkewitz and Brennan (1998), contemporary reform in schooling is still influenced by two ideological legacies of the nineteenth century-- the belief in progress and agency—humanistic discourses. There is a belief that reason can direct social action towards the betterment of society. Within educational discourses, researchers and teachers become agents of change and their commitments toward progress are directed by a critique of social conditions. A historical subject who brings about change is, however, an effect of power. As art historians at the site of the study reform the curriculum for the betterment of their students, one must ask what values, understandings, and ways of knowing are being promoted, circulated, and silenced. Whatever discourses are becoming institutionally sanctioned are powerful, leading to particular understandings about the world. Thus, inquiry into this reform initiative required that I understand the conditions that structure these practices for change and how they are situated in a network of discourses, humanistic and counter-humanistic. Ultimately, what happens in the classroom also leads to ways of participating in the world and understanding our relationship to others.

## 1.6 Why Interrupt Humanistic Discourses?

Art history is very much a modernist project. Those involved in its practices often uncritically accept a set of assumptions derived from the Enlightenment, such as the discourses of humanism. In general, humanism posits that rational consciousness, which is thought to be ahistorical and universal, constitutes the unique essence of human nature. Usually individuals' choices are thought to be based on free will and speak to their uniqueness. Language is considered to be transparent and a medium through which an individual can express self. As Lather (1991) states, the subject of humanism is to be understood as unified, monolithic, reified, and essentialized, capable of fully conscious, fully rational action. Weedon (1997) notes why such beliefs are attractive and powerful:

....The transparency of language and the fixity of subjectivity which are central to humanism, are attractive in so far as they offer a degree of certainty about life and apparent access to truth. If meaning is reflected in language and mediated by experience, our knowledge of the world is potentially true knowledge....Experience is prior to language but requires language in order to be communicated to other people. Experience is authentic because it is guaranteed by the full weight of the individual's subjectivity. It relies on what Jacques Derrida calls a metaphysics of presence...(p. 80-81)

Hutcheon (1989) points to the contradiction inherent here: "In the context of humanism, the individual is unique and autonomous, yet also partakes of that general human essence, human nature" (p. 13).

Usher & Edwards (1994) assert that the education system reproduces the humanistic project by creating a certain kind of autonomous, rational individual

who desires control; mastery over meaning; and power over self, others, and things. Such a project is often thought of as empowering because we are taught that we are in control of our world and our own experiences and can define and achieve our futures. Giroux (1988b) connects humanism to education by reflecting on how those in the field institutionalize the processes by which the grand narratives of progress and human development can be passed on to future generations. Spanos (1993) relates how liberal humanism relies on the idea of meritocracy, defining a self that defuses collective action against the dominant sociopolitical order. Drawing on poststructuralist, feminist, and/or neo-Marxist discourses, these education researchers question such a project, asking whose reason is most rational, who will control, who will be dominated, and who decides what progress is. Thus, the humanist orientation is both enabling and constraining.

According to Eagleton (1996), liberal humanism forms part of the official ideology of late industrial capitalism and the humanities exist to reproduce it-- often teaching the arts as the embodiment of universal values, a classless, genderless, non-ethnic, disinterested universal subject which has the ability to transform individuals into some abstract notion of a better person. The humanist orientation features the usual narratives of unfolding genius and autonomy.

In the discipline of art history, Erwin Panofsky (1955) developed the concept of the art historian as a humanist, as one who respects tradition and embraces its value. He was interested in aesthetic objects for their ability to

speak to the highest of human values and helped develop the fundamental principles for a scientific art history, where objects reveal their meaning through careful, rational study:

The “naïve” beholder differs from the art historian in that the latter is conscious of the situation. He knows that his cultural equipment, such as it is, would not be in harmony with that of people in another land and of a different period. He tries, therefore, to make adjustments by learning as much as he possibly can of the circumstances under which the objects of his studies were created. Not only will he collect and verify all the available factual information as to medium, condition, age, authorship, destination, etc., but he will also compare the work with others of its class, and will examine such writings as reflect the aesthetic standards of its country and age, in order to achieve a more “objective” appraisal of its quality. (1955, p. 17)

According to Haxthausen (2002), Erwin Panofsky’s humanist conception of the art historian has led to a particular approach to interpretation-- as recollection of meaning, where traditions are seen as objective and art historians’ concern for the object reveal its meanings.

This methodology has been challenged recently by art historians who tend to approach art and its history as instruments of power that shape notions of class, gender, and race. Wolfe (1998) observes that there is a need to counter the “strategic deployment of humanist discourse against other human beings for the purposes of oppression” (p.40). Where the modernist project was indeed started as a critique of domination, it has itself established new structures of domination through its anthropocentrism, Cartesian antagonism, and logocentrism (Roy, 2002). According to Danaher, Schirato, and Webb (2000), Foucault has worked to dismantle “man” as a rational entity by uncovering



discontinuities, plays of power, and pseudo essences in the forging of humanism. Foucault plucks “man” from a transcendental plane and historicizes him, revealing how he is a product of his own discursive and institutional practices.

Art historians continue to situate and disseminate notions of culture, art, and difference through the discourses of humanism, although in a number of configurations and in combination with other discourses. I, however, believe that the discourses of humanism, in their various configurations, and in combination with other discourses, continue to perpetuate the very relations of power that many art historians seek to disrupt through educational reform. These discourses serve to reproduce educational practices in place in the name of change and progress. Situating these discourses as historically contingent may, however, interrupt their naturalness and expose them to critique. Studying a site and looking for intelligible counter discourses may lead to problematizing the “common sense” of reform initiatives-- leading us to create a more self-reflexive practice which focuses on our framings.

### **1.7 Conceptual Framework**

The major portion of this study's content focuses on how the discipline of art history is changing and its expansion into other areas, such as visual culture. The books *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on a Coy Science* (Preziosi, 1989), *The Practice of Theory: Poststructuralism, Cultural Politics, and Art History* (Moxey, 1994), *The End of Art History* (Belting, 1987), *The New Art History* (Rees & Bozello, 1984), *The New Art History: A Critical Introduction* (Harris,

2001), *The Stories of Art* (Elkins, 2002), *Is Art History Global?* (Elkins, 2007), and *Visual Studies: A Skeptical Introduction* (2003) are just a few examples of the literature that has shed light on how the field is being reconsidered. Writers expand on theoretical approaches to art history and the artifacts to be included in such studies, interrogate vision and visibility, and offer social critiques of practices. These works examine how the selection of knowledge and presentation of ideas and images are enacted within a power system. The sources of power are derived from the capacity of the discipline to classify and define. This is the power to represent, to reproduce structures of beliefs and experiences through which differences are understood. Representations of art, culture, and difference emerge out of a network of discourses, producing subject positions and technologies of power, which have material effects upon lives.

I draw upon poststructural theory to understand the discursive field of art history. Sources for understanding poststructuralism include Barthes (1977), Diamond & Quinby (1988), Derrida (1976), Foucault (1973, 1977a, 1977b, 1984a, 1984b, 1990), and Weedon (1997). Poststructuralism helps to create an understanding of why knowledge is historically and socially constructed, privileged, and compromised. Poststructuralist thought as it applies to teaching is also investigated by examining the writings of Cherryholmes (1988), who explores how social contexts work to construct educational situations, and Popkewitz and Brennan (1998), who investigate how learning constructs

priorities toward how one participates in the world. Poststructuralist theories are also used as analytical tools to deconstruct power relations within art history.

Giroux (1988a, 1988b, 2005), Banks (1991; 1992), Sleeter (1992), Sleeter and Grant (1994), Wasson, Stuhr, and Petrovich-Mwaniki (1990), and hooks (1994) are used for their perspectives on the inclusion of difference in education. Furthermore, I also refer to current understandings in teaching and learning by examining Britzman (2003), Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr (1996), Doll (1993), Fosnot (1996), Wehlage, G.G., Newmann, F.M., & Secada, W. G. (1996), and Wiggins, G. (1998). These writers use multicultural discourses, postmodern theories, constructivism, and authentic learning as strategies for curricula development and educational reform.

### **1.8 Methodology**

The theoretical construct of discourse is a particular perspective from which to view social practice because it takes into account the positions from which people speak, the institutions which prompt them to speak in particular ways, and the mechanisms that distribute what is said (Foucault, 1984b). Similarly, art history is subject to discourse as well as a disseminator of discourse. Taking a discursive perspective to the practices of a discipline teases out how social practices and the people involved in those practices “continuously create and re-create each other” (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 6). So, this study proposes to examine the environment of the university art history classroom, the discursive practices of art history, to see how its educators stage signification,

deploy relations of power through their choices and actions, and construct and embody values through their framings. An understanding of teaching strategies used at the university level and how they are situated in power-knowledge structures would provide educators with new opportunities to critically analyze and question the intelligibility of the learning environment and how their choices and practices both enable and inhibit ways of imagining their roles as teaching towards difference.

### **1.8.1 Design of Study**

In order to examine how a network of discursive practices inform educational approaches in a university art history survey class<sup>2</sup>, in the midst of reform, I proceeded by conducting a case study of the site. I analyzed my data sources in three stages. Firstly, I looked at the discourses that educators including myself draw upon to initiate reform. I expected that many of these discourses were liberal humanist conceptions of art, culture, and difference. Others were interruptive discourses. Secondly, I historicized these discourses, looking at how they relate to a field of possibilities. Lastly, I identified how the discourses enabled ways of participating. My methods included observations, single person and group interviews, and a discursive analysis of the literature on the practices of art history. My theoretical framings include poststructuralism, feminism, and neo-marxism.

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<sup>2</sup> The study focuses on the class that used the CD ROMs.

### **1.8.2 Site**

Since I had been the education consultant for an art history course at The Ohio State University for a couple of years, I chose this establishment as my research site. The selection of the site can be thought of as not only a kind of convenience sampling but also a purposeful and theoretical sampling (Patton, 1990). The art history department in which I worked was involved in an education initiative funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education and an undergraduate curriculum mandate to teach towards understanding difference. Thus, I am interested in the discursive formations that circulate within this classroom, making it possible for educators to situate themselves in relation to art, culture, and difference and to articulate particular educational choices and approaches to understanding these topics.

### **1.8.3 Methods of Data Collection**

I chose interviews, the analysis of documents, and participant observation as my research methodologies. The interviews were semi-structured, with open-ended questions that solicited informal conversation. I triangulated interviews with data gathered through participant observation and documents, such as the textbook and student assignments. Unobtrusive measures are particularly useful for triangulation (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). The review of documents, an unobtrusive method, helped to portray the values and assumptions of the research team without disturbing the setting in any way (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Participant observation allowed me to discover recurring patterns of

behavior and relationships and to learn about the daily activity at the setting. Furthermore, my own involvement as an education consultant with the project gave me entry into situations that would not have been possible if I had been an outsider but it also required that I examine how I was situated in these discursive practices.

I observed and participated in the research project and classroom activities, and I also interviewed its researchers, educators, and students. I tape-recorded conversations with the research team and students and transcribed them; took field notes on the learning environment; conducted individual and focus group interviews with students; and kept a reflective journal on my activities and perceptions. These procedures helped build a narrative that emphasized the network of relations that constructed the art historical classroom, incorporating a number of perspectives.

#### **1.8.4 Methods of Data Analysis**

My observations and conversations were the basis for my findings, allowing theory to interact with data and triangulating my resources and methods to facilitate thick description. As I am most interested in the area of practice, I also focused on and identified the material conditions and discursive practices that provided resources for the production of the educational agendas in the classroom. Using discourse analysis, I coded emergent patterns, using a priori constructions as well as grounded constructions. During data analysis, I interpreted the patterns that emerged as reflective of broader structures, and I

examined how these patterns actively constructed methods that enable and constrain teaching towards difference.

### **1.9 Significance**

A classroom is indeed a site in which representation unfolds. Education thus gets reinvented at different times for different ends. Bringing a discursive perspective to the classroom deprives it of its innocence and provides it with accountability. Asking what problems art historians hope to resolve in their agendas, and seeing these actions within a discursive network, exposes their limitations and possibilities, which are then open to negotiation, challenge, and perhaps transformation. It helps to expose what people working in the discipline of art history choose to do and say to critique. As Cherryholmes (1988) notes, "Texts and discourses-practices impose values, categories, evaluations, and knowledge claims upon us. They exist to be consumed, to be accepted, to be acted upon, and we are who we are in important ways, individually and collectively, because of them." (p. 153) Thus, we must ask ourselves:

What educational practices are used in the university art history classroom?

What discourses make these practices possible?

What are the consequences of such practices?

Taking a discursive perspective to art history unmask its practices as contingent to a number of social and discursive forces that sustain particular relations of power. Demonstrating art historical practices to be contingent rather than natural

may initiate a discussion on alternative practices in relationship to those that are silent.



## CHAPTER 2

### A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ART HISTORY

#### **2.1 Introduction to the New Art History**

In relationship to leftist politics and larger intellectual and academics movements of the times, art historians, such as T.J. Clark (1974), have called for the discipline to take into account the social world in which art is produced and received. Such study exemplifies what has been called the new art history.<sup>3</sup> According to Rees and Borzello (1988), those working in the discipline question and scrutinize the old tradition or what is often called institutionally dominant art history.<sup>4</sup> The new art historians ask why some objects are studied and others are not, what types of statements are made with representations, such as those of women and landscape, what role art plays economically and politically, and how the discipline produces itself. Borrowing methods from marxism, feminism,

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<sup>3</sup> Others, such as Harris (2001), have called the current movements within the field radical or critical art history and have drawn attention to the idea that certain historians, concepts, and texts cannot be clearly assigned to institutionally dominant art history or the new art history.

<sup>4</sup> There are art historians, such as Preziosi (1988), Overy (1988), and Rifkin (1988) who believe that the new art history is not doing much that is different from the old; they still study the same objects, create orderly categories, and serve the same audiences, thus just becoming another

psychoanalysis, semiotics, poststructuralism, and the social sciences, the new historians are less interested in connoisseurship, style, and artistic genius, and are more interested in examining ideology, patriarchy, class, and methodology. Furthermore, the new art historians take issue with the claim that art history is value-free, has no relationship to aesthetics and criticism, and when art is placed in its social context, it begins with the art and works outward. The new historians acknowledge their theoretical framings, social agendas, and the power of discourses to generate relations of domination and subordination, analyze how institutions of art construct the field, and look at how the social order is produced and circulated by art. Ideally, the new art historians are not disinterested researchers but actively participate in society by challenging its values through related intellectual currents (Harris, 2001).

## **2.2 How Has Art History Has Been Traditionally Taught?**

To understand the new art history, one must see it in relationship to the old. Since my research specifically centers on the art historical survey, I will focus on this area as I discuss what the new art history is reacting to.

The survey has its roots in the nineteenth century, when according to Schwarzer (1995), the task of art history was to educate and civilize a general public. An art historical survey was about nation building and it was done through specific configurations of historical change. For example, even before the nineteenth century, the artist Giorgio Vasari in his *Lives of the Artists* (1976)

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academicism. Others such as Rees & Borzello (1988) criticize its extreme practitioners, who end

was interested in not only sources for artistic styles but also the rise and fall of the arts. He erected a canon of classical beauty, by which all epochs were to be measured and he saw historical progression toward a universal classicism as cyclical, with periods of growth, maturity, decay, and rebirth (Belting, 1987). According to Staniszewski (1995), Johann Joachim Winckelmann, with his *History of Ancient Art* (1766) also chronologically classified art into a sequence of periods of stylistic development and his book became the model by which to write history. Later, early art historians were engaged with the history of art as a history of the function of art in human society. The development of art as a cyclical repetition was given up for an understanding of art as bound to mental and cultural development (Belting, 1987). This is connected to the Hegelian idea that history is progressive and people find better ways to express the spirit of a culture through art (Elkins, 2002). Early art historians “discovered the meaning of their own time through connections with the whole of human history according to ideas of progress and linearity, and the division of world culture through ranking of artistic quality.” (Schwarzer, 1995, p.24)

By the second half of the nineteenth century, art historians such as Heinrich Wölfflin (1950) focused their efforts on form and object. As the natural sciences grew in esteem and rationalism became valued, knowledge began to center on details, that is formalism, the interrelationship between artworks themselves. Common to these early histories of art was a chronological

approach to the development of an artist's work, an understanding that the artist was perfecting his medium, and a hierarchy where objects from non-European nations were seen as a foundation for the development of higher forms of artistic culture, specifically those found in Europe (Schwarzer, 1995). By the 1920s, Erwin Panofsky (1955), rejecting formalism, pushed for the study of the cultural contexts of art by foregrounding a work's documentary status and its circumstances of production. Clark (1974) claims that many art historians have now reduced art history to methodology, formal analysis and iconography. Ultimately, however, as Preziosi (1998) explains, all art historians are concerned with causality, construing their objects of study as representative, that art is evidence of the character of a person, people, or nation, or a product of culture. According to Graham (1995), art historians today still define the survey as a chronological introduction to the West, centered on the narratives of high culture. Delivered in a lecture format, the survey is presented as a neat and complete package, a history without historians, without scholarly conflict.

The practices of art historians are still constructing a hierarchical cultural order. As Moxey (1994) asserts, in a society characterized by difference, where aesthetic relativism and cultural pluralism prevail, the question becomes how can art history trouble such a cultural order and be relevant today.<sup>5</sup> He suggests:

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<sup>5</sup> The conceptual framework of this study is based on Moxey's (1994) call for practices in art history which acknowledges the discipline's social and political power. He believes that art historians produce their work based on value commitments and these values are shaped by and react to social forces.

if art history is to take part in the processes of cultural transformation that characterizes our society, then its historical narratives must come to terms with the most powerful and influential theories that currently determine how we conceive of ourselves and our relation to one another and how we conceive of cultural artifacts and their role in society. Art historical discourse, in other words, must become cognizant of the historical circumstances in which it currently finds itself. (p. 24-25)

Initiatives have emerged in relationship to a critique of art history's modernist legacy. Most recently, a number of practitioners are doing things differently, including teaching a global survey or a thematic survey with supplemental instruction. As Collins (1995) indicates, some art historians are transforming the survey to "address issues of gender, race, and sexual preferences, methodological assumptions, continental literary theory, [and] sophisticated relations between art, its makers, and its users..." (p. 23).

### **2.3 The Changing Nature of A Discipline**

A number of panel sessions on educational practices in art history at the College Art Association indicate that some art historians are reforming their methods of teaching. Such initiatives have been fueled by what may be considered a crisis in the discipline itself. Scholars reexamining the nature of art historical knowledge characterize this supposed crisis.

Although art historians have traditionally believed that their interpretations had something to do with the truth, an awareness of how historians are invested serves to historicize their activities and account for the social and cultural functions they perform. Moxey (1994) argues that poststructuralism, including deconstruction, gives us insight into what an historian is doing. Instead of

believing that art historians can discover how things really are, they must acknowledge how language invests practices with values.

Derrida (1976) has shown how language is incapable of carrying the type of meaning usually associated with history writing—the truth. He undermines the validity of signs to bear meaning—that the facts can speak for themselves.

Language always invokes and masks meaning. History writing can thus only convey the attitudes and ideologies of those involved in its production (Moxey, 1994). So as LaCapra (1983) points out, the past is always mediated by texts.

Text here includes context. We cannot read a text against some real context; the real is also mediated by other texts. LaCapra (1983) argues:

...the notion of textuality serves to render less dogmatic the concept of reality by pointing to the fact that one is “always already” implicated in problems of language use as one attempts to gain critical perspective on these problems, and it raises the question of both the possibilities and limits of meaning. For the historian, the very reconstruction of a “context” or a “reality” takes place on the basis of “textualized” remainders of the past. (p. 26-27)

Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey (1994) have also discussed historical writing in relationship to art history. They say that the interpreter imposes conclusions drawn from examining social context:

Despite the efforts of those who pioneered the project of accounting for art in terms of social history, there has always existed the risk of its dilution into a procedure that merely adds on to artistic masterpieces a supplementary backdrop of “context.” In practice, and at its least enlightening, the procedure consists of locating works of art against a “background” constituted by economic and social history, with little or no investigation of the ways in which the latter intersect with the former. It is assumed that the point of the juxtaposition is obvious, that the work, which is still accounted for in terms of the formal conventions that determined its structure, somehow synthesizes or mirrors the social and cultural

circumstances in which it was produced. Such an approach characterizes the work as the end product of cultural activity. (1994, p. xvii-xviii)

Historical context is thus not a prelinguistic given; it is also constituted by other texts. By blurring the distinction between text and context, we are left with a culturally situated representation that has social and political implications. A work of art is not an end product but a beginning for cultural activity.

As Preziosi (1989) states, the traditional business of art historians to plot the developmental progression of the visual arts against broader social and cultural changes has been influenced by discussions on signification. In fact, the contemporary critique of representation as unable to determine meaning and historicism as unable to capture the truth has lead to a division among historians regarding the essential identity, goals, and purposes of the discipline. As Preziosi (1989) explains, these divisions occur around the following areas:

1. notions regarding the proper domain or object of study of art history-- the boundaries of the discipline and the criteria for discerning or establishing these;
2. the manner whereby artworks (or visual artifacts as such, whether or not the object of study is coterminous with the latter) produce signification or reflect meaning or content; or how they generate certain effects for and among viewers or users;
3. the relationships (whether of contrast, similarity, or identity) between art history and art criticism; and
4. the relationships between the latter (art criticism) and artistic practice, between creation and interpretation. (p.18)

These issues cut across the practices of art history and are framed by particular discourses, leaving many scholars with the opinion that the only form of interpretation left to the art historian is that of deconstruction.

An example of how these issues have been addressed can be seen in the work of many art historians, including Donald Preziosi (1989), who draws on poststructural theory to deconstruct the discourses of art history and describe the effects of art historians' modernist practices. He calls attention to how historical narratives perpetuate metaphysical myths that mask language's incapacity to signify. Preziosi (1989) characterizes the discipline with the following conditions: the artist is seen as a rational entity, producing a consistent standard, a uniformity of style, and a conceptually coherent body of work. Furthermore, an artwork is seen as fixed, saying something determinate, which is grounded by the artist's conscious or unconscious intentions. The artwork is often bracketed away from its social determinations in order to align with a class of objects, having its own history and meaning. It is also placed in a historical context, where history is coded as progressive and linear. The historian can determine the intentionality of this work by producing a reading and this reading assumes objectivity. Every art text has a fixed, opposed context. Representation is seen as a record of reality alongside the world in which one lives. Value is equated with the singularity of the artist and his creative genius. And the viewer is positioned as a passive consumer of a transmitted message. But as Preziosi (1989) states "At issue is the question as to whether any history articulated within



a discursive frame based upon centrality, homogeneity, or the continuity of self-identity can be other than oppressive” (p.44).

If as poststructural theory posits, meaning is subject to dispersal and deferral, both the subject and object are also subject to these displacements. To consider an object simply as a text to be read is static and reductionist; it assumes a fixity of signification somehow inhering in the object and an essentialist orientation on the part of the analyst, whose task becomes that of *interpretation* (Preziosi, 1989). Preziosi (1989) notes we must understand that, “All history is a production-- a deliberate selection, ordering, and an evaluation of past events, experiences and processes.” (p.70) and points to counter-discursive practices that allow for the play of difference: By problematizing the notion of autonomy, art becomes a component of cultural activity. Artist, historian, and viewer are objects of discursive practices. Thus, the historian validates and naturalizes certain kinds of discursive protocols while marginalizing others, the viewer becomes an active, complicit, and constructing subject, representation is understood as a social instrument for the creation and maintenance of the world in which one lives, and standards of an age change over time and differ among professionals. So as Collins (1995) has observed “the conception of art as a manifestation of large, sweeping historical forces has largely been rejected by so-called new art historians for one that emphasizes its complex embeddedness in the lives of its makers and users” (p. 23).

The theoretical practices of art historians have indeed been renewed by the deconstruction of the discipline's modernist traditions, but the question that remains is whether this renewal has affected educational practices. As the discipline of art history comes under scrutiny, there have also been efforts among its practitioners to address how the discipline should be taught. The College Art Association has initiated a series of articles devoted to discussing pedagogy, the first of which appeared in the *Art Journal*<sup>6</sup> in the fall of 1995. These articles indicate that the survey is undergoing radical revision, where issues emerging out of poststructuralism, postmodernism, neomarxism, and feminism have stimulated reform. If, as many scholars believe, the only legitimate form of interpretation left to art historians is that of deconstruction, how does one go about teaching a discipline? Lentricchia (1983) calls attention to how the theory of deconstruction itself is limiting:

Deconstruction's useful work is to undercut the epistemological claims of representation, but that work in no way touches the real work of representation—its work of power. To put it another way deconstruction can show that representations are not and cannot be adequate to the task of representation, but has nothing to say about the social work that representation can and does do. Deconstruction confuses the act of unmasking with the act of defusing, the act of exposing epistemological fraud with the neutralization of political force.  
(p. 50-51)

Following Lentricchia's (1983) insight, this study focuses on the social work that art history teaching does. If knowledge is related to what surrounds it,

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<sup>6</sup> According to Collins (1995) this issue was to be a first in a series of issues that would address pedagogy. This never however took place and the journal went back to its usual articles on

knowledge itself cannot be value free; it is political. I conceive of art history as cultural politics, disseminating narratives by which we understand ourselves and our relationships with others. I investigate the cultural function of one art history survey class.

## **2.4 Foucault, Discourse, and Art History Education**

Since this dissertation is about looking at the assumptions underpinning the teaching of a particular survey class, and the possibilities and limitations mapped through a reform initiative in the study of cultural artifacts, I find it useful here to employ Michel Foucault's notion of discourse, described by him in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), to identify and understand the network through which knowledge is produced. I believe that art historians attempting to construct meaningful discourse about their practices and about how to practice must begin to consider the consequences of the ways in which knowledge, power, and desire are mutually implicated in their formations and deployments. University educators do not passively teach about art but engender individual and collective realities by what they do and say. What educators do or say is constituted by the discourses in which they are positioned. To be able to identify discourses that are privileged and discourses that are silenced within a field of possibility may allow us to create pedagogical spaces in which there could be openings for the play of difference, a negotiation of the language codes by which art and the discursive practices surrounding it are understood. Thus, my project

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scholarship. In 2005, the journal did publish a roundtable discussion on teaching the art historical

proposes that an understanding of what structures the ways in which particular art historians think and act as educators will allow us to be in a better position to be reflexive about our practices. To understand that discourses are socially and historically contingent rather than natural may help us to see our practices differently and lead us to new imaginings.

I believe Michel Foucault's analysis of the modern and his criticism of humanistic discourses of progress, emancipation, and betterment can be useful in an investigation of the function of art history as conceived by some. His work serves to disrupt social practices, which are believed to be progressive. He questions the idea that society marches toward more enlightened forms of governance. Although Foucault never directly addresses education, his investigations discovered that education is central to the construction of modernity; forms of governance and social discipline are secured through education (Hoskin, 1990). That is to say, premodern forms of subjugation are replaced by discipline. Discipline, as discussed by Foucault, is a technology exercised upon a subject.

Since the Enlightenment, the subject has been the foundation for knowledge and signification. Foucault's investigations, however, reveal that discursive practices transform humans into subjects. These subjects are both active and acted upon—products of discourse—both as objects of knowledge and subjects who know. People in institutions such as the asylum, the hospital,

the military, and the school develop knowledge about people and this knowledge is used to shape them. Foucault calls these exercises of power disciplinary. Crucial to his beliefs is the rejection of the idea that knowledge and power are antithetical. Power and knowledge directly implicate one another. The exercise of power creates new objects of knowledge, and knowledge, in turn, constantly induces power. In traditional revolutionary theory, power is said to be possessed, repressive, and flow from a centralized source. Foucault proposes that we think of power as exercised, productive, and coming from the bottom up. He goes on to explain how power is dependent on resistance. The implication being that wherever there is a relation of power, it is possible to modify its hold. Thus, the social field becomes a complex web of power relations and individuals are produced through these relations. Depending on where one is situated, one's allegiances and interests will shift. Whether some forms of power (resistance) are more effective than others then becomes a matter of social and historical investigations,<sup>7</sup> and not of an a priori theoretical pronouncement (Danaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000; Shumway, 1992).

An analysis of power relations within an art classroom may lead to more concrete analyses of art history as a field of constant struggle. Art is always being defined, categorized, and classified. While I draw on Foucault's archaeological and genealogical work, I am more concerned with contemporary

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<sup>7</sup> Foucault (1972; 1977) describes his investigations as archaeological and genealogical. Archaeology investigates the principles of ordering within discursive formations while genealogy examines historical plays of domination.

representations and the knowledge they produce, hoping to give voice to marginalized knowledge by locating discontinuities in practices and altering our perspectives on the assumptions that inform these practices. Foucault's aim was to trace the political history of the production of humanity, as an object of knowledge—how we come to know ourselves. My aim will be to trace the production of humanity by focusing on the work performed by art history in the life of a culture. I will study how subjects are objects of cultural representations as well as its agents in the construction of the social. That is, I will ask what discursive practices enable art history to be practiced in particular ways at this time.

#### **2.4.1 The Construction Art History Education**

Foucault's methodologies are related to the re-examination of critical traditions inherited from the nineteenth century and his investigations of knowledge, power, and governmentality draw attention to how modern society operates. For example, his concern with how the subject is constituted by power has been taken up by feminists as they re-examine issues concerning representation, politics, and identity (Diamond & Quinby, 1988). In the context of this study, Foucault's methodologies help question the ways in which power works through discursive practices of schooling, leading us to dispel commonly held beliefs and critique ways of acting and thinking within educational contexts. For example, where previous scholarship treated knowledge as part of the way in which material practices are formed, Foucault illustrated that knowledge is

material practice; it generates action and participation. As Popkewitz and Brennan (1998) state:

Our speech is ordered through principles of classification that are socially formed through a myriad of past practices. When teachers talk about school as management, teaching as producing learning, or children who are at risk, these terms are not merely words of the teacher, but are part of historically constructed ways of reasoning that are the effects of power. (p. 9)

This particular concept of knowledge, of course, structures classrooms. Learning should be seen as discursive, embodying a range of constructed values and priorities toward how one participates in the world. Following a number of education researchers, such as Cherryholmes (1988) and Popkewitz and Brennan (1998), I argue that education sites, in this case, an art history survey, are social practices that order action and participation in society.

Often education researchers envision change by identifying the subjects who are said to prevent progress towards the betterment of society or to facilitate it. Both actions are linked to assumptions about progress and agency. The Enlightenment contributed to these views of progress and agency; scholars foretold that reasoning could direct and guarantee both:

Both [progress and agency] were constructed within a particular doctrine related to nineteenth-century views of the Enlightenment. It was believed that systematic knowledge was the motor by which “reason” could direct social action and guarantee future betterment in society. That reason was applied by specific set of actors that were identified through the knowledge of social science. Whereas liberal thought sought progress through managing social change, critical Hegelian thought sought progress through identifying social contradictions. While liberalism tends to place greater emphasis on individuals and the phenomenology of the subject in social change, critical traditions focus on the objectively constituted and constituting subject... (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998, p.7)

So how one thinks of change in education is embedded in discourses that are historically constructed and that organize the ways in which we perceive, conceptualize, and respond. Current education reform within art history must be examined as discursive practices by which subjects are constituted. Within my case study, I examine how the art history survey class is used to fulfill an elective promoting a commitment toward understanding diversity. This art history survey is embedded in discourses of multicultural education.

The professors and instructors at a major midwestern university The Ohio State University, where the survey is offered, are mandated to strengthen communities by preparing students for citizenship in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society through a diversity action plan. The university's action plan (see Appendix A) defines diversity as difference, variance, and heterogeneity, using the word to refer to different religions, different social classes, different philosophies, different accomplishments and capabilities, and different sexual orientations, genders, races, and ethnic groups. The plan asserts that students need to learn about perspectives different from their own. The action plan has to do with increasing diversity among the university's student body and its faculty and facilitating a healthy environment by promoting personal growth, challenging stereotyped preconceptions, encouraging critical thinking, and helping students learn to connect effectively with people of varied backgrounds. The fact that this survey fulfills a diversity requirement can be seen as an intervention, encouraging students within an educational situation to make connections



between the art history they are studying and the politics of their time. But, this is nothing new. The production and reception of art has always been a political issue and our ability to make learning useful always happens in relation to values. In this case, we are continuing the nineteenth-century view of social redemption through schooling. The action plan needs to be seen in relationship to social practices of multicultural education.

Multicultural education emerged out of the social activism of the 1960s and 1970s, drawing on the political struggles of the civil rights movement, the feminist movement, and the gay and lesbian rights movement. The social activism of these years led to demands for ethnic studies, women studies, and cultural studies on college campuses and a greater sensitivity to cultural, gender, and sexual issues. As Hamblen (1991) explains:

In a pluralistic society, there are a variety of repertoires of knowledge, traditions, and shapes of consciousness. All socialization processes, however, do not carry equal weight in a society in which there are class distinctions... Problems and contradictions begin to develop when only certain shapes of consciousness are given institutional credence. When particular patterns of socialization are given more value than others, official institutions, such as schools and museums, often become involved in the differential transmission of the dominant culture. Other traditions do continue to exist, but they are not given institutional status. Certain selected traditions become represented as correct, and these must be learned if one is to participate in the dominant culture. (p. 15)

This stated purpose of multicultural education is to change the power structures in society in order to foster social and political equity.

Much of what has been called multicultural education, however, fails to challenge the ordering of a social field in which knowledge becomes power.

Culture, ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality are complex relationships that are enacted in a social field. As Sleeter and Grant (1994) have noted, educators often add diverse representations into already formed grand narratives, without questioning these narratives and how they construct knowledge in a social field. This additive approach can be seen in the study of art, where previously neglected artists, movements, or styles are added to the list of what is to be studied without challenge to the frameworks themselves. The status quo is left in place. The practice is motivated by the notion of pluralism, but it still characterizes a modernist perspective. It still enacts the one cultural model by which all art is to be measured. Furthermore, cross-cultural approaches used to study art have also been shown to be limiting, often stressing non-western influence on western art or again appropriating the "other." For example, the 1984 exhibition "Primitivism in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern" by the Museum of Modern Art in New York is an example of this practice. The curator, William Rubin, in his desire to place the art of Africa, Oceania, and Native America on the same aesthetic level as Western modern art, decided to omit context to look at aesthetic affinities. What resulted was the assimilation of one culture's "art" (all the objects were not intended as art) into the Western aesthetic tradition. The message becomes one in which the African, the Native American, or the Pacific "artists" place in history is that of a footnote in the development of Western art (Karp, 1991). "Primitivism" is based on formal aesthetic qualities and the similarities between Western and non-Western

adoption of these techniques. Karp (1991) has suggested that if Rubin had chosen to examine how the traditional non-western artists and modern artists use similar forms in conjunction with other forms or if objects were judged by their users and makers in the context of their creation, he would have produced a more culturally diverse exhibition. Ethnically-based approaches shift focus to the culturally based criteria that particular societies use in producing and receiving art. Such approaches however do not often ask how the “other” is represented. Cultural identities may be represented as fixed and monolithic instead of multivocal and contradictory. Identities must be defined in the context of inter- and intra group conflicts and struggles, thus emphasizing relationality. All these approaches to multicultural education are embedded within particular discourses, and therefore we must ask what are the rules of reason, the discourses, that structure our practices for change and how is power deployed through these systems of ideas that inevitably construct perceptions of ourselves and others. Thus, I am less interested in the intentions of individuals as catalysts of change and instead, I focus on the principles through which subjects structure knowledge. By decentering the subject, I can see how it is constituted within a field, giving specificity to the system of ideas that inscribe people (Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998). The critique of both art historical methodology, that is its methods of interpretation, as well as how it is taught, that is how art, culture, and difference are understood in the classroom and how they are imbedded in

discourses, intersecting with issues of representation, ideology, and authorship, allow me to see how perceptions and participation get constructed.

#### **2.4.2 Poststructuralism and Discourse Theory**

The concept of discourse as developed in poststructuralist theory is central to my investigation. I have come to realize that a classroom is built upon boundaries (privileged ways of seeing things) that embody assumptions about education, as well as culture, art, and difference. I am also interested in determining if there are disruptions (marginalized ways of seeing things) in these boundaries and what these disruptions might look like.

Poststructuralism has been most influential among scholars in the humanities and the social sciences. It has much in common with postmodernism, such as the decentering of the modernist subject, the rejection of essentialist concepts of human nature, the rejection of unity and closure, and the rejection of transcendental concepts of truth and meaning. It is hard to pin down a definitive understanding of poststructuralism, but one could think of it as a critique of the assumptions found in structuralism, that language forms a closed, stable system.

Structuralism revealed that language does not reflect reality but produces it. People come into existence through language and are not free to think outside the rules of their language. Meaning is thus a product of shared systems of signification. The term structuralism derives from Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic studies. He viewed language synchronically as a system of signs

where each sign was made up of a signifier and signified. The relationship between the two is a cultural convention and the sign only has an arbitrary relationship to its referent. Each sign derives its meaning in a system of relations--its difference from other signs in the language chain. Structuralism is an attempt to apply this theory of language to other activities, from the study of human relations to objects. A structuralist analysis would consist of isolating the deep structures by which signs are combined into meaning. These structures were thought to be universal and fixed.

Critics since Saussure have theorized language to be much less stable. Whereas Saussure saw a one-to-one correspondence between signifier and signified, the poststructuralist Jacques Derrida (1976) sees the signifier as not directly related to the signified. There is no fixed distinction between the two and thus there is an endless play of signifiers. Meaning, as produced by the process of difference and deferral, becomes unstable. Eagleton (1996) explains further:

Since the meaning of a sign is a matter of what the sign is *not*, its meaning is always in some sense absent from it too. Meaning, if you like, is scattered or dispersed along the whole chain of signifiers: it cannot be easily nailed down, it is never fully present in any one sign alone, but is rather a kind of constant flickering of presence and absence together... 'Cat' may mean a furry four-legged creature, a malicious person,... But even when it just means a furry four-legged creature, this meaning will never quite stay the same from context to context: the signified will be altered by the various chains of signifiers in which it is entangled. (p. 111-112)

Such an understanding of language problematizes the structuralist notion of unity and fixed meaning. For example, Foucault (1972) points to the difficulty of even thinking of a book as a fixed unit:

...beyond the title, the first lines, and the last stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network...it indicates itself, constructs itself, only on the basis of a complex field of discourse. (p. 23)

So as Barthes (1977 ) posits, we must move away from thinking of an art product as a work to thinking of it as a text. “It is a shift from seeing the poem or novel [or image] as a closed entity, equipped with definite meaning which it is the critic’s task to decipher, to seeing it as irreducibly plural, an endless play of signifiers which can never be finally nailed down to a single center, essence or meaning.” (Eagleton, 1996, p.120) Meaning is caught up in a play of references rather than being definitive. In this sense, language can never be transparent.

Poststructuralist theorists ask critical questions about signifying practices, such as how certain “truths” attain a privileged position in a given time and place. Derrida (1976) describes how we often think of certain concepts as having a metaphysics of presence-- a logocentrism. The metaphysical is any thought system dependent on a transcendental signified, or a foundational truth upon which a whole hierarchy of meanings can be constructed, such as freedom, independence, and order. (Eagleton, 1996). Derrida (1976), however, demonstrates that transcendental meaning is a fiction, a product of particular systems of thought. For example, he deconstructs one such metaphysics of presence, speech, which in Western philosophy is privileged over writing because it is thought to be authentic and unmediated. He establishes that speech is just as mediated as writing and can even be said to be a form of

writing. Foundational truths are often defined by what they exclude, in binary opposition to other concepts and they come about in our desire for a center, an anchoring. As Eagleton (1996) remarks:

Sometimes such meanings are seen as the origin of all others, the source from which they flow...At other times such meanings may be seen not as the origin but as the goal, toward which all other meanings are or should be steadily marching...But any such theory of history or language as a simple linear evolution misses the web-like complexity of signs... (p. 114)

It is within discourse that words as well as other signifiers produce frameworks for understanding.

### **Discourse**

Although there have been many definitions of discourse, Barnes and Duncan (1992) describe the concept of discourse as it is used within poststructuralist theory:

It represents a clear break with earlier ahistorical categories of humanism and structuralism such as human nature, timeless meaning or universal rationality. Although structuralism successfully decenters the individual and, in this sense, is clearly a break with humanism (modernism), it is not fully a postmodern project in that it posits transhistorical structures underlying discourses (best seen in Levi-Strauss's work). Poststructural discourse theory, however, sees discourse as conventional and historical. It assumes that discourse, and the 'truths' that they construct, vary among cultural groups and among classes, races, gender-based or other groups, whose interests may clash. (p.8)

Discourses condition the meaning of words, which are deployed within a network of power/knowledge configurations, shaping particular assumptions, aims, choices, and practices. Discourses refer to all types of texts and their web-like complexity "constitutes our social and educational worlds" (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 8). This understanding of discourse is situated within my interaction with the

work of poststructuralist Michel Foucault (1972, 1973, 1981) and his influence on feminist cultural studies ( McNay, 1992; Sawicki, 1991; Weedon, 1997) and education research (Ball, 1990; Cherryholmes, 1988; Giroux,1988; Spanos, 1993; Usher & Edwards, 1994). Foucault's work concerns itself with the institutional effects of discourses and their role in the government of the individual subject. He describes the historical conditions that made it possible for certain representations of reality to dictate which kinds of statements come up as candidates for truth and what sorts of questions and answers were taken seriously (Sawicki, 1991). He analyzes how particular regimes of truth, formed by discursive practices, work to produce and maintain existing power relations. His investigations include how individuals are constituted and governed through the discursive practices of psychiatry, medicine, and the penal system.

According to Foucault, discursive practices are "a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operations of enunciative function" (1972, p.117). Discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p.49). So the object of discourse is constituted by a set of social practices. Discourse is "a system of possibility which makes a field of knowledge possible" (Usher & Edwards, 1994, p. 90). For example, education is not a given but a concept reinvented at different periods for different ends.



Discourses, however, are more than concepts; they constitute and operate on subjects. They constitute ways of knowing and being known, through the ordering of particular combinations of narratives, concepts, social practices, and ideologies, as they are relevant to a particular realm of social action (Barnes & Duncan, 1992). As explained by Foucault, this ordering can be called a discursive formation:

...whenever, between objects, types of statements, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regulatory (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation... (1972, p. 38)

Discourses are always part of a wider network of power relations, often most apparent in their material basis in institutional practices, such as the family, the school, and the hospital. McNay (1992) explains further:

...the discursive and the material are linked together in a symbiotic relationship. Foucault's most well known formulation of this symbiosis is the power/knowledge nexus. On the one hand, all knowledge is an effect of a specific regime of power and on the other hand, forms of knowledge constitute the social reality which they describe and analyze... The effects of the power/knowledge complex are relayed through different discourses... (p. 27)

Discourses shape the positioning of individuals in an institution, governing who can speak and act with authority, who is silenced, what can be said, and what remains unsaid; therefore, they exclude as well as include. The individual thus becomes the subject of discourse (how one thinks of oneself and acts) and subject to discourse (how one is acted upon and formed) and in the practice of doing so, discourses conceal their own invention (Foucault, 1972). For example, teachers can only speak and think of themselves as educators after they have

been subjected to the professional discourses that are in practice at the time. Art history “truths” are produced by individuals caught up and proficient in the discursive practices of their time. Usher & Edwards (1994) clarify the regulatory power of discourses:

Discourses ‘empower’ by creating subjects with certain capacities. But these very capacities also ‘disempower’ by objectifying subjects, making them subject to power. In this process, knowledge is an aspect of regulatory power which operates ‘externally’. At the same time, regulation can take the form of self-regulation, where knowledge is self-knowledge. At one level, this produces ‘empowered’ subjects: individuals who are empowered by learning and knowing more about themselves. However, subjects ‘disempower’ themselves in the very process of ‘self-empowerment’, because this very power of learning about oneself is also the condition for self-regulation; one learns the ‘limits’ of one’s own possibilities-- ‘limits’ which are a function of discourses rather than ‘natural’ factors. (p. 98)

Discourses are thus constraining as well as enabling; they constitute limits within which ideas and practices are considered to be natural or intelligible.

The structure of discursive practice, however, is not unified but constitutes subject positions that are defined in relationship to other discourses. Moreover, a discursive practice can offer more than one subject position and marginalization can create space to resist dominant subject positions. For example, Weedon (1997) discusses how feminist discourses lack the social power to realize their versions of knowledge in institutional practices, but they still offer the space to resist dominant subject positions of femininity within those practices. Often contradictions within or among discursive practices work as catalysts for change. Institutions thus become contested sites, where dominant discourses governing

the material practices of the institution can be challenged by less dominant discourses, transforming those practices.

Because this study is a critique of one course in art historical education, drawing on the experiences of teachers and students as they negotiate discourses about art, culture, and difference, I will attend to the play of power within language. Discourses about art, culture, and difference are situated and enable a set of effects, ideas about representation. As Eagleton (1991) explains, the linguistic revolution of the twentieth century has enabled a shift from thinking of words in terms of concepts to thinking of concepts in terms of words. That is we use words in particular ways to convey and disseminate concepts. Signs live in forms of social intercourse. The sign and the social situation are fused together, determining from within the form and structure of an utterance (Eagleton, 1991). Signs are thus an arena of struggle, being pulled this way and that by competing social interests, inscribed within a multiplicity of discourses. We thus must attend to the play of power within language itself. By examining how teachers and students negotiate art, culture, and difference and how these concepts intersect with discourses, we can begin to understand art history as cultural politics, disseminating narratives by which we understand ourselves and our relationship to others.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### **3.1 An Introduction**

Because this study conceives of art history as cultural politics, disseminating narratives by which we come to understand others and ourselves, it takes the teaching of art history as problematic. Art history education naturalizes the social organization of the discipline. That is art history education privileges ways in which knowledge about art, culture, and difference is constructed. By focusing on one art history class, in the midst of education reform, I look at the possibilities set into motion by the changes made to the curriculum. Thus my intention is to question the reform initiative and to see what hierarchies of knowledge are at work in the ways in which we see and understand art in this environment, and how these understandings have relevance to wider cultural experiences. Specifically, I seek to reveal the discursive practices that structure the teaching of art history and how such practices frame ways in which we participate in the world, how we see ourselves in relationship to others—that is issues of identity, or subjectivity.

As art historians at the site reform the curriculum for the betterment their

students, one must ask what values, understandings, and ways of knowing are being promoted, circulated, and silenced. Whatever discourses are getting institutionally sanctioned are powerful, leading to particular understandings about the world. Thus, inquiry into this reform initiative required that I understand the conditions that structure these practices for change and how they are situated in a network of discourses, humanistic and counter-humanistic discourses. Ultimately, what happens in the classroom also leads to ways of participating in the world and understanding our relationship to others.

### **3.2 From Knowledge to Narrative**

While embracing the postmodern problematic that there is a crisis in representation, that language cannot claim to reflect reality, I have asked myself how can I represent my research findings. Such reflexivity is necessary because writing is power. Writing creates understanding. As this statement expresses, representing the voices of others is more than recording them; it is about interpreting them. An interpretive turn consumes and clashes with the lived experiences of those being represented. As such, the realities of doing research leave me to ponder not only how to represent my research account but also how to situate my project and the voices of its participants.

Educators have long accepted the idea that we write to learn. When we put our thoughts onto paper, we begin to understand what we mean. Manipulating information creates understanding. We begin to see themes and patterns that further our meaning making. Wolcott (1988) urges researchers to

begin writing early about their fieldwork experiences; it helps to clarify and focus a project. Furthermore, Erickson (1986) also offers researchers advice in writing their accounts; he says, "The researcher has two aims in writing the report: to make clear to the reader what is meant by various assertions, and to display the evidentiary warrant for the assertions" (p. 149). Erickson's (1986) focus is thus on documenting, creating support for interpretations. By promoting expository writing, Erickson (1986), however, seems to avoid the messiness of social activity of research, its shifting and transformative nature. Documenting does not reflect the polysemic character of meaning making. Although Erickson (1986) promotes reflexivity, asking researchers to document how their perceptions change during the process of doing research, he does not acknowledge the literariness of the writing, that authors construct their subjects. Bruner (1990) offers up narrative as a valid way in which we can make meaning; he says we order experiences narratively. According to Packwood and Sikes (1996), "Lemarque (cited in Nash, 1991, p. 131) identified four common features of all kinds of narrative:

- (i) Narration of any kind involves the recounting and shaping of events...
- (ii) Narration has an essential temporal dimension...
- (iii) Narration imposes structure; it connects as well as records...
- (iv) Finally, for every narrative there is a narrator. (p. 337)

These characteristics of narrative help the researcher to envision the nature of qualitative work in conjunction with the politics of representing.

Researchers can only create partial and situated stories. As Britzman (1991) notes, "The telling of another's story is always a partial telling, bound not

only by one's perspective but also by the exigencies of what can and cannot be told. The narratives of lived experiences—the story, or what is told, and the discourse, or what structures how a story is told—are always selective, partial, and in tension” (p. 13). Data is not only interpreted and contextualized, but stories constructed around it are shaped by various theories. Form and content are thus inseparable. All research designs shape an account. Moreover, a research project is bounded by time, it is structured, connecting theory to practice and past to present, and it is constructed from a particular point of view. As I consider ways to write my research findings, I must acknowledge that the formats I choose limit my discussion. As a researcher, I employ particular methods to collect and analyze data; these choices locate my research within particular epistemological, ontological, and methodological communities.

### **3.3 Paradigmatic Assumptions**

As a researcher interested in postpositivist inquiry, my narrative is framed by poststructuralist paradigmatic assumptions. A paradigm is a worldview which defines the nature of the inquiry, the researcher's place within the research project, and her choice of methods. Derrida (1976) believes that reality is constituted within a social system of signs, such as language. But language is an unstable system because meanings never stay the same from context to context. Because language is filtered through the subjectivities of people and because we cannot stand outside of our subjectivities, the distinction between knower and known collapses and truth becomes situated. In such a view, my

own knowing is complicated by my own embodiments. As a researcher, I must then be sensitive to the nature of representation and power relations. First, I must acknowledge that my insight into the research site is framed within a network of discourses. The classroom itself is also not a stable site but another network of discursive practices and positionings. These layers will meet, intersect, conflict, contradict, move and shift. I must thus be careful not to subsume the play of difference and continually asking if it is possible to create, to use Scheurich's (1996) phrase, a "dialogic carnival" (p. 10) in the face of the poststructuralist problematic, the crisis of representation. That is to say, in my search for meaning, I must create a dialogue, situating my research narrative in relationship to commitments, social contexts, and conflicting discourses and I must admit that my research is about refashioning the contexts within which I practice.

### **3.4 Discourse Analysis**

According to concepts discussed by people practicing discourse analysis, language does more than reflect what it represents; it produces and constrains meaning. We cannot reveal the world or experience ourselves as outside of language. Language organized into discourses has the power to shape the ways in which people participate in the world. Reality and our subjectivities are thus socially constructed. Discourse analysis draws attention to the structuring effects of language. Discourse analysis draws into education the work of Michel Foucault (1972) and provides a way to critically look at the function of the



discipline of art history and its teaching. Such analysis is attentive to discursive structures, working to highlight assumptions framing art history and challenging its truth claims. As I have discussed, such art historians as Presiozi (1988) has identified how modernist and postmodernist discourses structures the discipline, effecting how it is practiced and understood.

According to Burman and Parker (1993), there are a variety of ways in which discourse research is being done; they say that it is very difficult to even speak about discourse analysis as a single entity, since this would blur together approaches subscribing to specific theoretical frameworks. What seems to be common among the methods, however, is that these approaches are united by their attention to the structuring effects of language and are associated with interpretive and reflexive styles of analysis. A consequence of these types of investigations is that questions of theory and method blur. In the case of this study, I am involved in a critique of both art historical methodology, that is its methods of interpretation, as well as how it is taught, that is how art, culture, and difference are understood in the classroom and how they are imbedded in discourses, intersecting with issues of representation, ideology, and authorship. Methodologies influence our understanding of concepts. Furthermore, the attention given to context and content, as discussed by such art historians as Bryson, Holly, and Moxey (1994), reminds us of the importance of reflexivity, rendering interpretation to evaluation. In the case of this study, reflexivity accounts for the participation of the researcher within the research process,

drawing attention to power relations in the research. As Burman and Parker (1993) explains:

Focusing on meaning construction and the relationship between systems of meaning can facilitate an understanding of relationships between researcher and the researched. This emphasis on the contradictions between discourses as well as their internal construction helps to theorize the functions they play within the social practices that give rise to them. (p. 8-9)

Discourse analysis is thus used to comment on social processes that maintain structures of domination and oppression. Because discourse analysis facilitates an accounting of knowledge claims, a critique of practice, and a transformation of our understanding of methodology, it could possibly be used to intervene in the ways in which art history constructs our understandings of art, culture, and difference.

### **3.4.1 The Framing of Discourse Analysis**

My use of discourse analysis draws on the work of Foucault (1972). According to Shumway (1993), Foucault uses a number of strategies to understand the past as well as different systems of thought. His strategies are not truth claims; they do not pretend to raise themselves to the level of theoretical principles. These strategies can be thought of as a way to attend to how discourses are constructed. They are then methodological. Foucault (1972) mentions four methodologies: reversal, discontinuity, specificity, and exteriority.

Reversal is an action. As Shumway (1992) explains, "When tradition gives us a particular interpretation of an event or an historical development, Foucault's strategy is to work out the implications of the reverse or opposite

interpretation. The strategy of reversal tells Foucault what to look for by pointing to the simple existence of the other side.” (p. 15)

Discontinuity is related to reversal. As described by Shumway (1992), “...the strategy of discontinuity is noting that continuity is one of the basic, positive assumptions of discourse. We tend to assume continuity is everywhere: in authors’ oeuvres; in the historical development of a contemporary object or state of affairs; in the relationship between thought or language, on the one hand, and the world or reality they represent, on the other.” (p. 18) Foucault (1972) looks for ruptures, breaks, shifts, and interruptions in his treatment of history. For example, tradition historical writing is often evolutionary, describing the progressive improvement of the world. Major changes in the world comes about through the accumulation of smaller changes. Shumway (1992) notes that Foucault assumes the opposite; he looks for discontinuities in history and does not apply causal explanations for their emergence. Both reversal and discontinuity can be applied to this study by looking at the limitations of particular discourses, such as the discourses of humanism or multiculturalism. Both are traditionally portrayed as progressive. Instead we must reverse our thinking about these discourses. They may not necessarily be progressive. We must evaluate them by looking to see how they impact the discipline of art history to answer particular political and social needs. What codes of domination and oppression are enacted through these discourses? We must look at how art

history gets reinvented at different times for different ends and what are the unintended consequences of the ways in which it is practiced.

Specificity speaks to the formations of discourses, attending to the features that distinguish one discourse from another. As Shumway relates,

This strategy begins with the reversal of our common assumption that discourse is a more or less accurate representation of a nondiscursive reality. Foucault begins rather with the assumption that discourse is a violence that we do to things, a practice we impose on them. The world itself is not assumed to have its own expression, which we can translate into our own language. Madness, for example, cannot be understood apart from some particular discourse. That is why we cannot write the history of psychiatry as the changing methods of treating or otherwise dealing with a definite phenomenon characterized always by the same patterns of behavior. Madness is something different in each specific discourse, in spite of whatever behavior consistencies might be discovered among its representations in different historical periods. (1992, p. 21)

I look at how the practices of art history today draw on various discourses, creating different effects. Specifically, I look for how various discourses of art, culture, and difference compete with alternative versions and how they construct the field of art history in relationship with how we create ways of understanding ourselves and others.

The last strategy is exteriority and it has to do with the idea that there is no deeper meaning to discourse. As described by Shumway (1992),

To look at the exterior of discourse is to treat it as unmotivated or unintentional, rather than to attempt to discover a rational or irrational cause...Foucault's strategy of exteriority is to look for the 'conditions of existence' of discourse...The conditions of existence come in two varieties. The first is a function of the discourse itself. Foucault argues that within any system of discourse only certain statements are possible. To describe the conditions of existence of a discourse at this level is to seek to understand the range of possible statements that the discourse

can produce. Foucault gives the name archaeology to this project. On another level, however, the conditions of existence of a discourse are external to it in the sense that they are social conditions. Such conditions include how the right to speak is governed within a discourse, or when it is appropriate to speak in this discourse. These conditions are governed by the role the discourse plays in the relations of power in society. Foucault will use the word genealogy to describe this approach to the conditions of discourse. (p. 23-24)

This study is closer to Foucault's concept of genealogy, but it is about contemporary practice. I am not only interested in what statements get produced in the practices of art history in a particular course but also how these statements are used by teachers and students to construct their understandings of art, culture, and difference. The focus is thus on the storied nature of art, culture, and difference—that is how objects (art, culture, and difference) get constructed in discourses and how subjects positions get constructed in this talk—that is how we experience ourselves when we talk and when we hear others talk about art, culture, and difference.

### **3.5 The Construction of A Plan for Analysis**

I will draw on my research project to describe how I conducted it, my motivation for it, and how the analysis took place. I will focus on the method of analysis here. My research project is a case study of one art history course that investigates Asian art, particularly from India, China, and Japan. The class was called, *The Survey of Far Eastern Art* and it was offered in spring quarter in 1999. The class was listed as a possible elective under the university's mandate on diversity. The university offers a number of courses to increase cultural understanding among its students and this course was one. Furthermore, the

class was undergoing education reform. Art historians in the department were collecting assessment data to understand how students were constructing knowledge, and in order to reform the curriculum. These historians had created a set of CD ROMs that enabled active inquiry and had hired an education consultant to conduct an assessment of their use in motivating understanding of the content of the class. I was the consultant on this project.

My understanding of assessment is that it is a method of gathering data on people and programs for the purpose of making an evaluation. In an education environment, assessment helps to measure student achievement, set goals, restructure curriculum, and institute reform. According to Beattie (1997), the least well understood aspects of assessment are how it is used to improve classroom instruction, empower students, heighten student interest and motivation, and provide teachers with ongoing feedback on student progress. The art historians who had created the CD ROMs were interested in how this technology could influence these later aspects, gathering data on how it improved instruction, facilitated student empowerment, and influenced student achievement.

### **3.5.1 A Discourse Analysis of the Classroom**

One of the features of my dissertation project was that I was able to collect different types of material related to the class. As the education consultant for the assessment project, I attended every class, collecting a range of discursive material, including recordings of various sessions, weekly journal entries from

students, examinations, and projects. I also had the opportunity to interview students, some individually and some collectively, and the instructor of the class. Being a member of the assessment team allowed me to gather data for my dissertation, which focuses on conducting a critique. As a researcher interested in the art history classroom as an institutionalized arena for the construction of identity, I believe that concepts of art, culture, and difference help to create narratives by which we understand others and ourselves. These terms, art, culture, and difference, were chosen because the content of the course as well as the participants focused on these concepts. I thus looked for patterns in the use of language associated with art, culture, and difference, and traced its social effects, how we understand others and ourselves.

My research questions are:

1. What educational choices and practices are used in the classroom?
2. What discourses make these practices possible?
3. What consequences do such practices have?

As such, I devised a plan that analyzed the data in relationship to these questions. Fairclough (1995) offers an analytic framework by which to perform discourse analysis, connecting method to practice. He asserts that discourse analysis explores the tensions between two aspects of language use, the socially shaped and the socially constituted. If I understand that language use, in the form of discourse, is a mode of action and that it is historically situated, I begin to understand that discourses shape identity, social relations, and systems of

knowledge and that these in turn sustain a variety of competing discourses. As such, discursive practices must be seen in relationship to wider societal and cultural processes to investigate how they shaped relations of power.

### **Stage 1: Identifying a Text**

Fairclough (1995) relates that each discursive event has three dimensions: a text, an instance of discourse practice, and a piece of social practice. A text interweaves ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings. These domains are defined respectively as the representation of the world, the constitution of identities of participants and the social relationships between them, and the distribution of foregrounded versus backgrounded information. So my first step is to answer the question: what educational choices are being made in the classroom? Educational choices can be considered text. As such, I made a list of keywords and phrases related to art, culture, and difference<sup>8</sup> and the related issues of representation, ideology, and authorship. I searched for these words in interactions in the classroom, in transcriptions and recordings of interviews, and in documents, such as examinations, handouts, and journal entries. I then read the surrounding text for relevance, copying it, and coding it. This procedure is not an analysis but a preliminary step to analysis, making the task more manageable. This step required that I pay attention to details and variations in the text. Detail and variation are of course related to Foucault's

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<sup>8</sup> These keywords emerged out of practices surrounding the classroom—the texts, the instructor's lectures, and the students' conversations.



methods of specificity and discontinuity. As Potter and Wetherall (1994) explain, the variation in accounts that people give is more important than consistency. It points to difference. As such, I was attentive to rupture, breaks, and shifts in how art history is being practice, and how teachers and students within the survey course talked about art, culture, and difference. These differences helped to identify the specific discourses that enable such talk or practice. Questions that structured my activity include those suggested by Potter and Wetherall (1994): Why is this text this way and not that way? Why do these words and phrases appear rather than others? Specifically, I examined the diversity action plan, textbook, the CD ROMs, and the assessment tasks created by the educators at the site, the educators' practices and conversations, and a number of students' works and conversations<sup>9</sup>. The focus was on written texts, however, because they helped to construct what gets privileged in the classroom. Teachers and students and their conversations were also examined for any resistance to dominant discourses circulated by the written texts.

## **Stage 2: How is the Text Shaped by Discourses?**

Fairclough (1995) explains discourse practice as a concern with aspects of text production and interpretation. This aspect of language use leads to my second question: What discourses make these practices possible? As Foucault (1972) and Potter and Wetherall (1994) note, talking and writing is constructed out of discourses. Foucault (1972) has related that discourses can be seen as

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<sup>9</sup> Students in this study were a lesser focus.

resources that we borrow and shape for our own purposes. When we borrow discourses, they carry more with them than we think. They function in the world, constructing objects and subjects. Thus, talk has many functions other than transmitting information. How are subjects positioned by the text? Who can talk? What can be said? I analyzed how each text is embedded in discourses that affect how we participate in the world-- how these structure signification that constructs social relations in and through power. I focused on what discourses are included and excluded, how they are different from each other, and how discourses shape subjectivity. I asked what problems are presupposed by the statements made and what solutions are being offered in response. Such questions helped to construct what sense participants are making of their experiences in the classroom. This activity also revealed the rhetorical nature of discourse (Potter and Wetherall, 1994). Discourses organize arguments and in their design undermine alternatives.

### **Stage 3: What are the Consequences of Such Talk?**

Lastly, Fairclough (1995) explains that all discursive events have a social practice, a reference to social-institutional contexts. How a discourse is socially constitutive (exteriority) relates to my third research question: what consequences do such practices have? I asked what social conditions are constructed by particular discourses-- that is how do they perpetuate and justify the social status quo, and how do they transform the status quo. I analyzed the data, looking for justifications and excuses made by the arguments proposed.

For example, if particular discourses (specificity) structure our talk about art, culture, and difference are said to be more progressive than others, we must reverse (reversal and discontinuity) our thinking about these, looking at how they create possibilities and limitations (exeriority) for how we participate in the world. How do discourses fix ideological stances? How do they render intelligible the ways in which society works, organizes, and justifies ideas?

Fairclough's (1995) description of the dimensions of a discursive event intersects with Foucault's methodology. By describing how texts represent, constitute social relationships, and distribute information, how discourse practices involve the production of knowledge, and how social practice are enacted within institutional contexts, Fairclough (1995) speaks to the nature of discourse. As Foucault (1972) explains, discourse is a structure that produces activity, transforming subjects into producers of discourse and products of discourse. So, specifically, Fairclough framework speaks to exteriority, relating discourse to social practice.

### **3.6 Validity Issues**

Positivist social science asserts that research can establish value-free, objective truth if proper scientific methods are followed (Polkinghorne, 1983). Validity has traditionally been that set of research practices that guarantee objectivity, separating acceptable research from research that is unacceptable. Even within postpositivism, there is talk of legitimacy. Lather (1986) discusses, "research in a postpositivist context mandates a self-corrective element to

prevent phenomena from being forced into preconceived interpretive schemes.”

(p. 65) Rigor establishes data credibility for openly ideological and interpretivist programs. Lather (1986) offers a number of methods by which to establish trustworthiness-- triangulation, construct validity, face validity, and catalytic validity<sup>10</sup>. She describes triangulation as “expand(ing) beyond the psychometric definition of multiple measures to include multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical schemes, and seek(ing) counterpatterns as well as convergences.” (p. 67) Construct validity is “a ceaseless confrontation with the experiences of people in their daily lives in order to stymie the tendency to theoretical imposition which is inherent in theoretically guided empirical work.” (Ibid.) Face validity is the practice of member checks, “recycling analysis back through respondents.” (Ibid.) Catalytic validity refers to “the degree to which the research process re-orientes, focuses, and energizes participants...so that respondents gain self-understanding...” (Ibid.)

Poststructuralism poses a direct challenge to even this reworking of validity (Scheurich, 1996). Research accounts can no longer be seen as a reflection of what has happened at the site but they must be seen as representations involved in discursive configurations deployed within a power/knowledge network; texts can no longer be seen as reflecting but must be seen as inscribing. So the question becomes how does one reformulate validity that respects the play of difference in language-- the play of difference in

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<sup>10</sup> Moving away from the site of my project did not allow me to analyze my data in relationship to

subjectivity. Haraway (1991) has already offered a possibility; researchers must be reflexive about their partial views, must situate their practices, and must trouble their master narrative schemes. Similarly, Scheurich (1996) says that researchers must formulate themselves as “other”, again situating themselves in the text in relationship to their respondents, again troubling their narratives. And Lather (1994) offers us transgressive validities, such as ironic validity, that trouble our easy knowledge productions-- again by foregrounding the insufficiencies of language and the problematics of representation and working against the constraints of authority via multiple openings.

### **3.6.1 Validity as A Situated Product**

McLaren (1992) states that researchers must “situate and analyze field research as textual strategies and discursive practices that ineluctably are entangled within larger structures of power and privilege.” (p.78) Not being able to directly capture lived experience, validity becomes problematized. Scheurich (1996) challenges us to new imaginings of validity that celebrates the play of multiplicity. He recommends that “difference can be achieved through dialogue and collaboration between the researcher and Other.” (p.9) But such a positioning also becomes problematic because of the relational nature of language. Because of the indeterminate ambiguity of the interpretive moment, Scheurich (1995) notes that researchers must highlight the baggage that they bring to the research enterprise. Thus I needed to locate myself as researcher in

the traditions of qualitative research, confront my political selves, be conscious of some of my interpretive frames, design a flexible guide for collecting data, address representation, and be open to what can be said within the local moment. This required that I see myself in relationship to participants and position myself in my research story. Such a stance however did not dismiss my responsibility to participants.

### **3.6.2 Triangulation: Multiple Methods, Multiple Data Sources, and Multiple Schemes**

I have three groups of data sources: texts that frame the classroom, interviews and observations of the educator, and interviews, observations, and artifacts of students. Firstly, I looked at the discourses that educators, including myself, draw upon to participate in the curriculum. Many of these discourses were liberal humanist conceptions of art, culture, and difference. Others were interruptive discourses. Secondly, I historicized these discourses, looking at how they relate to a network of possibilities. Lastly, I identified the material effects of these discourses. Using this approach to validity, I generated interactive, contextual methods, which searched for pattern and meaning, and I negotiated these meanings through self-reflexive strategies. Thus, instead of a model of communication that is closed, privileged, and compromised, you have one that is open, positioned, and negotiated. Because our research accounts can only be constructions, made up from language, meaning, and ideas that are historically and culturally situated, it became important to see myself as a partial observer,

telling a partial tale and indicating how social relations limit and shape my interpretations (Jones, 1992).

### **3.6.3 Construct Validity**

I position my representation as a case study within a poststructural theoretical frame. I am openly ideological about my leanings. I have worked at my site for two years, taking the time to talk with many of the educators and students about their experiences and sharing my own. I started a journal and tracked my study, noting the changes that occur, the problems that I encountered, and the tensions within practice. I also watched to make sure my theoretical framings did not overwhelm the logic of the data.

### **3.6.4 Self-Reflexivity**

I believe that self-reflexivity is limited. I was not be able to foreground all the baggage I carry as a researcher, but I believe it was an important starting point to look at myself as a partial and embodied viewer. I was able to describe some of the power relations that limit the shaping of my narrative, trying thus to see myself in relation to participants, the ethics and politics of my practice, and tensions inherent to language. That is I discuss the constructedness of the narrative. Since the purpose of my study was to map the discourses through which educators and students create strategies for teaching and learning, I was confronted by the limiting and constricting nature of my gaze-- I was mindful of how researchers all deploy relations of power through their choices and actions and construct and embody values through their

framings. The design of my study also foregrounds constraints of authority. For example, I am using multiple sources/discourses not because I feel I will be in a better position to get at the "real" but because I feel that multiple sources/discourses helps to see how differently the "real" is constituted-- hopefully opening up possibilities. Thus, as Lather (1994) advises, authority comes from engagement in the field and reflexivity rather than canonical objectivity.

### **3.6.5 Ironical Validity**

Taking on Lather's (1993) suggestion to "gesture toward the problematics of representation" (p. 685), I framed the project within the discourses of poststructuralism and discuss the insufficiency of language.



## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Because this study conceives of art history as cultural politics, disseminating narratives by which we come to understand others and ourselves, it takes the teaching of art history as problematic. Art history education naturalizes the social organization of the discipline. That is art history education privileges ways in which knowledge about art, culture, and difference is constructed. By focusing on one art history class, in the midst of education reform, I look at the possibilities set into motion by the changes made to the curriculum and ask if we can create better practice. Thus my intention is to question the reform initiative and to see what hierarchies of knowledge are at work in the ways in we see and understand art in this environment, and how these understandings have relevance to wider cultural experiences. Specifically, I seek to reveal the discursive practices that structure the teaching of art history and how such practices frame ways in which we participate in the world, how we see ourselves in relationship to others—that is issues of identity, or rather subjectivity.

I define identity as the ability to talk about ourselves in a variety of ways, which can include process, change, and contradiction. I do not embrace identity as a conscious sense of self. Foucault (1972) however uses the word “subjectivity” to talk about the processes of becoming a person. As Danaher, Schirato, & Webb (2000) explain:

Foucault rejects this idea of the self-governing subject, pointing out that what comes between ourselves and our experiences is the grounds upon which we can act, speak and make sense of things. For Foucault, one of the most significant forces shaping our experiences is language. Try to come up with a thought, or make sense of an experience, without using language to do so. We not only use language to explain our ideas and feelings to others, we use it to explain things to ourselves. (p. 31)

We are constituted as subjects through social processes that bring us into being as subjects. Identity should thus be understood as discursive, language in action. Identity is constructed through discursive practices that produce that which it names through the citation of conventions and norms.

Often, identity is thought to be a universal essence of the self that is then expressed through language—a humanistic discourse. Many cultural researchers, including Clifford Geertz (2001), have, however, questioned this assumption. They argue that identity is not a fixed entity but changeable in relationship to social and cultural contexts. For example, the value for the uniqueness of self so central to American society is not shared by cultures that understand self as inseparable from social obligations and kinship relations. As such, this study’s broader concern is with how identity or subjectivity can be

understood as a situated product, constituted by a range of social processes--discursive formations and statements that get referred to again and again.

A historical subject who brings about change is, however, an effect of power and learning itself is discursive, embodying a range of historically constructed values. As art historians at the site of this study reform the curriculum for the betterment their students, one must ask what values, understandings, and ways of knowing are being promoted, circulated, and silenced. Whatever discourses are getting institutionally sanctioned are powerful, leading to particular understandings about the world. Thus, inquiry into this reform initiative requires understanding the conditions that structure these practices for change and how they are situated in a network of discourses, humanistic and counter-humanistic. Ultimately, what happens in the classroom also leads to ways of participating in the world and understanding our relationship to others.

#### **4.2 Mandate on Diversity**

As I mentioned previously, the survey course in Asian art history is offered in relationship to increasing students' understanding of cultural relations through an engagement with issues on diversity. As such, it is important to look at how those involved in setting policy agendas for the university understand these issues. The university's diversity action plan (see Appendix A) states that diversity:

- Enriches the educational experience by providing students with the opportunity to learn from individuals who differ from them.

- Promotes personal growth and a healthy society by challenging stereotyped preconceptions, encouraging critical thinking and helping students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds.
- Strengthens communities and the workplace by preparing students for citizenship in an increasingly complex, pluralistic society, and fostering mutual respect and teamwork.
- Enhances the country's economic competitiveness by effectively developing and using the talents of all citizens. (Diversity Action Plan, 1999, p. 1)

The language of valuing diversity seems essential to the mission of university, both in its work of research, teaching, and service and in its vision of developing students who can work effectively in a society that will continue to grow in cultural and ethnic complexity. The document describes how the university should appreciate the societies from which students come and to which they will go after their education. It implies that students will be enriched if the university helps them receive what others have to contribute in ideas, values, and perspectives, strengthened through the promotion of people of different races, ethnicities, religions, sexes, sexual orientations, physical abilities, or socio-economic status, and transformed into people who value each other and their community over their preconceived notions and stereotypes. The document further demonstrates that the goal of diversity cannot be meaningfully achieved unless the university implements its efforts at the levels of transformation and social action. Ancillary programs and recruitment efforts are not enough, but rather a central commitment supportive of all people is needed.

#### **4.2.1 Words and Phrases Related to Culture, Difference, and/or Art**

Since discourse analysis deals with language in use, this text can be understood as a means by which to do things. In other words, this text situates language use in the interaction of the art history classroom. The terms culture and difference enable teachers and students to talk about diversity and relate it to concepts of art. It is not a matter of attaching labels to already existing objects. The point is that the language itself creates what it refers to—it enables and constrains the expression of certain ideas, relating language to practice, and constituting aspects of society and the people within it. Of course, the cited text will combine with discourses used by teachers and students in the classroom and will be interpreted through these discourses. Participants in the classroom may resist, contest, or struggle with these terms.

As Fairclough (1995) explains, every text is a representation of the world, constitutes the identities of participants and the social relationships between them, and foregrounds information. The diversity action plan foregrounds information by constructing arguments for why we should engage with diversity. I identify three categories defined by the plan by asking what sorts of arguments construct solutions for why we should engage with diversity. In relationship to the data, these categories emerged as the social, psychological, and representational. The category of the social includes the articulation of changes in social realities that students need to be taught to cope with or change—demographics, workforce, global economy, and inequities. Throughout the

document, the committee predicts population trends, discusses changing profiles among faculty, highlights skills needed for the workplace such as the development of critical thinking strategies and competitiveness, and how even though the university has made progress, inequities are still rampant. An example of these changes in social realities is cited in the diversity action plan (1999):

One of the greatest challenges facing colleges and universities today involves creating and maintaining a campus community that reflects the rich diversity of this country. This committee recognizes that this is a much a problem at The Ohio State University as elsewhere. In 1996, the institutions of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (Big Ten universities plus the University of Chicago) reaffirmed their commitment to this goal. This commitment was made in recognition of both the importance of educating students to live and work in an increasingly diverse society and the historical exclusion of women and minorities from various academic disciplines and occupations. These universities recognized that not continuing aggressive efforts dedicated to this goal would result in the exacerbation of this country's historic problem and the deprivation of future generations of the knowledge of the significant contributions that can be made by women and minorities to all professions and occupations. (p. 1)

In the literature on multicultural education, arguments are made that with the increased growth of people of color, schools must contend with the differing needs of these populations, workplaces must enable them to be effective competitors in a global economy, and society must reform institutional and structural constraints on those competing for resources, both economical and cultural (Banks, 1991,1992; Sleeter,1992).

The category of the psychological is an articulation of the need to change students' behavior and thinking and includes a discussion of different learning

styles, a lack of appreciation for other cultures, intolerance, stereotypes, and a feeling of powerlessness. As cited in the diversity action plan (1999):

Professor Patricia Gurin of the University of Michigan showed that all students learn better when the learning occurs in a setting where students interact and exchange ideas with others who are different from them. She found that racially and ethnically diverse classrooms and classes that deal with cultural differences allow students to grow intellectually through challenging long-held beliefs and ideas. Her research challenges the common belief that benefits of diversity accrue primarily to racial minorities. (p. 20)

According to the literature on multicultural education, psychological dispositions of dominant and marginalized groups are targeted (Banks, 1991, 1992; Sleeter, 1992). Structural critiques, such as white privilege, racism, and sexism, are used to describe dominant groups as lacking an appreciation for other cultures, as buying into stereotypes, and as being intolerant. Marginalized groups are described as having different learning styles and lacking social and educational skills to succeed in dominant environments.

The category of the representational includes a discussion of how curriculum and other structures can construct ways of preventing respect or knowledge of difference and includes tokenism, patriarchy, and euro-centricism.

As cited in the report:

Numerous studies and reports focused on diversity and campus climate have been issued over the years, and virtually all have come to the same conclusion; change was necessary. What has been lacking, however, is the university's commitment to create real and measurable change. There has not been an official, university-wide implementation/action plan with identified goals, and concrete strategies for achieving them. The inevitable consequence of this inaction is a university environment that both perpetuates racism, sexism and homophobia and gives privilege to white, heterosexual males. (p. 3)

The literature (Banks, 1991, 1992, Sleeter, 1992) argues that the curriculum omits minority perspectives and history, the classroom perpetuates limited ways of knowing, and society circulates negative portrayals of difference.

#### **4.2.2 How is the Text Shaped by Discourses?<sup>11</sup>**

##### **Multicultural Discourses**

The statements made in the university's diversity action plan are embedded in multicultural discourses. McCarthy (1993) states that multiculturalism is a particular historical conjuncture of relations among the state, contending minority and majority groups, educators, and policy intellectuals. She discusses three dominant discourses that structure the statements that can be made within multiculturalism, those of cultural understanding, cultural competence, and cultural emancipation (Ibid, 1993). McCarthy (1993) explains cultural understanding is that which is inscribed at the university to improve communications among different ethnic groups. Cultural competence refers to how cultural pluralism should have a central place in the curriculum, and cultural emancipation contends that schooling can boost success, both academically and economically, for minority students. I have been able to identify these discourses of understanding, competence, and pluralism within the university's diversity action plan.

The discourses that structure the talk of diversity have social implications.

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<sup>11</sup> This question is a rewording of my original research question "what discourses make these practices possible?"



For example, according to McCarthy (1993) the discourse of cultural understanding assumes the position of cultural relativism. Ethnic differences are to be accepted and recognized. At first, this construct seems progressive. This particular discourse dominates the language used in the university's diversity action plan and has led to courses, such as this art history class, where students investigate the cultures of people making up society in America. Such classes are also believed to facilitate cultural competence and are assumed to help create parity, as student Ralph<sup>12</sup> explains,

The reason I took this class is because I am not interested in European art as much. I have taken such classes. I have seen it all because we are pretty much raised up on it. There is more to life and the world that just that, so I took this to become more educated in the things that are not really focused on...I am ignorant on the subject of India for example. So I did not know much going in and now I understand it. It is a large melting pot of different beliefs and it is not all just one religion and one culture, or one form of art. It is a whole bunch of different ones. (personal communication, 1999)

The investigation of African-American, Latino, Native American, and Asian culture counterbalance the study of, for example, German, Irish, and Italian cultures. Cultural relativism, however, appropriates difference, reducing it to sameness. It does not consider the relational quality of identity--that our experiences of the world are racialized, genderized, and sexualized.

A second emphasis, mentioned by the action plan, is stereotyped preconceptions. This particular phrase is mentioned only once and totally eclipsed by the dominant discourses of cultural understanding and cultural

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<sup>12</sup> Pseudonyms were chosen for all participants in the study.

competence. The investigation of stereotypes speaks to cultural emancipation. According to McCarthy (1993), the believe is that if students are exposed to knowledge about minority history and achievement, dissonance would disappear and achievement would occur. Such study in conjunction with the investigation of stereotypes assumes to enhance minority opportunities for success because it deals with the students' language and cultural experiences and lessens cultural taboos through mutual experience and understanding. A student, Jin, speaks to this:

I have taken art history courses before but they have been about western art. I have not seen any Asian art and I am from Asia. I should know something...I wish I had taken this class before going back to Korea. I would be able speak about some things. When I went, I would get tired and look at something and be like "let us go." Now I am sure I would be able to go there and actually appreciate it and know the meaning behind it. I think people should be open to other cultures instead of just being ethno-centric... Sometimes, I see other people, especially this one friend who does not want to eat anything if she does not know what it is. I think being open-minded about cultures and being exposed to them prevent racism and stuff. (personal communication, 1999)

These discourses stress attitudinal models of reform (McCarthy, 1993), pasting over contradictions associated with identity and instead promoting content addition. Identity seems to be understood as static and essentialist, a matter of physical and cultural traits. Minority groups are thus defined as homogeneous.

#### **4.2.3 What are the Consequences of Such Talk?<sup>13</sup>**

##### **Humanistic Discourses vs. Counter Humanistic Discourses**

Throughout this analysis, the problems dealt with by multicultural education are conceptualized as part of a complex system that includes the political, the historical, and the economical. Layered across the three types of problems, I have identified in the action plan, is a network of discourses that uphold multicultural education as a humanistic project. As Britzman (1991) reminds us, it is “through critique we are made able to challenge what Michael Foucault terms ‘regimes of discourse,’ or the authoritatively sanctioned and conventionally taken-for-granted ways of understanding, speaking, and acting” (p. 17). Privileging specific traditions of knowledge over others relates to how relations of power are at work—it limits what can be said and done. For example, in the social category, difference is represented as a problem. The action plan’s remedy is to provide the skills needed to compete in the world, a discourse of meritocracy. As Butler (1993) explains, understandings get sedimented into a norm or a set of norms and have material consequences. A discourse of meritocracy sediments into a belief in equal opportunity and an unwillingness to examine privileges, values, or practices. Within the category of the psychological, discourses of inclusion and individualism are privileged. One can offset the acceptance of stereotypes or intolerance by including minority perspectives and enabling individual growth through sharing. The discourse of

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<sup>13</sup> This question is a rewording of my original research question “what are the consequences of such

inclusion encourages the trivialization of difference. Counter discourses to humanism are found in the representational category, such as structural critique. Interrogating representations, such as the circulation of negative portrayals of difference or a challenge to the idea that knowledge is objective, become silenced when they come up against those of inclusion, meritocracy, and individualism.

As Schön (1993) explains, “When we become attentive to the framing of social problems, we thereby become aware of conflicting frames” (p.139). Problems are not a given but constructed by people out of various discourses to make sense of complex social situations. Things are selected for attention from this complexity, setting the direction for action. As Schön (1993) describes, the process of naming and framing problems creates a leap from data to recommendations, from facts to values. The diversity action plan is embedded in humanistic discourses, such as inclusion, meritocracy, and individualism, and obscures counter humanistic discourses of structural critique. This project thus is, to use Mirzoeff’s (2002) metaphor about “ghostwriting,” to make visible/intelligible those things rendered invisible/unintelligible by dominant discourses and structures, such as humanism. I am particularly interested in how art historical content in these classrooms is made intelligible and how discursive formations create the conditions for intelligibility.

### **4.3 The Textbook**

The textbook used by the students for the survey was Sherman E. Lee's *The History of Far Eastern Art* (1994). The book is a 550-page study of the major artistic traditions of Asia, including those of India, China, and Japan, and their influences from and on neighboring traditions. The book is organized chronologically, in which patterns of stylistic development are traced and interpreted. Emphasis is placed on Indian sculpture and architecture, Chinese and Korean painting and ceramics, and Japanese painting and decorative art, with functional and material considerations. Sculpture is a focus when Lee (1994) discusses religious art. Furthermore, Lee (1994) provides historical, political, and social contexts for artistic development in each chapter and identifies methods by which to study Asian art, which includes formal issues, conceptual issues, and philosophical and other contextual issues. The book is considered the only one of its scope in the English language, covering art from the fifth millennium B.C.E. to about 1850 C.E.

#### **4.3.1 Words and Phrases Related to Culture, Difference, and/or Art**

Again because discourse analysis deals with language in use, this text can be understood as a means by which to do things. In other words, this document situates language use in the interaction of the art history classroom. The teachers and students talked about cultural objects of Asian societies in relation to concepts of art, culture, and difference. The language used creates what it refers to—it enables and constrains those in the classroom and their

expression of certain ideas, relating language to practice, and constituting aspects of society and the people within it. Of course, the texts will combine with discourses used by those in the classroom and will be interpreted through these discourses. Educators and students may resist, contest, or struggle with these terms.

The text foregrounds information by constructing arguments for why we should engage with the cultural objects of Asia. The textbook helps to frame the class and disseminates a way of engaging with the artistic and cultural traditions of three civilizations, India, China, and Japan. Again, I identify categories of problems defined by the text by asking what sorts of arguments construct solutions. These categories are again the social, psychological, and representational and emerged from analyzing the text. I specifically focused on the introductory chapters because they construct the direction Lee (1994) takes in approaching Asian art. The category of the social includes the articulation of social realities—structural constraints such as cultural beliefs and differences, religious beliefs and their movements, and the development of traditions allow one to understand the context of a particular society's art. Lee (1994) takes great care in accounting for differences among societies:

...Asia is not one but many. It is a collection of peoples, of geographic areas, and, finally, of cultures. Each has its own assumptions, its own views and uses of art. There are, of course, influences and counter-influences; there are interweaving patterns derived from the spread of religions, from migrations of people, and from the effects of trade and

commerce. We are, then, confronted in Asia with many different entities.  
(p. 18)

The psychological category is an articulation of why students should study the arts of Asia and includes a discussion of a lack of knowledge and appreciation for Asian cultures. For example, Lee's (1994) book begins with a preface, which introduces the reader to the need for a survey text and the nature of art historical study of the arts of Asian cultures. Lee makes this plain:

A general introduction to Far eastern art, although it is apt to be doomed by the results of new research and wider knowledge, has been badly needed; the usefulness and succession of comparable surveys of Western art have underscored this lack in regard to the art of the Orient. Interest alone demands a launching pad, however unstable, to the higher reaches of specialized knowledge; and scholarship needs occasional broad panoramas to modify or correct, thus automatically providing grounds for new locations of the framework or new directions for the vehicle. It is, in my opinion, more important for the layman or the beginning art historian first to know the place of great Indian sculpture or Chinese painting in the art of the Far East, and of the world, then to begin studying those contributions mainly as documents of the national histories or the religion of their respective areas. (1994, p. 7)

The category of the representational argues for a way of representing art and culture and includes a critique of how difference has been understood. First, Lee begins the text with a critique of a romantic view of Asia:

...the idea that the cultures of Asia are one, that there exists such a thing, for example, as the "Oriental mind," or that all peoples of these regions are united by a highly developed metaphysical approach to life, is false. In his many writings Ananda Coomaraswamy developed with great insistence the view that Chinese, Japanese, and Indian artists all worked within a single metaphysical framework. This attitude is understandable, even though it is biased. Asian countries, remote from far Western centers of culture and evolving in isolation from all but superficial contacts with them, were ravished by adventurers who represented only an unfortunate aspect of the Western world. Such intrusions made Asians particularly aware of their traditional ideals. They forgot the discrepancies, the contrasts, and the multiple factors that were also a part of their heritage and spoke only of what they treasured most and liked to believe was their unique

contribution, in contrast to the assumed aggressive materialism of the West. (1994, p. 18)

Moreover, the category also represents theories of knowledge by which art and culture get circulated. Lee (1994) uses a particular methodology stylistic development to make Asian art visible, accessible, and understandable. He says:

...a broad view, especially of style, is of the greatest importance in recognizing that the art of the Orient, like that of the Occident, is not a special, unique, and isolated manifestation. Related art forms appear on an international stage as often as isolated national styles develop on a contracted geographic stage. Seen in this light, without romantic mystery as well as without the paraphernalia of esoteric scholarship, the art of eastern Asia seems to me more readily understandable, more sympathetic, more human. (1994, p. 7)

#### **4.3.2 How Are the Texts Shaped by Discourses?**

##### **The Survey Itself**

The survey itself is a discursive configuration that shapes art historians and their teaching and is regulated by what can be said within a set of stable relationships between people and objects. Matthews (1995), when discussing the survey, explains that she believes that “art historians have fetishized a chronological, diachronic model based on causality and often teleology that supports a linear model of history and an elitist, exclusive lineage of art.” (p. 52) Graham (1995) identifies four notions common to the structure of the survey--canonicity, chronology, closure, and subjectivity.

Canonicity proceeds out of the belief that there are cultural artifacts whose study cannot be negotiated. The survey traditionally canonizes the art of the



West. However, in this case, the arts of Asia get canonized. As such, canonicity is power-- “the power to decide whose culture and whose views will set agendas for the rest of us.” (Graham, 1995, p. 30) Lee (1994) expands the canon of objects to be studied, as student Allie recognized.

I guess when I think of art I think of what is in an art museum, such as paintings, drawings, and sculpture...It was nice to find that we were going to look at different stuff, like temples, which are huge and massive pieces of art, and pottery, not even decorative pottery but pottery that was used for every day life. It is not something I think of or have thought of as art. (personal communication, 1999)

Even though he expands the canon, Lee (1994) also situates its study within formalism, which limits how the works can be seen and judged. For example, he describes the stylistic development of animal motifs in the late Zhou period:

New animal motifs and ways of representing them appear with increasing frequency during the late Zhou period from the fifth century B.C.E. “Animal style” is a term coined by Mikhail Rostovtzeff to describe the stylized representation in relief or in the round of animals in profile, most often with legs drawn up under them or standing proudly erect in an almost heraldic pose. Another aspect of this style is the depiction of parts of animals, heads, and haunches, as if representing dismembered ritual sacrifices. These works are often combined with geometric décor—spiral, fret, or interlace—and are usually ornaments rather than independent objects: horse trappings, finials, and other portable trimmings associated with the characteristically nomadic cultures of eastern Russia, Siberia, and Manchuria. We have seen some influence of the Animal style on Shang knife handles, but connections between China and the northern nomadic cultures do not appear to have been extensive till early in the late Zhou period. (Lee, 1994, p.46)

This is equivalent to an additive approach to the study of art, where previously neglected artifacts are added to the list of what is to be studied without challenge to the frameworks themselves. The status quo is left in place, enacting the one cultural model by which all art is to be measured. Furthermore, the canon is not

a universal notion of quality but one that is historicized and thus can only suggest a partial view of artistic practice (Matthews, 1995).

Moreover, chronology acts upon the history of art by sequencing events along a linear time line. A consequence of such a schema is that it is teleological, implying developmental or evolutionary directionality. Lee (1994) constructs a chronology that has teleological implications that imply that a culture matures over time; however, he stops short of covering the modern. Students like Allen think this is natural; he discusses how art progresses from the “simple to the more elaborate and more difficult. This is something I will probably remember long after all the images leave my head....Art follows a natural progression.” (personal communication, 1999)

Moreover, Graham (1995) refers to how the art historical survey denotes closure--a completeness in the story. Although occasionally discussing differences in scholarly interpretation and the concept that ideas will change with further research, Lee (1994) basically introduces a story about who did what when that implies closure. An example of this can be seen in his discussion of the Indus Valley civilization:

An aerial view of the excavation at Mohenjo-daro reveals that subsidiary buildings and structures were axially oriented with relation to certain main streets, indicating that the city was highly organized politically and socially and not just an agglomeration of dwellings along a road or river...Not only was its plan an orderly one; it had a highly developed irrigation and sewage system as well. There were numerous buildings of some size, such as the so-called Great Bath...What this structure was used for we do not know, but there have been some fascinating speculations. Some have suggested that the inhabitants of Mohenjo-daro kept aquatic reptiles or animals in the pool; others guess that it was a

place where wealthier citizens bathed. In any event, it was a sizable public structure with a more elaborate drainage system to keep the water fresh. Cubicles and rooms around the tank were perhaps intended for use by priests or bathers. The Great Bath was a large and important structure, implying a socially and technically advanced society.

Lastly, the teaching of the survey creates subjectivity—an act of normalizing and reproducing what comes to stand as art historical truth. Students, “as they accommodate themselves to the hierarchical cultural order that is perpetually reproduced in a survey” (Graham, 1995, p. 31), are marched through the history of art, without any discussion of how it constructs knowledge. Although Lee (1994) does, on occasion, critique how art history has constructed Asia, this gets lost with his own acts of normalizing. For example, his critique does not include hierarchies in cultural understanding of objects such as the separation of low and high cultural forms. One of the students Carl demonstrates what can happen without such critique:

The Indian stuff is good because it is complex. Some of it is of a decent size. It looks like, you know, that they did maybe some work doing all this—it is intellectual, diverse, and has a variety of styles. But the China stuff—I mean pots! Unless these things take batteries, light up and do all kinds of stuff, it is going to be really tough to impress somebody with pottery. Every kid in art class here presents his mother with some coil and glazed pot he made in art class. When are they ever going to find something other than pots I can look at to tell me about the ancient times of China? (personal communication, 1999)

Elkins (2002) maintains that the survey can only be imagined in a particular way:

The survey texts are simplified, compressed, conventionalized and toned down, so they tend to be disparaged by serious art historians. But historians still use them. Some major universities have experimented with ways of avoiding survey text, but the results have been less than

successful. The root cause is the beginner's need for chronology, and the most essential from my standpoint—a story. (p.57)

Although Elkins (2002) acknowledges that the survey is not complex and exists without an examination of interpretive controversy, he cannot imagine it differently. Any experiments in curricula are seen as avoiding the survey. The survey is so entrenched as a discursive formation that very little is said to critique it. Matthews (1995) says the chronological survey is one of the most difficult things for an art historian to relinquish because traditionally it has been the foundation of the discipline. The survey is thus an institution with a relatively fixed set of protocols for regulating communication about art and culture.

### **Orientalism**

As a textbook about the art and artifacts of particular Asian cultures, Lee's (1994) work is embedded in the discourses of Orientalism. Said (1978) identifies Orientalism as having three interdependent components: anyone who teaches, researches, or writes about the Orient is involved in Orientalism, the concept of Orientalism is based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between the East and the West, and Orientalism is a body of theory and practice that enables socio-economic and political institutions. Orientalism is cultural hegemony at work.

In order to analyze the discourses circulated by the text, it must be seen in relationship to how the author addresses the reader, how it represents the Orient, and how students interpret the text. As Said expresses,

Every writer on the Orient (and this is true even of Homer) assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies. Additionally, each work on the Orient *affiliates* itself with other works, with audiences, with institutions, with the Orient itself. The ensemble of relationships between works, audiences, and some particular aspects of the Orient therefore constitutes an analyzable formation—for example, that of philological studies, of anthologies of extracts from Oriental literature, of travel books, of Oriental fantasies—whose presence in time, in discourse, in institutions (schools, libraries, foreign services) gives it strength and authority. (1979, p. 20)

The previous knowledge that Lee (1994) relies on is the concept of the “Oriental mind,” questioning the idea that work emerged out of a metaphysical approach to life and that all societies in Asia are alike. Instead, Lee (1994) focuses on differences, as well as influences spread through migration and trade. He describes that

For more than a century the teachers and students of east Asian art and culture have presented the achievements “exotically” different and greatly varied cultures to interested readers in the West. Thanks to their efforts, the faiths, ideas, and material cultures of Hinduism, Buddhism, Lamaism, Confucianism, Daoism, Shintoism, and other doctrines are now more widely known and perhaps better understood and more influential than ever before. The marvelous cultural diversity of Asia and the fascinating interrelationships within that diversity are increasingly being brought home to us in the West... (1994, p. 9)

However, as Lee (1994) sheds the idea that Asia is homogeneous, he still constructs binary oppositions by using such terms as “oriental,” “exotic,” and “mysterious” and he maintains a timelessness and passivity about these cultures by observing them from the vantage point of the West. For example, he does not discuss the modern art of these countries because he feels it is part of a worldwide internationalism rather than of the traditions discussed in the book; he says, “the modern art of the East is omitted on the grounds that its creative side

is more a part of worldwide internationalism than of the tradition of art presented in this volume” (p. 8). There is a contradiction inherent here because he says at one point that Asia is not static and changes through a variety of influences but then he wants to maintain that there is something essentialist to their artistic practices that gets lost in modern times. Furthermore, he also makes the art of Asia visible in a particular way—through what he believes to be a universal concept of artistic practice. He recounts that “since the really unique and unforgettable quality of a work of art is its visual appearance, and since as Focillon said, the artist’s ‘special privilege is to imagine, to recollect to think, and to feel in forms,’ it seemed only logical to me that forms should be the principal concern of the book” (1994, p. 8). This concern is captured in such passages as the one exemplified here:

The Harappa figure is suavely modeled, with a tendency toward what we shall call organic style; that is, the forms seem natural and living, soft and flowing, rather than crystalline and angular in structure as are some inorganic forms. It shows intelligent study of the human body—what it looks like and how it works—and that study has been appropriately expressed in the material. (Lee, 1994, p. 20)

#### **4.3.3 What Are the Consequences of Such Talk?**

##### **Humanistic Discourses vs. Counter Humanistic Discourses**

The textbook is an anti-Eurocentric intervention in art history, making the arts of Asia visible. Formalist analysis helps hold together the complex histories of artist practices, institutions, and aesthetics of these countries. The logic that shapes Lee’s (1994) narrative, which is stylistic evolution, set within a chronology, not only maintains a sense of context and history but also a

particular ideology for art-- that is timeless and universal. Lee (1994) does not assume that Far Eastern art is self-evidently worthwhile; therefore, he defines it in relationship to the West to create a conceptualization of it as art. For example, Lee compares an Indian sculpture to the traditions of the West:

...To look upon this sculpture like those purists of the modern school who demand above all integrity of material and ask of painting that it “look like paint” is to rule it out as sculpture—along with the late Greek and Roman figures that convey skin textures superbly in marble, or the works of Bernini, which simulate flesh or bark or whatever the sculptor wished. Hindu sculpture—and especially the medieval material—must be looked as an art that denies or, better, transcends the material it is made of. Figures may seem to float off or on the surface of the stone; others seem to emerge from the stone. (1994, p. 200)

Furthermore, one of the students, Clay notes his own resistance to Lee’s strategy,

He is always saying like this Rajput painting approaches the brilliance of a Matisse. Come on! Just because someone European painted it does not make it better...He is culturally arrogant. Everyone—we get in this trap of comparing everything. Sometimes, I wonder if the people of India right now are saying, you know, this painting is almost as good as one of our paintings, or something like that...It is wrong to say—to always compare. I know it might help people to understand something better if they can—it is the whole sociological context. You have to categorize things in order to understand them. But I do not think you should do it, at least go about it that way. Do not compare it; just write about what it is you have. (personal communication, 1999)

Lee (1994) privileges style over context to remove these works from an anthropological understanding, focusing on individual works as art objects instead of their function in people’s lives. The aesthetic dimension takes precedence over any site-specific association, emphasizing the object’s autonomy. Art here rises above the local and can be considered a shared

human experience. It promotes humanistic values for art and culture and the appropriation of difference, as seen in the following example:

At Khajuraho the sculptured figures are tall and slim, and some have much elongated legs. The effects are linear, the poses exaggerated. A culmination of this tendency is to be found in one exquisite figure, perhaps the most interesting architectural sculpture at Khajuraho...It is a celestial beauty, occupying a corner position transitional from one main wall face to another. She inhabits a space that could have been very simply filled. The classic Gupta solution would have been a figure standing there and looking out, but this was too straightforward for the complex and extraordinary inventive minds working on this temple. They placed the figure in the space with one foot flat against one plane, the other foot on a different plane, the buttocks parallel to the spectator, the waist turned, and the shoulders on a plane perpendicular to the plane of the second foot; finally, the head faces the corner of the niche, with the arm making a connection from the body to the niche. The figure is spirally twisted so that it relates to all the real and implied faces of the space. Nevertheless, the posture seems easy and natural, for the artist was master of linear effects. (Lee, 1994, p. 244)

By raising art above the local and making it part of the human experience, Lee (1994) also treats the viewing subject as autonomous. By isolating the individual art object through the recounting of its visual information, the viewer is also positioned to have a one-to-one relationship with the object. Descriptions work to make objects life-like, where omissions get unnoticed and the viewer receives what may be considered the best of culture, ideas and values that transcend social and cultural differences. An approach such as this would not enable viewers to ask how the “other” is represented and to consider their own viewing in the construction of knowledge. So, the text functions to decontextualize objects from its cultural determinants, aligning them with the classification of art, and thus upholding the humanistic project. Culture here is



enculturation, providing one with the best of the collected art works in societies.

Some students such as Traci embraced this strategy:

I think when I walk away from this class I will have a greater appreciation or understanding of art in general. By looking at some of the earlier Indian structures, I would never have guessed that they were rock cut. Can you imagine? Usually I think in terms of things getting constructed; I never knew that those things were rock cut. That is quite impressive! (personal communication, 1999)

## **4.4 The Reformers**

### **4.4.1 Introduction**

I was the education consultant for the reform project in the art history survey. At the time I was hired to work with the reform initiative, I had just left a job in museum education and had been studying in an art education department, which was involved in a national reform project of its own. This project *Transforming Education through the Arts Challenge* (TETAC), funded by the Annenberg Foundation, the Getty Education Institute for the Arts, and the National Arts Education Consortium, involved secondary schools as sites for implementing a comprehensive approach to arts education to improve student achievement. This five-year, \$15-million effort to reform education in and through the arts provided professional development for teachers and administrators in schools and universities, developed curriculum theory, implemented an arts curricula and reform strategies, advocated for the value of art in education, and measured student achievement in selected rural, urban, and suburban schools. The goals of comprehensive arts education include developing students' abilities to understand and appreciate art by studying

aesthetics, art history, art criticism, and art making. I was primarily studying with two professors involved with this reform Dr. Sydney Walker and Dr. Michael Parsons while I worked as the education consultant for the art history project.

The educator I worked with on the art history reform project was Todd Soran. Todd was a Ph.D. student in the department of art history and was also working full- time with the assessment team to construct the CD ROMS for the project. He was studying Chinese art at the time of the study, had passed his comprehensive examination, and was in the process of writing his proposal for his dissertation. Todd was also married to an art educator who was finishing her dissertation in the field of art education, had shown interest in education theory, and had been presenting at art educational conferences with his wife. He elected to teach the reformed survey course to pilot the CD ROMS with the students. Todd designed the CD ROMS, one of which allowed students to see works of art virtually in situ and the other was a database of images within a virtual environment where students engaged with authentic learning situations. The original images, which were later reproduced on the CDs, were collected and stored at an archive and the team wanted to circulate them through digital archiving.

The reform team had to consider the contrasts between teaching western and nonwestern art. They knew that images and objects become normalized through the practice of looking at them as reproductions or decontextualized forms in a lecture hall. As such, the team knew the format fosters little sense of

participation or exploration. Looking at images and objects presented through reproductions where art and artifacts are situated outside a context collapses differences. All images or objects become leveled in one way or another as the same. Students then cannot grasp the significance of differences. Moreover, the social life of things--that is how people use art and artifacts--becomes distanced. There is little by which students are helped to connect to the social practices that art points toward. Instead, it is too easy for students to use familiar social practices to read objects. They involve themselves only in looking at line, shape, color, and texture and the status quo in understanding is maintained. The reformers, who were social historians, looked for ways to make the cultural differences embodied in these objects more vivid by constructing virtual, three-dimensional spaces for the sites, having video of practitioners using sites, and constructing authentic activities to enable students to know what art historians do.

I was hired to create, with the team, assessment exercises to use with the survey course and the later CD. In the discipline of art history, practitioners have been slow to embrace digital technology to enhance teaching and learning compared to others. While there is scholarship available that interrogates teaching with digital images (DeBenedictis, 1995; Lavin, 1997), there is much less information on teaching art history through a constructivist use of digital technology (Maddox. 1997). With my help, the team ended up placing the database of images within a virtual environment of a research institution to create

an authentic learning situation where participants would act as interns to carry out various assignments, such as creating conditions reports on objects, researching objects, going out on virtual field assignments to find and investigate objects, and displaying objects in exhibitions. Todd and I had a close working relationship on the project, where we attended the survey class together, and worked on the assessment activities while discussing how to construct educational reform.<sup>14</sup>

Both of us were aware of comprehensive art education<sup>15</sup>. This particular practice of art education is a reaction to the creative self-expression approach to arts education. Within the latter approach, students investigated various kinds of media and techniques to develop creativity through experimentation. Creativity was considered an innate ability that required encouragement and the teacher nurtured students to promote their self-expression. Adult art was not discussed because it was thought to hinder students' development. Comprehensive arts education, however, was discipline-centered. It emerged out of disciplined-based art education (DBAE) which promoted the study of art through the disciplines of studio arts, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics and thus circulates a way of knowing about art, culture, and difference. According to Clark, Day, and Greer (1989), art is believed to be essential for a well-rounded

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<sup>14</sup> Although we worked together on the assessment, we did not have free reign. The other members of the assessment team were made up of university professors and the curator of an archive and had final say on what we could and could not do.

education, students need instruction in the theories and contexts of art and the strategies to respond to and create art to be able to develop an understanding and appreciation of art, instruction should include a broad range of culturally valued adult visual forms from western and nonwestern cultures and from ancient times to contemporary times, the curriculum should be sequential and cumulative, and students should be evaluated for progress. DBAE is in fact a type of intervention where the understanding of art is constructed similarly to that of other subjects. It is thus content driven, emphasizes the teaching of art concepts, and advocates for meaningful art learning through the creation of a knowledge base.

Walker (2001) takes DBAE a step further, enabling comprehensive art education, by connecting it to overarching life-centered issues, such as power, identity, community, and nature, which reach beyond any particular discipline. She advocates for meaning making while studying and making art, connecting human issues and individual interests, backgrounds, and experiences to the study of the disciplines of art. Parsons (personal communication, 1999), through the writing of Grant Wiggins (1998), introduced me to authentic assessment. I in turn discussed authentic assessment with the reform team. This type of assessment privileges strategies for learning that use realistic, meaningful, open-ended problems, true to the discipline. Authentic assessment emphasizes the

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<sup>15</sup> Although there are other theoretical constructs that inform art education, such as social reconstructivism, the ideas found in comprehensive art education appealed to the whole reform team.

construction rather than reproduction of knowledge, the ability to consider alternative solutions, strategies, and perspectives, the employment of ideas and theories central to academic disciplines, the utilization of writing to demonstrate understanding, the engagement of problems or issues found in life beyond the classroom, and the demonstration of understanding to an audience beyond the teacher, classroom, or institution (Wiggins, 1998). Both professors were influenced by the literature on constructivism.

Constructivism provides an epistemological base different from positivism. Similar to beliefs within positivism, there is a real world that we all experience; however, in constructivism, meaning is imposed upon this world. According to Brown, Collins and Duguid (1996), meaning is seen as rooted in experience. Teaching thus should not be about transmitting knowledge to learners but rather developing the learners' skills to construct knowledge in response to a context. Instruction should provide contexts for problem solving and assistance that will facilitate learners to make sense of the environment as they encounter it. There would be multiple entry points to a problem that allows for experimentation, interpretation, and varied conclusion, a wide range of active learning modes and points of view, and the utilization of life experiences (Hein, 1998). As Hein further explains,

...constructivist education requires that the conclusions reached by the learner are not validated by whether or not they conform to some external standard of truth, but whether they "make sense" within the constructed reality of the learner. The validity of ideas according to constructivists does not depend on their match to some objective truth, which has an existence separate from any learner or group of learners. Rather, validity

arises from the value of the concepts in leading to action (use) and in the consistency of the ideas one with another. Thus, while traditional educators talk about learner misconceptions, constructivists will only about naïve, personal, or private conceptions. (1998, p. 34)

While working together, Todd and I also discussed the new art histories.

When I had begun my studies in art history as an undergraduate student, I was taught that art was a product of the environment in which it was created. I understood the discipline to be factual. The possibility that the knowledge presented could be selective, or situated, never occurred to me. I was not taught to question, elaborate, or think for myself and was asked to only analyze or memorize. My writing assignments were based upon analyzing the formal qualities of a work or assimilating expert findings to support an analysis of a work. I was reproducing the history decided upon by others elsewhere.

It was only after entering into my graduate program for a master's degree in art history as well as my program for a Doctor of Philosophy degree in art education that I began to realize that what art historians were doing was interpretive work. During these years in graduate school, I became very interested in cultural studies and visual culture. Cultural studies started in Britain in the 1950's with such texts as Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society: 1780-1950* (1983). Scholars in cultural studies look at changes in social, economic and political life and use critical theory to explore these conditions. According to Williams (1981), culture is a signifying system by which a social order is created and circulated. Ideas formed within a culture have material effects and circumstances. Culture is thus a fundamental aspect of everyday life, framing

the politics of intellectual work. Knowledge here then is not understood to be complete but is subject to action. Practitioners within visual culture studies examine the relationship between the viewer and what is viewed and understand that the visual mediates a sense of the world.

Through my conversations with Todd and the reform team, we came up with a curriculum that included competencies that were expected of students in the survey class. These understandings are listed in Table 4.1 below. The curriculum for the classroom was understood to mean what students had an opportunity to learn. Todd constructed actions by which students learned specific competencies. Of course, what students had as opportunities to learn focus their attention on certain objects to the exclusion of other objects. It was also likely that they learned from the objects excluded too.



<b>Declarative Knowledge</b>	<b>Declarative Knowledge</b>	<b>Procedural Knowledge</b>	<b>Dispositions</b>
<b>Facts</b>	<b>Concepts</b>	<b>Skills, Processes, and Strategies</b>	<b>Attitudes and work habits</b>
Monuments and objects	The relationship between art and culture	Research	Appreciation of cultures
Dates	Works of art are products of the past and play a role in determining trends that follow	Search for information on the CD ROMS	Appreciation of art
Makers	There are connections and differences between cultures	Make an oral presentation	Willingness toward inquiry
Craft Traditions	Artworks are situated in a context	Analyze a monument or object	Willingness to seek feedback and make adjustments to performance
Media	Artworks have a visual language	Compare and contrast works, monuments, artists, cultures, and histories	
	There are social and historical significances to artworks	Write to persuade	

Table 4.1: Desired Understandings and Competencies

#### **4.4.2 Words and Phrases Related to Culture, Difference, and/or Art**

Since discourse analysis deals with language in use, a curriculum can be seen as a text by which to do things. In other words, this text situates language use in the interaction of the art history classroom. The terms culture, difference, and art enable teachers and students to talk about art history. Of course, the cited text combined with other discourses. Similar to the textbook, the curriculum foregrounds information by constructing arguments for why we should engage with art history. Again, I identify three categories of problems defined by the curriculum by asking what sorts of arguments construct solutions. These categories are the social, psychological, and representational and emerged from an analysis of the data.

The category of the social includes an argument for how art history provides knowledge about people, places, and things, including both the articulation of differences and connections among cultures and artistic traditions as well as the highlighting of the use and cultural significance of monuments and artifacts. Todd would spend hours in class drawing relationships between art and culture through a discussion of religious beliefs, philosophies, and worldviews and their relationship to objects and their iconography. He was interested in having students understand the complex social realities of the past, which would then also lead to appreciation. As Todd explained,

The people who teach this class in Asian art history are basically social historians. I guess the main objective is to give students exposure to a broad range of artistic traditions beyond western art...to give them a kind of feel for the different cultures, ...for them to have some sort of

understanding of the historical development of Asia, ...learn something about the geography and of course the history. I used the Shang vessels as an example of an object that we do not necessarily know if the people who made it would call it art or if the vocabulary they had could indicate it as art. Usually for us and our culture, art is something extraneous, but for them based on the materials used and the amount of time it took them to make those objects, we at least know it was really important for that group, their culture, and society. So, we can use those objects to kind of understand the value systems of those people and what they believed. It is almost more like an anthropology class in some ways. (personal communication, 2000)

The CD helped situate the realities of these cultures according to Todd:

The students can click on a general map of Asia and then to a specific map. They would keep going through these maps until they got closer and closer to the site. This helped them grasp geography. There were fifteen sites where students could see a Buddhist site, a Hindu site, and a Islamic site...some of the sites are historical archeological sites and others are used in practice. They were kind of useful for students to see how those objects were actually used.

The category of the psychological included the argument that art history can enable students to think differently and included the promotion of visual literacy as a useful skill set and the facilitation of an appreciation for the arts of various cultures in Asia. Being literate refers to reading, analyzing, interpreting, and constructing texts. Primary among the demands of art history teaching was then to approach visual materials as a form of communication and as a creative endeavor. Todd modeled visual literacy skills through his use of texts, teaching his students to read works of art as complex sign systems. This modeling behavior, often involving single or paired works, allowed students to see interpretive strategies in use. It taught students to look at a work of art, dissect it, and read it. Visual literacy also provided the reason for appreciating the art of the

cultures of Asia. It allows students to unravel the complexity of the creative act as a productive example of human intelligence. As the instructor moved through the projected images, he pointed to selected areas and engaged his audience. Multimedia technologies further offered the best potential to replicate this performative relationship of instructor, image, and viewer. In the design of the CDs, motion graphics was used, allowing a work of art to be interactive. For example, as the student passed her mouse over a targeted area, a detail view or an accompanying text emerged. Also, highlighting portions of the image directed the student's attention. The team believed that art learning involved understanding how to obtain, read, and assess visual data, including acquiring knowledge about works of art, using strategies for the deployment of this knowledge to construct meanings and understandings, and creating and communicating these cultural meanings. Todd describes the importance of visual literacy in relationship to appreciation:

I think by giving them an unknown object or slide, they are supposed to make a study of the object. In the structure of the essay, they approach it in a way where they are not only describing the object but describing the object in reference to its context, the culture that made it, and what the object means. It kind of gives you an idea that they appreciate it. It means they are trying to understand it by reading it. (personal communication, 2000)

Student Reagan also cites the importance of visual literacy:

I look at everything around us, everything man-made and I question and challenge it, asking, for example, why that water cooler is round. So I have definitely become more analytical...It is definitely something I picked up in class and it helped learning that skill...Artistic expression and functionality account for stylistic changes. (personal communication, 1999)

The CD ROMs built further on this as Todd explains:

So we came up with the idea that students should go to labs like in the sciences. The lab could enhance what the students were learning about, where they would not necessarily review but have real problem-solving situations to explore, be more autonomous, and make their own decisions. We found that doing this was really exciting for the students, as opposed to the passive situation you find in most art history classes. The CD had them explore what the images mean and how to look at images, rather than give them information outright. We decided to create a virtual art museum where they would become interns and were given tasks that replicated what art historians were interested in and the different things they do when they study objects (See appendix D). (personal communication, 2000)

The category of the representational included how art history constructs knowledge about art and culture. Here, Todd focused on art as a historical document that requires interpretation through analysis. He presented a model by which to analyze and interpret works.

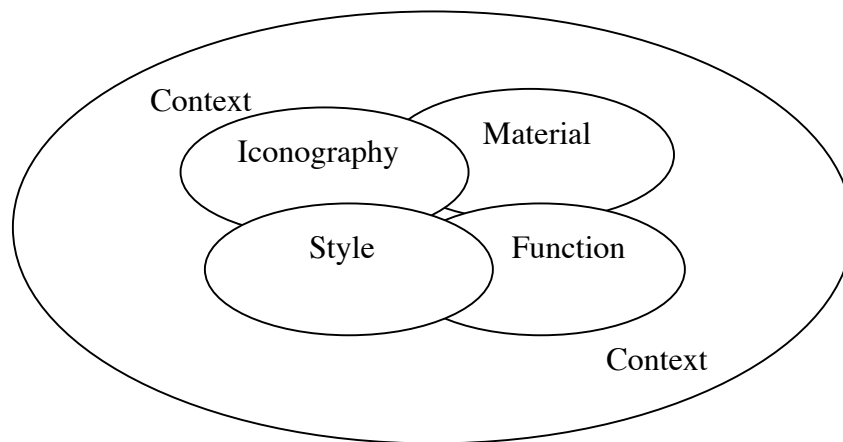


Figure 4.1 Methodologies Model

Todd introduced the methodologies at the beginning of the course to discuss how art historians go about studying an object. He also discussed the problems with methodologies; they also limit how one perceives. As noted by Todd:

At the beginning of the class, I talk about how we perceive an object and how in a different time, an object may be perceived differently. I mean the classical example is the swastika. After the 1930s, the swastika becomes a symbol of essential evil in the western world. But if you go to Asia and visit a Japanese temple, you have Buddhas with swastikas because they still retain the more ancient symbolism of the cosmos. It is also an auspicious sign in China. So in a different context, that same design can mean something entirely different. So, I give some examples of the terms by which objects are perceived and how these may differ among different people. I also give a little bit about how our present interpretations of what we are learning here is not the full picture—that is I may reinforce stereotypes. When you begin to say one thing is characterized by another thing, such as the visual or the philosophical characterizes a period, you know full well it is not the full truth. It is a grounded place for students to build on and the only danger is that if you do not address these issues a bit, students will have a tendency to kind of stereotype things. (personal communication, 2000)

#### **4.4.3 How Is the Text Shaped by Discourses?**

##### **Visual Literacy**

Visual literacy and how it can be imagined is a discursive formation.

Although literacy usually refers to the ability to read, interpret, analyze, and construct texts, the first three aspects seem to be privileged most in practice. In its traditional form, visual literacy is based on a hierarchy. Viewers read for the maker's intent as they decipher the object. The viewer is thus positioned as a consumer versus as a producer. As student Allen explains, "symbolism, what it meant to the artist, is the core of learning about artworks" (personal communication, 1999). Discussions of visual literacy include the study of form,

icons, and symbols and how they communicate messages, but stop short of reversing the roles of reader and producer. As Kleinbauer (1989) makes clear the usefulness of visual literacy,

Our world today is as cluttered with visual images as with verbal utterances. Visual images appear not only in art history textbooks and coffee-table art books...They are ubiquitous and we cannot avoid seeing them. But do we comprehend what we see? They make sense to us only if we are visually literate. Visual literacy enables us to do more than obtain a driver's license; it enables us to explore our environment and express our thoughts and feelings about the world round us; it involves making, observing, perceiving, hearing, listening, reading, talking, and writing about the arts—and even using the arts...It sharpens and refines perception and creates powers of discrimination. As a discipline focusing on the examination of individual works of the visual arts, art history trains students to perceive and begin to understand visual statements and their constituent component relationships. Once students have grasped how to perceive and analyze these elements in one work of art—any work of art in which they are significant—they can then be taught how to compare and contrast the same elements in two works, and so on. Through extension beyond the realm of the visual arts, they can learn to understand other kinds of imagery in their universe, whether it is to be found at the local football field, building of worship, or mall. And through yet further extension, they can develop nonartistic skills and solve nonartistic problems. (p. 206-207)

Todd did not emphasize just the formal qualities used by artists; he also focused on iconography and the construction of cultural meanings. He had students discuss objects and their internal workings and external social meanings, which he hoped would lead to understanding and appreciating different ways of life. For him, worlds were reflected in art, although he understood such reflections to be interpretive.

Furthermore, the argument in class was that it was not enough to navigate print and visual tools, but that students also needed to be comfortable with digital

tools. All three were important to constructing understandings. The belief was that visual and verbal literacy could further be facilitated through the use of the CD ROM. He rarely expanded beyond the traditional discourse of visual literacy to include the idea of art as a site of conflicting voices and intersecting discourses. But on occasion, he did discuss how meanings of objects change according to perspectives and that representations are partial and cannot capture a full picture of cultural life.

According to some scholars (Elkins 2002; Mirzoeff, 1999), like those in visual culture studies, being literate refers not only to reading images but also to an understanding of how they govern behavior. Literacy can be understood as the ability to appropriate a visual text for one's own purposes. Such a position on visual literacy empowers the reader to be a participant in cultural activity through critique and production versus one who passively consumes the intended messages of others.

### **Educational Discourses: Discovery Learning versus Constructivism**

The desired understandings and competencies that the art historical team wanted to promote included declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and dispositions toward learning. Students would need to know facts, concepts, and principles such as identifying monuments, objects, dates, makers, craft traditions, and media. Furthermore, students were to understand connections and differences between cultures, the relationship between art and culture, how works of art are products of the past and play a role in determining trends that



follow, how art works are situated in a context and have a visual language, and the social and historical significance of a particular work. Procedural knowledge required students to be able to research, search for information, make an oral presentation, analyze a monument/art object, compare and contrast works, monuments, artists, cultures, histories, and write to persuade. Moreover, students were also expected to seek feedback and make adjustments to their performances, develop an appreciation of different cultures and their art, and display a willingness to do inquiry.

The major change made to the curriculum was in relationship to the use of instructional strategies. Instead of relying on didacticism, the team instituted a combination of lecture/lab sessions, where students had opportunities for active versus passive learning. This strategy was built in relation to an understanding of a particular education discourse-- constructivism. During the labs, Todd used problem-solving situations that students could explore and they were excited about these opportunities (See Appendix D). Specifically, the CD ROMS were used to facilitate problem solving. As recommended by Wiggins (1998), the constructed activities allowed students to practice solving real problems, demonstrate comprehension of complex texts, recognize underlying principles and patterns needed to solve a problem, and use basic components and integrate them into a total performance.

Learning in the lab was quite different from lecture. Instead of an “art in the dark” situation, where all the students faced the instructor as he spoke and

pointed and on occasion asked questions, they had access to diverse resources and interactions—their own community of learners—their peers. Learning in this context facilitated the negotiation of meanings, although students did not have control over what to learn, when to learn, and with whom to learn. Although the team wanted to encourage students to be knowledge constructors and this did occur at times (See Appendix B, C, and Lab 4 in Appendix D), the learning endeavor was actually more about discovery. Hein (1998) explains discovery learning as active but different from constructivist learning:

Discovery education approaches have accepted the idea that learning is an active process, that learners undergo changes as they learn, that they interact with the material to be learned more fundamentally than only absorbing it, that they somehow change the way their minds work as they learn. Learning includes more than piling facts and concepts into the warehouse of the mind. As people learn, their capacity to learn expands; the shape and volume of the mind's warehouse is transformed by the process of grappling with the new information....Proponents of discovery education take a particular perspective on active learning. They argue that by engaging learners in activity, specific desired educational outcomes can be achieved; the learners will learn those things we wish them to learn. If people are exposed to raw data, to the phenomena of the world, they will arrive at the correct conclusions; they will reach the generalizations that describe the world as it actually is. (p. 30-31)

Those involved in discovery learning thus posit that learners can discover the truth for themselves if given the opportunity to learn through doing. The problem with such a position is that although the idea that there is no one way to present information to learners and there is no one way to structure a subject, learners through their activity must still come to the conclusions determined by others (Hein, 1998). Constructivists however center truth claims on whether the learner finds value in the concepts learned as they act on them. In

constructivism, learners are characterized as dynamic and are treated as if they have pedagogical worth. Knowledge construction is thus viewed as shared activity, producing knowledge and presenting knowledge in a variety of ways. Meaningful learning happens in context and in the pursuit of understanding, where students have multiple entries and solutions to a problem. Sometimes this did occur; for example, students juxtaposed image and written word on the same screen to demonstrate various understandings through the creation of exhibitions.

### **Social Art History**

Todd's teaching was heavily influenced by social art history. As Wolff (1993) explains, in social art history,

...the cultural product ('work of art') loses its character as transcendent, universal fact, whose 'greatness' is unanalysable, but somehow mysteriously and inherently present. It is seen instead as the complex product of economic, social and ideological factors, mediated through the formal structures of the text (literary or other), and owing its existence to the particular practice of the located individual....The sociology of art is the study of the practices and institutions of artistic production...this necessarily involves the study of aesthetic conventions, as well as the specific, socially defined place of the artist at any particular time. It also discloses the ways in which these practices are embedded in and informed by broader social and political processes and institutions, with economic forces historically playing a particularly important role. (p. 139)

Using this approach and packing it into the model of the survey, Todd examined objects in the context of the world in which it was created; discussed maker and patron motives in relationship to aspects of belief systems, cultural influences, and artistic practices; comparatively analyzed themes from different time periods and cultures; considered iconographical, stylistic, and symbolic issues in regard

to meanings; and drew attention to the value of objects to those who would use them. He had students conduct iconographical analysis by looking at elements in an object, tracing their development, and making conclusions regarding the social, cultural, economic, and/or aesthetic values of those responsible for producing the object. He also discussed how works provoked associations and connections to culturally situated experiences and how this sometimes conflicted with how the works were understood by the people who made them and the society who valued them. As one of the students, Allen discussed,

For someone like me, it has no bearing in my life. So I am just interested in what it was like for the other people-- meaning the people who these sites were built for, who worshipped there, and that sort of thing. I also have insight into the symbolism and the artwork, how it was made, what kind of people made these things, why these people made these things—mostly a complete understanding of Indian culture, ancient Chinese culture, and Japanese culture. (personal communication, 1999)

#### **4.4.4 What Are the Consequences of Such Talk?**

##### **Humanistic Discourses vs. Counter Humanistic Discourses**

Throughout this analysis, the problems dealt with by visual literacy, education, and social art history are conceptualized as part of a complex system of discourses that uphold art history as both a humanistic and non-humanistic project. Privileging specific traditions of knowledge over others relates to how relations of power are at work—it limits what can be said and done. For example, in the social category, difference is posited as phenomenon to be understood. Todd's remedy is the inclusion of culturally based criteria that particular societies use in producing and receiving art. However, without critique

of the survey, the complexity found in social art history can disappear as demonstrated by one student Karen:

I think of this class as an art history class. Maybe the material is a little bit lesser because it is not western art, but it is basically another art history class. You see images, see what they mean, where they are, the date they existed, the regions they originated, the styles they created, and the evolution of the art. You should be able to look at a work of art and be able to tell where it is from, what date, and different aspects of the piece. (personal communication, 1999)

Although he discusses at times, as in the representational category, how representations are privileged interpretations, it was not done enough. His approach does not often discuss how the “other” is represented. Cultural identities then may be understood as fixed, monolithic, and stereotyped instead of multivocal and relational. A discourse of inclusion sediments into an unwillingness to carefully examine privilege, values, or practices of the culture studying the “other.” Moreover, Todd never discussed how visuals construct reality in any direct way and as a result what gets produced is “good realism.” Britzman, Santiago-Valles, Jimenez & Lamash (1993) deconstruct this type of representation,

The critique of essentialism in the field of multiculture serves as our place of departure because mainstream practices have not moved beyond the mistaken impulse to offer students “good realism” as a remedy to the “bad fictions” of stereotypes. Such an approach to knowledge structures the mistaken faith in the stability of representations and language, and in the obviousness of experience as the ground for truth. Sustained are the normative boundaries between the real and the imaginary, as if these boundaries themselves were beyond the reach of representations. (p. 189)

The essentialist aspects of “good realism” can be seen by student Krissy’s remarks:

I guess for me the cultures are the most important part of the class—what they think, what they do, what they made. Around here, you do not get to learn about other cultures regardless of what you are doing. I guess this is part of the reason I took this class. When you live here, you think everyone is like us, until you get into a situation where you have to learn something you do not know anything about. Like here, the ideal female is small and tiny, but I would fit in perfectly in India. The females there have big breasts, small waists, and round hips. It just shows you how different types of thinking exist in different parts of the world, which is odd because we all basically the same. (personal communication, 1999)

So even though Krissy acknowledges that there are different frameworks for knowing, she assumes that ancient representations of beauty still apply and that art is a reflection of the real. Furthermore, she also seems to think different ways of knowing are at odds with being human, another essentialist concept.

Counter discourses to humanism are found in the representational category, such as structural critique. Interrogating representations, such as how interpretations are constructed in relationship to methodologies, challenges that knowledge is objective and universal. This discourse however was silenced when they come up against those of inclusion.

Within the category of the psychological, the promotion of visual literacy as a useful skill set to facilitate an appreciation for the arts of various cultures in Asia took place. Diverse representations were collapsed into the already formed grand narrative of visual literacy, with little questioning of this narrative and how it constructs the social field. The status quo is left in place because the cultural models by which art is read reinforces the privileging of familiar understandings

of maker, the creative act, and the reader, some of which are humanist concepts. But as Elkins (2003) points out, there maybe no other understanding to art history but the use of western schemas:

...There is no conceptually independent national or regional tradition of art historical writing. Chinese art history, for example, demands expertise in very different source materials and formal concepts, but its interpretive strategies remain very Western. Chinese art historians, both in China and in universities in the West, study Chinese art using the same repertoire of theoretical texts and sources—psychoanalysis, semiotics, iconography, structuralism, anthropology, identity theory. They frame and support their arguments in the same ways Western art historians do with abstracts, archival evidence, summaries of previous scholarship, and footnoted arguments.

If this is, indeed, the case, we should be more concerned with how representations work and how they construct understanding through their silences.

Constructivism in relationship with the multicultural discourses of the classroom can also be seen as a type of humanism because it privileges beliefs about freedom, autonomy, growth, development, and notions that people are capable of making significant personal choices within the constraints imposed by curriculum. Maslow (1970) discusses the concept of "self-actualization," which he described as "the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, etc." (p. 150). He identified a number of characteristics of self-actualized people, three of which are tolerance for ambiguity, acceptance of self and others, and experiences that lead to personal transformation through new insights.

Humanistic education is a lifelong process, the purpose of which is to develop individuals who will be able to lead meaningful lives. Priorities of humanistic

education intersect with that of multicultural education to emphasize empathic understanding, and respect or acceptance (Rogers, 1983). Since students saw the course as a multicultural course, they also embraced it as a humanist project.

As explained by Ralph,

you come to school and you want to educate yourself and people. A lot of students do not even care. So they sit in the lecture hall and take no personal pride in learning something new, and that upsets me that people really do not care. I like this class because it is different from the norm...I am really intrigued by how certain groups of people believe in certain things so strongly and how this can be different than another culture. (personal communication, 1999)

#### **4.4.5 Summary of Findings**

As art historians at the site of this study reform the curriculum for the betterment their students, one must ask what values, understandings, and ways of knowing are being promoted, circulated, and silenced. Whatever discourses are getting institutionally sanctioned are powerful, leading to particular understandings about the world. Ultimately, what happens in the classroom also leads to ways of participating in the world and understanding our relationship to others.

As seen in the above analysis, art history education privileges ways in which knowledge about art, culture, and difference is constructed. The hierarchies of knowledge at work in the ways in we see and understand in this environment included the following discourses—multicultural, survey, Orientalism, visual literacy, social art history, constructivism, and discovery learning, among others. These discourses created what they refer to, enabling



and constraining the expression of certain ideas and constituting aspects of society and the people within it. Of course, the cited texts used by teachers and students in the classroom combined with others not cited, because this research project is only a partial view of the stories that unfolded in the classroom.

The diversity action plan, the textbook, and the instructional choices made by the reformers foregrounded information in relationship to student participation by constructing arguments for why we should engage with this art history survey. By asking what sorts of arguments construct solutions for why we should engage with the art history of diverse Asian societies, I identified three categories that emerged from the data. They are the social, psychological, and representational. The category of the social included the articulation of social realities of today as well as the past, such as demographic changes and philosophical belief systems that existed in Asia. The category of the psychological required students to changed their behavior and thinking about various concepts, such as how to appreciate the arts and cultures of Asia. The category of the representational included a discussion of how particular structures constructed ways of knowing, such as the use of art historical methodologies.

The statements made in the university's diversity action plan are embedded in multicultural discourses. As stated by McCarthy (1993), three dominant discourses, those of cultural understanding, cultural competence, and cultural emancipation, constitute the multicultural. These discourses have social implications. The discourse of cultural understanding dominated the language

used in the university's diversity action plan and had led to courses, such as the one under study, where students investigate the cultures of people making up society in America. Such study is assumed to help create parity; however, it appropriates difference, reducing it to sameness because the relational quality of identity is often not discussed. According to McCarthy (1993), cultural competence and emancipation allows students to be exposed to knowledge about minority history and achievement, which would work to lessen cultural taboos and stereotypes through mutual experience and understanding. These discourses stress attitudinal models of reform (McCarthy, 1993), pasting over contradictions associated with identity and instead promoting content addition. Identity seems to be understood as static and essentialist, a matter of physical and cultural traits. Minority groups are thus defined as homogeneous.

Privileging specific traditions of knowledge over others relates to how relations of power are at work—it limits what can be said and done. For example, in the social category, difference is represented as a problem. The action plan's remedy is to provide the skills needed to compete in the world, a discourse of meritocracy. This is a humanistic discourse. A discourse of meritocracy sediments into a belief in equal opportunity and an unwillingness to examine privileges, values, or practices. Within the category of the psychological, discourses of inclusion and individualism are privileged. One can offset the acceptance of stereotypes or intolerance by including minority perspectives and enabling individual growth through sharing. The discourse of

inclusion encourages the trivialization of difference. Counter discourses to humanism are found in the representational category, such as structural critique. Interrogating representations, such as the circulation of negative portrayals of difference or a challenge to the idea that knowledge is objective, become silenced when they come up against those of inclusion, meritocracy and individualism.

Sherman Lee's (1994) textbook, used by the students in the survey, helped frame the class and disseminated a way of engaging with the artistic and cultural traditions of three major civilizations, India, China, and Japan. As a textbook about the arts and artifacts of particular Asian cultures, Lee's (1994) work is embedded in the discourses of the survey and Orientalism. The survey itself is a discursive configuration that shapes art historians and their teaching and is regulated by what can be said within a set of stable relationships between people and objects. Graham (1995) identifies four notions common to the structure of the survey-- canonicity, chronology, closure, and subjectivity.

Canonicity proceeds out of the belief that there are cultural artifacts whose study cannot be negotiated and it sets the agenda for the rest of us. Although Lee (1994) expands the canon of objects to be studied, he situates its study within formalism, which limits how the works can be seen and judged. This is equivalent to an additive approach to the study of art, where previously neglected artifacts are added to the list of what is to be studied without challenge to the frameworks themselves. The status quo is left in place. Moreover, chronology

acts upon the history of art by sequencing events along a linear time line. A consequence of such a schema is that it is teleological, implying developmental or evolutionary directionality. Lee (1994) constructs a chronology that has teleological implications that imply that a culture matures over time; however, he stops short of covering the modern. Furthermore, Graham (1995) refers to how the art historical survey denotes closure--a completeness in the story. Although occasionally discussing differences in scholarly interpretation and the concept that ideas will change with further research, Lee (1994) basically introduces a story about who did what when that implies closure. Lastly, the teaching of the survey creates subjectivity. Although Lee (1994) does, on occasion, critique how art history has constructed Asia, this gets lost with his own acts of normalizing. For example, his critique does not include hierarchies in cultural understanding of objects such as the separation of low and high cultural forms.

In relation to Orientalism, Lee (1994) questions the idea that work emerged out of a metaphysical approach to life and that all societies in Asia are alike. Instead, Lee (1994) focuses on differences, as well as influences spread through migration and trade. However, as Lee (1994) sheds the idea that Asia is homogeneous, he still constructs binary oppositions by using such terms as "oriental," "exotic," and "mysterious" and he maintains a timelessness and passivity about these cultures. For example, he does not discuss the modern art of these countries because he feels it is part of a worldwide internationalism rather than of the traditions discussed in the book. There is a contradiction

inherent here because he says at one point that Asia is not static and changes through a variety of influences but then he wants to maintain that there is something essentialist to their artistic practices that gets lost in modern times. Furthermore, he also makes the art of Asia visible in a particular way—through what he believes to be a universal concept of artistic practice. He recounts that “since the really unique and unforgettable quality of a work of art is its visual appearance, and since as Focillon said, the artist’s ‘special privilege is to imagine, to recollect to think, and to feel in forms,’ it seemed only logical to me that forms should be the principal concern of the book” (1994, p. 8).

The textbook is an anti-Eurocentric intervention in art history, making the arts of Asia visible. Formalist analysis helps hold together the complex histories of artist practices, institutions, and aesthetics of these countries. The logic that shapes Lee’s (1994) narrative, which is stylistic evolution, set within a chronology, not only maintains a sense of context and history but also a particular ideology for art-- that is timeless and universal. Lee (1994) does not assume that Far Eastern art is self-evidently worthwhile; therefore, he defines it in relationship to the West to create a conceptualization of it as art. Lee (1994) privileges style over context to remove these works from an anthropological understanding, focusing on individual works as art objects instead of their function in people’s lives. The aesthetic dimension takes precedence over any site-specific association, emphasizing the object’s autonomy. Art here rises above the local and can be considered a shared human experience. It promotes

humanistic values for art and culture and the appropriation of difference. Culture here is enculturation, providing one with the best of the collected art works in societies. An approach such as this would not enable viewers to ask how the “other” is represented and to consider their own viewing in the construction of knowledge.

Lastly, the curriculum, including its instruction, was also a text by which to do things and was embedded in the discourses of visual literacy, social art history, constructivism, and discovery learning. Visual literacy and how it can be imagined is a discursive formation. Although literacy usually refers to the ability to read, interpret, analyze, and construct texts, the first three aspects seem to be privileged most in practice. In its traditional form, visual literacy is based on a hierarchy. Viewers read for the maker’s intent as they decipher the object and focus on the visual qualities of a work. The viewer is thus positioned as a consumer versus as a producer. Discussions of visual literacy in class included the study of form, icons, and symbols and how they communicate messages, but stop short of reversing the roles of reader and producer. The instructor did not emphasize just the formal qualities used by artists; he focused on iconography and the construction of cultural meanings. He had students discuss objects and their internal workings and external social meanings, which he hoped would lead to understanding and appreciating different ways of life. For him, worlds were reflected in art, although he understood such reflections to be interpretive.

He rarely expanded beyond the traditional discourse of visual literacy to include the idea of art as a site of conflicting voices and intersecting discourses. But on occasion, he did discuss how meanings of objects change according to perspectives and that representations are partial and cannot capture a full picture of cultural life. The instructor never discussed literacy in relationship to how images govern behavior.

The major change made to the curriculum was in relationship to the use of instructional strategies. Instead of relying on didacticism, the team instituted a combination of lecture/lab sessions, where students had opportunities for active versus passive learning. This strategy was built in relation to an understanding of a particular education discourse-- constructivism. During the labs, Todd used problem-solving situations that students could explore and they were excited about these opportunities (See Appendix D). Specifically, the CD ROMS were used to facilitate problem solving. Learning in the lab was quite different from lecture. Instead of an “art in the dark” situation, where all the students faced the instructor as he spoke and pointed and on occasion asked questions, they had access to diverse resources and interactions—their own community of learners—their peers. Learning in this context facilitated the negotiation of meanings, although students did not have control over what to learn, when to learn, and with whom to learn. Although the team wanted to encourage students to be knowledge constructors and this did occur at times (See Appendix B, C, and Lab 4 in Appendix D), the learning endeavor was actually more about

discovery. Those involved in discovery learning posit that learners can discover the truth for themselves if given the opportunity to learn through doing. The problem with such a position is that although the idea that there is no one way to present information to learners and there is no one way to structure a subject, learners through their activity must still come to the conclusions determined by others (Hein, 1998). Constructivists however center truth claims on whether the learner finds value in the concepts learned as they act on them. In constructivism, learners are characterized as dynamic and are treated as if they have pedagogical worth. Knowledge construction is thus viewed as shared activity, producing knowledge and presenting knowledge in a variety of ways. Meaningful learning happens in context and in the pursuit of understanding, where students have multiple entries and solutions to a problem. Sometimes this did occur; for example, students juxtaposed image and written word on the same screen to demonstrate various understandings through the creation of exhibitions.

The instructor's teaching was heavily influenced by social art history. Using this approach and packing it into the model of the survey, the instructor examined objects in the context of the world in which it was created; discussed maker and patron motives in relationship to aspects of belief systems, cultural influences, and artistic practices; comparatively analyzed themes from different time periods and cultures; considered iconographical, stylistic, and symbolic issues in regard to meanings; and drew attention to the value of objects to those



who would use them. He had students conduct iconographical analysis by looking at elements in an object, tracing their development, and making conclusions regarding the social, cultural, economic, and/or aesthetic values of those responsible for producing the object. He also discussed how works provoked associations and connections to culturally situated experiences and this sometimes conflicted with how the works were understood by the people who made them and the society who valued them.

The problems dealt with by visual literacy, education, and social art history are conceptualized as part of a complex system of discourses that uphold art history as both a humanistic and non-humanistic project. For example, in class, difference is posited as phenomenon to be understood. The instructor's remedy is the inclusion of culturally based criteria that particular societies use in producing and receiving art. However, without critique of the survey or representation, social art history becomes what Britzman, Santiago-Valles, Jimenez & Lamash (1993) call "good realism." Although the instructor at times discussed how representations are privileged interpretations, it was not done enough. His approach did not often discuss how the "other" is represented. Cultural identities then may be understood as humanistic, fixed and monolithic instead of multivocal and relational. A discourse of inclusion sediments into an unwillingness to carefully examine privilege, values, or practices of the culture studying the "other." The instructor's occasional interrogations of representations, such as how interpretations are constructed in relationship to

methodologies, become silenced when they come up against the discourse of inclusion. In the promotion of visual literacy as a useful skill set to facilitate an appreciation for the arts of various cultures in Asia, diverse representations were collapsed into the already formed grand narrative of visual literacy, with little questioning of this narrative and how it constructs the social field. The status quo is left in place because the cultural models by which art is read reinforces the privileging of familiar understandings of maker, the creative act, and the reader, some of which are humanist concepts.

Constructivism in relationship with the multicultural discourses of the classroom can also be seen as a type of humanism because it privileges beliefs about freedom, autonomy, growth, development, and notions that people are capable of making significant personal choices within the constraints imposed by curriculum. Maslow (1970) discusses the concept of "self-actualization," which he described as "the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, etc." (p. 150). He identified a number of characteristics of self-actualized people, three of which are tolerance for ambiguity, acceptance of self and others, and experiences that lead to personal transformation through new insights.

Humanistic education is a lifelong process, the purpose of which is to develop individuals who will be able to lead meaningful lives. Priorities of humanistic education intersect with that of multicultural education to emphasize empathic understanding, and respect or acceptance (Rogers, 1983).

## CHAPTER 5

### IMPLICATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

As Britzman, et al. (1997) notes about teacher education, this study also asks that we no longer posit the question: how do we teach others to teach, in this case, within the art history classroom? We must instead ask how do people learn and understand and examine teaching in relationship to this. Such a question orients the classroom differently. Asking how people learn pushes for a dialogically-centered classroom with active learners, and allows one to consider complex conversations around conflictive forms of knowledge, identity, community, language, and its practices (Britzman, et al., 1997). This question acknowledges that the classroom does social work--that culture, identity, and language are constructed and students' lived contexts are thus relevant to their capacity to learn. In the classroom under study, art history learning was constructed through the lived context of multiculturalism as a valued enterprise.

Pedagogical strategies do something to knowledge and the insights into knowledge. If anything, this study shows that understanding is affected by cultural constructions made in discourse, in social relationships, and in social

context. Art is not a monolithic social category. All artists are not engaged in the same activity and artworks do not have the same purpose. Making explicit the belief systems embodied by a work, the social roles a work assumes, and how audiences interact with it draw attention to how images and objects find their meaning in social activity (Van Laar & Diepeveen, 1998). I believe that this study helps to imagine such social activity in relationship to classrooms and the study of objects.

The contradictions and multiple realities implicit in the work of educators and students deny that learning can be something acquired or mastered. We must be more concerned with the structures that allow us to make meaning and what possibilities and limitations they provide—the socialization of thinking and visualizing. As educators, we must be concerned with how to produce debate and multiple perspectives on events and practices; what produces or limits meaning making; and how we sustain value commitments—issues of representation.

## **5.2 We Are Involved in Representation**

### **5.2.1 Representation**

Representation has to do with how images have a social function, producing cultural meaning. As Stimpson (1988) explains, representation serves up several meanings at once; it can be an image, a narrative, an idea, and a product of ideology, bringing forth the world and justifying its dealings. The notion that representation has something to do with imitation is common to art

history. Gombrich (1960) described how artists have wanted to improve the illusionistic power of their pictures and so checked their images against their perceptions of the world. Resemblance theory has, however, been challenged by many art historians, including Nelson Goodman (1976). These historians believe that representation has less to do with mimetic accuracy and more to do with cultural values. Artists construct work that articulates the attitudes of the society in which they live. Works manifest the values of the society in which they were created. This particular idea of representation was a dominant discourse in the survey class. Postmodernism, moreover, makes representation an issue, challenging our mimetic assumptions about it. It critiques the ability that representations have in reflecting reality and that “man” is the centered subject of it. Hutcheon (1989) asks, “have we ever known the ‘real’ except through representations? We may see, hear, feel, smell, and touch it, but do we know it in the sense that we give meaning to it...Our common-sense presuppositions about the ‘real’ depend upon how the ‘real’ is described, how it is put into discourse and interpreted” (p. 33). Also, according to postmodernism, these representations cannot be stable. Eagleton (1991) explains:

Nobody is much enamoured these days of an idea of representation in which the signified spontaneously puts forth its own signifier; in which some organic bond is imagined to exist between the two, so that the signified can be represented only in this way; and in which the signifier in no sense alters the signified, but remains a neutral, transparent medium of expression. (p. 210)

We can no longer say a world is reflected in art but only that works are ideological constructions that masquerade as representation (Melville, 1995).

They constitute reality. Such an understanding of representation must be seen in relation to power and in discussions in the classroom. Cultural forms have the capacity to speak through specific arrangements and deployments. Culture is an effect of representation and educators must explore how the narratives they tell and the images they present structure how students see themselves and others.

### **5.2.2 Culture**

The word “culture” is connected to a number of concepts. Williams (1976,1981) suggests four uses: culture as a process of intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development; culture as the products and practices of intellectual and artistic activity; culture as a way of life; and culture as the signifying system through which a social order is communicated, experienced, and reproduced. Within the discipline of art history, the dominant view of culture rests on products and practices. Culture here describes universal standards of beauty and value, separating objects from the everyday and raising them above the local. The textbook in the survey classroom privileged the aesthetic dimension of an object over any site-specific associations, emphasizing the object’s autonomy. Art here rises above the local and can be considered a shared human experience, promoting humanistic values for art and culture. This use of culture can also be seen in relationship to education. A cultured person should be familiar with the best of the collected art works society provides.

The third definition, provided by Williams (1981), is anthropological and speaks to the common practices shared by groups of people. Here culture is not

hierarchical, but plural. The educator of the survey took this aspect of culture on by connecting art to cultural practice. Giroux (2005) however troubles the idea of culture as shared experience by pointing to the conflictual elements of culture—the inequalities that different groups experience within a location and how differences are expressed in multiple and contradictory ways.

William (1981) last definition of culture is where this study is situated and can help to construct ways in which educators can see themselves as cultural workers. Culture as a signifying system is embodied in all institutions. Material practices construct meanings, values, and subjects. Culture in the classroom can transmit dominant values but can also be a site where these values can also be displaced. Culture is thus discursive; the word must be examined in relationship to discourses. Culture is constitutive, shaping society, in this case through the classroom, by the stories told and images displayed. As seen in the study, culture is complicated; it cannot be seen as a single thing or as constituted by objects alone. Culture becomes the social practices in which objects are embedded and made meaningful, such as through multicultural discourses. Sometimes this was acknowledged in the class, for example in the discussion of how objects are studied and how this may differ, but the other aspects of culture seemed to override this.

### **5.2.3 Authorship**

Another issue of representation that dominates art historical scholarship and teaching is the notion that the author expresses himself in a work. Pollock

(1995) explains that the effect of such a notion is the production of an artistic subject for and of works of art:

What is seen when looking at a painting is, then, the trace which takes us back to that definable and cogent subjectivity for which the painting's visual form is only the sign...The production of artist as subject disguises the actual process which folds the viewer/historian over the putative author, seemingly discerning his (sic) intentions and psyche while not admitting to the fact of reading which is necessarily taking place in front of a complex social text. (p. 38)

The artist as subject becomes the source of meaning and the cause of art (Pollock, 1995) and this concept is seen in students' discussion of visual literacy.

Barthes (1977) argues, however, that the writer is collapsed into the writing:

"The writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest on any one of them" (p. 146.). Foucault (1984a) does not dissolve the writer into the writing. He argues that what we call a writer differs during different historical periods:

The "author function" is tied to the legal and institutional systems that circumscribe, determine, and articulate the realm of discourses; it does not operate in a uniform manner in all discourses, at all times, and in any given culture; it is not defined by spontaneous attribution of a text to its creator, but through a series of precise and complex procedures; it does not refer, purely and simply, to an actual individual insofar as it simultaneously gives rise to a variety of egos and to a series of subjective positions that individuals of any class may come to occupy. (Foucault, 1984a, p.107-08)

Thus, an author again is not someone who precedes the text but is a product of the text.



Nehamas (1987) expands on Foucault, urging us to construct new meanings by connecting the text to other texts to see what texts have made it possible. According to Moxey (1994), Nehamas' formulation that meaning should not be found in the writer's intention or in the historical circumstances that determine it is an advantage. Nehamas says the author is created by the text, by those who interpret it:

Whereas the writer is a repressive figure, whose association with legal codes of ownership serves as a metaphor for closure imposed on textual interpretation by the strategy of reading texts in relation to the individuals who composed them, the author is an expansive concept that is the product of the text and those texts to which it has given rise. The author, in other words, is a creation of the interpretations to which his or her work has been subjected in the course of time. (cited in Moxey, 1994, p. 58)

Such a conception does not ask who wrote it but how it was written and how it is read. It opens up conversations about the conditions of possibilities of knowledge. An art history classroom should be concerned with how images are written and read by students.

#### **5.2.4 Ideology**

One of the effects of representation is ideology. Eagleton (1991) proposes six possible definitions for ideology: it is the material process of the production of ideas, beliefs, and values in a social life; it symbolizes the conditions and life experiences of specific, socially significant groups or classes; it can be a discursive field in which social power conflicts and collides over questions central to the reproduction of social power as a whole; it is the ideas and beliefs which help legitimate the interests of a ruling class; it is the ideas and

beliefs which help to legitimate the interests of the ruling class, specifically by distortion and dissimulation; and it is the ideas and beliefs which help to legitimate the material structure of society as a whole. Ultimately, Eagleton (1991) says ideology is a particular set of effects within discourses. Ideology creates closure whereby certain forms of signification are excluded and others become fixed. This process allows certain interests to become rationalized and naturalized in the name of certain forms of political power. The cultural process by which certain ideas dominate over others is identified as hegemony. Cultural hegemony at work gives certain discourses durability. In the context of this study, the political ends served by art history include valuing difference without troubling its representation. My recommendation in the context of art history is that the practitioners of the discipline should enable students to engage in the social where art becomes a site for the production of activity. Visual culture studies can help to formulate such activity.

### **5.3 Visual Cultural Studies as Guidance**

According to Crimp (1999), visual culture is a narrower area of cultural studies. It is an emerging field and is closely aligned with art history, because it takes theories, such as poststructuralism, from social and cultural studies and applies them to artifacts, social institutions, and cultural practices that frame these artifacts. Art historians, however, focus on the semiotic qualities of visuals, while visual culturalists are more interested in cultural politics and the social construction of vision and visuals (Elkins, 2003). Visual culturalists investigate

how seeing, knowing, and power are interrelated. Vision in this conversation is thought to be culturally constructed and a social practice. Scholars involved in visual cultural have expanded their studies to include non-art objects and low-art objects, from different cultures and historical times, use the new approaches to art history<sup>16</sup>, interrogate vision, and critique image-making practices. According to Elkins (2003), one can break down those involved in visual culture as scholars extending the role of art history to cover all imagery through a semiotic lens (Moxey, 1994, Mitchell, 1994), as practitioners doing interdisciplinary work that borrow methods from cultural studies to investigate how visuals are places of social interaction and definition (Mirzoeff, 1999, Skurken & Cartwright, 2001) and as those who want to establish a sociology of vision (Rose, 2001).

Unlike the methodology of art history surveys, such as chronology, which is pre-determined and rigid, visual culture studies allows the inquiry to lead methodology. The selection and ordering of information and images are more likely to be diverse. As Mirzoeff (1999) explains:

To some, visual culture may seem to claim too broad a scope to be of practical use. It is true that visual culture will not sit comfortable in already existing university structures. It is part of an emerging body of post-disciplinary academic endeavors from cultural studies, gay and lesbian studies, to African-American studies, and so on, whose focus crosses the borders of traditional academic disciplines at will. In this sense, visual culture is a tactic, not an academic discipline. It is a fluid interpretive

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<sup>16</sup> Jones (2003) discusses how the new art history, once supported by leftist intellectuals, never did challenge traditional art history. Its practitioners still privileged the object and the systems that sustain it. She notes, "Art history seems to have the biggest stake of all the related disciplines in warding off the incursion of visual culture as a rubric and mode of understanding visuality. It is a conservative field to begin with, staging its boundaries in relation to what can be considered art, and what cannot, and is deeply interested (as the October series makes lamentably clear) in a very limited conception of what constitutes history. (p. 6)

structure, centered on understanding the response to visual media of both individuals and groups. Its definition comes from the questions it asks and issues it seeks to raise. Like the other approaches mentioned above, it hopes to reach beyond the traditional confines of the university to interact with people's everyday lives. (pp. 4-5)

Contrasting visual culture with visual literacy will help to explain what I am calling for in the teaching of art history.<sup>17</sup> Visual literacy is the phrase I will use to explain a dominant approach used in art history, especially surveys, and was indeed a goal set by the reformers for students. According to the reform team, students should be visually literate.

Visual literacy is an approach to works that transforms them into "high art," allowing viewers to enter into a social practice by which to discuss art. Visual literacy can be compared to what Fernie (1995) describes when discussing connoisseurship:

Connoisseurship involves the acquisition of extensive first-hand experience of works of art with the aim, first, of attributing works to artists and schools, identifying styles and establishing sources and influences, and second, of judging their quality and hence their place in the canon. (p. 330)

Objects and images are looked at for themselves versus their use, and may include a discussion of its production, such as who made it, why it was made, and what inspired the maker. Most particularly, with visual literacy, the viewer is concerned with composition, mostly what qualities make up the work, its

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<sup>17</sup> It is not my intention to claim that teaching visual culture instead of the art historical survey is original. Elkins (2007) claims that art history is losing a sense of itself as a discipline because its practitioners and scholars are dissolving its boundaries. He however claims if certain narrative elements are not in place, the history of art no longer looks like a complete and comforting story.

iconography, and how the work is placed in the maker's oeuvre (Rose, 2001).

Visual culture however is about the use of objects in people's lives. As Rose (2001) explains:

Visual images are made, and may be moved, displayed, sold, censored, venerated, discarded, stared at, hidden, recycled, glanced at, damaged, destroyed, touched, reworked. Images are made and used in all sorts of ways by different people for different reasons, and these makings and uses are crucial to the meanings an image carries. An image may have its own effects, but these are always mediated by the many and various uses to which it is put. An image will depend for its effects on a certain way of seeing, as Berger<sup>18</sup> assumed in relation to female nude painting. But this effect is always embedded in particular cultural practices that are far more specific than 'a way of life.' (p. 14)

Visual culture is thus about the effects of images or objects, within the social context of viewing. Visual culture is not a thing but a process. The following chart further elaborates on the differences between the two discourses.

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<sup>18</sup> Berger's book *Ways of Seeing* (1972) based on a television series raises questions about the ideological nature of images, especially in the depiction of women.

Visual Literacy	Visual Culture
Understanding and appreciating artworks	Understanding how artworks and artifacts function socially
An end result of the artist's social activity	A beginning for social activity
Focus is on the visual qualities of artworks	Focus is on social practices
Vision is sensory	Vision is socially produced
What does this object mean?	How is this object meaningful?
Authoritative	Shared authority
Transforming minds	Transforming lives
Becoming cultured	Culture as a signifying system

Table 5.1 Visual Literacy Versus Visual Culture

## 5.4 Art History as Cultural Activity

As seen by the study, the field of art history has an object-based focus that serves to reproduce ways of understanding art--a central commitment to the artwork itself, often through a stylistic or iconographic investigation, reinforcing its uniqueness. But as asked by Green & Mort (1996), why direct cultural inquiry around the object itself? Objects have social lives, as described in my analysis. What justification is there to continue to separate art from life?

As Green & Mort argue:

Visual representations need to be seen as part of an interlocking set of histories, which involve multiple relations and dependencies across a range of social fields and practices. It is no longer a question of analyzing an internal field of visual imagery in its relation to a set of external determinations (science, the family, sexuality,..etc.), but of understanding the interdependence and interchange of discourses and practices, with mutual reinforcing results. This is not a question of a black on white, figure on ground, art and history relation. We must hold on to this point at the moment of our analysis, which should not be directed at any single object, image, or sub-domain (art criticism, patronage,..etc.), but upon the play of interlocking social processes. (1996, p. 227)

Visual images cannot be understood in isolation through an analysis of their internal workings or external social meanings (Green & Mort, 1996). An analysis of cultural meanings and their significance depends on the position images have in relation to complex cultural debates, which include both those that teachers and students are involved in. So, I would like art historians to acknowledge the varied nature of art and its fundamental role in the production of cultural meaning.

In art history, often learning is centered on the question of "what does this object mean?" and ends with a discussion on issues dealing with production. Teachers assume the art object stands as a finished product and ignore its social life. Practitioners have for too long been looking at art sequestered into particular cultural zones to the exclusion of looking at other art or artifacts and their fields of circulation. I propose that the question "how is this object meaningful?" will push the investigation of art history in a direction that deals with reception and value, allowing students to consider how art frames their understandings and how they frame the understanding of art-- to see how art is indeed relevant in their lives and those of others. Instead of defining art through its exclusions, we should see its connections to larger social and cultural issues-- art as a way of experiencing things-- ways of being and becoming. Such a pedagogical turn requires travel.<sup>19</sup> The metaphor of travel implied in "how is this object meaningful?" emphasizes a transformative encounter, where the borders you must go through and be in relation with to get somewhere, that is the meaningfulness of something, are examined (Clifford, 1997).

Winter (2002) explains that Western aesthetic theory is historically contingent and cannot be used as a way of understanding all artworks or artifacts; instead, we must confront differences in how things are known and valued and on how standards of practice are applied by others. For the field of art

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<sup>19</sup> This idea of pedagogy of travel, along with my developing understanding of visual culture, was initiated in discussion with a colleague Dr. A. J. Olson, currently at the University of North Texas, as we prepare a manuscript for publication.



history, it is no longer enough to study meanings. Learning in this study, as A. J. Olson (personal communication, 2006) described to me, is not formed through pre-existing disciplines but in movement through social engagement. So, in the art history classroom, teachers must "live" lessons from the beginning. Students must be engaged in cultural practice: Who are we? What is valued? What must be done? How do the things in our lives engage us? How are things meaningful? Opportunities lie in seeking to explore the cultural riches embedded in social practices.

A pedagogy of "traveling" (Pinar, 2002) -- rather than one framed as an execution of preplanned steps, centered on specified outcomes and checks for understanding—should frame teaching. According to Pinar (2002), pedagogy as travel encourages individuals to experience an educational journey where the focus is on the individual in the process of negotiating the object under study. Travel extends the understanding of self outward, where a journey changes both that which is visited and the self that travels it. Teaching must require that students first understand pedagogy as process, a way of understanding themselves and how they engage others. Pedagogy becomes a form of cultural production where educators travel within and across communities, examining how meaning stimulates the construction of knowledge, value, and identity.

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APPENDIX A  
DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

## **A Diversity Action Plan for The Ohio State University**

June 12, 2000

### **Co-Chairs**

Carole A. Anderson  
Dean, College of Nursing  
Assistant Vice President for Health Sciences

David Williams, II  
Vice President for Student and Urban/Community Affairs  
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### **Members**

David Ashley  
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David Ferguson  
Associate Vice President, Office of University Relations

Susan Fisher  
Professor, Entomology  
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Deborah Gill  
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Dara Cooper  
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### **Preface**

One of the greatest challenges facing colleges and universities today involves creating and maintaining a campus community that reflects the rich diversity of this country. This committee recognizes that this is as much a problem at The Ohio State University as elsewhere. In 1996, the institutions of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (Big Ten universities plus the University of Chicago) reaffirmed their commitment to this goal. This commitment was made in recognition of both the importance of educating students to live and work in an increasingly diverse society and the historical exclusion of women and minorities from various academic disciplines and occupations. These universities recognized that not continuing aggressive efforts dedicated to this goal would

result in the exacerbation of this country's historic problem and the deprivation of future generations of the knowledge of the significant contributions that can be made by women and minorities to all professions and occupations.

Similarly, the nation's colleges and universities and various higher education organizations have endorsed the concept that racial and ethnic diversity should be one factor among the many considered in admissions and hiring in order to provide a quality education for all students. The reasons given for their positions are that diversity:

- \* Enriches the educational experience by providing students with the opportunity to learn from individuals who differ from them.
- \* Promotes personal growth and a healthy society by challenging stereotyped preconceptions, encouraging critical thinking and helping students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds.
- \* Strengthens communities and the workplace by preparing students for citizenship in an increasingly complex, pluralistic society, and fostering mutual respect and teamwork.
- \* Enhances the country's economic competitiveness by effectively developing and using the talents of all citizens.

This committee strongly encourages the university to aggressively and publicly defend the principles of affirmative action in admissions, financial aid and hiring decisions. In addition, the university should actively and visibly participate in the national efforts to increase diversity in higher education. The committee looks to the president to lead this effort.

In 1998, a public opinion poll, conducted by Daniel Yankelovich, showed that Americans support diversity in higher education and recognize that diversity is important to student success. A clear majority of the individuals polled agreed that diversity on campus has a positive effect on the campus and on students' education. They also agreed that, because our society is multicultural and we live in a global economy, students need to learn more about persons who are different from them, and that colleges and universities should take explicit steps to ensure diversity in the student body.

Research also shows that a diverse environment has educational benefits. A study conducted by Professor Patricia Gurin of the University of Michigan showed that all students learn better when the learning occurs in a setting where students interact and exchange ideas with others who are different from them. She found that racially and ethnically diverse classrooms and classes that deal with cultural differences allow students to grow intellectually through challenging long-held beliefs and ideas. Her research challenged the common belief that benefits of diversity accrue primarily to racial minorities.

A new report published by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), "Does Diversity Make a Difference? Three Research Studies on Diversity in College Classrooms," is a compilation of data that supports the contention that campus diversity provides educational benefits for all students. The report is based on faculty surveys and case studies of classroom interactions and provides much needed data demonstrating that multi-ethnic classrooms challenge stereotypes, broaden students' perspective and sharpen critical thinking skills resulting in a positive impact on all students' learning.

A diverse environment at The Ohio State University is central to the mission and to the academic goals that have been set. This belief has long been professed, but the university has not acted aggressively and consistently on this belief. Some progress has been made, especially in the recruitment of women faculty, but, overall, the campus community is not diverse. The profile of faculty, staff and students is not as diverse as the state of Ohio or the nation.

While strategic indicators suggest that OSU has made slow progress in increasing diversity relative to benchmark institutions, the university should and must do better. Furthermore, serious questions can be raised regarding the appropriateness of benchmarking against a group that, as a whole, has not made impressive gains in increasing diversity. More suitably, progress should be judged by a higher standard. Yet, recruitment alone will not suffice. What is also required is the creation of an environment, both in and outside of the classroom, that is welcoming and supportive of all people. Likewise, a strong collective will to change is also required of the entire university community.

Numerous studies and reports focused on diversity and campus climate have been issued over the years, and virtually all have come to the same conclusion: change was necessary. What has been lacking, however, is the university's commitment to create real and measurable change. There has not been an official, university-wide implementation/action plan with identified goals, and concrete strategies for achieving them. The inevitable consequence of this inaction is a university environment that both perpetuates racism, sexism and homophobia and gives privilege to white, heterosexual males.

To address this serious situation, in January 1999 a small committee was charged to develop an action plan to assist the university in achieving its goals related to diversity and to report to the provost/executive vice president and the president.

This committee developed a Draft Diversity Action Plan that was circulated to the university community at the end of November 1999 to stimulate discussion and generate comments. A great deal of interest was expressed in the plan and its objectives -- ranging from a view that the University was already diverse enough



and no more effort should be expended to increase diversity to the more common perspective that the plan did not go far enough and was not inclusive of all of the relevant groups that do contribute to the diversity profile of the university. Many commented on specific objectives in the plan but few offered additional, specific strategies for inclusion in the plan.

The committee considered all of these comments, including the call to be more inclusive of many other groups, but reaffirmed that the focus of the proposed diversity plan would remain on increasing the number of women and racial/ethnic minorities and improving the campus climate for all, including persons with different sexual orientations. Many of the suggestions provided by the university community have been incorporated and will provide the basis for continuing discussion and stimulating a sense of ownership by all faculty, students and staff. The committee believes that the goal put forth in this plan to create a culture of inclusion will provide all people with the support needed to succeed. Therefore, we also strongly support the work of the offices dedicated to advocacy for specific groups, and we urge the campus community to take their recommendations and actions seriously.

The term "diversity" means difference, variance and heterogeneity. Its opposite is sameness, similarity and homogeneity. Because the meaning is broad, it has come to mean many things to different people. The term is used to refer to different religions, different social class or political philosophies, different capabilities or accomplishments, different sexual orientations, or different races, ethnic groups and gender. The work of this committee and the recommendations focus on gender, and racial and ethnic differences -- the core interests of the civil and women's rights movements of the 1960s and at the heart of the subsequent social change in this country -- and on persons with same sex orientation. This plan is, however, just the first step in a longer-term commitment to increasing diversity, in its broadest meaning, on the campus.

This plan sets forth six overall objectives and a variety of strategies -- albeit, non exhaustive -- for meeting them. We realize that both the profiles and the applicant pools for students, faculty and staff in the various colleges and vice presidential units are quite varied. Hence, different strategies may be more or less appropriate for individual units and should be tailored to meet their specific needs and goals. However, if senior administrators lack the will to hold individuals accountable by utilizing all of the management tools (e.g., budget, merit increases, reappointment) available to them, the goals of this plan will not be met.

Appendices A and B contain data related to women and minority faculty, staff and students on campus. Although many people believe we have made

substantial progress in increasing diversity on campus, we want to do better. Available data reveal the following:

\* There has been slow but steady progress in increasing the numbers of minority students enrolled at the Columbus campus of OSU. In autumn 1999, the percentage of minority students enrolled was:

7.26% African American  
1.75% Hispanic  
5.29% Asian American  
.33% American Indian

\* In Ohio, African-Americans represent 11% of the population, Hispanics 1.4 %, Asian Americans 1.0%. By 2010, these percentages are expected to increase to 13.8%, 2.2% and 2.9% respectively.

\* In 1999, 17.8% of the freshman admitted were members of minority groups compared to 12.7% in 1989.

\* The six-year graduation rate for white students is 57.6%. For African-Americans, it is 37.2%. For Hispanic students, it is 42.4%

\* Women faculty constitute 26% of the regular, tenured/tenure tracking faculty although women earned 41.8% of the Ph.Ds awarded in 1998 in all fields.

\* In 1999, 12% of the regular, tenure track faculty were members of ethnic minorities. Of the 2968 regular faculty, 3.25% (N=96) were African American, 0.1% (N=3) were Native American, 7.3% (N=216) were Asian American and 1.4% (N=43) were Hispanic.

\* The percentage of African-American, Native American and Hispanic American faculty has remained essentially the same since 1990. Over the ten years there have been slight increases in the actual numbers of ethnic minorities except for African Americans who have decreased by five. (The total faculty has decreased by 383)

\* In 1999, 26.6% (N=790) of the regular, tenure track faculty was female. Because the overall size of the faculty has decreased by 383 since 1990 the percentage of women has increased from 23.5% to 26.6%, but the actual number of women faculty has increased by only 2.

\* There are 192 regular, clinical track faculty in the six health sciences colleges. 42.7% (N=82) are female, 4.2% (N=8) are African American and 4.7% (N=9) are Asian American and 1.0% (N=2) are Hispanic.

\* The percentage of women and ethnic minorities among professional staff has remained relatively constant since 1990.

\* The number of women and/or ethnic minorities in senior leadership positions including vice presidents, deans and department chairs is small.

## **The University's Goals**

The university is committed to becoming a leader within the higher education community with regard to diversity and the creation of a campus culture of inclusion that creates a learning environment essential for educating students who will work and live in an increasingly diverse culture. In order to achieve this recognition, bold steps must be taken to recruit and retain greater numbers of women and minority faculty, staff and students and to create a supportive environment in which they can succeed and reach their fullest potential.

Incentives and rewards must be made available to individuals and units that develop successful models to achieve a diverse community, and accountability for achieving the goals must be assigned. The entire campus community must assume responsibility for advancing the university's goal of increasing diversity. The president, provost, vice presidents, deans and all senior level administrators must be held accountable for progress (or lack thereof) made in advancing the goals of increasing diversity and changing the campus climate to a more inclusive and supportive one.

The university's land-grant mission obligates OSU to serve the people of Ohio and the nation through teaching, research and service. The short-term goal of this plan is to create a faculty, student and staff profile that reflects the demographic profile of the state. Long term, however, the university population must reflect national demographics. Specific steps to reach our goal range from short-term strategies, such as targeted and aggressive recruiting when the pool is diverse, to strategies to increase the pool -- including long-term strategies of working with K-12 schools to increase the graduation and college attendance rates among ethnic minority students.

### **Objectives**

- A. Create a supportive environment that is welcoming for all individuals.
- B. Recruit and retain greater numbers of women and minorities into faculty, staff and administrative positions (including deans, chairs, and vice presidents).
- C. Recruit, retain, and graduate greater numbers of ethnic minority students.
- D. Provide incentives to academic and academic support units for developing models of excellence for increasing diversity.
- E. Collect and organize data to systematically and effectively assess progress and to align/realign programs intended to enhance diversity.
- F. Assign accountability to achieve the progress envisioned in this action plan.

## **The Action Plan:**

In order to achieve the objectives, the following action plan will be undertaken. Each section of the plan focuses on one of the objectives and describes specific actions for consideration. Many of the identified strategies are already in place, and these should be continued when proven successful. Some strategies are more or less appropriate for one unit than another. Ideally, each unit should customize its own plan using the suggested strategies.

The plan is intended to supplement and complement activities that units undertake in order to address specific issues and factors that might bear on their progress and success. There will be costs associated with implementing this plan. But, success must not depend solely on the availability of new money. Rather, the identified actions need to be incorporated into existing operations and support wherever possible. It is recommended, however, that the provost should designate some amount of money each year to assist in the implementation of the suggested programs.

We also recognize that all of the actions suggested in this plan cannot be undertaken at once and recommend that the provost identify specific targets at the beginning of each academic year to be implemented that year.

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### **A. Create a supportive environment that is welcoming for all.**

Achievement of a community supportive of a diverse population will require coordinated efforts of all the vice presidential units to enhance those activities that have already produced results and to support the development of new initiatives that will assist in greater achievement of the goals for diversity. Each vice president will be held accountable to the president for the degree of success that is reached in achieving a greater sense of community on campus that is characterized by a climate of inclusion.

#### **1. The provost and executive vice president will:**

(a) Reinvest in and reinvigorate the Office of Faculty and TA Development to make available a wide range of services and curriculum materials to assist faculty in creating a classroom climate in which all students have the opportunity to succeed. This especially includes materials aimed directly at positively incorporating women and minority students into the classroom dynamic.

(b) Develop, in collaboration with the vice president for student affairs, a plan to establish a multicultural center on campus. The Hale Center will remain a freestanding black cultural center because of its history and the special place it

occupies at Ohio State. However, it will be expected to contribute to the life of the multicultural center in meaningful and appropriate ways.

(c) Continue to support The Women's Place.

(d) Ensure that the WOSU stations' programming fully reflects the interests and tastes of a culturally diverse population.

(e) Using all available management tools, hold deans and vice presidents accountable for creating and maintaining a climate inclusive of diversity within their colleges/offices.

(f) Propose to the Board of Trustees a plan to extend university health benefits to domestic partners.

(g) Ensure that sexual orientation is not a consideration in any employment decisions.

2. The vice president for student affairs will:

(a) Develop a diversity training workshop for student leaders of all registered organizations as part of a leadership training program. The plan for the workshop should be developed for implementation in the summer of 2000.

(b) Award challenge grants, with funds provided by the provost, to student organizations to provide inter-organizational, culturally diverse, student programs.

(c) Plan with the Alumni Association to create an Alumni Advisory Board for Diversity.

(d) Develop policies and practices to ensure that the Living Learning communities foster a greater understanding of diversity and that each has populations, which are, themselves, diverse.

(e) Sponsor bi-annual workshops for all students, beginning in Academic Year 2000- 2001 to foster greater respect for and understanding, and valuing of individuals with different sexual orientations.

(f) Eliminate housing policies, including employment opportunities in campus residences, that discriminate against same sex partners.

(g) Institute "Theme Quarters" with multiple events and organizations to provide dialogues on diversity. An annual plan featuring campus wide themes would be

developed each year. New funding will be provided to ensure successful and meaningful programming.

(h) Require constituency offices within the Office of Student Affairs to develop collaborative programming aimed at exploring diversity issues and promoting dialogue among people of all backgrounds.

(i) Create mechanisms to support and protect students who bring allegations of gender, sexual and racial discrimination in order to lessen their vulnerability, fears of reprisals and harassment.

3. The vice president for university relations will:

(a) Develop a comprehensive communications and marketing program to advance diversity interests both internally and externally.

(b) Initiate proactive, ongoing media campaigns to support efforts to create a welcoming campus climate.

(c) Develop new and review existing materials describing the university's diversity initiatives for dissemination both on and off campus.

4. The vice president for research will:

(a) Establish seed grants for the purpose of promoting the interdisciplinary study of diversity issues.

(b) Create opportunities for inter-college research programs focused on multicultural issues.

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B. Recruit and retain greater numbers of women and minorities into faculty, staff and administrative positions (including deans, chairs and vice presidents).

Increasing the diversity of faculty, staff and administrators is probably the single most important objective that will have a substantial impact on all other objectives. The goal is to make and sustain substantial, annual increases in order to reach the long-range goal of mirroring national demographics. The responsibility for this initiative rests with the vice presidents and deans. Where the pool of potential candidates is already limited, the units will be required to develop strategies for increasing this pool (e.g., increasing ethnic diversity among the graduate student body). Particular attention should be given to units

that have a substantial pool and have failed to increase the diversity of their faculty or staff. At the same time, recognition should be given to successful units.

The goals for the total university over the next five years should be to increase the number of women and minority faculty by the following:

Female	25%	N=197
African-American	30%	N=28
Asian-American	10%	N=21
Hispanic American	30%	N=13
Native-American	100%	N=3

1. The provost and executive vice president will:

(a) Hold deans and academic department chairs accountable for increasing the representation of women and minority faculty through the development of college- specific plans based on the disciplines' minority and gender demographics and pools. Some plans may focus on aggressive recruitment from existing pools and others on building pools where none exists.

(b) Ensure that funds are available to assist units in hiring minority faculty at all ranks but particularly at senior ranks to enable the provision of mentors for junior hires.

(c) Modify the faculty hiring and assistance program in Fiscal Year 2001 to focus those funds in two ways: 1. For departments with small pools of women and minority candidates who are successful in recruiting them, and 2. For units that have been successful in increasing diversity to be able to hire at the senior rank.

(d) Ensure that the university conducts aggressive national searches with emphasis on developing pools that include qualified women and minority candidates for faculty and administrative positions.

(e) Require faculty search committee chairs to submit a report regarding the process used to enhance the pool of qualified women and minorities and the rationale for inclusion or exclusion of them in the final pool.

(f) Initiate workshops for faculty and department chairs to enhance their ability to increase the representation of women and minorities in faculty hiring pools.

(g) Provide incentives to units that develop collaborative arrangements for faculty recruitment with institutions who produce significant numbers of women and minority Ph.D. graduates.

(h) Initiate a faculty exchange program with historically black institutions.

(i) Refine and develop new "family friendly" personnel policies for the benefit of all faculty and staff. These policies are particularly important for women and minorities and demand immediate attention.

(j) Appoint a coordinator/analyst in the Office of Human Resources to produce and analyze data to support the university's Diversity Plan and the federal affirmative action requirements. Data will include analysis of recruiting pools, benchmarking comparisons and tracking of internal progress.

(k) Ensure that there is an effective and well-understood university mechanism to deal with faculty and staff allegations of sexual harassment and discrimination.

2. College deans and department chairs will:

(a) Ensure that faculty search committees aggressively pursue women and minority candidates.

(b) Develop a plan to increase the pool of women and minority candidates in those fields that have small pools.

(c) Ensure that the climate within the unit is welcoming to women and individuals from diverse backgrounds. Accomplishing this may necessitate formal diversity training for faculty and staff.

(d) Implement family-friendly personnel policies for the benefit of all faculty and staff. These policies are particularly important for women and minorities. Maintain a climate in which women and minorities feel free to access these benefits.

(e) Encourage staff to attend workshops offered by Office of Human Resources and credit-bearing university classes to enhance their skills for advancement.

3. All vice presidents and their units will develop a comprehensive plan to:

Increase the numbers of women and minorities in administrative and professional positions (A&P).

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C. Recruit, retain and graduate greater numbers of minority students

For the past decade, the university has been systematically raising the standard for admission and plans to continue this process. This ambition must not be allowed to have a negative impact on the recruitment of minority students. Therefore, we must continue to create significant and aggressive initiatives to



accompany successful ongoing initiatives in order to enhance further our recruitment of high-ability minority students.

African-Americans constitute the largest minority group in Ohio, and OSU appears to be recruiting a reasonable number of the existing pool of these high-ability high school graduates. OSU is recruiting 20% of this pool compared to recruiting 10% of the highest ability white students. We cannot be satisfied with only recruiting 20%. OSU can and must recruit more of these high-ability students and increase the effort to recruit more out-of-state students. Doing so will be particularly important to the goal of improving the record on retention and graduation for African-Americans that is substantially below the overall rate and the rate for white students. But, key to improved retention and graduation rates are the concerns of campus climate that must be addressed simultaneously.

The overall goal of our recruitment should be to have the student body mirror Ohio's projected demographics in ten years. By 2010, it is projected that the proportion of ethnic minorities will be: African-American, 13.8%; Asian, 2.2%; and Hispanic, 2.9%. In some fields, women are also underrepresented and, as such, should be targeted for recruitment. Much more needs to be done if the university is to realize the goal of becoming a leader in the state and the nation in the areas of increasing the pool of college bound minority students, retaining a larger percentage of those recruited and establishing a graduation rate for them that is at parity with non-minority students. Significant progress can only be made by the active engagement of the provost and executive vice president and his staff, the vice president for student affairs and his/her staff, the Office of Minority Affairs, college deans and faculty.

1. The provost and executive vice president will:

(a) Evaluate all existing minority recruitment programs to determine their effectiveness in recruiting minority students to OSU and elsewhere. If it is determined that the program is not meeting its goals and if it is also deemed not amenable to correction, the funding for that program should be redirected to other initiatives with the same goal.

(b) Encourage academic deans and department chairs to facilitate faculty involvement with undergraduate recruitment.

(c) Enhance academic support services for students who, based on experience, are at risk for non-retention and graduation.

(d) In Academic Year 2001, develop a plan to reduce the disparity in graduation rates between white and minority students.

(e) Initiate a Leadership Development Outreach Program for deans and chairs to visit targeted institutions (e.g. high schools, churches, military) with a high concentration of minorities to introduce them to OSU and its array of programs and opportunities.

(f) Create merit based scholarships for out-of-state minority students who possess the potential to succeed.

(g) Enlarge the Minority Scholars program scholarships beginning in FY 01 and work with colleges to offer scholars direct enrollment in the various colleges.

(h) Continue to support ongoing initiatives that link faculty with high school advisers, cultivate relationships with elementary and middle school children, work with university area feeder schools.

2. The college deans will:

(a) Evaluate the potential of direct admission to the college for increasing the enrollment of freshmen women and minorities, especially scholarship recipients.

(b) Identify academic support strategies that can be undertaken in the college to assist students to succeed and graduate.

(c) Work with faculty and departments to examine the curriculum, course content and methods, classroom climate and teaching styles to eliminate gender and racial bias to enhance the education of all students. Provide appropriate incentives and rewards for faculty who are successful.

(d) Work with the office of TA development to assist faculty in assessing their classroom climate to create a learning environment that is comfortable for all students.

(e) Add an item on the Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) that allows the assessment of progress made toward making course content, methods and climate more inclusive.

3. The vice president for student affairs will:

(a) Develop a Peer Partners Program that matches minority students with other students enrolled in the same program.

(b) Strengthen programming in the dormitories to create environments of inclusion and respecting and valuing differences.

4. The Dean of University College will:

(a) In partnership with the vice president for student affairs and the Office of Academic Affairs develop a summer-long "bridge" program for at-risk new or potential new freshmen. The goal of this program would be to enhance their potential for success in the university.

(b) Enlarge the Term I program.

(c) Revise UVC 100 (freshman survey course) so that it includes more content on living in diverse communities. Such content should include, but not be limited to, an examination of preconceptions, an appreciation and valuing of differences, and the economic, social and psychological costs to society as a whole of discrimination and exclusion.

5. The vice president for development will:

(a) Implement a strategic plan for aggressively pursuing funding for increasing scholarship support to be used primarily to increase diversity.

(b) Identify a directory of sources of external financial support for the various programs identified in this plan and disseminate that to the appropriate units.

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D. Provide incentives to academic and academic support units for developing models of excellence for increasing diversity.

Substantial progress in increasing diversity within the university will be achieved, in part, by providing positive incentives for change. This has already been demonstrated in other areas such as teaching, research, and interdisciplinary cooperation. To this end, the president and provost will:

(a) Establish a Models of Excellence for Diversity initiative that provides funding for competitive awards that will enhance diversity within the college. These proposals should include:

- \* A critical assessment of diversity within the unit.
- \* A plan and timetable for addressing the issues.
- \* Commitment of matching funds.
- \* Benchmarking indicators for judging progress.
- \* A formal evaluation of success.

The proposals will be reviewed by a select committee appointed by the president and provost and evaluated on the basis of their potential as a "best practice" to be used by other units.

(b) Enhance the prestige and visibility of diversity-related awards both on and off-campus.

(c) Sponsor a Best Practices for Achieving Diversity conference annually that will include a nationally prominent keynote speaker.

(d) Collect and distribute to all units those strategies and practices already in place that have proven to be effective mechanisms to recruit and retain women and minorities.

(e) For Academic Year 2000-2001, instruct each academic department or college and each vice presidential unit to undertake a diversity project chosen from the diversity plan for the year or other designated time. The unit will choose this project to best fit a demonstrable need or opportunity for improvement of that unit, and it should be a new undertaking. Regular reports on this initiative will be made to the Diversity Council, which will, in turn, disseminate lessons learned and best practices from these experiences.

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E. Collect and organize data to create databases in order to systematically and effectively assess progress and align/realign programs to achieve diversity goals.

Accurate data that is organized in ways that allow various questions to be answered is essential to the success of this plan. Historically, the university has been handicapped by the lack of good data that are easily analyzed. The creation of these databases is essential in order to mark progress over time in achieving greater diversity. A commitment must be made to provide funding for the necessary staff to collect and maintain essential data. The beginning point is to use existing data to create a historical record and then to continue to collect relevant data on an ongoing basis. The president and provost will:

(a) Collect the following data to document progress:

- \* Recruitment, retention and promotion rates of women and minority faculty and administrators as contrasted with overall rates.
- \* Recruitment, retention and graduation rates of women and minority students as contrasted with overall rates.
- \* Campus climate survey results.

(b) Periodically assess the progress/success of women and minority faculty and administrators.

(c) Issue an annual status report documenting progress made toward meeting the university's diversity goals using the above data.

(d) Publish an inventory of diversity-related events, offices, programs and groups within the university.

(e) Sponsor an open campus forum each year at which the progress that has been made and continuing issues can be discussed.

(f) Develop a diversity Web site that provides the current demographic profile of students, faculty, staff and administrators, and update the Web site annually.

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#### F. Assign accountability to achieve progress envisioned in this plan

Ultimately it is the responsibility of the president and provost to hold vice presidents and deans responsible for making progress toward the achievement of the university's diversity goals. This action plan calls for the establishment of incentives and rewards for individuals who make progress toward achieving these goals. Success, as evidenced by annual reports, should be a factor considered in annual evaluations of key administrators.

However, it is recognized that the university has established similar goals in the past based on various reports and studies, and progress has not been made. Therefore, it is the strong recommendation of this committee that the president appoint a university wide Council on Diversity to be established by the beginning of the 2000-2001 academic year. The overall purpose of this council would be to:

- \* Set annual goals and priorities based on this Diversity Plan.
- \* Be informed by data from previous reports and commissions, including the recently released SRI Report.
- \* Monitor the collection of data to chart progress made on the meeting of diversity goals.
- \* Foster collaboration and coordination between the various initiatives (e.g., The Women's Place, Office of Minority Affairs and Faculty Senate Diversity Committee).
- \* Be responsible for updating and keeping this Diversity Action Plan current.
- \* Be responsible for adequate planning to develop alternatives to affirmative action if legal opinion strikes down the use of affirmative action in making admissions, hiring and financial aid decisions.

- \* Issue an annual report to the university community.

The council should be comprised of individuals who represent diversity and who are in positions that provide them with influence and credibility. The chair of the council will be appointed by the president and serve a two-year term. Members will be appointed for staggered terms of one to three years with the opportunity for reappointment. The members should be drawn from the:

- \* Academic units
- \* Vice presidential units
- \* Chair of the Senate Diversity Committee
- \* Staff Advisory Committee
- \* Student leaders.
- \* The Graduate School
- \* Faculty Council

It is essential that this council be as diverse as possible to ensure its credibility with the populations of interest.

It is recommended that during the first year, the council appoint a subcommittee to examine the specific concerns of gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgender students, faculty and staff. The concerns of this group have not been systematically addressed, and they are considerable. This should be of the highest priority since the issues that have been identified during the public sessions devoted to discussing the diversity plan and in other contexts indicate that the academic and work life of these individuals is being negatively affected by the campus climate as well as some policies and practices.

## Summary

This plan is a living document. Simply stated, the goals relate to significantly improving the representation of women and minorities among the student body, faculty and staff; improving the classroom and social climate on campus for all members of the university community; and enhancing the education and educational processes that take place in this university.

The goals of the plan and the strategies that have been outlined to meet them are extensive. It is not expected that the university will move forward on all of these at once. Rather, the goals should be prioritized, and deliberate, and focused goals should be set each year. It is only through continuous and deliberate action that progress will be made. Although many of the actions proposed in this plan are doable with current resources it is likely that real progress and success will require additional resources. To that end, we recommend that the executive vice president and provost establish an annual

allocation to be given to these initiatives. At the same time, many of the activities in which OSU is currently engaged will help move us forward if this plan and its goals become the guiding principles for actions.

Successful achievement of the goals of this plan is important for many reasons, but prominent among them is the need to provide students with a complete and excellent education that prepares them for future work and careers in a global, multicultural world and economy.

## APPENDIX B

### ASSIGNMENT 1



Create a chronology of the stylistic evolution of an artifact found within the world in which you live. Provide reproductions of the artifact set and write 1-2 pages describing why and on what basis you created the given chronology.

A. Discuss the stylistic changes that have taken place and why these changes may have taken place.

B. Draw upon the various methodologies used in class to analyze your set of artifacts and place them within a time-line.

C. Draw upon social, cultural, or historical contexts to discuss the changes and to defend the chronology.

## APPENDIX C

### ASSIGNMENT 2

Design an exhibition of five to ten reproductions (from the Sherman Lee textbook) of Asian art or artifacts. Write 1-2 pages discussing your exhibition of images and how they relate to a theme. Present a 5-10 minute tour of your exhibition on the last day of class Thursday, June 3, 1999.

A. Choose a theme with a number of interrelated ideas to explore in relationship to your chosen images. Examples of possible themes include Asian art and the devotee, Buddhist art in India, or how different artists/cultures have treated a particular subject.

B. Draw upon social, cultural, and/or historical contexts and the various art historical methodologies to discuss the images and their significance. That is investigate the images in terms of style, iconography, material, function, contexts and/or cultural relevance...etc. to illustrate the chosen theme.

C. Create an exhibition, complete with title, reproductions, and text labels. Consider how you can draw relationships between and among images and text through their placement in space. Exhibition text should appeal to a novice viewer who does not have a background in Asian art history.

D. Give a 5-10 minute tour of your exhibition to the class.

E. Each student should write his or her own 1-2 page report describing the creation of the exhibition, how the images relate to the theme, and the relevance of the theme to a viewer. The report is due on the late day of class.

F. Questions to help facilitate the development of an exhibition:

1. Why should we engage with the material culture of Asia?
2. What can we learn from these objects?
3. How can I facilitate learning about these objects and the people who use and/or value them?

## APPENDIX D

### SAMPLES OF LABS

Form 1

## Registrar's/Conservator's Report

### Part I: Registrar Information

\_\_\_ Accession Number    \_\_\_ Acquisition or \_\_\_ Loan

Previous owner or source:

Information available upon acquisition (this information is tentative and has not been verified)

Brief Description (10 words or less; e.g., sculpture of a female figure):

Place of Origin:

Date:

Material(s):

Size (cm)

Height:

Width:

Dimension:

Other:

Weight (kgs):

### Part II: Conservator's Report

Surface Abrasions (number and locations):

Breaks (number and locations):

Cracks (number and locations):

#### Stability

\_\_\_ Stable

\_\_\_ Unstable

control

\_\_\_ Stability unclear

#### Suggested Conservation

\_\_\_ No conservation suggested

\_\_\_ Immediate attention requested

\_\_\_ Conservation requirements unclear

#### Special Storage Needs

\_\_\_ A/C

\_\_\_ Humidity

\_\_\_ Low lighting

Brief rationale for Stability, Suggested Conservation, and Storage Needs decisions:

Photographs taken: \_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no (if no, \_\_\_ number of photographs need to fully document the object)

Use Gloves when handling: \_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no

Other Special Instructions:

**Summary**

Write a general description of the object in question.

## **History of Art 213**

### **Site Survey Sheet—Laboratory 1**

Instructions: Answer the questions listed below.

Find the site of Sanci on the Site Survey CD. Write a few sentences describing the site's physical location.

List some monuments at the site. Why might there be more than one monument At Sanci? Do you think they were built during the same period? Why or why not?

What are the important parts of a stupa, why might these stupas have been built, and how do you think the stupas at this site might have been used by devotees?

Examine the so-called "Great Stupa" (Stupa I) at Sanci. Describe the layout of the monument. What types of sculptural imagery do you find at the stupa?

List several items that appear on Stupa I's toranas and briefly describe what the figures are doing. How might the figure's activities relate to Buddhism and stupa I, itself?

## **History of Art 213**

### **Laboratory 2**

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of Laboratory 2 is to:

- Date an object and relate it to similar objects by comparative analysis
- Organize relevant information
- Place an object in context and date the object relative to the site

#### **Instructions:**

Use the Art Object CD.

Receive the conservators' call then complete the first task (Form 2).

Use the notepad to "submit" form 2.

Call the Archivist.

Use the Art Object CD to complete Form 3.

Use the Site Survey CD and follow the instructions on the Site Survey—Lab 2 sheet

#### **Items to submit at the end of the laboratory:**

Form 2

Form 3

Lab 2 sheet



## **Form 2**

### **Objects, physical properties, and comparison using a database of information**

**Instructions:** Using the **Title Search** function, search through the database and select all objects whose **physical properties** may relate to the object you examined when filling out Form 1. View the records for these objects and answer the questions below.

Note: There are no restrictions on the number of objects that can be selected.

#### **Written Exercises:**

Select two objects among those found in your Title Search results. Write two sentences for each object describing why you selected it.

1<sup>st</sup> Object from Title search (compared to the original object):

2<sup>nd</sup> Object from title search (compared to the original object):

Having examined other database objects that relate to the original object (in storage bin 3), return to the registrar's/Conservator's Report form (Form 1) and add or change any information on the first page that you feel is necessary.

**CAUTION: DO NOT ALTER, ERASE, OR OBLITERATE YOUR ORIGINAL WORK. WHEN RESEARCHING, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO KEEP ALL RECORDS OF YOUR IDEAS AND FINDINGS.**

Write another general description of the original object (in storage bin 3)

Compare the two descriptions. What changed between the first and second descriptions? Why or why not?

Often physical properties are used to tell us about how an object was used and valued by the culture that created it. Reexamine the original object's physical properties and consider how the object may have been used in its original context and explore how these physical properties might point toward its cultural value.

## **History of Art 213**

### **Site Survey Sheet—Laboratory 2**

Instructions: Answer the questions listed below.

Relocate the site of Sanci on the Site Survey CD. Re-examine the toranas (gateways) located around the so-called “Great Stupa” (Stupa I). Write any new insights you may have about the meaning and significance of the imagery depicted there.

Examine the four sculpture figures inside the vedika enclosure. What is the iconographic identification of these figures? Explain.

Assign a date to the images and explain why you chose that date.

What relationship do these images have to the toranas and vedika? Are they contemporary or later additions? What, if any, do they tell you about the site?

Locate the site Mamallapuram. Do a general survey of the site and describe its physical location.

Find the Mahisasuramardini Cave and try to identify the relief images in the cave.

Find and examine the Shore temple, describing the layout of the temple and its main parts.

Examine and describe one of the other monuments at the site.

### Form 3

#### Beyond Physical Properties

**Instructions:** Use the **Parameter Search** function, focusing especially on the **Region and Time**. View the objects in the found records and save any relevant records to your user database, then answer the questions on this form.

After answering the questions, use the Collection editor to compile several of these records into a collection called "Lab 2 Images." This collection will be used for future reference.

#### **Written Exercises:**

Review the objects found using the parameter search. Compare two objects with the original objects (in storage bin 3) and write a brief paragraph (no more than four sentences), comparing them.

Object 1 (compared tot he original object)

Object 2 (compared tot he original object):

Having examined other objects in the database that relate tot the original object, return to the Registrar's/Conservator's Report form (Form 1) and add or change any information that you fill is necessary. **REMEMBER: DON'T DELETE OR ERASE ANY OF YOUR PREVIOUS WORK.**

Describe any changes you may have made. Describe why you made changes, if any.

## Lab 4: Creating a Digital Exhibition

### Instruction Guide

Follow the steps, shown by the instructor, to create a collection with two Buddha images in your *User Database*. Call the collection “Two Buddha Images.” View the collection as a slide show.

Using the Kiosk, Go to the *Video Phone* and call the exhibition curator, who will explain the purpose of your next task. Go to the *Kiosk Exhibitions Room* and look at the images in the kiosk. Do the images create a coherent theme that you can identify? If so, tell what it is, then go to “c.” If not, do directly to ‘c.’

Decide on your own theme for an exhibition, considering content, material, style, and context. Search the database for images you may want to use for your exhibition. \* Write down the record number for those images. Return to the kiosk, add the new images, and create captions for each image. You may need to return several times to get information. Create a title and add a brief introduction to your show. The work you do in the kiosk will be saved automatically.

\*You may also use any of the images already in the kiosk for your exhibition.

Complete the lab sheet questions. Some of the questions are hypothetical and ask you to consider how you would create a real exhibition for these objects.

## **Form 4**

### Coordinating and Applying Knowledge

**Instructions:** Complete the electronic exhibition at the kiosk using objects from the database. Try to identify the exhibition's theme(s) and select objects that contribute to it. Be sure to check all of the object captions and make any changes you think are necessary.

#### **Written Exercises:**

Write 1-2 paragraphs describing why you chose the objects for the exhibition.

Museum curators often must decide whether to display an object as it may have been originally seen and used, or whether to display an object so that it is most easily seen by museum visitors. In 1-2 paragraphs, discuss which approach you would choose and why you would make that decision.

Consider how you would display what you have chosen. Describe the possible benefits and hindrances to the viewer's understanding?

Consider how you would display the objects in the kiosk exhibition. Draw a brief ground plan that shows and describes:

Where you would put the objects and why?

What tables, stands, hangers, cases would be needed to display the objects and why?

How you would like for each object to be lit (include type of light) and why?

How the visitors would be expected to circulate through the exhibition and why?

Feel free to include any educational materials (posters, maps, text descriptions, etc.) that might help the visitor learn about the materials in the exhibition.

How would you display the original object? What kind of light, tables, stands, etc. would you use and why? What kind of exhibition theme would you build around this object?